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George M. Leader, 1918-2013

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George M. Leader, 1918-2013

Description
George M. Leader (1918-2013), a native of York, Pennsylvania, rose from the anonymous status of chicken farmer's son and Gettysburg College undergraduate to become, first a State Senator, and then the 36th governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. A steadfast liberal in a traditionally conservative state, Leader spent his brief time in the governor's office (1955-1959) fighting uphill battles and blazing courageous trails. He overhauled the state's corrupt patronage system; streamlined and humanized its mental health apparatus; and, when a black family moved into the white enclave of Levittown, took a brave stand in favor of integration.

After politics, Leader became a pioneer in the area of assisted living, with a chain of Lutheran nursing homes in central Pennsylvania. He multiplied his philanthropies, endowing a nursing center, funding education and reintegration programs for prisoners, and providing supplies and expertise to impoverished Ghana. By the time of his death, George M. Leader had lived as vigorous, productive, and - to use a word he might have appreciated - useful a life as any Pennsylvanian of his time.

On three occasions in 2006 and 2007, Gettysburg College history professors Michael J. Birkner and Charles H. Glatfelter engaged the former governor in interviews about his life and times. Leader talked expansively and candidly about his wins and losses, his prides and regrets; the excitement and bitterness of politics, the satisfactions of philanthropy, and the sustenance of family. These interviews, ranging over nearly a century of political and state history, tell the story of one of Pennsylvania's most remarkable sons.

Keywords
George M. Leader, Pennsylvania, Gettysburg College, governor, Gettysburg, York County, integration, assisted living, philanthropy, patronage, political corruption, mental health

Disciplines
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GEORGE M. LEADER

1918-2013

Interviewed by Michael J. Birkner and Charles H. Glatfelter

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(1918-2013)

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Michael J. Birkner
&
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Gettysburg College
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

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Second edition

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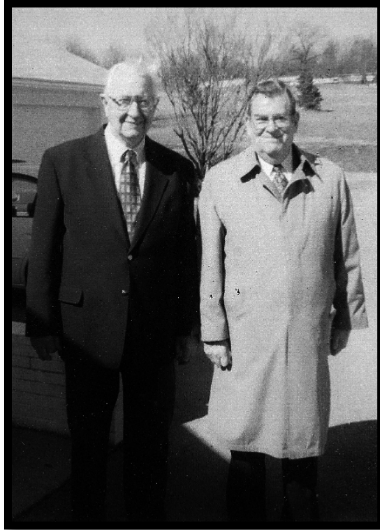
In memory of
George M. Leader
and
Charles H. Glatfelter

Pennsylvania Dutchmen
who left their mark



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Introduction

Gettysburg College takes pride in the achievements of its alumni in various fields of endeavor. Among those who have made special contributions to a better world, one of the most distinctive characters would surely be the college's sole alumnus to have served as governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania: George Michael Leader, '39. During his single term as governor (1955-59), Leader was a virtual whirlwind of activity, rethinking the way government did business, expanding support for the aged and the mentally ill, improving infrastructure, and financing education programs at higher levels. Not least of Leader's achievements as chief executive of Pennsylvania was his work reorganizing the state government for the sake of both efficiency and accountability. Despite lacking reliable majorities in the legislature during his first two years in office, and facing Republican majorities in the second, he enacted some 80 percent of his programs. Journalists and scholars consistently rank his governorship as one of the most creative and fruitful in modern Pennsylvania history.

A lifelong political animal, Leader's career in elective office was relatively brief. Active in Democratic Party organizational work in his native York County in the 1940s, he served one term in the State Senate, succeeding his father, and ran unsuccessfully for state treasurer in 1952, caught in the undertow of Dwight Eisenhower's landslide presidential victory that year. Two years later, running against a well-known and well-financed Republican "regular," Lloyd Wood, Leader pulled off an upset, earning a coveted place on the cover of *Time* magazine. At the time Leader was elected, governors were allowed but a single consecutive term. In 1958, as a lame duck, and ambivalent about moving to Washington to join a Democratic Senate caucus dominated by Lyndon B. Johnson, Leader decided that the US Senate was his best option. In an otherwise strong year for Democrats nationwide, Leader was defeated in an upset by Congressman Hugh Scott, owing in part to the machinations of Pittsburgh's Democratic leader and gubernatorial candidate, David Lawrence, who had personal and political reasons to "cut" Leader in Allegheny County. It was a bitter defeat for Leader.

Needing to make a living, Leader turned down Governor-elect Lawrence's offer to serve as his welfare secretary, choosing instead a career in private enterprise, first in the mortgage business and ultimately as a health-care entrepreneur. In this endeavor, he worked in tandem with members of his family, and continued to play a role in managing Providence Place—his final senior-care enterprise—until his death at age 95. His goal from the outset was to provide quality care for seniors, with the motto that doing good would also mean doing well.

A proud Pennsylvania Dutchman, George Leader's interests and activities ranged widely. His life, in retrospect, was protean, because he operated on so many tracks. He was deeply committed to advancing public welfare in Pennsylvania and beyond. In his career after politics, Leader's philanthropic initiatives included support for prisoner education; improved nurse training; enhanced access to computers for schoolchildren; and access to clean water for villagers in Ghana and elsewhere in Africa.

Throughout his life, Governor Leader retained a deep interest in history, politics, and public affairs. He had strong opinions about notable political leaders, and did not hesitate to express them. He hated the growing influence of money on the political system, which he believed both advantaged special interests over the average citizen and turned political campaigns increasingly negative. Always, he was concerned with more responsive and effective governance. Just a month before he passed away in May 2013, Leader joined former Pennsylvania governors Ed Rendell, Tom Ridge, and Dick Thornburgh in writing a letter to the state legislature, urging the abandonment of elected judgeships and proposing a system of merit selection. Taking the influence of money out of the system of choosing jurists was, to Leader, only common sense. Leader and his compeers followed up with a letter to the editor of the *Wall Street Journal* (April 8, 2013), responding to a *Journal* editorial criticizing their proposal. The former governors reminded the *Journal*'s editors that the public remains involved in the selection of judges at one step removed, and that Pennsylvanians deserved the opportunity to vote in referendum on the merit selection proposal.

A future biographer will benefit from consulting Leader's numerous interviews with journalists and scholars about one or another aspect of his career. In 2006 and 2007, Leader sat for three

extended interviews at Providence Place in Hummelstown, Pennsylvania, with two Gettysburg College historians—Charles H. Glatfelter and myself. The interviews ran roughly chronologically, from Leader's earliest memories of life on the family chicken farm in York County in the 1920s, up through his current activities. On one visit, we discovered that he had just returned from planting shrubs at one of his senior homes. Asked about this, Leader observed that it was all in a day's work for him. He was 89 years of age.

George Leader spoke freely during the interviews. His capacity for recalling conversations that had taken place a half-century or more in the past, and his grasp of detail with regard to politics and public-policy issues right into the present, were impressive. The interviews we conducted will provide readers with a window into a world where farming was not merely significant to the well-being of the Pennsylvania economy, but also a way of life for perhaps half the state's population. This was a world of personal connections, where motor vehicles existed but did not dominate the landscape, where countryside closely surrounded and country people did their business in central cities and small towns, and where, in politics, party bosses played a much greater role in raising money and choosing candidates for statewide races than is the case today.

Gettysburg College is featured in parts of this interview, as Governor Leader describes how he came to attend the college, the leading personalities he encountered, and his frustrations as one of few Democrats in the student body. Active in a wide range of campus organizations, he could get elected president of none of them due to his identification as a New Dealer. It grated on him. This frustration, combined with his lack of progress towards completing a major despite accumulating over a hundred credit hours in his three years at Gettysburg, induced Leader to migrate to the University of Pennsylvania, where he majored in social studies, as he could not have done at Gettysburg. Even as Leader could recall particular influences on him at Gettysburg (notably "Orientation" class leader Donald Heiges and speech professor Thomas Cline), it's evident that what Leader learned at Penn, and the contacts he made there, proved more valuable to him in his subsequent political activity. He leaned heavily on Penn's Fels Institute for expertise when he was reorganizing Pennsylvania's government and, among other initiatives, turning patronage

mills in the various departments into merit-oriented civil service operations.

Leader's observations on the Pennsylvania State Senate and the machinations of Republican power broker Harvey Taylor will absorb the interest of political scientists and political historians—as will his observations about the personalities and issues bearing on his statewide political campaigns of 1952, 1954, and 1958, and his years in the governor's office in Harrisburg. Leader's account of how insurance commissions were controlled by Senator Taylor and used to co-opt pliant members of the minority Democratic Party is a classic example of how government really works, as opposed to textbook versions of how a bill becomes a law. His recollection of responding to racial intimidation in August 1957, when an African-American family moved to Levittown and was greeted by a mob, reflects his values and captures his decisiveness of character. As governor, Leader made it clear that Pennsylvania would not accept racial apartheid, and he backed his words with actions—actions which offer a stark contrast to those of Arkansas governor Orval Faubus upon the court-ordered integration of Central High School in Little Rock less than a month later.

Professor Glatfelter and I felt it was important to spend time on Leader's post-governor activities, since they encompassed so much of his life. (He was only 41 when he left the governor's mansion.) The third and final interview session, conducted in 2007, ranged widely over Leader's business activities and philanthropies. They demonstrate how, even when approaching his tenth decade on earth, he remained passionate about making a better world.

George Leader was a distinguished son of Gettysburg College and, for seven decades, a remarkable force in his native state. Charles Glatfelter, who passed away at age 88 in February 2013, and I relished our excursions to Hummelstown, coming away with an enriched historical perspective, and, beyond that, admiration for one individual who got the most out of every day he breathed.

Michael J. Birkner
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania
December 2013

Acknowledgments

This project could not have reached fruition without the support and good will of many individuals—starting with George M. Leader, who invited Charles Glatfelter and me to visit with him, and frequently expressed interest in the enterprise. Both Governor Leader and Professor Glatfelter read and made corrections to the interview transcripts, thereby improving considerably the final product. (It must be said that the governor, rather in the vein of Lyndon B. Johnson, preferred to see his words in something less than full colloquial dress; ultimately, we reached a middle ground on preserving this transcript as an oral history.)

I wish to express my appreciation to individuals who helped at various stages of this enterprise, starting with Mrs. Roz Parkhurst, who made a first pass at transcribing tapes from the first two interview sessions; and Mrs. Rebecca Barth, who did a first-rate job transcribing interview three. Musselman Library Director Robin Wagner's early support made this volume possible. Carolyn Sautter, the library's Director of Special Collections, was equally supportive, as was John Hiner of Gettysburg College's Development office. Catherine Perry, Special Collections Director of Digital Projects, worked assiduously to excavate and comb the Leader scrapbooks, and to digitize photographs for this volume. Special Collections Archives Assistant Devin McKinney was an invaluable aegis every step of the way; the final product owes much to his aesthetics and his craft.

A Note on Sources

There is as yet no fully satisfying study of Leader's life, though there have been many articles and several books that capture elements of his life experience. Among articles, see Mike Argento's handsomely illustrated "Leader for Life," *York Sunday News*, November 7, 2004, pp. A1, A8-A9; and Kenneth C. Wolensky, "Born a Leader," *Pennsylvania Heritage* 28 (Winter 2002), 22-29. Paul Beers's *Pennsylvania Politics, Yesterday and Today* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1980) offers a pungent account of Leader's political approach in the context of a freewheeling Pennsylvania political culture.

The most detailed accounts of Leader's governorship include M. Nelson McGeary, *Pennsylvania Government in Action: Governor Leader's Administration (1955-1950)* (State College, PA: Penns Valley Publishers, 1972); Reed M. Smith, *State Government in Transition: Reforms of the Leader Administration, 1955-1959* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1963); and Kenneth C. Wolensky, *The Life of Pennsylvania Governor George M. Leader: Challenging Complacency* (Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press, 2011). Smith's book provides an informed, if dry, recounting of Leader's major initiatives as governor, treating issues from milk production and recreation to administrative reform and the overhaul of the state's mental health system. Early in the 21st century, Leader commissioned Elisabeth Myers, a Haverford College graduate, to research the subject of mental-health reform in 20th century Pennsylvania. The product, Myers's 84-page *Unlocking the Doors: Harry Shapiro and the Reforms of the Pennsylvania Mental Health System* (Hummelstown, PA: Leader Publishing, 2005), includes a substantial account of Shapiro's partnership with George Leader in advancing the cause of better care for those Pennsylvanians suffering from mental handicaps or mental illness.

Late in his life, Leader commissioned Pennsylvania historian Kenneth C. Wolensky to produce an authorized study of his life. That work, cited above, interweaves oral history with narrative, connecting the different subjects covered in his interviews with Leader; topics include politics, entrepreneurship, and philanthropy. The main source base for Wolensky's narrative includes Leader's papers in the Pennsylvania State Archives, and a family collection of papers held in

Dover, Pennsylvania. The third significant Leader collection, his papers at Gettysburg College, was not consulted.

There is substantial overlap between Wolensky's work and the issues covered in the Birkner-Glatfelter oral history. However, the latter work discusses aspects of Leader's youth, college experience, early political career, Pennsylvania political personalities and culture, and the 1958 campaign in far greater detail than does Wolensky's.

Gettysburg College's George M. Leader collection includes scrapbooks from Leader's service in World War II and his years as governor, as well as copies of formal writings and speeches, and selected videotapes.

THE FIRST INTERVIEW

March 15, 2006

Michael J. Birkner: Governor, I want to start by asking you about the circumstances of your early years. Would you tell us where you were born, and about your parents—starting with their names, what they did, and those kinds of things?

George M. Leader: I'll be glad to. I was born in York Township, York County, Pennsylvania. York Township is just to the south of the city of York, about three or three and half miles from the city limits, and my parents for a while took things to one of the York markets. They had at least three country markets in there. I remember one was Central, one was Eastern, and there was another one, City Market. There were three of them—I can only remember three—and my parents went to all of those markets, probably [since] before I was born.

My mother grew up on a farm south of York that is now covered by the water of the first impounding dam that was put on the Codorus Creek. That branch of the Codorus Creek provides water for the city of York; the dam could be on that creek because that branch is not polluted. The other branch that came down through Spring Grove supported the Glatfelter Paper Company, and there was a tendency for that to be polluted from chemicals used in papermaking in Spring Grove. Anyhow, the farm where my mother grew up was under there. My father was born in Glen Rock, Pennsylvania, and grew up mostly down in Glen Rock, and then later on in a little town called Hometown.

Birkner: Just for clarification's sake, Glen Rock is close to Seven Valleys, five or six miles from the southern border of York County. Now, your first memories were of growing up on a farm?

Leader: Yes. Let me say a word first about my father. My father was a bright boy, the only child in the family. His mother came from plain, Anabaptist stock. Her mother came to York County from the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. I think her family was the Myers

family; I think they were originally Mennonite, but they became Brethren. She had a brother, and [also] an uncle, who was a minister of that faith, who lived in Loganville. Dad grew up there and got a country-school education, and then had one year beyond that at the York Collegiate Institute. But Dad had a great intellectual curiosity, and was a great reader. I have to thank him for his great faith in the value of education. We'll talk more about that later.

Birkner: Let's get your parents' names.

Leader: Mother's name was Beulah Naomi Boyer. My father's name was Guy Alvin Leader. His mother looked in the new book of [baby] names to make a determination of what they wanted to name this child; she came across Guy, which also, I think, means Leader.

Birkner: Before I ask about your first memories, it occurs to me that in some of the material that Charles Glatfelter supplied me with, I learned that your father, despite not having a college education, was a teacher for a number of years, [before] health issues led him to become a farmer. Do you want to say something about that?

Leader: Dad wanted to go to college. His father, after having a trade as a cabinetmaker, became a farmer, and a *successful* farmer. You would have thought that, [my father] being an only child, his father would have been able to send him to college. But there was no Social Security or anything of that nature in those days, and the modus operandi was that a farmer, when he got too old to farm, sold the farm, and made sale of the farm machinery, [and] used that money to sustain him during the retirement years. It was either that, or going to the poor farm—which was considered a terrible disgrace. When my father wanted to get an advanced education, his father said he couldn't provide the financing for it.

Birkner: I see. Did he become a teacher?

Leader: About age 17, he took the examination required to qualify to become a country-school teacher. He passed that examination. So at 17 he was teaching at a country school where he had some students who were as old as he was, and certainly quite as large as he was. Back in those days, corporal punishment was still considered part of the operation.

Birkner: I've read several different versions of your father's decision to leave teaching and become a poultry farmer. Most of them relate to his health, but it isn't clear to me whether he had a series of minor problems or one major problem. Can you shed any light on this?

Leader: Yes. He had a major problem, which they called rheumatism in those days. I don't know whether it was rheumatic fever or what it was, but he was a very sick man. He had all of his teeth removed, as well as his tonsils, and he made a recovery from that; as a result, it left him with an impaired heart. But he enjoyed thoroughly good health most of the years after he had his teeth removed, and he carried on with breeding poultry.

Birkner: That was in fact what he was doing when you were born?

Leader: Probably by that time, by 1918, I suspect he was in poultry. He bred a line of white leghorns for about 50 years. He came across a book on how to breed poultry. It was [written] by a Professor James C. Dryden. Dryden left the University of California faculty and established a poultry farm on his own to carry out the principles that he had learned about breeding poultry. The trick was to breed from *families* with strong characteristics, not from individuals. Individuals didn't necessarily reproduce true to form, in terms of the desirable characteristics. Dad had some bloodlines that came from Dryden, although there were firms on the West Coast, Hollywood and Hansen, [who] were the two primary breeders from which he purchased his original stock. Later on, he purchased it from Dryden himself.

Dryden was highly successful, because he had what you call a trap nest. When the chicken goes into the nest to lay an egg, it can't get out until someone lets it out of the nest, picks up the laid egg, weighs it, checks the quality, [and] records it on a sheet of paper. Then, that trick is used to develop 10 or 12 sisters that are outstanding. That's a good family. Then you take another family, where you had 10 or 12 sisters that did well, and you select a male from that family. You cross them, and doing that, you can develop a strain of chickens that is quite consistent in producing anywhere from 180 to 220 eggs per year.

Dad produced chickens that laid 300 or more eggs in a year. They had egg-laying contests in Storrs, Connecticut, and in Harrisburg, conducted either by the schools of higher education or [by] the state. My father entered chickens into those contests and won many of

them. He had a lot of ribbons, and he had one of the outstanding lines of White Leghorns in the United States. That method of breeding persisted until Henry Wallace and the Wallace family developed the hybrid chicken; I guess they developed that in the thirties. I used to tell my father, "You're going to have to spend more money on your breeding program." He had a Professor Marble from Penn State who consulted with him once a year on the breeding program in the later years, and that was fine. But by that time the Hyline people were spending over a million dollars a year on developing the hybrids. I said, "Dad, you're spending $25,000 a year, and they're spending a million dollars a year. You better watch out—they're going to overtake you." He said, "Well, we're doing alright so far. We're still beating them in the egg-laying contest."

As it turned out, the hybridization people overcame some of their problems. They had a problem for a while with leucosis-leukemia complex, and for a while with tinted eggs. The New York market, which was a fine market for eggs in our part of the country, wanted white eggs; they didn't want them tinted brown. But the hybrid people overcame that, and after they overcame the leucosis-leukemia problem, they were tough competition, and they prevailed.

Birkner: In the main time of your dad's work, would you say that, aside from being successful in contests, he was commercially successful? He was making money on his farm?

Leader: My father made money. [He] made $10,000 a year or more every year, except for one year when he had typhoid fever and almost died; that year he only made about $2,500. And he was always able to borrow money. He started with nothing. He borrowed $2,500 from his father-in-law; I think his father gave or lent him $500, and that's how he started. He reached the point where he had 25,000 breeders and was producing approximately a million and a quarter baby chicks a year, which in that day was quite a good volume. According to Dad, during the thirties when I was growing up he was making $10,000 a year, and you could probably count on two hands the people who were making $10,000 a year in the city of York. That was pretty good money in those days.

Birkner: Absolutely. Well, I'm going to guess that some of your first memories as a boy, then, relate to chickens.

Leader: I hated the chicken business with a passion. By the time I was eight years old I had helped to pack eggs, and by the time I was 12 years old, I was helping to clean chicken houses. I didn't like either one, and I said I was never going into the chicken business. Obviously, I did.

Birkner: Did you do this as part of your obligation to the family, or did your parents give you a little bit of allowance for it?

Leader: We didn't get an allowance in those days. We had our Sunday school picnic at St. Luke's Church in York; if we went to the picnic, on a good day we got a quarter. We went to the Pine Grove Church picnic, and most of the time we got 15 cents, and that was the biggest money we saw from one end of the year till the next. And we got one gift for Christmas. I remember I wanted a football so badly, and my mother didn't know the difference, so she bought me a rugby ball. I spent hours kicking that over our one-story house. In those days, I was determined to become a football coach—don't ask me why.

Birkner: Your parents didn't spoil you. I understand that you're part of a fairly large group of siblings; where are you in the pecking order?

Leader: I'm third. I had an older brother about five years older, and an older sister about eight years older.

Birkner: There were six or seven kids in the family?

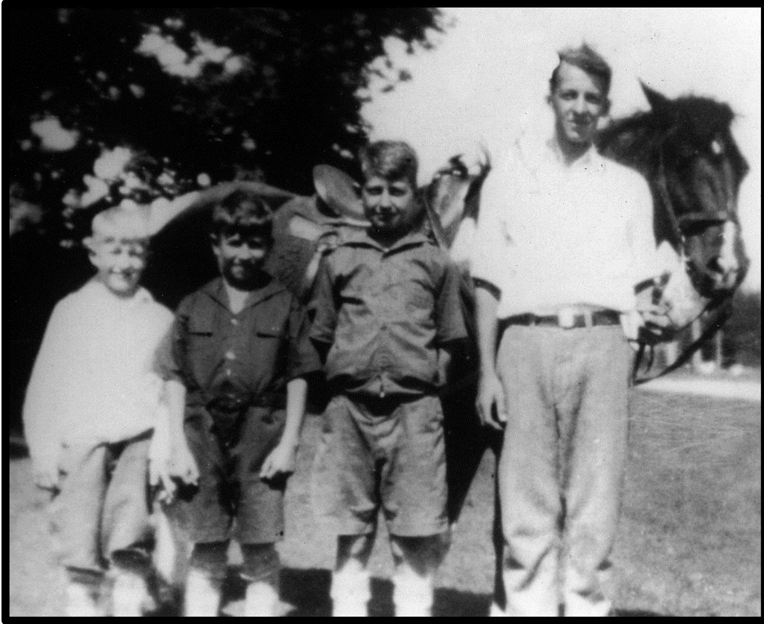
Leader: Seven of us, yes. Two sons and three daughters were born after I was born.

Birkner: So even if you were living on a farm, you always had an opportunity to hang out and do things with somebody?

Leader: Well, Mother said [that] between meals, she didn't see much of those boys. We were either out playing or we were out working. As we grew up, we were out working. We had lots and lots of eggs to pack, and that's a tough chore.

Birkner: I want to ask you that about the playing side of it, because you were a pre-suburban person, and the tract developments, etc., are really not part of the life that you were growing up with. Aside from seeing kids in school, how much time were you actually [spending]

playing with peers who were not members of your family? Did you have close friendships growing up?



The Leader sons on the family farm. L. to R.: Henry, Guy Jr., George, and Paul.

Leader: Only to this extent. When I was about 12 years old, I organized a baseball team called the Leader Heights Juniors. I selected an older fellow as the manager, and I got the boys together, and we played on the school ground. It had so much mud on it, and tracks from cars driving on it; there was no backstop. We would play sometimes on Sunday afternoons. A lot of the players didn't have telephones in their homes. We had a horse that was given to us—it was essentially a riding horse—and I'd get on Babe, and I'd ride around the neighborhood and notify the boys when we were going to play and where we were going to play. Then we'd get together on Sunday afternoon and play. Back in those days, all of us went to church. The boys had to work six days a week, so the only time they could play was Sunday afternoon. That was pretty much for me, I think, the first indication that I might have any leadership skills. But I didn't know

what leadership skills were in those days, so it didn't affect my personality!

Birkner: The point is that you didn't have an adult figure who was running what we would call a league. As a 12-year-old, you liked to play baseball, and you got together with your peers who liked baseball, and you got things going. Doesn't this sound a little bit like Lavern Brenneman's situation growing up in Seven Valleys? He was an avid ballplayer—and a good one, from what we can tell.

Leader: I wasn't very good. I did play prep school baseball successfully, but my mother wasn't so sure we should be playing baseball on Sunday. She was brought up pretty strictly. My father said, "Oh, let them play." He was a little more liberal than she was. So we were allowed to play baseball on Sunday afternoons. It was impossible for us to play any other time, because virtually all the members of that team had to work on what we called truck farms—vegetable farms, in those days—and there was a lot of labor. You know, cultivating, hoeing, pulling the weeds between the plants, planting the seeds, the whole thing. Children were very much a part of a workforce in those days. They didn't get allowances, and they didn't get paid. They were lucky if they got, as I said, 15 cents or a quarter to go to a picnic.

Birkner: One often hears about the dangers of farm life. On a chicken farm, I'm guessing there may have been fewer dangers, but did you run into problems where you got scratched badly by the chickens? [Were there] other dangers as a boy working on that farm?

Leader: Well, when we gathered the eggs, it was not unusual, when you went to take the eggs out from under the hen that was sitting on the nest, [that] she would peck you on the back of your hand. I had all kinds of ways to get that chicken off the nest. Sometimes I'd get them by the head and throw them on the floor. If she pecked me once, I didn't let her peck me a second time. It could really hurt on the top of one's hand. A peck from the chicken was really quite painful, especially for a child.

Birkner: But you understood the chicken was being territorial?

Leader: That's right. She had her right to sit in there and lay her eggs. The reason chickens kept on laying was that in nature, before we started breeding them for production, laying a group of eggs [and

sitting on them] was the rule. But if any animals disturbed them or anything, they might lay a second or even a third cycle of eggs. So part of the reason they produced eggs commercially was [that] we kept taking the eggs away, and the chicken kept trying to reestablish her nest. Now, there were some that became broody. This is a hen that's not going to lay any more eggs; she says she's laid enough eggs. She just wants to sit on those eggs until they hatch. We had little coops where we would put them without nesting in the hopes that we could break them of their broodiness.

Charles H. Glatfelter: Did you have animals, [like] a cow, on the farm?

Leader: We had one horse, and we had one cow. My sister, Mary, who's eight years older [than I], had to milk the cow, and she hated it. She didn't want to go to high school smelling like a cow. It's pretty hard to be around cows without getting some of the odor on you.

Glatfelter: Is that sister still living?

Leader: She's now 96 years old. She lost her husband, but she's still living.

Birkner: You mentioned baseball. Were you also a follower of the major-league teams? Did you listen to the Athletics on the radio? Did you have a particular passion for that?

Leader: We did listen to the Athletics. I'd never seen a major-league game, but we did listen to the game sometimes on the radio, and we followed Connie Mack and his team religiously back in those days.

Birkner: If I'm not mistaken, right about the time you would have probably had peak interest in it—let's say 12 years old—the Athletics had this outstanding team, with Al Simmons and Lefty Grove and some other great players.

Leader: Lefty Grove, George Ernshaw. Jimmy Foxx on first base. I can't remember the whole lineup anymore.

Birkner: It was an outstanding team.

Leader: Oh, yes; I think they were champions back in those days. And then Connie Mack borrowed a lot of money to build a new stadium. You didn't get a lot of taxpayer money back in those days to build those facilities. Then the Depression came and they weren't

getting the crowds, so Mack began to sell off the stars, because his bank debt was eating him up.

Birkner: That's a famous story—he dismantled this fantastic athletic team. They didn't play in the evenings in those days; they played in the afternoons, right?

Leader: Probably on weekends, we might hear them on Sunday. I remember Millard Gladfelter saying that he used to give free tickets to some of the faculty people up at Temple University. He said he was at a game, and he and his colleague went down to see Connie Mack to thank him for the tickets and say how much they enjoyed the games, and [Mack] mentioned the name of one of his star pitchers who had passed his zenith. So Connie Mack wasn't too sympathetic to that pitcher anymore, and when Millard said what a great pitcher he was, Mack said, "Can't get 'em out. Can't get 'em out." So I came to understand that in baseball and the professional sports, when you can no longer perform to the highest levels, you are no longer considered a valuable person. That's a hard lesson, I'm sure, for a lot of people to learn.

Birkner: Still is. I wanted to ask you about school. One of the things that Charlie [Glatfelter] and I learned from Lavern Brenneman was how complicated it was for him to get to York High School. He had to take several trains and he'd have to wait—he'd get to school early in the morning, and wait because of the trains. How did school work out for you, in terms of getting to where you needed to go?

Leader: My parents provided somebody to take us to school in the morning. My father took us many times, and Dad was always overcommitted [with] getting his people lined up to their work for the day on the farm. He always had anywhere from 15 to 20 [to] 25 people, so we were always late getting to school. I remember going into the principal's office, signing in, and being chastised for being late. But getting home in the evening, we had to hitchhike three and a half miles. Sometimes we walked the whole way. One time, I decided I wanted to go out to play basketball at York High School, and I went out to practice. I was pretty tired when practice was over, [and] it was dark. Hitchhiking after dark was not very good in those day, [so] I walked the whole way home. I got home sometime after seven o'clock, and our evening meal was served at five-thirty. A few weeks

of that and I said, "This can't work." I gave up trying to play basketball at York High. I finished high school at 16, and most of the boys that were playing were more mature—a couple of years older than I was. They'd grown up in the city, where shooting baskets by the hour was possible, and I grew up on a farm, where playing sports by the hour would have been inconceivable. We were lucky to get a couple of hours to play baseball on a Sunday afternoon.

Birkner: What was the best thing about junior high school and high school for you?

Leader: I did very well up through ninth grade, and then I went into [the] big William Penn High School. I called schools like that educational factories. I went over there when I was about 13. I was totally a fish out of water, and I would say [that] York High School represents three, [or] at least two, of the most miserable years of my life. My father said, "You're going to go to college. You've got to take Latin and German." I am probably the world's worst language student—I don't have that type of memory for vocabulary—and the two years were very mediocre. By the senior year I didn't have the Latin anymore, and I did better. I was beginning to get to be an average good student. Then I was 16 when I finished high school, and Dad said, "You're too young to go to college. You ought to go to YCI for a year." I went up to YCI for a year, and I was on the honor roll. I took mathematics; I took algebra over, because I had a poor start in algebra; I took solid, trig, English, physics, and chemistry.

Glatfelter: About how many faculty were there [at YCI]?

Leader: About half a dozen at that time.

Birkner: You have to clarify. What is YCI?

Leader: York Collegiate Institute was a private school, mostly designed to attract students from the wealthier families, and they had a half-dozen pretty outstanding teachers. The head of the school was Matthew Johnson, who shepherded that school into a junior college. [It's] now York College—a four-year college. They had [Dr.] Charles Yawkey in Chemistry and the sciences; a superb teacher. They had a Dr. [J. Kenneth] Snyder in English. Snyder required us to write a one-page paper every day, five days a week, and he took the time to correct them and make suggestions. I never would have been able to

do what I did at Gettysburg College if it hadn't been for Mr. Snyder and his teaching us how to write. Can you go through high school without knowing how to write? No. But I certainly did when I was there. Johnson, Yawkey, and Snyder were the three principal teachers that I had. I took the chemistry prize as the best chemistry student in that class, and I was on the honor roll every time. I played football, started every game; I played baseball, started every game; and I played JV basketball. By that time I was driving a car, and I was permitted to stay and play those sports for that year. That's what helped me get started with my educational career. York Collegiate Institute really helped me a lot.

Birkner: In the scheme of things, your family was quite well-off, and yet your parents were clearly not spoiling you. What was your perception of your class status? Did you see yourself as well-off? Was it part of your consciousness as a teenager?

Leader: We were as well-off as anybody else in the neighborhood. There were seven children in a five-room bungalow, without a bathroom. But only a few of our neighbors had bathrooms, so we didn't feel deprived. And we had just as good clothes and just as good cars.

Birkner: Are you telling me you had an outhouse?

Leader: It was generally an outhouse. It had a flush toilet in it, but it was outside the home.

Birkner: So you're living in a relatively opulent style?

Leader: Oh, no, we were crowded. There were three double beds in the bedroom where I slept. There were always at least five people sleeping in that room.

Birkner: Why do you think this was? Your father probably could have afforded a bigger house, unless he was pushing everything back into the business.

Leader: He was putting everything back into the operation. He borrowed $800, [and] he built two chicken houses. He'd pay that off, and he'd borrow $800 more. And he'd borrow until he had enough chicken houses for 25,000 breeders.

Birkner: So you weren't taking family vacations to Florida, and he wasn't building a fancy house for you?

Leader: By the time I was 16, he [had] built a fancy house for us—a beautiful brick Colonial house. By that time they'd put hard roads through that area, so we had hard roads. We had two bathrooms on the second floor, and we had a whole shower room in the basement—two showers, a commode, two washbowls—and two hired men who boarded with my mother from the time they were 17 or 18. We all cleaned up down there after working in the chicken houses; the men would wash up down there before they came in for a meal. By the time I was 16, we lived in a very fine house.

Glatfelter: How big was the farm?

Leader: The original farm Dad bought was six acres. Then Dad bought 10 acres more, then he bought another 46-acre farm across the road. With chickens, there are a lot of disease problems to combat; the common ones are coccidiosis and chicken pox. My Dad was the first person in Pennsylvania to vaccinate for chicken pox. But then there was a disease that came along called cholera disease in chickens. We just couldn't break the cycle on that farm where we were, so Dad bought a couple hundred acres near the Maryland line, 15 miles away. He moved all his brooder houses and shelters down there, disinfected them, washed them, scrubbed them, and we grew our young stock there. He was able to preserve his bloodlines because we transferred young chickens that were banded down there too, and then he sold off all the older chickens on the original farms. We brought the young ones home, and we broke the cycle of the cholera. But that cholera—we must have lived with it for three, four, or five years before we got rid of it.

About the time I was in Gettysburg College in the thirties, Dad's flock was hit by the leucosis-leukemia complex. Dad by that time had lots of families of chickens, and he put his emphasis on eliminating that disease, because he had already achieved many things by way of production. After about three generations, he was able to breed out or reduce the problem. This leukemia has about four forms—retinitis, loss of the use of a leg, a drop wing, and the big liver. Sometimes the liver would cover a nine-inch plate; that's how big it could get. All of which either crippled the chicken or killed the chicken outright. So in three or four generations, he was able to breed resistance, and a lot of other leghorn breeders around the country bought his stock, because he was the only one at that time that had chickens with resist-

ance. It was sweeping the country. I remember Professor [George D.] Quigley from the University of Maryland wrote us a letter saying he would like to buy some hatching eggs. Well, we didn't sell hatching eggs. [But] Dad knew Quigley, so he sold him a case. A year later, he wrote us a letter and said, "I cleaned up my chicken house and disinfected it, and I put your chickens hatched from those eggs in that house, and they didn't die of leucosis-leukemia." We had that letter on file for a long time.

Dad had initiated this breakthrough. He had imagination; he had a positive attitude toward progress. I can remember I used to be amused when people would say, "Guess your father didn't have the disease problems that all the rest of us had." I said, "He had to figure out a way to solve them." And that's why he was successful. I said, "The only animal that knows how to kill itself in more ways than a chicken is a turkey." Turkeys have a few diseases that even chickens didn't get back in those days. But today I'm amazed how they can grow chickens—50,000 of them in a building. They have so many drugs now, and they use them. Of course, you and I are getting the drugs secondhand from the meat. That would stop me from eating chicken, but I like chicken. Today they've been pumping so much into the feeds, it's amazing how you can keep chickens alive. The only thing remaining is this avian flu. They're killing chickens by the millions all over the world, trying to keep that from spreading.

But I don't know. I just had a couple hundred wild geese on [the] ponds at my farm about a week ago. They're my regular Canada geese, but they didn't scare those couple of ducks that visit my ponds from my neighbor's place. But if they have avian flu, they may be out there in [the] ponds on my farm right now. It's a scary prospect. However, I read of some research where a chap grew a vaccine in a Petri dish. As you know, most vaccines are made from the live embryos of chicken eggs. So it's a complex program; [it] takes a lot of time. This fellow was growing a vaccine in a Petri dish that worked on rats. Now, I assume by this time they are starting to try it out on humans. If we could get something like that to cut the cost, we could probably go around the world, as we did with smallpox vaccinations.

Birkner: Let me ask you something further about your father and the poultry business. Did you have magazines around the house that

dealt with the science of poultry? Was that a staple of your home, or did your father have an office where he kept that stuff?

Leader: In a five-room bungalow with all those people, there was all that crosspollination. My father got all the magazines that were in print, I think, at that time. He got all the farm magazines, all the poultry magazines, all the magazines of politics, all the magazines of general interest. We ate supper at five-thirty in the evening; by six o'clock, he was in his chair, and he read every night until nine-thirty or so. He had about three and half hours of reading every night. He had a nice little library, but he also went through all those magazines, and he always got, in addition to the local paper, one of the big-city papers.

Birkner: Typically Philadelphia?

Leader: *Philadelphia Record* for years, because he was a Democrat, and that was a Democratic paper. After church every Sunday, we would stop at the newsstand and get the *Philadelphia Record*. Every Sunday after church he'd pick up the *Record*, so we had a good newspaper to follow Philadelphia sports.

Birkner: To what extent did this rub off on you as a young fellow? Did you pick up those papers and magazines and read them, too?

Leader: To some extent, but not as much as you might think. We did look at them. We loved the *National Geographic*, for example, and of course all the Curtis Publishing Company magazines—the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Country Gentleman*, *Collier's*, *Ladies' Home Journal*.

Birkner: You really had quite a library of magazines?

Leader: *Good Housekeeping*, too. We looked at all of those. I used to read some of the stories. They had the "Scattergood Baines" stories.

Birkner: Clarence Budington Kelland wrote those stories. He was an arch-conservative who was a Republican National Committeeman from Arizona for many years, and a close friend of Herbert Hoover. He wrote these "Scattergood Baines" stories and other serials for the *Post* and *American Magazine*, among others, for years and years; they were very popular.

Leader: We'd read some of that, and I'd look at farm journals; I'd look at the poultry magazines. My father advertised his baby chicks in

several of those poultry magazines. *The Pennsylvania Farmer* made my father a "Master Farmer" at some point. They named one or two every year, and he was one of them. They'd write a big biographical article on the recipient, and show some pictures of their operation. So yes, we were very magazine-oriented. Dad had a nice little library, too, of his own.

Birkner: Most of us are influenced in some way or other by one or both of our parents. How would you describe the respective influences on you of your father and mother?

Leader: They were complementary. Dad gave us the intellectual curiosity, and Mother gave us the work ethic. Mother had about a third-grade education. She had a brother who became a country schoolteacher—he was a country schoolteacher all of his life. But they didn't believe in educating girls. So mother came home from school and had to milk cows, and after supper she had to go to the tobacco shed and strip tobacco, and she knew nothing but hard work from the time she was a little girl. Mother supervised us when we were packing eggs, for example; she'd get two or three of us out there packing eggs, and she'd pack eggs. That wasn't just now and then: that was certain days every week [that] we had to do that. And she'd lead the troops. So I think I got my work ethic from her; I don't think I'd be working at age 88 if it weren't for my mother. She really felt that your work is your worth, and at least subconsciously I think we got that from her. And then Dad had this intellectual curiosity. He wanted to know everything about everything. He would have made a great college professor.

Birkner: Were your parents compatible?

Leader: In their own way, they were. I don't think Dad and Mother ever communicated the way people should communicate in a really good marriage, because Mother had no interest in father's intellectual pursuits. However, she was like my father's right arm. She helped to pack eggs; she helped to take baby chicks out; she helped to set eggs on the trays to put in the incubator. She did all kinds of things. She had the family's garden, about two acres, and by the end of the summer, she had that ground cellar under our house filled with jarred goods, peaches, tomatoes, chow-chow—you name it. There was enough there to last all winter. Underneath the cellar steps, there was

a big bin. You could buy potatoes back in those days for one dollar a hundred, so we stopped raising our own. Dad said, "I can't pay for help to raise potatoes that sell for one dollar a hundred." So he sent our truck down into southern York County, [and] he'd get 800 pounds of potatoes and put them in that bin, and that lasted us all winter. They'd start to sprout in the spring, and we'd take the big sprouts off of them.

Birkner: Did your mother do the cooking for all these people in your household?

Leader: She preferred the outside work; she generally had a girl to help her in the house. She'd teach those girls to cook, [and] she did the finishing. Principally, she'd finish the vegetables with butter and salt and pepper and sugar. She'd overcook them, but they were delicious. I still like my vegetables that way; I still won't eat the steamed vegetables if I don't have to. My daughter has to. I know steamed vegetables are better for us, but I don't want to change now. If I can live on overcooked vegetables this long, I'll make it another few years.

Birkner: Did you eat desserts at meals as a common practice?

Leader: Mother made jelly, and once or twice a week she baked six pies. Three pies were sufficient for a meal. So we had pies, [and] we had cake—she baked cakes. She frequently opened up something like a half-gallon jar of peaches. We'd have peaches, and she'd serve that as a dessert. Didn't do much in those days about Jell-O or puddings; [it was] mostly pie, cake, and fruit for dessert.

Glatfelter: You said she had "a girl"; that was someone's daughter?

Leader: Country girl. Yes. Dad and Mother would get in the car, and they'd go down into southern York County—they knew people down there. A lot of our male employees came from southern York County. Big families down there where the boys grew up and parents couldn't support them on the farm, so they would maybe send Peter at 18 to take a job with us. They probably worked for their fathers for nothing when they were in grade school. A lot of young men came from down there. Several of them started with my father when they were 17 or 18, and worked for my Dad until they were 60 or 70. The girls came from those same families. It wasn't unusual for us to have

a brother and a sister working for us at the same time. On a chicken farm, you had lots of flies. I can still see my mother coming in the house to finish the meal. One of the first things she would do was [she'd] pull the blinds down, get the fly sprayer, and spray the flies, then she'd put them all together in a dustpan and put them in the coal stove to burn. Then she'd manage to finish the meal, and we'd go in and eat a meal without flies. One or two flies in a restaurant can drive me absolutely out of my mind. I can't stand having flies when I eat. I definitely got that from my mother.

Birkner: Just a quick question about the meal itself. You have siblings, [so] I assume that lots of people sat around the table together. You ate you said at 5:30. Was it a pell-mell meal? Did you just race through your food and then all [go] your separate ways, or did you actually have general conversation around the table?

Leader: We went to the table as a family. My father always said grace, except at breakfast; we weren't all there at the same time for breakfast. And there was discussion, yes. There was a lot of political discussion; this was in the Depression. People either loved Roosevelt or they hated him.

Birkner: I assume your family was a Roosevelt family?

Leader: Our family was a Roosevelt family. My mother and father thought Roosevelt was wonderful. We'd have meat, generally, for the noon meal four or five times a week. The butcher came on Wednesday. We had no refrigerator, so mother would get meat for Wednesday and Thursday, and Dad went and picked up the groceries in York on Saturday, so we had meat for Saturday and Sunday. But we ate a lot of eggs. When you're packing eggs, some of them are cracked; we ate a lot of those cracked eggs. For breakfast every morning there were oatmeal and eggs, and some of those farmhands ate a pretty hearty breakfast, because some of them had to go out and start taking care of the chickens at five o'clock. In the early days, we didn't have anything to keep the water from freezing, so we'd dump the water at night and go out early in the morning to give the chickens water. You have to give chickens water, since they're eating that dry feed; they have to moisten that dry feed to swallow it. So the men made their first round very early.

Birkner: Let's discuss your churchgoing aspect of life. You mentioned that you played some ball on Sunday afternoon. Your mother was not so sure that was a good thing to do, but [your] dad let you do it. I take it that going to church on Sunday morning was a regular part of life growing up. Would that be a fair statement?

Leader: Yes. I think [our] grandparents on both sides went to church every Sunday, and in some cases held official positions. My parents went to church every Sunday; we went to Sunday school every Sunday. I had lots and lots of medals that said "perfect attendance" for Sunday school.

Birkner: What was the name of the church?

Leader: We went with my grandparents to Sunday school. We went to St. Luke's Lutheran Church in York.

Birkner: In the city?

Leader: Yes. My Grandfather Leader and my grandmother belonged to that church. We'd go in with them, and my mother and father would come into church later, for the main service. Then we would join them for Sunday school, and we'd go along with our parents for the main service and come home with them. But we went to Sunday school with my grandfather who lived in Leader Heights, and my grandmother and grandfather were devoted to the adult Sunday school at St. Luke's. We had a wonderful superintendent by the name of Dr. Franklin Menges, who has some Gettysburg College connections. In fact he got his Ph.D., I think, and he also taught chemistry at Gettysburg College. *[Note: Menges, Pennsylvania College Class of 1886, received a Ph.D. in 1888 and a Sc.D. in 1927.]* Then he bought himself a farm just west of York, and [the] Western Maryland railroad ran through it. It had large deposits of calcium carbonate and magnesium carbonate.

Glatfelter: That's light metal, isn't it?

Leader: Yes. He farmed that farm until he wanted to retire, and then he sold it to the J. E. Baker Company for a million dollars. I asked him, "Why didn't you sell a long time ago?" He said, "I don't want to live out there when they're tearing up my farm." He loved his farm. Then he moved to Washington to be with his daughter, who had a career down [there].

Glatfelter: When did your family go from Salem in Jacobus to St. Luke's? Weren't your parents in Salem first?

Leader: Yes, they were in Salem. They got a pastor out there by the name of Rev. [Ferdinand] Hesse. I think it was my father who couldn't see any good in the man. I think one Sunday he preached a Mother's Day sermon in which he held up President Warren Harding's wife as the example of what a great mother ought to be; my father must have known too much about the Hardings to accept that. That and other things made my father decide he couldn't go to that church anymore. My grandmother and grandfather were already going to St. Luke's, so my parents transferred over to St. Luke's Lutheran as well.

Birkner: Would you describe the religious tone in your household [as] minimal, mild, or substantial? How important was Bible reading in the scheme of things?

Leader: My father read the Bible every night and went to church every Sunday, and Sunday afternoon he would listen to the great preacher from New York City on the radio. Great scholarly, philosophical, wonderful man.

Birkner: Harry Emerson Fosdick.

Leader: Harry Emerson Fosdick. That was his favorite minister on the radio, and he'd listen to him most every Sunday afternoon.

Birkner: I would call that more than minimal; I would call that pretty substantial.

Leader: Yes. Dad was on the church council at St. Luke's for almost all the years I can remember as a boy growing up. My Grandfather Leader was the Sunday school superintendent at that church, on the Old Baltimore Pike just north of Hometown.

Glatfelter: At Hometown.

Leader: He was superintendent of that Sunday school. My Grandfather Boyer—I don't know if he held a title or not, but he was a very active churchman. His son became superintendent of the Sunday school at the Lutheran Church in Jacobus for many years, and my mother and her brother both sang in the church choir. My grandfather played the tuba in the country band. I'm not sure if he ever

sang in the church choir, but he could sing those bass notes. I sat beside him at my grandmother's funeral; with the tears rolling down his cheeks, he was singing "The Old Rugged Cross" from his heart. This man had a very deep, deep religious spirit. So on both sides they were very much church-oriented people. My Grandfather Boyer was Lutheran, but Grandma Boyer was Reformed, and now UCC [United Church of Christ], and they were very active. They went every Sunday. They just wouldn't miss a service.

Birkner: I'm guessing that this wasn't an issue that was questioned in your household. It was just part of the fabric of your life growing up?

Leader: No, there was no question about country people's faith. I would say most of our neighbors went to church every Sunday as well. In that part of rural Pennsylvania, it was almost understood that you would go to church Sunday morning. The farmers got up and milked all their cows and then went in and washed up and dressed up and went to church and then came home after church. And later in the day, they would milk the cows another time.

Birkner: That's a window into a different era: today, of course, churchgoing even among people who claim membership in churches is not very high. Your father was not able to get a college education, although, as you said, he was a lifelong learner. Was it taken for granted that the boys in the Leader household would go to college?

Leader: We knew that from the day we could understand. My father always said there was a college in our future. My father was going to see that his children had the opportunities. There were seven of us, and six of us took advantage of that. My seventh brother dropped out of high school, because he didn't like school very much for some reason, and Dad helped him buy a farm. Yes, we knew college was in our future, no doubt about that.

Birkner: You had an older brother? Was he the first to go off to college?

Leader: No, my oldest sister was the first to go to college—she went to West Chester. In our family, we believed in educating girls.

Birkner: You were ahead of your time, really.

Leader: In our family, all of my sisters went to college.

Birkner: This was an equal opportunity?

Leader: Oh, yes. Dad was not a chauvinist. He knew women should have a fair chance, and he frowned [on] the fact that the Pennsylvania Dutch had this attitude that girls shouldn't go to college, because they were just going to get married anyhow. He didn't approve of that. He thought that was pretty unenlightened thinking.

Birkner: In those days, career opportunities for women were pretty minimal, so her opportunity to go to West Chester was probably for her to become a schoolteacher, right?

Leader: The bulk of the girls in those days became either elementary schoolteachers or nurses. Many times, girls who couldn't afford to go to college became nurses, because back in those days, the hospitals didn't charge any tuition. I think they might have provided those girls with their room and board, and those girls worked many, many hours while they were taking their training to earn that.

Birkner: By happenstance, about two years ago I interviewed a woman who was living in Gettysburg. She was originally from my neck of the woods in North Jersey, and [she] fit your description exactly. She had no money, but wanted to do something with her life. They took her to Frank Hague's Hospital in Jersey City, New Jersey, and she got her nursing training, as you suggest, under those auspices, and had to work a lot as part of the deal. She became a nurse in World War II, which is how I came to meet and interview her. Now, what about your brother? When would he get to go to college, the older brother?

Leader: He didn't go. He only got the farm.

Birkner: He got the farm.

Leader: He got the farm. He dropped out of high school in his junior year; he just didn't like school at all. I think he had the misfortune to have a pretty inadequate country schoolteacher during his formative period. Paul certainly had the ability to go to college if he had been more inclined toward the academic field, but he wasn't so inclined. He got married and bought that farm. He worked with my father for a number of years, but then he went off on his own and became a turkey breeder. He had a hatchery, and sold poults and so forth.

Birkner: When your turn comes, how does Gettysburg College get into the picture?

Leader: Very simple. I had a professor at York Collegiate Institute who said I should go to Swarthmore. That's where I wanted to go. My father said, "No, we're Lutherans. You've got to go to Gettysburg." So I went to Gettysburg. He was paying for it. Back in those days, tuition at Gettysburg was $400 a year. I know my father kept a record. He had three of us in college at the same time a few years later. He had a son in Swarthmore—my younger brother got what I wanted—and he had a son in Penn State. But my brother at Swarthmore had a $700 scholarship, and we were each spending around $1,100 or $1,200 a year. When I was governor, and they'd tell me how many taxpayers' dollars we should give to Penn State, I thought, "How come we should subsidize Penn State when these other schools educated me and my other brother for about the same money?" I feel that most of [our] higher education institutions are *not* very well-managed, from a business standpoint. I think they're much better at the academics. What do you say, Charles?

Glatfelter: Room for improvement; hell yes, room for improvement. They're not well-managed. That might be related to the fact that in the past they haven't had very much to manage.

Leader: That might be true. On the other hand, I think the worst thing that ever happened to our higher education system was tenure. I voted for tenure in the public schools, and that was the worst mistake I ever made. I don't think any of us are so good at what we do that we deserve tenure. I don't know about the Pope; I guess he deserves it, I don't know. I don't want to put my judgment up against [that of] the cardinals, but I don't think anybody deserves total security. I think total security destroys more initiative than any other single factor, and I'm very much opposed to total security. I'm opposed to lifetime appointments. I'm opposed to somebody staying in a position after they're no longer productive and creative and focused and motivated.

Birkner: We certainly could have a long discussion of this. As a tenured faculty member, I am in many ways sympathetic to your point. I've seen the world, and having life experience beyond the nonacademic world, I know the importance of productivity and stay-

ing on your toes. But there are also the issues of political interference. In Pennsylvania and elsewhere, people who have different views from the establishment can be unjustly treated, and that's where tenure can be valuable. You also have to recognize the injustices that you can have with or without a tenure system.

Leader: Let me finish that part, if I may. It's been said for a long time by people who seem to know that the military is always prepared for the *last* war. Higher education, many times, is prepared perfectly for the last century not for the next one. I could give you illustrations on that, but I don't want to spend the time on it here.

Birkner: It would be a good conversation for us to have, but really we want to get your views now.

Leader: Unfortunately, let me take medicine as an example. Medicine is really an art, in part, and yet we're trying to make scientists out of all of our doctors. We should have two courses to travel—one for doctors who are going to practice on me and you, and one for the doctors who are going to do the research. We try to combine them into one. We try to make scientists out of all of them, which means that some of them aren't very good scientists and many of them are not very good practitioners. They don't know how to relate to human beings.

Birkner: I think that's very true. Your dad tells you that Gettysburg is going to be in your future, and you are a dutiful son, so—

Leader: He's going to pay for it.

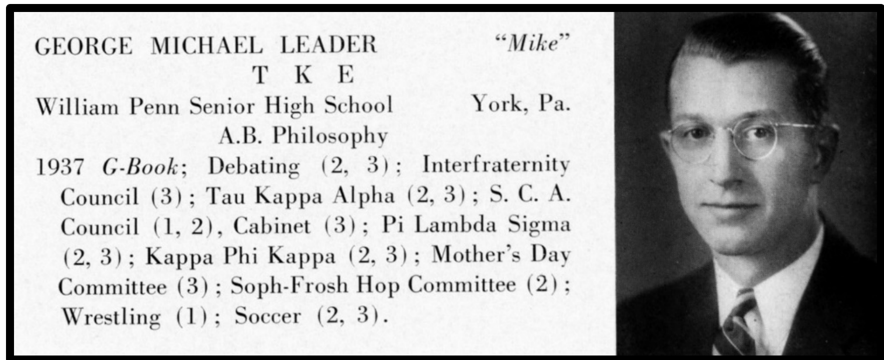
Birkner: Tell us about your first visit to the Gettysburg campus and what you thought, if you can remember that.

Leader: I can't remember, but I remember the $100 or $200 charge in Old Dorm [Pennsylvania Hall] and McKnight [Hall]. I got a roommate in McKnight for my freshman year. We had some hell-raisers in McKnight at that time; I remember one time, they lighted a wastebasket and dumped it in through my transom. We didn't burn the building down. Did it burn down later?

Glatfelter: No, McKnight is still there. It's now Foreign Languages.

Leader: Oh, it's a classroom building. Anyhow, Gettysburg at that time had just taken over the Gettysburg Academy, which I guess had

failed financially, and had converted it into a girls' dormitory. I was in the first class, class of '39, that had girls on the campus, and they had a fair number of sophomore and junior and senior girls who hadn't come in as freshman. So we had our first exposure to girls in a number of years. I don't know when they discontinued coed education; they had it some years back, I think. I was already dating the woman who became my wife at that time, so I wasn't overly enthusiastic about having girls on campus. But I thought they added a dimension.


GEORGE MICHAEL LEADER "*Mike*"
T K E
William Penn Senior High School York, Pa.
A.B. Philosophy
1937 *G-Book*; Debating (2, 3); Interfraternity Council (3); Tau Kappa Alpha (2, 3); S. C. A. Council (1, 2), Cabinet (3); Pi Lambda Sigma (2, 3); Kappa Phi Kappa (2, 3); Mother's Day Committee (3); Soph-Frosh Hop Committee (2); Wrestling (1); Soccer (2, 3).

From the Gettysburg College Spectrum*, 1939.*

Birkner: You must surely, within a couple of weeks of coming to Gettysburg, have been exposed to Henry W. A. Hanson, the president of the institution. What was your impression of Henry W. A. Hanson?

Leader: Dr. Hanson had a son in my class—Bob. He's a retired lawyer in Harrisburg, I think, at this point. *[Note: Robert D. Hanson passed away only four months after this interview, at the age of 89.]* Dean [Wilbur] Tilberg had a son in my class. I'm not sure whether Bob was on the debate squad, but Tilberg's son was. Bob might have been, I don't remember for sure; perhaps he was. I got to see Dr. Hanson once or twice, and it was always through friendship with Bob; I got to see Dean Tilberg once or twice, and it was all because of being a debate partner with his son, Cedric Tilberg.

Birkner: What I'm asking relates to required chapel. At least once a week, Henry Hanson was the speaker. How did you find his little homilies? What were they to you as a young man?

Leader: Dr. Hanson was a dramatic speaker. He really dramatized whatever subject he chose. I don't think you want to hear that kind of lecture over and over, because it wears thin; he would have been better someplace where he didn't have to be exposed so often. I think a couple of shots of Dr. Hanson would have been good. I don't think he was really appreciated. One of the things that took me years to understand was [that], when he tipped his hat to students, male students as well as female, what he was trying to do was teach us that we should be tipping our hat to him. He called us "Gettysburg College bluebloods."

Birkner: He actually used that phrase?

Leader: I think so. Somebody did, and I think it was Hanson. We weren't bluebloods at all. We were a bunch of hicks. We didn't have a lot of rich people. We had a few, but mostly we just had run-of-the-mill guys right off the farm and the back regions of small towns, like me. He was trying to get us polished up, and it may have had some good effect. I don't know.

Birkner: Two particular phrases are associated with Henry Hanson and these chapel speeches, and of course he was president for many years, so I don't know when he inaugurated them and how often he kept saying them. But I want to see if you are familiar with [them]. One was "the three no's," and the other was, "If you touch a Gettysburg man, you've touched a gentleman." I've also heard the words, "You've touched a Christian gentleman." I'm curious if you can shed any light on those phrases and Dr. Hanson.

Leader: He had his influence on me, and on that student body, trying to make us better people [and] better Christians. But a young professor taught a course that was supposed to help you develop a philosophy of life; he later became president of the Seminary.

Glatfelter: Orientation—Don Heiges.

Leader: I think that Don Heiges touched the hearts and the souls of more students than anybody else on the campus. He was a remarkable guy. He had a lovely wife. They lived on the campus, and I think

they came closer to what the spirit of Gettysburg College was trying to achieve than probably anybody else at that time. They were rare gems.

Birkner: Can you say anything further about how it was when he touched you? What was it that he could do in that connection?

Leader: He did this orientation program, and he required of us that we write a paper, an extensive paper, on our philosophy of life. Since education is supposed to teach you how to think, I believe he did more to teach us about how to think. Now the environment [at the college] was very staid and conservative, and I'm not saying [Heiges] was a liberal; I don't know what his political philosophy was. But he really tried to make Christians out of us at a time in life when most young people are going through serious doubts. That Orientation course was one of the courses from my 111 credits in three years at Gettysburg, but that was one of the courses they didn't let me transfer to the University of Pennsylvania.

Birkner: Yet you're saying it was a valuable experience for you?

Leader: Yes, it was. It was good, very good. One got a good exposure.

Glatfelter: I don't want to interrupt and go into detail here, but I can second everything that [you have] said about that course. I would simply add that [Heiges] was interested in our becoming mature Christians, not infant Christians.

Leader: That's a good way to put it. Yes, he was very good. He later became president of the Seminary.

Glatfelter: Oh, indeed he did.

Leader: Dr. Hanson probably saved Gettysburg College financially. A wonderful minister in York—with a big heart, anyway—[named] Dr. [Christian] Weber had made a commitment to building a new library, 60 or 70 years ago, for [the] college. They had the "W's" already on the doorknobs. Unfortunately, the time came to ante up the money, and the poor fellow didn't have it. He was a great preacher—he was a supply pastor in our church for about a year—the kind of minister that had tears rolling down the ladies' cheeks. Dr. Hanson, I think, came in about that time, [and] had to bail the college out from a very bad situation. He must have gone to the Glatfelters in

Spring Grove. Unfortunately, my mother came from the poor Glatfelter side, and I think Charles did too.

Glatfelter: Yes.

Leader: Anyhow, he got the Glatfelters to come in and bail them out on that, and I think they came up with some additional money to revamp Glatfelter Hall. At that time, Glatfelter Hall got to be known by that name; I think it was simply the main building [Recitation Hall] or something before that.

Glatfelter: It was Glatfelter Hall from after 1929. Completely redone. *[Note: According to Dr. Glatfelter's* A Salutary Influence: Gettysburg College, 1832-1985*, the formal name-change occurred in 1912.]*

Leader: Anyhow, Dr. Hanson got the Glatfelters to redo the classroom settings and pay off the library. So the Glatfelters, thanks to Dr. Hanson, were able to combine their efforts and their resources, and save that college from total financial collapse.

Birkner: Charlie, you've written about this subject in [your] book on the history of the college. What would lead a Lutheran pastor to have the kind of resources to pledge to build the college library?

Glatfelter: If you looked at that man's career, it was not mostly as a parish pastor; he was an influential leader in church administration. I'm not sure he had ever had as much money as he thought. I believe he thought he had enough to fully justify naming that library the Weber Library.

Birkner: He thought he had that?

Leader: He had it in the stock market, or someplace where it evaporated?

Glatfelter: Remember, this is happening right after the stock market crashed.

Leader: I bet he had it in stock.

Birkner: He was going to name it for his wife or mother, right?

Leader: I don't remember.

Birkner: It was going to be the Emma Weber Library. This is such a shock to Henry Hanson. It has to be, because, as you say, they put

everything but the W's on the doorknobs. They've got the invitations printed up [and] the dedication prepared for the place.

Leader: I think Weber was a nice man of the best intentions, and I don't think he deliberately would have put himself in such an embarrassing situation. I have a feeling it was probably one of the disasters in the stock market. I remember Dr. G. Elmer Krout, whose sister was married to my uncle, Harry Boyer. I think he always wanted my father to go into the stock market, but my father never did. And I think Dr. Krout lost everything in the market crash.

Birkner: Your theory about Mr. Weber is probably as plausible as any. You don't imagine he would have been a con man?

Leader: No, I think Charlie's right. I think the man thought [he had], and maybe did have, the resources. A lot of people had a lot of stock. My attorney general, Herb Cohen, was a millionaire in 1929, and he was 29 years old. I said, "Herb, how can you be so smart? And where did you get the capital?" He said, "Anybody could get capital. You could close your eyes and put a pencil down on the stock page and buy that stock. It all went up. They all went up."

Birkner: But what went up came down.

Leader: I'm probably the one person who hates to see the stock market go up unduly, because I figure the bigger the balloon gets, the bigger the burst is going to be when it breaks.

Birkner: Well, that happened in 1987, and it happened in 1991.

Leader: That was small compared to 1929. But it was there, yes, you're right. And we blow it up now. Oddly enough, we run up the interest rates now two or three percentage points, 200 or 300 basis points, and the stock market is still sustaining itself about where it was. It's probably too high now. And certainly having the Chinese holding one-third of our government bonds is the biggest risk. It is the biggest balloon that we need to worry about busting, because the Chinese are growing very fast, and they may need their own capital for their own growth. If they decide they don't want to hold our bonds, where are we going to sell that debt?

Birkner: That's a fair question.

Leader: Our whole country is in debt. The federal government is broke, the state governments are broke, the local governments are broke, the people have so much credit debt, and they're borrowing 125 percent on their homes. I'm a liberal Democrat, but I'm not stupid.

Birkner: Charlie provided me with a series of articles about you that were written at the time you were elected governor of Pennsylvania, and one of the articles focused on your years at Gettysburg College. Basically, the author of this article concluded that you were reserved and unpolitical, [that you] weren't active or influential in the college, et cetera. Then I looked at Charlie's photocopies from the yearbooks, and I noticed that you were involved in practically every major organization on the campus. There's an incongruity between the way the newspaper reporter described you and what I noticed as a historian. I would say this guy Leader was a doer.

Leader: A leader.

Birkner: A leader.

Leader: I lost five elections for presidents of organizations during the last year I was in Gettysburg. I was well enough recognized to get [nominated] by somebody. I wasn't a total idiot, but I couldn't get the votes to be elected to anything. As far as I know, outside of Dean Tilberg, there were only three Democrats on the college campus when I was there: Henry Boehner from New Jersey; I think a Jewish student from New York [Nathan Sklar]; and myself. One day I cut my education class, for a good reason. I was not in the habit of cutting classes.

Birkner: Was that Frank Kramer's class?

Leader: Dr. Kramer's class, yes. Dr. Kramer, if he were alive today, probably would be an out-of-the-closet homosexual, [though] he did get married in his later years. He was a nice guy, and he was bright. I cut his class one time, [and] I'm sure I had a good reason, because I didn't make a practice of cutting classes. I came back in the next class and he said, "George, we talked about you in your absence." He wanted to get back to me personally; he wanted to do the manly thing, which he did. And I said, "Well, that's nice." He said, "The students here think you're a radical." Using my best defense, I said,

"Yes, I am." I like to get to the root of things, that's true; smart-assed young college student, right? Anyhow, it really shook me: on that campus, at that time, I was a New Deal Democrat. I was in such a small minority that I stuck out as a radical. If I had gone to Swarthmore College at that time, I probably would have been in the mainstream. Gettysburg has come a long way since that time, and I'm glad you have a very balanced population. I know I would be very comfortable there today; I probably wouldn't have lost five elections for the presidency of the various organizations of which I was a part.

Birkner: Let me go back to the business of the activities. It does say something about your personality that you didn't just go tourist class through your three years at Gettysburg. You were in the significant organizations, whether it was debating or fraternity life.

Leader: The Student Christian Association.

Birkner: Right.

Leader: That was one of the elections I lost, and I lost to a very good person, and that one I can remember; that fellow was a friend of mine. I think probably Professor Heiges had me nominated. I don't think he was a liberal Democrat, [but] I think he realized I was motivated by human concern—concern for the human condition.

Birkner: Some of the things you were involved with [were] the View Book, debating, Inter-Fraternity Council, Tau Kappa Alpha, Student Council, Cabinet one year, Phi Lambda Sigma, Kappa Phi Kappa, Mother's Day Committee, Frosh Hop Committee, wrestling, [and] soccer. That's a person who is fully engaged on campus, it seems to me. So I thought it was very odd that you would be called reserved, as in shy, by the person who wrote this article.

Leader: I was getting over my shyness by the time I got to Gettysburg. I think York Collegiate Institute did marvelous things for me. It established my self-confidence.

Birkner: I take it from what you've just said that part of the reason you went off to Penn is that it was politically an uncomfortable environment at Gettysburg College for you.

Leader: I don't know; subconsciously, that may have been a factor. What happened [was that] I started as a chemistry major, [and] I switched to become a philosophy major. All the other students in the

philosophy courses were pre-ministerial, and I wasn't pre-ministerial. I got down to my junior year, and I was having a hard time deciding how I [was] going to meet the requirements for a major. I had such a variety of coursework—economics, political science, history, mathematics. I was pretty well ready for choosing a major, which they did, in those days, about the junior year of college. I did it about the junior year of high school. I found out that I could go to school in education at Penn, and get into a five-year program and graduate as a social studies major, and pick up the additional courses I needed—another history course, and a few things like that; another sociology course. I could pick up the courses I needed to graduate with a baccalaureate degree down there as a social studies major, which is exactly what I did.

I should have stayed for the fifth year, which would have led to a master's degree in education. This I never did, because I wanted to get married. Mary Jane and I had been going together, by that time, [for] about five years, and I wanted to get married [and] have a home and a job on our farm, or as a schoolteacher. I should have gotten my master's and stayed at Penn another year. Several years later, when I went back for graduate work, I went to the School of Local and State Government; my interest had changed. I had the social studies background, which was good, and then I went to the School of Local and State Government, which at that time was a division of the Wharton School. I think it's part of the Liberal Arts School now.

Birkner: I think you're right. To back up a second on the Gettysburg experience: you said you gravitated out of chemistry toward philosophy. Was there anything about your experience in chemistry or philosophy that you can remember?

Leader: I had Dr. [Charles F.] Sanders. Remember Dr. Sanders? Dr. Sanders was an unusual guy, but he made learning interesting. I don't know how the pre-ministerial students felt about him, but I really liked what he had to say, and I thought it was important. I didn't know what I'd ever do with it; I was not enough of a scholar to ever get a Ph.D. in philosophy and teach at the college level. I don't think I had that kind of a mentality. Unfortunately, I have a weak memory for cold facts. I can take a dozen related things and remember them, if I can relate them. That's why I was such a bad language student—I had a terrible time with vocabulary. When I went to Gettysburg, I

had to take two more years of the language. I took German my freshman year, and it ruined my freshman year. I got a B and a C, and that's all I deserved. So I went to summer school the next summer, and went up to Dr. [Karl] Grimm's house, sat in his backyard with him for one summer, and got a B for the second year. From then on, I just loved going to college.

Birkner: Karl Grimm was still teaching?

Leader: He was head of the department at that time. I was the only student he had.

Birkner: Since I have no oral history recollections about Dr. Grimm, could you just say a word or two about his persona or anything about him that you remember?

Leader: I think he would have been a perfect actor in a play in a beer garden in Germany. He looked like a little German gentleman. Is that fair to say? He had a sweet personality.

Glatfelter: He may have retired in 1939, when [Dr. William K.] Sundermeyer came. If it wasn't '39, it was close to that. He was close to retirement when you were there.

Leader: Oh, yes, he was up in years.

Glatfelter: He may have lived as late as 1950. He was quite old when he died. He came to Gettysburg as a pre-ministerial student, and by the time he got into the Seminary, he found that he simply could not subscribe to Lutheran doctrine. So he became a college professor in German, and I think that was one of his better decisions.

Leader: He was a nice man. He was kind of a lovable character, wouldn't you say?

Glatfelter: I did not know him very well, but I remember him.

Leader: All I can say is he took a bumbling language student who never was very good at it, and he put up with me for six weeks or whatever it was, and my girlfriend said I was a terrible person spending time in Gettysburg rather than having dates with her. I hated every minute of the German, because I was so inept at it. I was just a bad language student.

Birkner: How did you gravitate to philosophy from chemistry?

Leader: Somehow I got a course with Dr. Sanders, Ethics or Logic or something like that, and at that time it was so fascinating I wanted more of it. That was maybe a kind of quick move on my part. I would tend to make a quick decision, and [with] quick decisions, you tend to make mistakes. But if I did make a mistake, the time was not wasted. A lot of times it's good to know what can't be done, and then you make better decisions the next time. I made a bad decision on philosophy, although I never regretted my exposure to Dr. Sanders.

How well did you know Sanders, Charlie?

Glatfelter: Not well at all, because he was retired by the time I got there. He was still alive; I knew he was around.

Leader: He was retired then. He knew the subject, and he made it interesting. I liked him. I think I was attracted to him. I have the philosophy that all the knowledge is in the library. The only thing a professor is being paid to do is to motivate you to learn it, and too many professors are totally lacking in that skill. So if I took a course where my first impressions of the course and of the professor were bad, I would go in and change courses. I did it on more than one occasion. I was looking for a professor that would turn me on, and Sanders was one who did.

Birkner: Did you have any others at Gettysburg who would be in that category? You [mentioned] Heiges.

Leader: [Those are] the only two that come to mind right now; there probably were others.

Birkner: How important to you was being in the social fraternity that you were in?

Leader: The social fraternity, in my opinion, is the biggest mistake any college student can make. There is entirely too much time wasted there. I was there during Prohibition, so no drinking, but in modern times, they have the keg parties. The fact that taxpayers are subsidizing students who go to Penn State, and that the Penn State students on that campus are supporting 150 bars, does not rest well with me.

Birkner: What about your own personal experience?

Leader: They're bringing high school girls and getting them drunk on beer, and then having sexual experiences. I think it's a disgrace for the school, and a disgrace for our society.

Birkner: I want to get *your* experience, though. Was it a good or bad experience for you to be in that fraternity?

Leader: Let me tell you my favorite story. I was on the Academics Committee at TKE. One day we were having a meeting right after lunch. The committee sat down, and the night before, some of the seniors had taken one of the freshmen down to a house of prostitution in York, and he had his first sexual experience.

Birkner: So much for "the three no's."

Leader: That was all the conversation at lunch that day. Some got satisfaction out of hearing about this young freshman's experience at the house of prostitution in York. I knew where it was, because we used to drive two blocks out of our way to pass it on the way back from baseball practice when I was in YCI—never went in. And I said, "It's very simple, gentlemen. When you get as much recognition for your academic achievements as you get for going to a house of prostitution in York, we will have no trouble excelling."

Birkner: That's a good story. I don't suspect that your friends were much moved by your observation.

Glatfelter: You had a course, and maybe more than one course, with Dr. [Robert] Fortenbaugh. Dr. Fortenbaugh was an important faculty member, and chairman of the History Department. What impressions do you have of the courses you had with him?

Leader: I remember him very well. I did have several courses with him. He would be on the campus and I would see him as a father figure. He was a fine Christian gentleman. He was, unfortunately, as politicians would say, lacking in charisma; I didn't especially enjoy his courses, because they lacked a motivational factor. I don't doubt he knew history. I think he worked hard in his profession, and I think he honed his skills, but he didn't have the personality to put the stuff across in the classroom. Or maybe it's because of the way we taught history. Over the years we got into the [habit] of teaching a lot of military history, and things of that type. When I went down to Penn, I had a Dr. Watts for World History. That man could light up the room. I had no trouble getting an A in his courses, because I was so excited about them. We were [studying] social and economic and political history, all the kinds of things that turned me on, and that was

the contrast I got from Dr. Watts. He had a firebrand personality, which Dr. Fortenbaugh did not. He was a sweet, kind Christian gentleman, and that simply didn't do it for me. There must have been a lot of other students that he reached more effectively.

Glatfelter: Across the street from him was Dr. [John] Zinn. Did you have Zinn?

Leader: I had Dr. Zinn in Chemistry.

Glatfelter: [How] would you characterize him?

Leader: He had the fire. I started out in chemistry, [so] I studied under him. He taught me Freshman Chemistry; that was a lecture-hall class. I think he had about 150 of us in his lecture hall. He would lecture, and he could keep you awake, pounding a big table in front of him. He pounded it and said, "The particles that make up this table are in motion." I never forgot that. He had a way of dramatizing things. I think Zinn was an A-number-1 science professor.

Glatfelter: That was the science you took. You didn't take biology or physics?

Leader: I took physics under Dr. [George R.] Miller. I was a good physics student. I had a good background in physics; I had no trouble with that course. He was a person who was probably taken too lightly by the students; he was too good a fellow for his own good, I think. But I think he was a pretty good teacher. I think he knew his subject. I think most people who studied under him were successful.

Birkner: I wanted to ask you a question about the circumstances of your transferring to Penn. Given that Gettysburg was a small college, and that you were an active person on campus, when you announced your decision that you would be going to Penn rather than graduating with your class at Gettysburg, did either Dean Tilberg or President Hanson reach out and say, "George, why are you doing [that]?"

Leader: I don't recall that they did, no. I think Gettysburg College was at a certain low at that time. Had anybody ever told me that [the] Gettysburg College of that era could [be] made into the Gettysburg College of this era, I would have said, "You've got to be completely nuts. They are so deeply set in their ways, and they are so conservative, and anybody who isn't a conservative would never get a job on the faculty there. They can't change!" I'm absolutely amazed, shocked

and amazed, that they have become what they are today. I think they are very much mainstream.

Glatfelter: Did anyone at the college know you were leaving, or did you make that decision during the summer?

Leader: I probably made that decision in the summer. I remember my father and my brother Henry and I got in the car and drove to an appointment with Dean Minnick at the School of Education at the U. of P., and we signed the papers right there. Dean [John H.] Minnick said, "What's this young fellow [Henry] going to do?" And my father said, "Oh, he's going to take a year at Mercersburg Academy. We think he's too young to start college. He's only 16." Dean Minnick said, "Well, why waste a year going there? Use that year for graduate work when he gets out." So I went out to a tele-phone booth, and I called the Swarthmore College dean of admissions, and Henry entered Swarthmore. He got a $700 scholarship. They had so much money out there, and they were generous.

Birkner: Was your dad satisfied with your decision to move over to Penn? Once you made that decision at the end of your junior year and explained your reasoning, your father could understand where you were going?

Leader: I really would have had a hard time figuring out how to have a major at Gettysburg at that point, even though I had 111 credits. I went to summer school and carried more than 15 credits seven or eight times over six semesters. I only needed nine [credits] to complete the junior year. They took six credits, or something of that nature, off at Penn—for Orientation and, I think, the Bible course.

Glatfelter: The Old and New Testament.

Leader: Yes. They took about six credits off, and I still had more than enough.

Birkner: You mentioned that this professor of world history you had at Penn was a firebrand, and got you excited about your studies. Did you have other good experiences academically during your time at Penn?

Leader: My sociology professor there was tops. He was picked up by the federal government as part of a professional exchange program and sent to one of the countries in Latin America for a year. Can't say

his name now. Yes, he was equally good. I had an education professor named Dr. Theodore Reller who was top-grade. I tried to get him to be Secretary of Education [in my administration]. May I take the time to tell you about how I found the Secretary of Education?

Birkner: Let's hold that off until you get to the point where you are elected governor. I want to come back to that because that will be a good story.

Leader: Dr. Reller was one of my education professors at Penn, [whom] I loved and found very interesting. He wound up at a university in California. I was looking for him to be my Secretary of Education. He was off-campus [then], studying the education systems of several countries in Europe.

Birkner: Did you ever have any of the notable historians in the Penn History Department when you were there, like Roy Franklin Nichols, or Conyers Read, or any of those people?

Leader: No, [just] that one course in world history.

Birkner: Read was a famous English historian who became president of the American Historical Association in the 1930s. He was also head of the movement to get America into the war in 1939 and 1940. He gave a very controversial speech at the America Historical Association, claiming that we needed to be patriots first and historians second.

Leader: He probably made a good case for that.

Birkner: So were you heading toward this bachelor's degree in social studies at Penn? Is that what you ultimately were going to do?

Leader: Yes.

Birkner: I assume since your family lived in York and you weren't going to commute from York, you were living either on campus or in the city in an apartment.

Leader: I was living in the dormitories.

Birkner: Did you make friends at Penn?

Leader: I knew a couple of fellows from York who were there. One person was Charlie Wolf. Charlie's father was a very big man and

young Charlie was, too. In fact, at one time he became chairman of the board of trustees at York College and a member of the board at Penn.

Glatfelter: Is this Wolf the lumber [family]?

Leader: Yes. They are very well-to-do now, and John Zimmerman married one of the Wolf girls. He has stepped aside now, and Tom Wolf, who is one of the family members, has taken over along with other members of the family.

Glatfelter: He was running for attorney general.

Leader: I did not know that. Was it in the paper down there? Anyhow, in Charlie Wolf I made a good friend. I made good friends with Al Giles, who came here later on to Pennsylvania. He was from Connecticut or Massachusetts. There were a lot of Jewish and Italian students in the dormitory. I made friends with some of them at that time, but I lost touch with them later on. I didn't make a lot of friends. When I could, I was dating Mary Jane. We were engaged, so I came home whenever I could. I didn't have a lot of time to socialize. When I was down there I really had to study.

Mary Jane Strickler and George Leader on a date, c. late 1930s.

Birkner: Do you want to characterize Penn at that time?

Leader: Thomas Gates was the president, and Gates was probably one of the big Republican leaders at that time. I understand he was president of Penn without salary—he was so wealthy, he didn't need it. So he would have been conservative. On the other hand, with a big university like that in a big city, you tend to get a cross-section of students and a cross-section of faculty. You never felt that, as [was] the case in Gettysburg at the time, if you weren't a conservative Republican you didn't get a job there. I always marveled that Dean Tilberg was there. Now of course he didn't flaunt his politics, but I think he might have been registered as a Democrat.

Glatfelter: I think you're right.

Leader: He was the only one that would have been. I don't know whether he was just a token Democrat or what.

Birkner: I was Charlie's student, and I have to say honestly I didn't have a clue what his political orientation was from his teaching. I just didn't know.

Leader: I tell you where it was a factor—Dr. [Rasmus] Saby's class in political science, and notably in the selection of textbooks. When I took Public Speaking, I had Dr. Cline.

Birkner: Thomas Cline?

Leader: Yes, a very, very talented man. A very distinguished-loo-ing man. He was the coach of the debate team. We were debating, and of course my liberal tendencies often came out in discussing a subject. He also taught Public Speaking, [and] when the time came for the final examination, it required a speech. I did a speech and Dr. Cline evaluated it. I wrote the speech on liberalism; I argued that Gettysburg College should be more liberal. I told my friends, "I'm either going to flunk it or get an A." I said, "Gettysburg College was [a Lutheran school], and Martin Luther was a liberal. Gettysburg College should reflect that kind of liberalism. What should they do? They should get more liberal professors and more liberal textbooks."

Birkner: You could hear a pin drop in class, probably.

Leader: I got the A. Then I went down to Penn. [I thought], "Gee, I'd like to take a little more public speaking." I had my eye on a political career at the time, so I took the course on persuasion, and I got on the debate team. There was a Dr. [Edgar L.] Potts who was coach of the debate team, and also taught persuasion. So I took the course on persuasion, and of course it dealt with how you should try to reach people on the emotional level. You know, most people make their decisions emotionally, and then they search the logical side of their brain to find the reasons to support the decision which is already made. I think that course in persuasion which I took at Penn had more to do with my political success than anything academically that I was ever exposed to.

Birkner: Why was that class influential? Did the teacher give you tips [on] how to hit the right chords?

Leader: No, but we had to do speeches, and we had to demonstrate how we would use the emotional appeal in our speeches. I did that. I assume he had a textbook; I don't remember. I don't remember how he approached it outside of his lectures. But he got across very clearly to us how important the emotional level was. I think a lot of times that's where we fail. Maybe you shouldn't do it at the academic level, but I think a lot of times professors fail to reach their audience[s]. I listened to something on television last night, can't remember who it was, or who said it, or what the program was—

Birkner: Was it one of the cable political talk shows?

Leader: Might have been. But what it said was [that], to put something across, you've got to be motivated. What's the emotional word that I'm searching for? That you can't make very much of a success of anything in life unless you have this passion for it. The point I'm making is [that] nobody makes a success emotionally of almost anything unless they have this passion for it. I have a picture in my bathroom—my wife won't let me put it anyplace else—[and] it's a painting that I bought. She scolded me. It shows a man in a desert riding on a skinny donkey. He's got a half-filled bottle of whiskey in his right hand, and his left [is] on the reins of the donkey. The guy is skinny. You see skinny feet, skinny fingers, and skinny body. I wrote a little poem: *"Pedro has no place to go / There isn't much he wants to know / He hasn't got a single goal / to challenge his immortal soul."*

Now, I do believe I had a passion for politics, and if my friends hadn't double-crossed me in Allegheny County, I would have been a United States senator. Don't know whether I would have liked being a senator, but I might have. At that time, Lyndon Johnson was calling the shots in the Senate, and I might have been as miserable as my friend Joe Clark was in the Senate. Lyndon called Joe in one day when he refused to go along on one of Johnson's favorite bills. [This is] when Johnson was the Democratic leader of the Senate, not when he was President Johnson. Joe refused to go along with him. [Johnson] said, "Joe, you're never going to get any place in the Senate that way." Then he said, "Now Joe, in case you don't understand me: you're a no-good son of a bitch, and you're never going to get anything." And Joe didn't get anything for Pennsylvania. Talk about pork barrel. Joe Clark was a friend of mine; I worked hard for him to get elected in '56.

Birkner: He was up against [James H.] Duff in '56.

Leader: Yes, Duff had the seat; he took it from Duff. Anyhow, Joe wasn't able to do anything because he would not become the servant, the tool, of Lyndon Johnson. That doesn't say that Lyndon Johnson didn't do some great things. He *did* some great things. But sometimes in the wrong way. There was a joke that Lyndon Johnson was one of three or four tyrants in politics in our time; the other two were [Richard] Nixon and Joe McCarthy.

Birkner: Perhaps. I wouldn't put Lyndon Johnson in a category with Nixon and McCarthy. You mentioned that when you graduated from Penn, you didn't follow through immediately on your inclination to take a double degree [there] because you wanted to get married. You went back to a family poultry breeding farm, and your dad gave you an office position. At that point in your life, I would imagine you were focusing on getting married. But were you thinking about your long-term future at all?

Leader: I was thinking very seriously about politics and government. I wasn't sure how I was going to get there: was I going in as a civil servant, or as an elected official? But I wanted to get into government. I was convinced, in those days, that governmental programs could save mankind, certainly in this country, perhaps even abroad. I was more convinced of the effectiveness of government in changing

people's lives than I may be now. I still think it's a tremendous factor in terms of strengthening America's middle class; I'm deeply concerned about the fact that the middle class is shrinking. We're getting more rich people and more poor people. The strength of our democracy, in my opinion, is the middle class. If you lose the middle class, you run the risk of losing everything.

Glatfelter: One reason given for the decline of the Roman Empire is the decline of the class in the middle.

Leader: America is on a dangerous road in that respect right now, and unless we get some different political philosophies into government at all levels, we need to be concerned.

Birkner: I follow you. So you were thinking about politics, but you're not necessarily in it. But your father at this point is in politics?

Leader: Yes. I started hauling voters to the polls when I was 19. By the time I was 21, I was a committeeman, and by the time I was about 25 or 26, I was secretary to the county Democratic Committee. You say my father was involved. Yes, we had to reform the Democratic Party because the Democratic County Chairman was also the tool of the Republican County leader. He would throw Democratic support to certain Republican candidates that the Republican Party really wanted, and that almost guaranteed their election. A man came along who wanted to clean this up—his name was Clayton Moul. He came to see my father, and my father said, "I don't want to get more deeply involved in politics. George will help you." I'd been out of college a couple of years and I was very much interested, so I went out and helped Clayton Moul get elected. As a matter of fact, I placed him in nomination as a member of the county committee. Mr. Moul said to my father, "Guy, I'd like you to be secretary of the county committee. Just kind of a recognition for services rendered." And Dad said, "I don't want [it]. Why don't you appoint George?"

That's how I became secretary of the county committee, and it wasn't too long after that [that] I left for the service; they gave me a leave of absence. I thought, "Well, that was a nice gesture, but they'll probably forget about it," [because] in three years I expected to [still] be in the navy.

George and Mary Jane Leader during World War II.

But when I came back, sure enough, Clayton Moul said, "Hey, you're back now. We're going to reinstate you as secretary of the county committee." And they did. This was a nice thing to do. Then, six months or a year later, Clayton said, "I don't want to be county chairman anymore. I'm too busy; I can't carry the load. Why don't you [take it]?" I said, "I don't want to be county chairman." But he had already talked to some of the powers that be—Herb Cohen, and my father, and others—and they all agreed I should be county chairman. So I took a job that I didn't really want.

Being county chairman is a good place to make enemies, and a hard place to make friends. But I took it, and I worked hard at it. In 1947, we elected all the county officials and all the city officials in York, except one—we lost the city treasurer. He was a very popular candidate and he beat the trend. We did it because I'd worked hard at registration. I'd gotten the party a good lead in registration in York County. That made it easier to elect Democrats. We ran a good ticket.

Birkner: There are a couple of questions that logically flow from this. I'm getting by implication that before '47 it was more typical for Republicans to win than it was for Democrats to win.

Leader: During the war, the Republicans took over almost everything in York County and York City. I think as Adlai Stevenson said, "Anybody can become a ward chairman—the sky's the limit." I think I'm an example. If you're willing to start at the bottom… We talked about one of our mutual friends in York a while ago. He wanted to run for lieutenant governor, [but] he's never held any political office, and he hasn't earned his spurs. Nobody wants to start at the bottom anymore.

Birkner: An example of that would be Bob Monahan, who always wanted to run for US Senate without having done much of anything at the lower level.

Leader: My brother Henry had a chance to become a common pleas court judge. Henry wanted to be an appellate court judge, and turned down the opportunity to become common pleas judge. If Henry had accepted [that] position, he would have almost certainly wound up on one of the appellate courts.

Birkner: He never did get there?

Leader: No.

Birkner: Let's go back for a second to Clayton Moul. Was he meant to be a candidate, or did he just want to build the Democratic Party in York?

Leader: He just wanted to build the party. He hated to see the party in the hands of someone who was abusing it by selling out candidates in various elections because he was taking dictates from the Republican leader.

Birkner: Can you tell us the name of that individual?

Leader: I think his name [was] Howard Rohrabaugh. He was rather closely affiliated with George Love, who was the Democratic State Committeeman, and George Love was very much affiliated with Sam Lewis, who later became lieutenant governor on the Republican ticket.

Birkner: One thing that struck me [was] the factionalism and back-stabbing that seemed to be going on in both political parties in the 1940s and early 1950s. It wasn't an entirely clear division between Democrats and Republicans; there were a lot of people in bed with each other across party lines. There was a lot of acrimony within each of the parties, and I don't know how someone like you, or anybody who just wants to do the public [any] good, can survive in it.

Glatfelter: Most of what you're talking about comes from those 1954 articles in the *York Dispatch*, isn't that right?

Birkner: Yes. I said to myself, "My goodness—it's a den of thieves, a viper's nest." It's hard to keep the players straight without a score-card. Who would you trust in this system? There were enemies all over the place.

Leader: I remember sitting in the Senate one day and [seeing] Harvey Taylor, the Republican State leader, who was getting around $450,000 a year in insurance commissions—none of which he kept for himself, [though] he kept for himself the overrides in the profit-sharing—walk across to the Democratic side one day. He gave an envelope to Johnny Dent, the minority leader, [another] to Bill Lane, who was one of the Senate leaders, and [another] to John Holuska. Senator [Frank W.] Ruth, who was a Reformed minister, sat across from me. He [also] sat across from my father, so he sort of adopted me as a son when I came to the Senate; I would turn to him for advice and counsel. I said, "Senator, what's Harvey Taylor doing over there with those envelopes?" He said, "That's insurance money. Those fellows have taken it for years." That's $450,000 a year out of the till, some of which was also given to the Democrats to keep them sweet. Harvey Taylor was the broker of record, and controlled the insurance commission.

Birkner: What did he mean, "It's insurance money"?

Leader: The insurance commissions were for coverage on state property. When I took over as governor, we had about 1,600 individual policies on automobiles that were carrying about 35 percent commission. What I did [was bring] in Dr. [Stephen] Sweeney—and I'll tell you all about the School of Local and State Government when we get to that. Dr. Sweeney got a professor from Haverford College to help us, and we set up Clayton Moul as head broker for the same

salary we paid our cabinet officers. We took all the gravy out of the insurance business in Pennsylvania. Again, nothing that made you a lot of votes, but who cares—we saved the taxpayers a couple million dollars a year on insurance. Beyond that, we replaced individual bonding with blanket bonding for everybody in government, for less than the cost of the individual bonds, and we didn't have to send in the corrections every month.

Birkner: I'm still not clear on why commissions on insurance go into the hands of Harvey Taylor.

Leader: Harvey was the Republican state chairman. That's why it went there. It was purely political patronage.

Birkner: But who is paying and who is receiving the commissions?

Leader: Harvey Taylor, a broker of record, gave them to license the brokers across the state who had political connections.

Glatfelter: They sold the insurance and Harvey Taylor got access to the commissions.

Leader: He *directed* the commissions. We ran a study on it. USF&G in Baltimore had a lot of the policies. They didn't even have it listed under his name; they had it listed under a number. But we sent our people from the insurance department to check it, [and] we found that Harvey was getting something in excess of $100,000 a year in profit-sharing.

Birkner: Is that where the phrase "honest graft" would apply?

Leader: I went to my attorney general and said, "Did he break the law?" And he said, "I don't know, but I'm willing to try it in court." This was the time of Joe McCarthy, and I was allergic to character assassination. I shouldn't have been. I would have done better if I'd been a little less ethical. Tom McBride of Philadelphia, a top-notch lawyer, was my attorney general, and he was an honorable man. I should have understood that when a man of his caliber says, "I'm willing to try the case," he feels the case has merit. He wanted to try it. I didn't see it that way; I was thinking I didn't want to be another Joe McCarthy. So I didn't let him go forward.

Birkner: Earlier, you said a man named [William] Lentz ran against Harvey Taylor and beat him for the Senate?

Leader: Yes, for the Senate.

Glatfelter: Which was quite a blow.

Leader: That fellow Lentz had a lot of guts and a lot going against him. Taylor was obviously the most powerful Republican politician in the state of Pennsylvania.

Birkner: Very interesting. Your father was elected to the State Senate during the war years. What motivated him to run?

Leader: We had from York County a blind senator by the name of [Henry E.] Lanius. He probably was able to get through, for that day and age, the best legislation for the blind that any state had. We weren't very advanced in those days about dealing with the handicapped. He got elected, [and] died in office. He was a Democrat, and the Democratic political leaders came to my dad and said, "We'd like you to take over for Senator Lanius," and Dad accepted. I think he automatically got the nomination. I don't remember what the process was.

Glatfelter: I don't remember either. He might have been appointed.

Leader: He may have been appointed, yes. So his first term was only three years, then he ran and was elected in 1948. [That year], Harry Truman carried York County by 2,500 votes. Dad went to bed thinking he had lost his election. I was in the courthouse and stayed up all night. At daybreak the next day I was out to his home. He came to the window and I said, "Dad, you were elected." I think Dad won by 800 or 900 votes, but Harry Truman carried York County by 2,500 votes, to everybody's surprise. He was so unpopular that we had a lot of political meetings where his name was hardly mentioned. Now, the vice-presidential nominee at that time was Alben Barkley. They wanted to run Alben Barkley for president, but some of the powers that be—mainly the two labor leaders, CIO's Sidney Hillman and AF of L's William Green—said he was too old. Barkley outlived both of them. And he was a beloved man. He would have been a strong candidate for the presidency, because everybody loved Alben Barkley.

Birkner: Was Alben Barkley an Everett Dirksen type [of] character in terms of his principles—which is to say, he had principles, but one of [them] was flexibility?

Leader: He was liberal, and I think probably he supported most of the New Deal measures.

Birkner: Your dad squeezed in for reelection in part because Truman did better than expected in York County.

Leader: It certainly didn't hurt him, the fact that Truman got a decent vote.

Birkner: There's something I want to ask about your dad's approach to politics. You said something to me off the tape about not wanting to be a single- or two-issue governor—that you felt you were elected to do the job on all fronts. Was your father of the same opinion, or did he want to pick one thing to work on in the Senate?

The governor's father, Guy Alvin Leader (1887-1978).

Leader: Dad was a farmer at heart, as well as [a man] in politics. Back in those days, agriculture was a pretty important part of the economy. I guess about 50 percent of our people were in agriculture; today it's about 10 or 12 percent. The thing that I think pleased Dad the most was when they were going to do something for the School of Agriculture at Penn State. Dad had friends up there—Pete Commando, Dutch Kauffman, and Dean Marble—who helped him in his breeding program. Bill Henning helped with the cattle end of it. Dad particularly admired James Duff; he thought Duff was a good, tough, strong man. And Duff had made some good bold moves, I think; he made a very strong move in mental health. But it didn't get very far, to be honest with you. By the time I got there, we still had 42,000 people in mental hospitals, and the mental hospitals were very poorly staffed, and they had almost no professionals on the staff. We were just warehousing patients. But Duff had some good ideas. Duff could have been a great governor. I find it hard to accept that, with his personality and his strength in the legislative body, he wasn't the great governor I think he had the potential to be. Dad liked him, though he said he was too progressive for many members of his own caucus. That's a possibility; that's one explanation. I can't think of another.

Birkner: But there are powerful Republican conservatives in Pennsylvania who don't want to support a progressive regime, right? They probably supported Duff only because he was a Republican.

Leader: Maybe Duff couldn't stray too far from his base because he wanted to go to the US Senate. He *did* go to the Senate, and he hated it, for the same reason that I didn't enjoy the legislative body. This is not sour grapes, I don't think—anyway, I'm far enough away from it to be objective—but I don't think I would have enjoyed the United States Senate one little bit. I'd be running back and forth between the Senate and Pennsylvania. Right now, down there, the congressmen and the senators aren't really the power. There are two powers in Washington: the one is thousands and thousands of lobbyists who have millions and millions of dollars, and the other are the staffs of those Congress people. And the lobbyists inform the staff. Let's say you're an expert on the drug program. I'm a senator and you're my number-one assistant on drugs. They come to you and they sell you a bill of goods, and your assistant really makes the decision. They tell

me [that] now, the lobbyists are not just lobbying the bills; the lobbyists are *writing* the bills.

Birkner: I gather that's true.

Leader: So really, a senator is not a senator. A congressman is not a congressman. The top aides are making the decisions. I sit and watch those committee hearings, and I see two people sitting behind the official. He's reading the statement, and I look over his shoulder to see the guy who wrote the paper. [Office-holders are] fundraisers and PR experts now, and we reelect 97 percent of them. They can't *all* be that good. Now, I don't know how it was 50 years ago when I would have been there. It was better, but not that much better, I think.

Glatfelter: When your father and you were in the Pennsylvania State Senate, was there much that you as an individual senator could do?

Leader: We sent our bills in, and I even had a Republican cosponsor some of them, [but] none ever came out of committee. My father said, "George, if you run for the Senate, you can probably stay there for the rest of your life. But if you run for governor, you're probably going to lose, and you'll probably be out of politics." I said, "Dad, I'm either going to be something or nothing. I don't want to sit in the Senate for another four years."

Birkner: You're too much of a minority.

Leader: Yes. Even when something really critical came up—like the preferred appropriations, which took a two-thirds vote, and they had to have some Democratic votes—we always had some Democrats who sold out. I would say those four years in the Senate were a good education. I would have had a hard time being governor without those years in the Senate. I would have had a hard time being governor without three years in navy supply, where everything we did required from 13 to 17 copies.

That was before computers. That's how I really learned the difference between line and staff. I knew how to put an organization together. I had drawn a lot of organizational charts in the navy; I had no trouble with organizational charts. I had 52 people reporting to me as governor. The people with State and Local Government said, "How about a super-cabinet?" I said, "I can't get enough people capable of running *one* department; how am I going to get people capable

of running *eight* departments?" First they said to me, "George, what makes you think *you're* so smart that you can run 52?" But I did—and I never had one of my department heads come to see me when I hadn't done my homework. I knew what they had on their minds before they came to see me in almost every case.

Birkner: Let's return to the politics of the 1940s. Your Dad is in the Senate. Did being in the Senate affect his business life, or did he delegate that to your brother?

Leader: The Senate only met every two years, and he was back and forth. He didn't stay overnight—he went up for a session and came home afterward. He kept right on running his business, although my two brothers were a great help. I had a brother, Guy Jr., in the business; he did most of the nitty-gritty. And my father always attributed [his] long success to the fact that he had 15 or 20, or sometimes as [many] as 24, of those wonderful Pennsylvania Dutch people working for him. These young men came in right off the farm. Some of them stayed with him until they retired. He said, "My success I always attributed to this fantastic workforce I had with me." I never heard my father chastise a man; I never heard him curse in the presence of any of those men. I never knew him, when they had a problem, that he didn't help them solve that problem, whether [it] was a new automobile or a pregnant wife. He had about 12 or 15 houses, all with modern bathrooms and automatic heat. And he didn't wait for them to cut the grass—the lawn was cut every week. When the housewife said, "I need new wallpaper for my kitchen," she got it. [Dad] said, "If you keep the wives happy, you keep the men happy."

He was a kindly man. One of his men was doing some carpentry work, and cut a piece about an eighth of an inch short, and [then] recut it. Somebody came over and said, "Nobody would ever notice that. Why did you bother?" He said, "The *boss* would." They called my father "the boss," [but] my father treated them like sons—better than sons.

Birkner: What was your father's chief strength, as a political figure and as a senator?

Leader: My father wasn't a great senator, and neither was I. We both functioned in the minority. Dad's greatest achievement was helping

Penn State's School of Agriculture get some good things; that was his chief claim to fame.

Birkner: You're saying it really mattered whether you were in the majority or minority, in terms of your ability to have a successful term in the State Senate.

Leader: There was no way anybody in the minority could have a successful term. That's why I wanted out.

Birkner: Did you take your father's seat, or did you take your own? Or did it make a difference?

Leader: Dad gave me a letter one day. He said, "George, that letter has an announcement that I will not run for reelection. You can give it to the newspapers whenever you want to. So what do you want?" "I don't think I want to run." I went to the powers that be, and they said, "That's foolish." I said, "I want to go to the Senate someday, but I don't want to go this way"—I didn't want it to look as if my father had handed me the seat.

I can't deny the fact that [my] father helped me to get the secretaryship and [then] the chairmanship of the county committee, and I certainly wouldn't have had as good a shot in the [State] Senate if all these things had not happened. And the truth of the matter is that in 1948 as county chairman, I worked a whole lot harder for his election than he did. So I didn't feel guilty about it. But it wasn't quite the way I wanted to do it.

THE SECOND INTERVIEW

October 6, 2006

Birkner: A number of oral histories you've done, and comments you've made to us, have suggested that you were not entirely comfortable as a state senator, and didn't feel you could get very much done, because you were in the minority. I wanted to pick up on this thread because, as Charles Glatfelter reminded me, you were an advocate for certain positions as state senator which, even if they were not winning positions, were consequential positions.

Leader: Of course, it takes two-thirds of the members of the State Senate to approve preferred appropriations, and I was always surprised that some of my Democratic friends were willing to support some of those appropriations even though they may not have been greatly needed or very appropriate. The Republican Party was so powerful in those days that they could afford to give some of the goodies—you understand what I mean by "goodies" [perquisites]—to some of the Democrats, particularly the Democratic leaders in the Senate. That made the difference. I was reading in yesterday's paper that Congressman [John] Murtha has a lot of goodies to give out. He's a very powerful person, and was chairman of the committee to elect Congresswoman [Nancy] Pelosi as the minority leader. If you have those goodies in sufficient quantity, you can do some fantastic things. In the minority, we not only weren't very effective in doing positive things, but there were times when we sort of sold out to the opposition, and did some things, perhaps, a little more of a negative nature.

I put about 40 bills in. None of them ever came out of committee. I introduced several bills to enhance the possibility that we would put fluoride in the water. Some people have big problems. I had been getting teeth filled from the time I was a little child. We went to the dentist once a year, and I always had to get three fillings, which I

hated. I particularly hated taking the Novocain, which indeed did hurt at the time. I wanted to protect children from that if I could, and I had, I think, two or three bills in on having the state provide the material to water companies to put fluoride in the water. On at least one of those bills, Sen. [Albert R.] Pechan, a Republican senator who was a dentist, cosponsored it; even *that* one did not come out of committee. Anyhow, it was pretty hard to feel that you were getting anything accomplished. When a controversial bill came along, like the loyalty oath bill, more Democrats voted for it than against it. I think there were only seven or eight of us who were against it, and I was the only one that stood up and spoke. Probably the most brilliant man in the Senate was Max Rosenfeld, from Philadelphia. When Secretary [Harry] Shapiro was a state senator, he had given Max a senatorial scholarship. Max was brilliant. He came from a poor Jewish family in Philadelphia, and when he came out of law school with a magnificent record, he became a partner to Harry Shapiro, and then was elected to the Senate. Max, I think, could without exaggeration be classified as a pure genius. I said, "Max, what are you going to do?" He said, "I don't dare speak up on this. I've got to protect my position with my constituency." I said, "Well, it's too bad that someone of your brilliant intellect has to bow to that kind of pressure." And he said, "The more capability you have, the more it hurts."

Glatfelter: Just for those who are not initiated into the world of the early 1950s, why don't you explain, briefly, why someone felt the need to have a loyalty oath, and what the context was, and how you were reacting to that?

Leader: It was more or less the same philosophy and psychology that was running during the Joe McCarthy investigations in Washington, when we were witch-hunting for Communists. Actually, the Pechan bill—the loyalty oath bill—I think was really there at the behest of Judge Michael Musmanno. He was in the Senate chamber during all the time that it was being discussed, debated, and voted upon. Pechan was a very big man in the various veterans' organizations.

Glatfelter: He was a dentist, wasn't he?

Leader: Yes. He was a dentist.

Glatfelter: The same fellow who was on your side on the fluoride issue was the loyalty oath senator.

Leader: He was the sponsor of it, yes. During the discussions of it, Michael Musmanno was in the Senate chamber, and Michael was working very hard to look like an anti-Communist—I think partly [because], in fact, he probably *was* a card-carrying Communist in his younger days, and he wanted to make sure everybody knew now that he was a good, solid American citizen, and not put himself in a position where he would be suspect.

Glatfelter: Are you saying he was on the bench at this point and walking over to the Senate chamber, or that he had been a judge and was now a senator?

Leader: He was probably on the common pleas bench in Allegheny County at that time.

Birkner: But he's in Harrisburg, trying to cajole senators to vote for this bill?

Leader: Yes, I think you could probably say that, although he never approached me. He somehow or other must have known that I was against it; he made speeches on my behalf when I ran for governor. But Michael Musmanno was an opportunist. He was totally pragmatic, and I think Michael could have done whatever seemed to his purposes at any given time. Anyhow, when the Pechan bill came up, there were only eight Democrats out of the 18 who stood up in opposition to it, yet anyone who had a modicum of liberalism in his soul would have had to be against it. I said, "I have no objection to taking an oath. I took an oath when I went in the United States Navy; I took an oath when I came into the Senate. I have no problems with that. The person you hurt is some Quaker schoolteacher who won't take an oath. It isn't in her. Because of her religious belief, [she] will not take an oath." I said, "William Penn came to this country to accept a grant of land from George the Second. *He* was a Quaker!" My ancestors came to Pennsylvania on his invitation, and he didn't just invite the Quakers to come. He made two or three trips across the rough Atlantic Ocean, in a small sailing ship, to go to Germany, and the cantons in Switzerland, and invite my ancestors to come here. I wouldn't be here today if it weren't for the Quakers, and the principal Quaker, as far as Pennsylvania is concerned, was William

Penn. I said, "I would feel I was betraying the progeny of my host in this Commonwealth if I did anything of this nature that was offensive to the Quakers."

Glatfelter: How did your speech go over?

Leader: It went over all right. It was totally ignored, [but] except for that, it went over fine.

Birkner: Did you take any flak back in your county for what you said opposing a popular bill?

Leader: No, I don't think so. I don't think most people cared. The state university presidents, including Harold Stassen, Milton Eisenhower, my cousin, Millard Gladfelter—who was the fourth one? [The] University of Pittsburgh president [Rufus H. Fitzgerald]—all came in, and they met with the leadership of the Republican Party, and they got a special dispensation that they could police their own faculties. They didn't pay any attention to the fact that every other college and university in Pennsylvania might have been offended by it. They just took care of themselves, with a very selfish and small-minded approach. I never quite felt that those people stood up to be counted at a time when idealism might have been a good thing for Pennsylvania and for America. I was very disappointed.

Glatfelter: That bill became law. Was it forgotten then?

Leader: A couple of Quaker schoolteachers lost their jobs, I think. Not many. It didn't amount to much. Wasn't needed. It was offensive to the sensitivities of people like myself, people who cared about civil liberties. But it was passed to curry the favor of the various veterans' organizations, all of which I belonged to back in those days. I think I belonged to four of them.

Birkner: Politicians are worried that if they cast a vote a certain way today, it might affect their political aspirations tomorrow, because people look back at what they did. To what extent were you already looking ahead to a potential race for state office? It does strike me that this was not a politically advantageous move on your part, to speak out, even if you spoke on principle, against the loyalty oath. The popular thing would [have been] to support the loyalty oath.

Leader: It was potentially dangerous. But I wasn't thinking of state office at that time very strongly. I had thought at one time about

possibly running for lieutenant governor, but I was drafted to run for state treasurer. I had no desire to be state treasurer, but they needed somebody to run in 1952. In June of 1952, Genevieve Blatt and I were drafted to run for the fiscal offices.

Birkner: 1952 was not a propitious year for Democrats.

Leader: No. It was probably about the worst year [I] can think of, because in 1952, Dwight Eisenhower was the Republican candidate for the presidency. One of the Roosevelt boys tried to draft Dwight Eisenhower on the Democratic ticket back in 1948, and Ike, I guess, turned him down. If he was ever approached on it directly, I don't know. Ike was non-partisan. I think Governor Duff was amongst the politicians that went over to see Eisenhower when he was in charge of NATO. He was put there by Harry Truman, and if he had any obligation politically, it would have been to Truman and the Democratic Party. So Jim Duff and a couple of other Republican leaders went over and talked Ike into running on the Republican ticket.

Birkner: You're absolutely right. Before we get into the race for treasurer, I want to back up to your observation about the Senate. You've already given us an interesting word picture of the way things worked. But who was the power in the State Senate on the Republican side when you were a junior senator? Was it Harvey Taylor?

Leader: Harvey Taylor, absolutely and without a doubt, owned the State Senate of Pennsylvania during the years that he was there. He was always president *pro tempore*, and he had access to a lot of money to be utilized in the campaigns of Republican candidates. He was getting around $450,000 a year of state insurance commissions, which he distributed as political patronage, particularly to the candidates or supporters of candidates for the State Senate. He also owned some of the House members, because he had enough money to put some money over there, to sponsor some of the House members. He wasn't as strong in the House as he was in the Senate, but he had enough influence in the House to get his way. He also had the money from the Pennsylvania railroad and he had the money from the Pews, and those were probably the two biggest contributors to the Republican Party when Harvey was president *pro tempore* in the Senate. He was also the Republican state chairman. Harvey owned the Senate. Anything he wanted, he could get.

At one time, I had the temerity to put together a "must" list—the list of legislation that I wanted to get through before we could adjourn—and I sat down with the Republican leaders, including Harvey Taylor, and the Democratic leaders. [It was] a 9 ½-by 11 ½-by nine-inch sheet of paper, typewritten, and there were about 20 things on it, I believe, and the Republicans, under Harvey's tutelage, agreed to virtually nothing. Harvey was totally pragmatic. Harvey had no agenda when I was there except to not let me look too good, because if I looked too good, I might go to the United States Senate, or even come back four years later and run for the governorship. Harvey's only agenda was to make life as difficult as possible for Democrats. The miracle, one of them, when I was governor [was] that about 80 percent of my major bills got through [and] became law. Even now, I can't believe that we could have been that successful, under the circumstances. The good Lord must have smiled on us. *[laughter]*

Birkner: Did you have a good relationship with Taylor, or were you, as a junior Democrat with liberal ideas, on the fringes of his consciousness?

Leader: It's like this. Harvey Taylor liked my father when he was in the Senate, personally, and they were nearly the same age. They were on a friendly basis. So when I came into the Senate, Harvey was not hostile to me. I threatened to call him up one time for a favor, but I didn't do it. If I had called Harvey Taylor for a favor of some sort, in the days when they had a Republican governor, he probably would have tried to get that favor for me, because that was his nature. But it's that old story—get a favor, owe a favor—and I didn't want to put myself in that position with him.

Birkner: In terms of your recent mention of being drafted for the treasurer's race in '52, would you summarize your attitude in this context of favors given and owed? I'm guessing you figure that even if you can't win, you're doing something for the party, and maybe they owe you a favor down the line.

Leader: My wife lay on our bed and sobbed for half a day when I decided to go for state treasurer. I was truly drafted; I certainly never would have volunteered for it. I said to her at that time, not knowing how it would work out, "Mary Jane, when you're in politics, you sometimes have to do what other people want you to do, if you want

them to do something for you at a later time." I did know *that* much. I understood the scheme of things in the political arena. I did know that.

Birkner: That's an ongoing feature of politics. Just recently, in the [2007] mayoral race in New York, you may recall there was a dead heat between two Democratic challengers to Mayor [Michael] Bloomberg. The young congressman [Anthony Weiner], who'd done better than expected, dropped out [and] didn't pose his challenge because he wanted to get a chit for whenever he wanted to run again. [Ferdinand] Ferrer, who got the nomination, got crushed in that election. So it cost nothing to that young congressman to do the right thing for his party.

Glatfelter: You did pretty well in that election [of 1952]. If you look at the number of votes that you and that [Weldon] Heyburn had, you came fairly close. There must have been Republicans who voted for you, or Republicans who stayed at home.

Leader: Yes. Eisenhower carried the state by 600,000 votes, which was a war-hero vote, and he had earned that. Heyburn, against whom I ran, carried the state by about 120,000 votes. He might have gotten most of those 120,000 votes by the coattail effect of being on the ticket with Eisenhower. We didn't understand it at the time, but if you looked at the state carefully, the Democratic Party, although behind by 907,000 at registration, was not that far behind in the minds and hearts and loyalties of the voting citizens of the state.

Birkner: They were registered Republicans just by habit? Is that what you're saying?

Leader: I think a lot of our counties were so strongly Republican that people wanted to be in the majority party because they got benefits, the most common one being low assessments on their real estate. I know when we moved to Montgomery County, the Republican committeeman candidate came over and said, "I see you registered Democrat. That's a big mistake in this county. You'll have a high assessment." And I *did* have a high assessment. I had to have a lawyer go in and get an adjustment to make my assessment more or less in line with my neighbors. That's the sort of thing that local government did. The Republicans were very strong, and it was well-established [that] if you wanted to get anything politically in those

counties, you had to be a Republican. So people registered Republican, even though in their hearts they would have normally been Democrats.

Birkner: There were a lot of voters up for grabs for an active and attractive candidate, which you would have been in 1952.

Leader: Yes. I think even in the years after that, it became quite apparent that Democrats could win in this state, and many times have since then.

Birkner: What does it mean to run for treasurer statewide? How much were you out on the campaign trail? How often were you in places like Erie, or Scranton, or wherever you might have to go?

Leader: The state committee had no money, but they did furnish us with a sound truck and a driver. We were able to travel with that sound truck and driver all over the state. There was a woman who was on Richardson Dilworth's staff in Philadelphia by the name of Natalie Sachs, and Natalie had set up a lot of the agenda for us. We did a lot of speaking, probably to smaller audiences. But we got to meet the Democratic leaders in almost every county in the state, and we got to make speeches in almost every county in the state. When the time came to get the support of the policy committee for the governorship, those people apparently came away with a favorable impression of me and of Genevieve [Blatt] as candidates, and they supported us. A lot of members of the policy committee were county chairmen, state and city committeemen, etc. The local Democratic leaders in almost every county got to know us in that ['52] campaign for the fiscal offices, and we both got their support immediately in '54. We were good campaigners. I would say that with no false modesty: we were good. We could get up on the top of that sound truck and we could talk to an audience. After you've done it 15 or 20 or 30 or 40 times, you get pretty good at it.

Glatfelter: This is important, isn't it?

Leader: It is. You're right.

Birkner: You knew [York County] extremely well; you went out and campaigned statewide in '52. What were you learning about Pennsylvania by going to these different places?

Leader: That's where we learned the commonwealth. Every one of those people that we sat down with educated us—every county chairmane, very county leader educated us. By the time we went back in '54, we knew our lessons. We knew what was important in the anthracite region; we knew what was important in the southwest, in the Democratic [belt]. We knew who the leaders were—good, bad, or indifferent—and when we stood up to talk in Pittsburgh or Philadelphia, we pretty well knew that, too. That campaign of '52 for the fiscal offices was an education for Genevieve Blatt and myself, and we used that education to go back out in '54 and benefit by it. We campaigned all summer [in '54]; the Republicans didn't start till Labor Day. By Labor Day, I think an honest poll would have shown we were ahead in '54, all because of what we had learned in '52. It was like going to school.

Birkner: It set the table for '54.

Leader: Set the table. Exactly.

Birkner: You came out of the '52 race defeated but unbowed, having had a good experience and gotten some good visibility. What people also appreciated [was that] that you had made this race in a tough year, and that you had done very creditably. You had not lost anything by losing. Is that fair to say?

Leader: If we hadn't run the race in '52, it's highly unlikely that I'd have been selected as a candidate in '54. It was the [seeds we planted] in '52 that came to fruition in '54.

Birkner: Would you say a word about Genevieve Blatt, something about her character and your relationship with her in politics?

Leader: Genevieve Blatt was Mayor David Lawrence's girl in Harrisburg. Mayor Lawrence always—during the years when he was in power—controlled the state and city, pretty much, in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, and Genevieve Blatt was on his team out there. On a lesser scale, her principal job out there had been a Civil Service Commission position. But she was his person. [At this time,] the state committee had no money, so Dave Lawrence sponsored Genevieve to be secretary of the state committee, and she carried the title "secretary" but was, in effect, also the chair of the state committee. The other chairpersons who were named were all figureheads, so they

very rarely worked at it. She worked at it 365 days a year. She had a good mind, she had a good touch, and really, [for] what there was of a Democratic Party at the state level, she was it. To show you how weak we were, in 1952 when we ran for the fiscal offices, Guy Bard came off the bench to run for United States senator, and Genevieve Blatt and I were on the ticket, and Judge [Harry M.] Montgomery was on for one of the appellate courts. The total budget that year for the state committee was $60,000. The Democratic Party, as a power, was virtually nonexistent.

Glatfelter: I found Genevieve Blatt to be a very intelligent person—a hard worker, as you say, and also [easy to like].

Leader: She made friends. She offended nobody, and she just did a fine job there with very little to work with. The treasurer of the Democratic Party at that time was [Warren Mickel], and Warren went around the state, collecting $100 here and $100 there. My father was on his list, and he always gave him $100 once or twice a year or more. He had, maybe, some dozens of places where he could go [where] he could get that $100. That kept the state committee in existence, [although] not as an effective force.

Birkner: You refer to the "fiscal offices." Was Genevieve Blatt running for auditor general?

Leader: Yes. She ran for auditor general, and I ran for state treasurer.

Birkner: Would you say a word about Guy Bard, and whether you were disappointed [that] he wasn't elected?

Leader: *Time* magazine put [Republican] Senator [Edward] Martin's picture on the cover, and the gist of the article was that he was the most useless senator in the United States Senate. I used to hold that magazine up. What can you say about what a great treasurer I was going to be? Am I going to write the checks better than somebody else? *[laughter]* I spent most of that campaign speaking on behalf of Guy Bard, and I used to hold that picture of *Time* magazine up and say, "Isn't it a disgrace that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania should have a man that *Time* magazine—which is essentially a Republican magazine—calls the most worthless United States senator, and here's Guy Bard, who had enough motivation to [resign] one of the appellate courts in order to run." Guy Bard was a first-class gentle-

man from Lancaster County, a man of great moral standing, and he would have been an asset to us in the Senate and an asset to America. I started right out, from the beginning, speaking on his behalf, and almost everything I said in my speeches was about Guy Bard and his qualifications over those of the most worthless senator sitting in the Senate of the United States. I think that went over because I wasn't speaking for myself. I think people liked that.

Birkner: Surely that gave you a little more credibility—you were a good team player.

Leader: Also, I was from York County; he was [from] Lancaster County. In terms of people in the state, we were almost neighbors. Now, I had never met Guy Bard until I campaigned. But he was a fine gentleman.

Birkner: You were defeated in '52, but unbowed by it. You still were in the State Senate, so you hadn't really lost your living. But is it fair to say that you were not planning on making a career in the State Senate?

Leader: Yes. I burned out in the State Senate very fast. Being in the minority is not pleasant in a legislative body, because almost nothing you do is productive. I'm a great believer in results; people who don't get results don't stand very high on my admiration scale. And I was getting nothing [accomplished]. I would say, honestly, [that] neither my father nor I was a great senator. If we'd been a majority, we would have been pretty good. But in the minority, we weren't good.

Birkner: You wouldn't have been one of the Democratic congressmen going to John Murtha's part of the cloakroom to provide those extra votes to pass the Republican bills for the goodies.

Leader: No. But if I had been elected to the United States Senate in 1958, by 1959 I would have been going to Lyndon Johnson for those goodies.

Birkner: You would have done it then?

Leader: I don't know if I would have or not. Joe Clark didn't do it, and Lyndon Johnson put him on the shelf and said he was a no-good son of a bitch [who was] never going to get anything. So you had two choices. You could be an idealist like Joe Clark, and write a book on the Senate [*The Senate Establishment*, 1963]. I never read that book; I

should have, because I'm sure it showed what a powerhouse Lyndon Johnson was. *[laughter]* Or I would have been a servant to Lyndon Johnson. I always have felt—and I loved Hubert Humphrey—that being vice president to Lyndon Johnson stressed Hubert Humphrey to the point that he got cancer and died. I'm not a doctor, and I may be all wrong. But it would take a pretty strong argument from a doctor to talk me out of it.

Birkner: What you just said is central to the dilemma of activism in politics, whether you're talking Louisiana in 1930, Pennsylvania in 1950, or the United States Senate. It's that tension between the person who wants to do good on the basis of his principles, and the person who is willing to qualify those principles by playing the game. How do you as an individual make those decisions about which side you take? As you say, Joe Clark was not an effective senator; did he do more good by sticking to his principles? Yet by playing ball with Lyndon Johnson, at what point do you fall into [his] version of morality? It's not a simple issue.

Leader: I cannot sit here today and tell you which position I would have taken. I cannot tell you. I'm curious about [it] myself: what would I have done under the circumstances?

Birkner: You can't know what the specific issue was, or what you [would have] wanted to get accomplished in that particular circumstance—which is why it has to be a hypothetical.

Glatfelter: While you were talking, I was wondering what I would have done.

Birkner: Well, really, all of us. Because you want to do good, and you want to accomplish something and be recognized for it. But what price are you willing to pay? I just watched *All the King's Men*, the latest version, with Sean Penn as Willie Stark, and that's what Jack Burden has to decide when he works for Willie Stark. He's a former journalist and would-be historian with principles, [and] he wants to do right. But he also feels that Willie Stark can do some good for the people of Louisiana. So he compromises his principles to work for a megalomaniac. It's a tough call.

Charlie and I could talk [about] this with you at great length, but we want to segue back into 1953. At what point do you believe you have a shot at the Democratic nomination for governor in 1954?

Leader: Dave Lawrence called Herb Cohen. They had worked together in the [George Howard] Earle administration [1934-38]. Lawrence had been Secretary of the Commonwealth, and Cohen had been majority leader in the House of Representatives, [and was] later minority leader for the House. He said, "George Leader ought to think about running for governor." Well, that's all I had to have—get Dave Lawrence's support, and that would be a big lift. I suspect he talked with Genevieve Blatt, and the two of them agreed that I would be a good candidate. Now it wasn't easy, because there were at least two other candidates in the field—and I'm trying to think who they were.

Birkner: Wasn't one of them [William] McClelland, from Pittsburgh?

Leader: Well, of course—the coroner in Pittsburgh. The coroner in Pittsburgh had been an All-American on the football team at the University of Pittsburgh. Great player. So he went to dental school [and] became a dentist, and being a dentist didn't particularly qualify him to be a coroner. But back in those days, you didn't have to be a doctor to be a coroner, and he had some medical training, which was more than some coroners had.

McClelland was so popular that hardly anybody ran against him. Nobody could beat him. He was coroner for years, and he was a popular man, and he would have gotten it. If he had been nominated for governor, he would have gotten a tremendous vote in that end of the state. How he would have fared in the rest of the state, I don't know; but I know in that whole end of the state, he would have run well, because he ran very well against me. I only carried one county out there, in the primary, against him.

And the other one? It might have been [Bill Lane], but I'm not sure who the other one was that ran. Anyhow, I'm talking about [a time] when we had to get the backing of the policy committee. I was able to get about two-thirds of the policy committee to vote for me, and that gave me the endorsement of the state committee. Now, that was great in many ways, because it did get some of the party machinery behind me. But the man who later became the chairman of the Liquor Control Board, my executive assistant, Dave Randall, [was] a close buddy [of the other candidate]. He said he was the most over-rewarded man in the history of politics in Pennsylvania, because

[he only] raised $2,500. *[laughter]* He was a lawyer in Harrisburg; he's in the notes that I reviewed last night.

Birkner: You got support from the state committee, but you had to win the primary.

Leader: The state committee supported me in the primary, but I still only carried the eastern half of the state. My opponent, Dr. McClelland, carried the western half.

Birkner: But you prevailed.

Leader: I prevailed by, I think, about 60,000 votes. It was a light vote, a very light vote.

Birkner: The country was in a fairly contented mood in '54; that doesn't tend to bring out a heavy protest vote. I realize there was a mini-recession in '54, and that probably helped you in that election. But in general, would it be fair to say that you were not expected to win that election, that it was supposed to be a Republican seat?

Leader: When I was selected to run, Joe Clark said, "I'm sorry to hear that. George is a nice fellow, and I hate to see him become the sacrificial lamb." I think that was the attitude of a lot of the people "in the know," so to speak, at that time.

Birkner: Did you have to give up your State Senate seat to run for governor?

Leader: I couldn't run for my Senate seat, which was up in that year. My father said to me, "George, if you continue to run for the Senate, you can probably stay [there] for the rest of your life if you want to. If you run for governor, you'll probably lose, and someone else will have taken your Senate seat, and you'll be out of politics." I said, "Dad, I'm tired of the Senate. I'm either going to be something or nothing." I'd already learned that, being in the minority in the Senate —in a legislative body anywhere. When the Republicans took power in Congress in '95, after they had been in the minority for 40 years, they got kind of obstreperous and wild. It was like, "We have the prize now, and we're going to make use of it!" They waited 40 years to have anything to say! What would you expect? All that pent-up energy; all that pent-up frustration; all that pent-up disappointment.

Birkner: All the slights they had endured over many years.

Leader: It's not healthy for one side of a legislative body to be in the minority too long.

Birkner: Look at New York. Republicans have controlled the State Senate and the Democrats have controlled the state House, in a lock, for at least a generation. So these people are stuck in place, in both houses—in one case the Democrats, in one case the Republicans—in the minority, with no hope of any change. It isn't healthy. But what you're telling us is that you were willing to be out of office, because that was not a satisfying job for you. Tell us about your race for governor [in '54]. Something is happening. You're out there; you're talking to people; you have your issues. What's going on when you're running for governor? What are you noticing?

Leader: Compared to 1952, our response in terms of audiences was far better. When we went into a town, we didn't just meet with the leaders and speak at the Democratic dinners; we called on the newspapers and talked to the editorial staffs. We went to the radio stations and almost invariably got a free interview. We went to the television station, if they had one, and almost invariably got a free interview. By the time we left a town, we had not only talked to maybe a hundred people—which would have been a nice audience in some of those towns—but we had been to the newspaper and gotten on the front page. We had 800 weekly newspapers in Pennsylvania in those days; I would hate to estimate how many of those weekly newspapers we called on. A candidate for governor, in a small town with a weekly newspaper—

Birkner: It's a front-page story.

Leader: A front-page story. They would have us shaking hands with a local leader or something.

Birkner: Who is "us"?

Leader: Genevieve Blatt and myself.

Birkner: So it wasn't your lieutenant governor candidate [Roy Furman], it was Genevieve Blatt.

Leader: He was with us some of the time, too. But Genevieve and I were the team in '52, and we were basically the [team together] in '54.

Glatfelter: She was running for Internal Affairs?

Leader: Internal Affairs, yes. If we had had any sense, we would have run her as lieutenant governor. *Nobody* wanted to run for lieutenant governor. Roy Furman was the fifth one we asked to run, and he agreed; first four turned me down. Later, I used to meet the others that were offered the position, and they'd say, "We should have listened to you; we should have run with you. It would have been a better team." Roy was a nice fellow, but he was [from] the old school of politics.

Birkner: At what point do you start thinking, "We're going to win this damn thing"?

Leader: I'm the eternal optimist, and I never went into anything that I didn't expect to win. Even when I ran for state treasurer, I didn't go out there to lose. I have a very positive attitude on life. I have my setbacks, same as other people, and I'm still building, and I'm still growing, and I'm still trying to get better at what I do. I'm a great believer in growth in people. Growth in myself. I'm 88 years old; I would like to believe I'm still learning. I'm always surrounded by bright people, and most of my good ideas come from other people. Six weeks after I get them, I forget who gave them to me, and sometimes I embarrass myself by putting them forth as my own. I'm a learner, that's number one; number two, I'm an applier. The difference between me and most people is [that] when I learn something, I use it. I put it to work.

Birkner: "What good is philosophy except that it has some use?" said Benjamin Franklin. In a way, you're a Franklinian.

Leader: I guess I am. I'm glad to hear that, because I have a great respect for Ben Franklin.

Birkner: You were saying you were optimistic in general, and weren't worried too much about losing. Let's turn this on the flipside. You were running against a well-known lieutenant governor with a strong Republican machine. Tell us what your opponent's doing while you're out visiting all these little towns.

Leader: The Republicans more or less took off for the summer; they felt the campaign started about Labor Day. We felt—*I* felt—[that] after all, Democrats didn't have a track record since the '30s, but I wasn't in that campaign; I was in college when the Democrats were

important in state government. We didn't have a tradition in our party of what you do [to win]. Genevieve and I just went out and campaigned.

Birkner: Early.

Leader: Early. Right from the time we were nominated. We campaigned all summer. I was drinking a lot of iced tea, and I got to the point where I couldn't swallow very well. I sneaked into the Hanover hospital for a couple of days to see what was wrong with me, and in response to a doctor's question, I said, "Well, I'm probably drinking eight or ten glasses of iced tea a day." They said, "Stop that. That's too much caffeine." I stopped drinking the iced tea and went back [to] campaigning. I got out of the hospital that morning, and that afternoon I made a speech at the Carlisle Fair, and we kept right on going. That's the only setback I had there. I think I lost about two and a half days when I couldn't swallow.

Birkner: What was the basic argument that the Republicans would make, aside from [that] "the country is in good hands," and [that] "the Republicans will keep your taxes low"?

Leader: They said I was too young. Jim Duff—whom my father got along with very well when he was governor—had to come out, and [he] spoke against me. He said I'd be the "short pants" governor: I wasn't even old enough to wear long pants yet. They attacked me on my age, primarily.

Birkner: Inexperience, too?

Leader: Well, probably inexperience, too.

Birkner: Lloyd Wood, by contrast, had plenty of experience.

Leader: He did. One thing about Lloyd Wood: he was a very nice man. When he presided in the Senate, he was absolutely fair; he called on both sides. They had a room in the rear of the Senate called the "Rumpus Room," where people went to get food and drinks. I don't think there were any alcoholic beverages back there; I never saw any that I can recall. But Lloyd Wood was a nice man: can't say anything but that about him. If he had gone out there and worked real hard, he probably would have made a lot of friends. But they were used to the machine delivering [the vote], and they just took it for granted. They

would say it's another victory against this candidate who is very young and easy to knock over.

Birkner: Am I right in thinking [that] in those days it was not standard for the candidates for governor to debate?

Leader: [It] wasn't standard to debate. There was no offering to debate at that time. Now, when I ran for United States Senate in '58, then [Hugh] Scott wanted a debate, and I think I did one debate.

Birkner: But you didn't debate with Lloyd Wood?

Leader: No, I didn't debate with him.

Birkner: You simply went out and did your business. Who were your biggest helpers? Obviously, you were running closely with Blatt, but who helped you the most in '54?

Leader: Outside of Genevieve, who was excellent, and Natalie Sachs, [Richardson] Dilworth's girl Friday, we didn't have a lot of help. We didn't have a big organization. But Genevieve Blatt, Roy Furman, and I, and State Senator Joe Barr, whom we had selected as state chairman, made an appointment to go to see—at Mayor Lawrence's suggestion—Governor [Robert] Meyner in New Jersey. Because Meyner had won in '53 in a Republican state, Mayor Lawrence thought that he could probably give us some pointers. So we sat down with Meyner [and] told him why we were there, and he said, "No, I can't give you anything." Our spirits fell. We were looking for big help from this man. But he had a dry sense of humor, and that was part of his dry humor—we didn't know him well enough at the time to realize he was kidding us. Then he said, "But I've got a fellow in New York that really helped me get elected. I'll be glad to give you his name and address, and see if he can help you." That picked us up.

He gave us the name of a chap [called] Lloyd Whitebrook. Campaign advisors were few and far between in those days; today the woods are full of them. We got in touch with Lloyd Whitebrook, and we worked out a deal with him to develop our television program. They asked me to come over to New York, and they put me in a big studio, about as big as this house. The studio was tremendous, with 20- or 25-foot ceilings, and there were only three or four people in there besides myself. One of them said to me, "Could you stand in front of that microphone and give us a 10-minute speech?" I had

been campaigning for three or four months before that, and I knew all the issues by heart; it was no problem to do that. So I stood in front of that microphone and made a five- or 10-minute speech and stepped out, and one of them came over and said, "Could you do another five- or 10-minute speech?" I said, "Yeah. I can do that." I knew my material like the back of my hand by that time. So I did that. And then [they said], "OK. You'll hear from us."

We didn't hear from them for about two weeks. It's like going to the hospital [and] getting an ultrasound: they don't tell you whether you're going to live or die. For two weeks, there's no response. Then they told the state committee that George Leader has a Pennsylvania Dutch inflection and should take elocution lessons. I'll tell you about how I responded to that one. I said, "I got through the primary with this Pennsylvania Dutch inflection, and I'm going to win or lose the general with it. I'm not going to take elocution lessons." *[laughter]* If I had taken elocution lessons and developed speech patterns that would have been acceptable in New York City, the people would have thought I had gone high-hat, and nobody would have voted for me. *[laughter]*

Birkner: [Was that] the end of New York advice? Not necessarily that valuable?

Leader: No, the advice they gave me after that was much better. They hired a first-class outfit to run a survey on the issues, and that's something that's highly valuable. I don't suppose any candidate since that time has ever run in a campaign without knowing what the issues were, in terms of their popularity. They're running them all the time now; you see the reports of them on the television. It turned out that the number-one issue was the sales tax—it met a great resistance—and the number-two issue was industrial growth. During that campaign, I developed the ideas for the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority, which by today has participated in financing something over $6 billion worth of plants. It could have been twice that, if my successors had nourished it with a little more money.

But anyhow, we found the issues. They sent me up there to a studio four or five times to cut my tapes. A lot of times I ignored the teleprompter, because they didn't know the issues in Pennsylvania. But they got me in the right direction, and then we did touch up their tapes. We did about a half a dozen pretty good tapes. Not by today's

standards, but they weren't the kind of tapes that cut up your opponent, the way they do now. Virtually all of those tapes were constructive. I thought television was going to be the greatest blessing America had ever had, and that we would have the most informed voters in the world. But then they learned how to do those negative ads at the *end* of the campaign, after opponents can't answer them anymore, and they took a beautiful instrument that could have made our democracy work better than it had ever worked, and they destroyed it. It brings tears to my eyes to think what the politicians and clever professionals have done. It's destroyed this great educational tool, and they've made a knife out of it, to stick into the back of your opponent.

Birkner: And it works.

Leader: Makes me furious.

Birkner: Did Dwight Eisenhower campaign for your opponent in '54?

Leader: Not that I can remember.

Birkner: He was too busy with other things, I guess. There was no Senate race in Pennsylvania, which might have aided you as well. Because of that, maybe it got less attention from the Republican National Committee. They might have thought, "That's one state we don't have to worry too much about. We've got to get so-and-so elected in you-name-the-state."

Leader: We hadn't had a Democratic United States Senator for a long time, since Frank Myers got to be a US Senator.

Glatfelter: From Pittsburgh, I think it was.

Leader: Poor Frank died of leukemia, and I often wonder [about that]; I'm a great believer in stress as the cause of illness. Frank Myers was elected to the Senate the same time that Lyndon Johnson was [in 1948], and Lyndon Johnson's election was highly controversial. They didn't seat him for a while. The Senate sent a committee down to Texas to investigate this election of Lyndon Johnson, who was in the Congress long before that. I doubt very much that Lyndon's first election to the Senate was anything but totally corrupt.

Birkner: [Johnson biographer] Robert Caro has given a lot of evidence on that point.

Leader: Totally corrupt. Frank Myers's committee came back and said, "Yeah, it was OK. He was elected OK." I loved Frank Myers. Frank Myers was a gentleman and a good man, and he had done the pragmatic thing there. The reward for that was [that] he became the assistant majority leader in his first term. Can you imagine that? Being the number-two man in the majority in his first term? Ordinarily, it would take you four or five terms to rise to a position like that. [But] poor Frank developed leukemia. You should have seen him; he would get his transfusions. He had a wonderful family. And he died, eventually, of it. I still believe in my heart that the stress had something to do with it. He was a good man who was put in a position where he had to do something that went against his conscience.

Birkner: I'm not a medical student, and I don't know whether you can directly connect any kind of cancer with stress. But certainly doctors and medical researchers have proven over and over again that stress can make you sick. There's no doubt about that.

Leader: Stress can kill you. Not just make you sick—stress can *kill* you. There's a lot of people, I think, who die of stress.

Birkner: It sounds like you were not stressed. You were having some fun campaigning. You were a natural-born campaigner.

Leader: I don't know if I was a natural. But I got into the swing of it, and got to the point where it was not painful. I like people, generally, and I met a lot of people that were nice people.

Birkner: Let me play off of what you said a few minutes ago about '52, where you would hold up that *Time* magazine on behalf of Guy Bard, and say [referring to Sen. Ed Martin], "Do you really want to reelect the most worthless senator?" Did you have any kind of spiel, or prop or anything that you used in '54 that proved especially helpful with voters? How did you go about making your case as simply and clearly as you could?

Leader: The only time I ever held anything up was when I was up in the hard coal regions, and somebody had accused me of not burning enough anthracite coal. We had brooder stoves for our baby chicks in those days, and I burned a lot of anthracite; we used Lykens Valley

coal. So I had a handful of paid bills—maybe a dozen of them—and I just stood up. I was sitting on a flatbed wagon as a platform, and I stood up there and I just peeled them off. I said, "Look at that bill. That's paid. That's anthracite. Now look at that one." And I threw them down. "Look at *this* one. And look at *this* one." I said, "Do you think my critics will be satisfied *now* that I burn anthracite coal?" *[laughter]* I carried every county up there but one—and they stole that one from me. That was Schuylkill County. They did steal that one. But I didn't use a lot of props, not in that campaign. That's the only time I can remember using a prop.

Birkner: That's a great story; I love that. But you did have your talking points, and I assume one of them was unemployment and getting Pennsylvania back to work.

Leader: Sales tax, and getting people back to work. At that time, they had a real drop in employment in the hard coal region—the anthracite region. The Pittsburgh seam, from which they got the coal used to make steel, was running out in the southwestern part of the state, so they were hurting there. The seam coal which remained out there had as high as 5 percent sulfur, and that wasn't moving too well. Normally, anthracite has five-tenths of a percent sulfur. They talked about scrubbers in those days, but they weren't doing a lot of scrubbing of coal. I think today, even, there's a lot of places where the utilities aren't installing the scrubbers. The big fight now is [that] they're building 15 or 20 new coal-burning plants for the utilities in Texas, and they're trying to get them cleared in Texas before they install the scrubbers. I don't know; I guess it's all a matter of money, isn't it? They just don't want to spend the money, even if it's going to kill people.

Birkner: Why don't you say something about the sales tax? John Fine had gotten a one percent sales tax enacted. Evidently, even that one penny was great enough to harm him politically.

Leader: It's absolutely unbelievable how unpopular the sales tax was. The reason I held out for about 15 months on backing the sales tax was that I told all those people out there I would veto it if it came up. I finally had to sign it. And that hurt me, and it hurt my credibility.

Birkner: In '54, however, it's to your advantage that the Republicans had passed a one-percent sales tax.

Leader: I think it was important all out of proportion to what it should have been. But we did use it to the maximum advantage.

Birkner: Where were you on the last day of the campaign in 1954?

Leader: I was in York County, and I wound up that night at the dinner in Adams County, next door to York County. I did, I think, 12 speeches that day, mostly in York County.

Birkner: Whew. Do you have a memory of that at all?

Leader: [I went to] a lot of the smaller towns in York County, and stood up on the roof of that station wagon and spoke to crowds that day.

Birkner: I'm not going to put this man *[nodding to Glatfelter]* on the record, but I have a suspicion how he voted in that election.

Glatfelter: Well, you know how I voted. I don't remember the last days of the campaign, but I do remember [that] the day after the election, Bob [Bloom], Basil [Crapster], and I came into the office that we shared with Bob Fortenbaugh. There were four of us in the same office, [and] three of us had voted for you. Bob Fortenbaugh was a Republican; he knew we had voted for Leader, and finally he barked at us, "Well, if you want to elect a *Democrat* to the House of Representatives, you want to elect a Democrat from Adams County." But Adams County had reelected Francis Worley to the House. That I do remember.

Leader: Francis really wasn't a very strong Republican. If we had cultivated him a little more, I think, we would have won him over. Francis really was a Quaker. I guess he was born a Republican, but he was an idealistic man.

Glatfelter: He was definitely a maverick.

Leader: Sometimes he voted for things that had humanitarian qualities.

Birkner: Of course, you had your celebration in York then when you won. It was your home turf.

Leader: I guess we did. Can't remember.

Birkner: In preparing for this conversation, Charlie brought up a number of areas that we might explore in the very fertile period of the mid-'50s. One of the things that he put down that I think is important is in question form. "How was George Leader thinking about becoming governor once he was elected?" What's going on between Election Day and the inauguration?

Glatfelter: It's a short period of time.

Birkner: Yeah. I took a week off and went to Florida with Bill Green and his family. Bill had done a great job for me in Philadelphia; he invited me to go down there, and I accepted. Mary Jane and I went down there for a week, then we came back, and very shortly thereafter, Dr. Stephen B. Sweeney, who was director of the School of State and Local Government at the University of Pennsylvania, got in touch and came to see me. I had selected Dave [Randall] to deal with the correspondence which was piling up, and we'd rented some space on [Cameron] Street, on the second floor of what had been an automobile garage. David had hired some people to take care of that correspondence—typists, and people of that type—and then, as I say, Dr. Sweeney came up to Harrisburg to see me.

He said, "What would you like us to do?" I said, "I don't know, Dr. Sweeney. What do you think you might be able to do to help me?" He said, "The first thing we would like to do [is] get a professional, and make a study of every department, and have a report in your hands by the end of the year. You could give it to your cabinet appointees, and they would know the condition [of that department] and what was going on in that department." He said, "We can get a lot of information [that] the newly appointed people might not be able to get so readily, because we have no ax to grind." I said, "That would be wonderful. I accept. By all means, do it." So he did that.

Then he said, "The governor doesn't have any staff. Governor Fine has one man as an executive secretary, and he's writing speeches and doing all sorts of things. It's impossible for one person to do this. You need a Department of Administration." I said, "That's a great idea. I would like to have a staff; I'd like to surround myself with competent people. What do you have in mind?" He said, "In a Department of Administration, you ought to have the Budget Office." In 1953 we passed legislation which brought all of the departmental comptrollers and their budgets under the Budget Secre-

tary. We implemented that. He said, "You ought to have a Department of Program Planning, you ought to have a Department of Personnel Administration"—I'm using the word "department" properly here—"and you ought to have a Department of Program Evaluation to see what's going on out there and whether it's functioning well." I said, "That would be great. Where am I going to find people to staff that?" He said, "If Dr. James C. Charlesworth is agreeable, I'd let him come up to launch that Department of Administration for a couple of years." And he did.

Charlesworth was considered one of the top public-administration people in the nation. He had written a textbook that was used all over the nation, at all the universities. Charlesworth was a very bright guy. He came up, and we attracted a couple of good people. I can't say all of their names right now, but Andy [Bradley] took over as budget secretary. Andy came to Harrisburg as a chauffeur for Warren [Mickel], and Warren was in one of the fiscal offices. He went to night school Saturdays, and went down to the University of Pennsylvania, and took the coursework. He also got an association with a public accounting firm in Harrisburg, and by the time I came on, he was a CPA. He had a good mind, and he had the motivation, and he was an excellent budget secretary. He mobilized all those comptrollers, and when they weren't competent, he replaced them. The patronage system was very large; at that time, we had 69,000 employees. I think we only 15,000 who were under civil service. Part of the labor industry was under civil service; the Liquor Control Board was under civil service; and I think that was it at that time. But all the rest of the personnel was patronage.

We continued to have that office for personnel, but they had to then go from there to the Office of Personnel Administration. We hired the Personnel Administration Service of Chicago. They redid our classification system; it had been abused to the point of being worthless. I think they had 2,500 classifications, and it was just ignored. They could promote a friend, and give him or her more money. They just changed the classifications—made new classifications. We not only did that, but we hired the man who did the study for the Personnel Administration Service from Chicago as the head of [our] Personnel Administration.

Birkner: Do you think many states had something similar to this in 1955?

Leader: No, not that I know of.

Birkner: My guess is that only a minority of states in 1955 had this. Such reform was in the air. Reformist governors recognized that things had really slid downward in terms of efficient state government during the Depression and into the '40s, and New Jersey, New Hampshire, New York, all had reorganizations. There was a professsor at Princeton named John Sly who they called on; he helped write reorganization plans for several states. He merged many agencies to get the number down to 40, or something like that. He did this for Alfred Driscoll in New Jersey, I believe, and for Sherman Adams in New Hampshire. It wasn't that Pennsylvania was an outlier in that regard, but Pennsylvania, I think, was probably an outlier in the high percentage of patronage jobs. That is extraordinary.

Leader: I think we had more patronage than all the New England states put together. They had to go through the personnel administrator and the Department of Administration on qualifications; if they didn't qualify, they didn't get the job. And many of them didn't. Anyhow, upon his retirement, Dr. Charlesworth had gotten Dr. John Ferguson, who was semi-retired as head of the Political Science Department at Penn State, and when Dr. Charlesworth went back to the university after two years, he had a man, in the person of John Ferguson, who was thoroughly competent to take over and run that department. This is how I related. When we had a tough problem and there were no easy solutions, we would send them up to that department and say, "What are our alternatives?" Then, when the alternatives came back, I would make my selection from [those] rather than trying to pull a solution out of the air, particularly in a field where I had limited expertise. That was the second thing they did for me. Now that was mobilized; before I took the oath of office, that was put together.

After I took office—just to continue the saga of the Public Administrative Service—we used 67 consulting firms or individuals, and about 60 of those were selected by Dr. Sweeney and his staff in the Department of Administration. We pulled together the best brains in the United States of America, and we just didn't take those reports and put them on the shelf. We carried out almost all of them, and we

brought in the personnel who could do it. I had those people help me to recruit, too, especially the professionals. When I was done, we had a core of professionals that could really do the job of running the government intelligently.

The 36th governor of Pennsylvania.

In the old days, if you gave $25,000 to the Republican Party, you were offered a cabinet job. [People] came in on Tuesday morning, in most cases, [and] went home Thursday afternoon, and carried on their business or their law practice, and the bureau heads ran the government. [But] the bureau heads only had one motivation, and

that was, for the most part, surviving until they got their pension. So you had stagnation in government. We were known for not keeping up with the times—no progressive thinking. No caring about what's going to happen tomorrow.

Birkner: It strikes me [an] element here we need to consider is what price you pay, or [what] turbulence you stir up, when you change a system so noticeably. This was a "get along, go along" system. You say, "I want productivity, I want enterprise, I want people to put in the time." But somebody is losing out when you make these changes. Where does the squawking come in? How does it come back and hit you?

Leader: The squawking comes from the county chairmen, who are accustomed to placing their people in jobs. Probably the most vociferous one would be when we reformed the mental hospitals. We had 42,000 patients in mental hospitals, [and] thousands and thousands of people working there in patronage jobs. Didn't matter if you [were] qualified or not. I remember that even the state senators from those districts, and some of the House members, were very upset, because they depended on the patronage of their mental hospital. They didn't want to cure those people—they wanted to keep them there, because the more patients they had in the hospital, the more jobs they had.

We professionalized a lot of it, and we put in programs to get them out of the mental hospitals. So much so that 50 years later, we probably have 350 people or so in mental hospitals in Pennsylvania instead of 42,000. If they'd made me a dictator, I could do the same thing with the prison system, I think. No, there would be [more than] 350. Governor [Robert] Casey did a nationwide search through an agency and brought [Joseph D.] Lehman in. Lehman said, "Some people should never get out, and a lot of them should get out much sooner." We don't have enough wisdom in the matter of sentencing—not enough wisdom, not enough latitude for the judges, and those judges that do have the wisdom to decide don't have the latitude. It's a sad thing. Now you've got 42,000 people in the prison system; it could be tremendously reduced. They have a thing now called "drug courts," for juveniles, primarily. It's a good program. The Secretary of Corrections wrote me a two-page letter on how fine it is, and I wrote a covering letter and sent it out to all the judges and all the district attorneys in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. I got

a lot of replies back from people where [the drug courts] had been installed, saying how fine they are and how well they work.

Birkner: I want to come back to the turbulence and squawking for a second. The Democrats had been out; they elect a young Democrat. Presumably, they're expecting to get their people placed. Now you're putting in a new, more expertise-oriented system, as opposed to a "who you know" system. I want a sense of how you're dealing with that.

Leader: I almost forgot to tell you what we put in place. We put about 12,000 or 13,000 jobs under Executive Board civil service. Under the old constitution, the Executive Board had the power to do that, and in order to make sure that they would hold up, they had to take a qualifying examination. Later on, under the [William] Scranton administration, when they took it to court to try to knock that program out, it *did* hold up. Unfortunately, a lot of good people left during the uncertain period while it was going through the courts, so they lost a lot of good people that we brought in from all over the country. But in any event, when we put that Executive Board system of civil service in for all those people, we generated tremendous flak from the county chairmen who were losing all those jobs to civil service. At that time, the division between Democrats and Republicans in the patronage system was about even.

Birkner: Did you lose support in the state legislature because you were doing this?

Leader: I don't think it helped me; the county chairmen, certainly, were no help in trying to encourage those people to support me. I lost part of my base of support. Of course, we were struggling so much [because] it was Republican majorities in both the House and the Senate by that time. That was really the second biannual session of my administration. That was just another bump in the road; it didn't help me any. The county chairmen, most of them, were obviously not pleased with what I was doing to professionalize state government. We accommodated [them] as much as we could in getting endorsements from the county chairmen, but when we couldn't get our professionals approved, Dave Randall, my executive secretary, approved 1,100. We wouldn't let those professionals get away. We asked the county chairmen to endorse them, and 1,100 times they

said no. So yes, it was a problem. It didn't endear me to the state chairmen or the county chairmen.

Birkner: Before we go into the governor years, I want to push you back to your election. Charlie actually has, in the package that he prepared for us, this extraordinary cover picture of you on *Time* magazine after your election in November of '54. *Time* magazine, as late as 1954, is the most widely read news magazine—except, possibly, for *LIFE*—in the whole United States. What did that mean to you, to get your picture like that?

Leader: I don't remember.

Birkner: I would have to imagine that that generated some mail, at least.

Leader: Probably. On a few occasions, I was shown as one of the three or four young governors who might be material for the presidency, eventually. I'm not a modest man; on the other hand, I have never really believed, deep in my heart, that I was qualified to be president. I've never believed, either, that George W. Bush is qualified to be president. I do think that the people who are qualified to be president are few and far between. When President Roosevelt selected Truman, I thought, "What in the world are you doing picking Harry Truman, a product of the Prendergast machine in Missouri?" Yet Harry Truman became a great president. When Harry Truman was vice president, he read all the books on the presidency, and probably came into the presidency better prepared than almost anybody.

Harry Truman had a moral fiber; he had an inner toughness. Where he got it, I don't know, because he always came off looking like—what do they call them today, in high school?—a nerd. He always did. Yet he had that inner toughness, and a basic judgment that was pretty doggone sound. As I say, I'm not a modest man, and it was nice to be mentioned a few times, but I never felt I was qualified. A lot of the people who run for the presidency, if they evaluated themselves as objectively as one can [evaluate] oneself, probably would know that they're not going to be outstanding. I had a chance to run for the vice presidency under Stevenson. Jim Finnegan was his campaign manager, and when I got to the convention, Jim said, "I think I can get you the vice presidency." I

said, "Jim, you've got to be kidding. Where would I get the votes?" He said, "You've got Pennsylvania. You get some support in New York and California, and I think I can get you most of the South." I said, "How in the world would the South go for a liberal like me?" He said, "They'll go for anybody who'll be against [Estes] Kefauver." Jim was just coming back from talking to all those people down there.

Birkner: That's true. Most Southerners didn't like Kefauver one bit. In fact, they voted for [John F.] Kennedy over Kefauver.

Leader: Yeah. I had just gotten over hepatitis. I had terrible chest pains with it, and for a while I was getting worse every day. We brought a coronary specialist up from Temple, and he thought it was my heart. Turns out I had hepatitis. I was pretty well over it by the time we got it diagnosed, and after I knew [what] I had, I took a week off to try to recover. I worked right through, and I got out to Chicago with my wife and Dave Randall, and I said, "Jim, you know what? I don't think I can make the campaign. I'm not strong enough right now. I'm just glad to be alive." If you've gone through chest pains over and over again, you know it feels like a steamroller has gone over your chest. And [if] you get over that, you're glad to be alive.

Birkner: I once attended a speech that Joe Biden gave—this was 20 years ago, in Lancaster, Pennsylvania—after he had had surgery for a brain aneurism. He came through the surgery, and this was the first speech he gave afterwards. In his first line to the audience, he said, "I'm delighted to be here today. In fact, given what I've been through recently, I'm delighted to be *anywhere*!" *[laughter]* As you took office and started to find your way around Harrisburg and hit your stride, what were your priorities in terms of, first, what you thought was job one for Pennsylvania in 1955, and second, who you had to get along with in order to get your job done? You've already mentioned the civil service issue: you wanted to work with competent professionals in the agencies. But let's [talk about] the level at which the governor operates.

Leader: First of all, I had to get along with my staff. I had a wonderful cabinet, but I also had a wonderful little kitchen cabinet, which was made up of Dave Randall, my executive secretary, my brother

Henry, who was my legislative secretary, [and] my press secretary, which was Debs Myers. Before Debs came aboard, we had done a pretty bad job of public relations in the early part of my administration. We appointed a man who was highly recommended, but who I think maybe he was schizophrenic; he caused me a lot of grief. Then the Democratic National Committee brought in a man by the name of Debs Myers. The first day he said, "We're going to do less and do it better." And he did. He was in the kitchen cabinet. Debs had a lot of common sense. Last time I saw him, he was something like deputy mayor of the city of New York, and he said to me, "George, could you get away to come to New York and take the job here?" I said, "Debs, I wouldn't come to New York City for a million dollars, and it's not because I don't need the money." *[laughter]* When I went to see him, he never came out for lunch. We always had sandwiches at his desk. He was so busy, between the strikes of the bus drivers or the garbage collectors or somebody else, and responding to the various newspapers about the condition of those problems, that he couldn't leave his desk. I'll tell you, running the city of New York is not an enviable position.

Anyhow, in our kitchen cabinet there was sometimes Bud Reuben, who was the deputy attorney general and was Herb Cohen's son-in-law; a Harvard law graduate, and a very bright young man. We'd sit around the table and we'd have decisions. I was always very quick to grab the telephone, and I can still hear my brother Henry saying, "George, not yet, not yet, not yet. Don't pick up the telephone yet"—because they wanted to discuss it some more before we made a decision. But one of the things [I learned] to do, somewhere, somehow, was to make a decision. When you don't make a decision, you have *already* made a decision, and that's what most people don't realize. If it's the wrong decision, you can almost always go back and correct it, but you can't find out what the results can be until you make a decision. I did make decisions, and I *could* make decisions. After I was out of office, I was talking with [former Ohio governor] Mike De Salle, whose term overlapped my administration and extended a few years beyond. I was with him in his new law office out in Ohio, I've forgotten where.

Birkner: Probably Columbus.

Leader: Probably Columbus. I said, "Mike, how are you enjoying

practicing law?" He said, "Oh, it's great." [He was] coming out of a big law firm, but he'd started his own after he left the [governorship], and he had seven partners. He said, "I got seven bright young men. [It's] exciting. But once you've been governor, if you don't have 20 balls in the air, you don't think you're doing anything." I think even now I've got to keep a couple balls in the air or I get terribly bored. I do make mistakes, but I always try to go back and correct my mistakes. Two mistakes you make: if you do nothing, you've already made a mistake, because the problem is still out there; or you make a decision which you think is a solution, but it only turns out to be a partial solution, and then you have to make the decision to make the adjustments.

Birkner: I need to clarify something. You didn't make the decisions before you had consulted the pertinent personnel and advisors, right? You had your meetings and thrashed things out, right?

Leader: Well, we didn't drag it around. If we had something [on the agenda] that was highly complex, we'd send it up to the Department of Administration on the next floor and we'd get the alternatives. *Then* we made the decision—if it was highly complex. If it wasn't complex material, or if we were dealing with material that we were familiar with, we'd just make the decision ourselves; we wouldn't bother the Department of Administration. But we had all kinds of talent in that Department of Administration, and where we didn't have the talent up there, we would farm it out to one of those consulting firms and get back their recommendations. We used to say, "The best thing you buy is brains." Now, that's a little clichéd, but it's true. Whatever success I've had in life, in or out of politics, it's been [because] I've always had the ability to call on people who were smarter than I was—some of them totally uneducated people. I'm working with a builder right now; he's had one course beyond high school in electrical [engineering], yet more often than not I take his advice in construction. He grew up with his father and his uncle, who were in construction. He's been living and working in construction since he's 12 years old. I take a lot of advice from him.

Birkner: Were you advantaged by being a lame duck from the moment you were elected, or would you have made the same decisions regardless of whether you had the opportunity to run for a second term?

Leader: About the second or third week that I was in office, my political mentor, Herbert Cohen, who was by that time my attorney general—in those days the governor appointed the attorney general; he wasn't elected as he is now—came into my office. He said "Governor, Gifford Pinchot had two principal issues." The one was, we'll get the farmers out of the mud; and the other, I think, was the forestry program—establishing the state forest, which he did a magnificent job in doing. [Herb] said, "You ought to select two issues," just as we [had] selected two issues for the campaign—industrial and job growth, and kill the sales tax. He said, "If you try and develop all your issues, all your programs, the public will be so confused that they won't know what you stand for." I said, "Herb, I'm only in this office a couple of weeks, and already I feel like time is running out on me. I brought all these good people in in all the various departments, and they all expect that I'm going to give time and attention and support to their programs. The fact that I was elected this time was a fluke. I may never be elected to another political office, and I'm going to make this one really count." I say that to you now because I believed it then, and I have no regrets.

Birkner: Meaning, you were going to go full-bore along many tracks rather than [just] two.

Leader: You've got to realize Pennsylvania was so far behind, except for the things that Pinchot did. You mention any area from education to strip mining, and we had lots and lots of problems. We dealt with them.

Birkner: Now as I remember, the income tax you offered died. It was supposed to be for education, and it was one percent.

Leader: We had what was called a classified income tax, where we taxed real income at one level and indirect income, like dividends and rent and interest, at another level. Of course, the Republicans claimed it was unconstitutional. Governor [Milton] Shapp put through an income tax that was tested in the courts, and when it passed the test, he sent me a letter and said, "George, in case it would bring any comfort to you, based on this decision of the Supreme Court, your tax would have been constitutional." But mine was never passed, so it was never put to the test. Then we fussed around for a while with a value-added tax, which would have been a disaster; it was not my

idea. I had to finally swallow the sales tax.

Birkner: Who defeated your income tax? Was it conservative Democrats? Obviously the Republicans were going to oppose it.

Leader: I think we put it through the House, but we couldn't get [it] through the Senate. Naturally, Harvey Taylor's principal goal was to embarrass me. He was afraid I was a comer; I had got a lot of publicity—*Time* magazine, et cetera. They were going to chop me down as much as they could, and they worked hard at it.

Birkner: They didn't want to give you credit for getting an income tax?

Leader: They didn't want to give me credit for being able to handle the state's problems and getting a sufficient revenue, was one of the problems.

Birkner: Do you in retrospect wish you had not signed the sales tax, or was it one of those things where, if you were going to balance the budget, you had to do that?

Leader: I had no choice. One of the things that people don't understand is [that] in those days, and probably pretty much still today, the state government is one giant tax collection agency. Back in those days, two-thirds of what we collected went to the school districts and to local government. Had I been wise enough and tough enough and resourceful enough, I could have said, "OK, fine—we'll just put the tax program through the way it is." [The Republican Congress, led by Newt Gingrich in the House] shut the federal government down for 14 days over taxes. I wasn't that tough. And maybe it's just as well that I wasn't that tough. But if I'd have said, "OK, fine, we've got enough money coming in to run the state government and we'll give the school districts and local governments what's left over, we'll divvy it up" . . . Back in those days, by law, we had to pay 50 percent of the cost of operation of the public schools; today they're paying 37 percent. It never occurred to me to cut schools, and yet I could have. If I had cut the schools, those school directors would have got on the backs of their senators and representatives, and we darn well would have gotten a tax program pretty fast. But I never thought to do that. I wasn't ruthless enough. If I had a weakness, probably that was it.

Birkner: Would the income tax that you proposed have produced

enough revenue to do what was needed?

Leader: Yeah, it would have produced enough. Just a matter of adjusting the rates. It would've balanced the budget, yes.

Birkner: It would have been against your nature to play that kind of game of chicken, wouldn't it?

Leader: It wasn't my nature; I wasn't cut out for that type of thing. I revered education too much. I was brought up by former country schoolteachers and school directors and my grandfather and my father, both school directors, and my father said, "Education is the only way out of poverty." We didn't know we were poor. We were seven kids in a five-room bungalow without indoor plumbing; you *know* we weren't rich. [But] the only reason we didn't know we were poor is most of the people around us had about the same thing.

Birkner: So what made you finally sign the sales tax bill?

Leader: There wouldn't have been enough to balance the budget.

Birkner: Was there enough money to pay bills, or did you have to borrow during that period?

Leader: No, we were OK. We had enough. I don't [know quite how] we paid out that money to the schools—whether we paid it out by the month, or by the year, or whatever. We were on a semi-annual budget in those days. I assume that money was paid out more or less as it came in.

Birkner: In general, did you have a constructive relationship with the Democratic leaders of the House and the Senate?

Leader: Yes. We met every Sunday night with the Democratic leaders of the House and the Senate and with my brother Henry, who [was] my legislative secretary, and his legislative assistant, and the attorney general. We met every Sunday night and worked out our strategy for the coming week.

Birkner: You respected these individuals you worked with?

Leader: Yes, I did.

Birkner: Did your brother do the job you hoped he would?

Leader: Yes. I think if I had to do it over, instead of getting a very

fine young man—a lawyer like Roy Shafer, who became Governor Lawrence's legislative secretary—I probably would have gotten an out-an-out politician behind me. Somebody like John Torquato, [my] Secretary of Labor and Industry. I think I made a mistake. We were too idealistic in that, and I probably should've gotten some really tough-minded person. We didn't know about the art of the deal. A governor like Governor Shapp—his first term was a tremendous success. He came out of the Philadelphia environment, and they knew how to make deals. I came up out of York County; we didn't know how to make deals. Politics is mostly deal-making. I served prior to that, fortunately, so that it didn't destroy my effectiveness, but if I had known how to make deals, I probably could've gotten some things I didn't get—although we got, I'd say, 80 percent of my programs, so that's not bad. Once you start making deals, [the tragedy is that] it all becomes deals, and you lose the rest of what you might get without making deals. So I don't know that it was a mistake, but Milt Shapp was able to get his income tax because he made deals. He was very good at it, and I admired what he was able to achieve. But I couldn't operate the way he did, because I didn't have that type of skill.

Birkner: The other governor who comes to mind as being that way was Marvin Mandel in Maryland. He was a Milton Shapp wheeler-dealer type.

Leader: Was he?

Birkner: Absolutely. He pushed it so far, he wound up in federal prison.

Glatfelter: I'd like to ask about the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority. That was something valuable and lasting.

Leader: Still functioning today.

Glatfelter: Tell us how it got started, and the extent to which the legislature was willing to supply funds to keep it going.

Leader: I think probably the Industrial Development Authority must have been mentioned in the Senate during my term there, but in any event, I developed the idea in my campaign of '54. I was talking about it, and I remember I was in the office of the head of the steelworkers' union in Pittsburgh [Dave McDonald]. He was a very well-

known labor leader. I said, "Do you think we could put together an Industrial Development Authority?" He said, "Excuse me a minute. I want to get you something." He went and got me a copy of the *Saturday Evening Post*, and it featured an article by [Bill Batt]—who later became my Secretary of Labor and Industry—about the Scranton plant, and how they were collecting money from both companies and workers to supply capital to companies who would come in and build plants there that would create jobs. [That] encouraged me, knowing it could be done, and I developed that Industrial Authority idea in my '54 campaign as I talked about unemployment—which was, as I say, very high. If my memory's right, I think there was 26-some percent unemployment in southwestern Pennsylvania, in the bituminous coal region.

So I went forward with confidence, and when we got into office, we had the legislation drawn up for 100 percent financing by the state [on a loan] basis for physical plants. That measure I was unable to get through the Senate, so we set up a series of public hearings, which started in Wilkes-Barre and [then] went to Altoona. I know we went to western Pennsylvania; I think we went up to Erie as well. We picked the brains of the people that had experience. There was some industrial development in Altoona; there was some in Wilkes-Barre, [and] there was a lot in Scranton. Those people all came into Wilkes-Barre for that meeting and then [in] Altoona and then, as I say, [in] western Pennsylvania—I've forgotten where we met out there—and then Erie. Erie I think had had a little sampling of it too, but Altoona had some experience with it, Wilkes-Barre had some experience with it, Hazleton had some experience with industrial development. [I'm] talking about putting public funds into the project to encourage people to come there. Then when we failed, coming out of that, we probably found the solution to our 100 percent financing problem in Wilkes-Barre: the experts up there recommended that we require industries to get a bank or insurance company loan for the first 50 percent, and that the Commonwealth would put up 30 percent based on the local community coming up with 20 percent. If they came up with their share of the money, locally and at a low interest rate—2 to 2.5 percent, in that day—we would then match that rate with state funds. That bill passed the House and the Senate, and I signed it into law. After 40 years, it had $6 billion invested in plants.

It's 50 years, and I don't know where it is now, but we invested in

plants that created jobs for around 350,000 workers. That program is still working fine, and the present administration has another program called [PEDA, the Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority], and I think they have, like, $300 million to invest, and probably can get more if they need it. They're building ethanol plants and biodiesel plants and solar panel plants and so on. Americans could—if we wanted to, if we had the will—do what Brazil has done, and become totally energy-independent.

Birkner: Keep in mind, their raw material is easier to turn into ethanol than our corn [is].

Leader: Right. Sugar turns 8 to 1—energy consumed to energy produced. Corn only gives you 1.3, according to [*New York Times* columnist] Tom Friedman. I called up the Secretary of Agriculture last week and said, "Why can't we grow sugar beets here?" I wrote a letter to the head of the Agriculture Department at Penn State last week; I haven't heard from him yet. But I did talk to the Secretary of Agriculture, and he's going to let me know. There's no reason why we can't grow sugar beets here. They grow them in Wisconsin, I understand. 50 years ago I said to my Secretary of Agriculture, Bill Henning —who came out of Penn State and was head of the Department of Animal Industry up there—"Why can't we raise soybeans here?" Bill said, "We don't have the processing plants, and you can't bag them because they heat [up]." So 50 years later, I drive down the road, and half the fields out there are soybeans. I don't want to wait 50 years for us to grow sugar beets to put those processing plants in. I talked to my congressman; he's on the Agriculture Committee. The congressman said he can't change the 53 cents-a-gallon tariffs that we have on ethanol coming in from Brazil. The reason we can't change it, I'll guarantee you without further analysis, is that the committee on agriculture in the House is totally controlled by Midwestern farm interests—by congressmen from the Midwestern farm belt.

Glatfelter: I think in years past, sugar beets in this country have been grown mostly in places like Colorado and Utah. If that's the case, why can't it be done in Pennsylvania? It isn't that it's only done in Louisiana and Mississippi.

Leader: The Secretary of Agriculture's looking into it now. What the governor could do in this alternative energy program [is that] he

could finance [a processing plant]. They're financing a big ethanol plant up in the central part of the state now, and we could finance a sugar beet processing plant here if we had the sugar beets.

Birkner: You mentioned just a second ago the high unemployment in the western Pennsylvania fields. To what extent as a governor in the 1950s were you aware that there was this tectonic shift called deindustrialization going on? It affects coal, it affects railroads, it affects steel, but it doesn't really play out in a big way on the national press until the '70s. First off, were you aware [of this development], and second off, what can any political leader do when you're dealing with these kinds of negative long-term shifts in the economy?

Leader: We tried to educate the public. I remember making speeches [saying that] the industries that employ great blocks of labor in this state have diminished tremendously, starting with agriculture, rubber, glass, coal. All those had tremendously diminished by the '50s. We were bringing companies in here from New England, some of them shoe companies, who later moved down South; by the end of the 1950s, we were losing the furniture [manufacturers]. We used to be big in furniture; also handmade cigars. Steel, I think, was still holding out fairly well when I was governor, but those others I mentioned [were] covered in speeches in which I said we have got to have the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority to deal with that. Those industries were no longer great employers of labor, and we were pushing for other things. Textiles were still doing OK in Pennsylvania at that time; shoes were being made in Hanover. But yes, we were quite aware of that shift, and were struggling to come up with solutions, and were only partially successful.

Birkner: I think you really are more sensitive to these changes than many would [have been] at that time; people might [have assumed] it was just a temporary decline, as opposed to a structural decline.

Leader: No, we knew what we were up against to a degree, and I did speeches covering the subject matter.

Birkner: What about your relationship with PENNDOT [Pennsylvania Department of Transportation]? Traditionally, PENNDOT has a low level of esteem among the public, because the workers don't fill enough potholes or they don't work hard enough. Did you have a constructive relationship with [them]? How would you define what

was important in that field for you?

Leader: I made one terrible blunder in road-building. Some non-union firms out of West Virginia and elsewhere came into Pennsylvania and bid on our roads, and the labor unions came to me and said we ought to put the prevailing wage in. Years later, we learned about collusion: there was a lot of collusion in some of our neighboring states. I suspect there was collusion *here*; I don't know. I think that they were mostly all caught. But we were not getting the good bids we should've gotten in highway construction, and probably in bridge-building, because they took turns. If it was your turn, I'd bid high so you'd be sure to get it, and if it was somebody else's turn, you'd bid high so they'd get it. They passed [it] around, and there were unconscionable profits in some of those fields, so that if non-union, out-of-state firms had come in here, we might not have had [the] collusion, and we might [have] built a lot more roads for the dollar.

The removal of toll booths from one of two bridges spanning the Susquehanna River between Harrisburg and Lemoyne, May 15, 1957.

Now, I had promised to build some major roads in my speeches in '54. I wanted to build a north-south road in western Pennsylvania connecting the Erie Thruway to the West Virginia Turnpike, and I wanted to build the Keystone Shortway between Chicago and New York, which was, I think, 800 miles shorter than any other route. I put them in my speeches; I was going to build them as turnpikes. Then, when we did the traffic counts, none of them supported the bonds. In fact, when Governor Fine built the North-east Extension Turn-pike, the traffic wouldn't support the bonds. So [the legislature] voted $20 million worth of additional bonds to carry the interest in the early years until the traffic could build up. Then they started to steal—the chairman of the Turnpike Commission started stealing it in the area around the Lehigh Tunnel. In any event, I'm sitting there, and then, like manna from Heaven, the Eisenhower Administration came up with the interstate system of defense highways. When they put "defense" in there, they got Eisenhower's attention; he signed it. [They] brought in the man who had built the New York Thruway for Tom Dewey in New York State. I forgot his name, but he was a capable man.

Birkner: Bertram Tallamy.

Leader: Yes, Tallamy. I got all the roads that I promised, not because I could do them as toll roads, because they wouldn't carry the bonds, but because of that [federal] program. We built all the roads I pro-mised. They made an honest man out of me.

Glatfelter: That program started in '56, and you benefited from it before you left office because you started working on it almost immediately, didn't you?

Leader: Yeah. We had trouble getting Route 79 connected to the Erie Thruway. It [connected] to the West Virginia Turnpike, but [Gen. Richard K. Mellon] liked to come to [Indian Town Gap] every year for two weeks and put on Marine field shoes, and Tony Biddle, who was my adjutant general, asked, "Could you bring him out for a drink?" I said yes, but noted that we didn't keep alcoholic beverages in our house. So we got some [of] whatever he drank, and had him out for a drink one afternoon. I said, "General, you could do some-thing great for western Pennsylvania." Well, that got his attention, because the Mellons had really knocked themselves out to do good

things for western Pennsylvania. He said, "What is that?" I said, "I'm having trouble getting a north-south route from the Erie Thruway to the West Virginia Turnpike, and I think it would serve western Pennsylvania well." He didn't say he would or wouldn't help me. But a few weeks later we got a letter that says we're on the map! Richard Mellon never called up and said, "I got that put on for you, Governor," but I always thought that when he died, I'd like to see that [route] named for him. Unfortunately, Governor [Raymond] Shafer did what you're not supposed to do—he named part of it for himself, up around Meadville—so it never got to be the General Richard K. Mellon Highway. It should have been, because he got it put there.

Birkner: You got a lot out of that drink.

Leader: I got a lot of mileage out of that drink, yeah. I paid for that myself, because the state didn't pay for alcoholic beverages.

Birkner: That was a valuable investment in the state you made.

Leader: That gave us a highway system in Pennsylvania that really helped us. Route 80 up there opened up a whole territory that had been more or less dormant for lack of good highways. It really did us a world of good up there. I don't know that Route 79 [connecting] the Erie Thruway to the West Virginia Turnpike did us a lot of good, but it did us *some* good. It really serviced that area around Pittsburgh all the way south [to little Washington] and all the way north to Erie.

Birkner: It also helped you with your employment issues: if you've got big road projects, you've got men working.

Leader: And it gives you the land for industrial development. All those southern and southwestern counties built up industrial parks and did fairly well in attracting industry.

Birkner: I would consider that a significant achievement of your years as governor.

Leader: Well, getting the infrastructure is an important factor in developing the economy.

Birkner: One issue that I want to spend some brief time on is your interactions with people beyond Pennsylvania while you were governor. For example, you were a member of the National Governors Association, and you attended meetings. What value did you find in

those meetings? Who did you meet that was interesting?

Leader: I haven't thought about that for a long time. Of course, Governor Meyner was a neighbor, and helped us in the beginning, and I got to know Bob Meyner pretty well. I think he had my wife and me over to the mansion in New Jersey, which was a fine house near the campus of Princeton University.

Birkner: Morven.

Leader: It's a lovely place, and it made a nice governor's mansion. I also got to know New York Governor [Averell] Harriman. He invited my wife and me to spend a night with him up there. It's the first time I had breakfast served in bed, and a newspaper, the *New York Times*, served with breakfast. I got to know Harriman reasonably well. Harriman was not a man that was easy to know. He had [the] ability to be president, but he was a very bland personality; unless you knew him very well, he was a very dull person. I don't know how he ever could have been elected president, because he wasn't a particularly good speaker. He had the background, [though], tremendous background.

Birkner: Look what happened to him in '58: he got out-campaigned by Nelson Rockefeller, who had that common touch, even though he was rich as Croesus. He could campaign and interact with people the way Harriman never could.

Leader: The only two I can think of right now are Meyner and Harriman.

Birkner: I was just curious if you met any characters like Bracken Lee of Utah, [or] these more flamboyant southern governors like Earl Long. You certainly had interaction on the national political scene because, as you mentioned earlier, you chatted with Jim Finnegan about the vice presidency and had that conversation you've relayed. Tell us about your attitude toward Adlai Stevenson in 1956.

Leader: In 1955, they held the Governors' Conference in Chicago, and Adlai Stevenson invited me to come down to his farm, which was south of Chicago maybe 40 or 50 miles, near Springfield. It was surrounded by huge fields of black soil—which caught my eye, because it looked so fertile. We talked; we had a nice lunch. He said, "I'd like to ask you for two things. I'd like to ask your blessing for Jim Finnegan to be my campaign manager for my run for the presi-

dency, and I'd like to ask you for Matt McCluskey to be my finance chairman." Jim at that time was my Secretary of Commonwealth. I said, "You picked two very good men for those spots. I'd be honored to encourage them to accept those responsibilities. Jim will do a good job for you." I said he had a great personality.

Jim Finnegan was the quintessence of quality as a political operative. I visited his hospital bed when he was dying of cancer. He said, "Say some of those Lutheran prayers for me, Governor." He was a great guy. I miss him. So Jim took that on, and he covered the entire country and did a good job. There was no contest, really, that year [between Stevenson and Eisenhower].

Birkner: What about your sense of Stevenson as a politician and political leader? Did you like him? Did you identify with him, or did you say to yourself, "This guy doesn't have it?"

Leader: I liked him very much. He was very bright. But he was a perfectionist. If he had been president, I think it would have shortened his life. He kicked off his '56 campaign in Harrisburg. I presented him on television—$250,000 worth of television that night for a half-hour speech, if my memory serves me right. He came in with a speech that had probably been written by a top-notch writer; he worked all day on that speech. We convinced him to come down and spend 15 minutes having lunch with us. But he was up in his room in the mansion here on Front Street all day, still making changes in the teleprompter at the dinner table that night.

The tragedy of Adlai Stevenson was he was never satisfied. He always wanted to try to do it better. I think he might have been a pretty good president, but I think it would have been very hard on him, because he would've never been quite satisfied with what he was doing.

Birkner: I recently was reading a section of Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.'s biography of Robert Kennedy which deals with the election of 1956. John F. Kennedy got his brother placed on Stevenson's traveling staff, to see how a campaign could run, and to be helpful. According to Schlesinger's account, Bobby Kennedy was so appalled by the inability of Stevenson to make decisions day after day—small, medium, or large—that when the election came, he voted for Eisenhower. Bobby Kennedy voted for Eisenhower because he had just had gotten so dissatisfied with Stevenson's inability to get off the dime.

Leader: Stevenson might have been the best we had at that time.

Glatfelter: In 1952, you remember, he almost had to be dragged kicking and screaming to accept the nomination. I think I may have voted for Stevenson twice, but I wondered whether if he was elected, his first act would've been to resign. *[laughter]*

Leader: He was so bright and so able. He was so cultured. It was a shame that he had that lack of confidence. After he [accidentally shot and killed his cousin as a boy] he never recovered his self-confidence.

Birkner: You might be right. Let me ask you, practically speaking, as governor in '56, did you think Stevenson had any chance to carry the state of Pennsylvania?

Leader: I don't remember. We probably knew that Eisenhower would carry the state. When we'd be out on a street corner making speeches, we'd have all the candidates' names on our sound car, and little kids coming home from school would say, "Oh, Stevenson—he's no good. We're going to be for Eisenhower." The little kids in *school* knew about Eisenhower. He had a public persona that was the envy of any candidate.

Birkner: Charlie thought it was important to ask you a question about the second half of your governorship. You had a Republican-dominated legislature. Tell us about whether your strategies changed, and whether you were able to keep things moving in a positive direction in the second half of your term.

Leader: We had, of course, a biannual budget in those days, and I think we had a really rough time getting our budget through the second term. The Eisenhower administration had a managed economy, and they were very fearful of inflation. They'd let the economy pick up for two years, and then they'd increase interest rates or cut the money supply, and [the economy] would go down for two years; then it'd get up for two years, and down for two years. What happened with the biannual budget is [that] they caught you on the upside when the economy was strong, and you did your projections of revenue on the basis of that strong economy. Then when the two years ran, your economy dropped down and you didn't get the revenue, [and] it generated deficit. I actually left the government with a deficit, because of the economy. The legislature wouldn't let you get away with

being conservative in your estimates of revenue, so I used to always have to call my Secretary of Revenue and say, "Mr. Secretary, you've got to jack up those estimates on revenue. The legislature will not accept what you're putting forward." My people generally put forward the right numbers the first time. So we had a lot of trouble with the budgets in that second go-around, and we did leave with a deficit because of that.

The drive to pass a new Pennsylvania state constitution, 1959.
Gov. Leader third from right; Mrs. Leader at extreme right.

Glatfelter: Allow me to read something from the final message of George Leader to the General Assembly, January 6th, 1959. I think it would be well if [Mr. Leader] would comment on this. "Let me mention just a few of our accomplishments. I am proudest, I think—" Do you know what's coming? "I am proudest, I think, of what we have done for the mentally ill."

Leader: Yes, I think that is true. That's true. We started with 42,000 [patients], and they were simply being warehoused. It was a great source of patronage in those counties where they had the institutions, and nobody much cared if they ever got out. If a man's wife went through a tough menopause, he could put her in one of the mental hospitals on the signatures of two doctors—one of whom had never seen her—two doctors who were totally unqualified in psychiatry. She would go into a mental hospital, and she never came home.

Glatfelter: I know of a woman in Glen Rock who did just that.

Leader: Then, two things happened. One, the husband, after seven years, could get legally divorced without any settlement on her. [Two, in] most cases, none of her children or her husband ever came to see her again. The average stay of people who stayed in a mental hospital [more than] three years was 23 years, which was [also] their life expectancy.

Glatfelter: "At long last, we have begun to do what we should have been doing many years ago. The Commonwealth has recognized and shouldered its responsibility to the mentally ill."

Leader: There was such a shortage of psychologists and psychiatrists that we weren't treating people. We were simply feeding them and housing them and that was all. Locking them up. It was worse than a prison sentence, because there was no parole. So we started that in motion, and we gave more state money to the local mental health clinics. Many times I would say [that] when you put a person in a mental hospital [because] they couldn't adjust to their family situation, or their community situation, or their job situation—put them in an institution with a lot of other people where they got no treatment—and if, by some miracle, they adjusted there and straightened out; and if, by some miracle, the very limited number of professionals found that they were straightened out, [then] we sent them back to the community—to the same place where they couldn't adjust to the family situation, or the home situation, or the community situation, or the job situation. With the local clinic, they could treat the individual; they could treat the family. They could make adjustments in the community situation or the job situation to get that person back on track. The great numbers of [patients], mostly women, were in there because they had a tough menopause.

Birkner: I'm no expert on this topic, but my sense is that you were way ahead of the curve in terms of this new approach to dealing with people who had certain mental problems and the treatment thereof. This warehousing phenomenon really did not get addressed in most states until the late 1960s and into the 1970s, when there were some major scandals that the media uncovered. You're doing this in the mid-1950s.

Leader: I was very fortunate, because Harry Shapiro had been a state senator as a Republican and had written reform legislation for mental health which was never carried out. When I was elected, he volunteered to come to Harrisburg and be my Secretary of Welfare, and [to] carry out the intent of the legislation he had submitted in the '30s, 20 years before. He was just a dynamo. In those mental hospitals, they had no magazines, no newspapers, no radio, no television, no creature comforts—many of them [were] wearing paper slippers. No dress clothing. If they got assigned to the laundry or the kitchen, they'd probably work there 365 days a year—no rotation. They were clean; that's all you could say for them. The places were clean. With [all that help], they should have been able to keep it clean, and they did. Back in the '30s, they weren't even clean. You couldn't keep them clean because some of the patients were so undisciplined.

Birkner: Governor, you obviously have a happy place in your heart for Shapiro. Were there other individuals who helped carry water for the Leader administration who you'd like to just point out now [and who] deserve some recognition?

Leader: Jim Finnegan, who was the Secretary of the Commonwealth, was particularly close to me, mostly because of his personality, and I was close to him. Herb Cohen, of course, when he was attorney general. Then when he left to go to the Supreme Court, the new attorney general, Tom McBride, and I were very close. We had a deputy attorney general by the name of Bud Reuben who was Herb Cohen's son-in-law, and he was a really bright, bright young man. When the attorney general wasn't available, we'd many times call on him; we were on the same floor, and many times we'd call on him to come over and get his opinion on constitutional questions.

Birkner: Were you very close to Charles Baine?

Leader: Yes, I would say so. Charlie was a fantastic person. I'll give

you an example. He changed the art in the corridors of his building every six months for the benefit of his staff, to help to give them a greater sense of the culture of our nation and our state. When Charlie Baine came in, there was not a single Ph.D. or Doctor of Education in the department. By the time Charlie left, he had 26. Charlie *made* a Department of Education. [It] had been a purely bookkeeping operation, to determine how much subsidy a school district was entitled to, based on their student population. Those records they kept, and they worked at that, and that is about all they did. I had to recruit five people before one of them would accept the job as superintendent, because that department had such a bad reputation. I started with Millard Gladfelter, because I knew Millard and trusted him, and he said no. He wasn't president of Temple yet—he was provost—but he had his eye set on the presidency, [and] he wanted to stay. Then I went to the president of Allegheny College, whom I had met in the campaign, but he accepted a job [in] Colorado. He wasn't going to stay here; we don't have enough skiing. But he was a good man. Then I went to [Howard] McGrath; he was commissioner of education under Truman, but at that time, he was president of Cincinnati University. He said he'd come, and then he went to his board, and they were in the midst of a fund drive and said, "You can't go now. This fund drive will be a failure without you leading it." So after two weeks he withdrew.

Then I went for the deputy commissioner of education from the state of New York. He lived around Albany, and his name was Sundquist or something like that. He thought about it, and then he turned it down. So I called up my friend Millard Gladfelter one more time. I said, "Millard, nobody wants to be Secretary of Education. (We called it Superintendent of Public Instruction in those days.) What am I going to do?" He said, "Why don't you pick one of the better county superintendents?" I said, "*Who* is a better county superintendent?" He said, "Charlie Baine down there in Bucks County. They asked him to run for Congress as a Republican, but he turned it down. He's an independent, [I think]. There's an explosion of population in Bucks County; he's kept up with his schools, and he's kept up with the schools for the handicapped"—one of which he named for me, but that came later. I said, "Will you sound him out for me?" He said, "Yeah, I'll do that for you."

So [Millard] called Charlie [and] reported back to me later. I

called Charlie, and Charlie said, "I'm making $15,000 now"—that's what we paid for a county superintendent of education in those days. "But if the governor wants me, I'll go to Harrisburg for the $15,000." I called him in and I hired him. Now Charlie Baine, in some ways, was a little bit of an oddball, but he was 100 percent [an] educator, and he just did a marvelous job. He lasted through the [next administration]. When you're an advanced thinker, as he was, it's hard not to be a little controversial. He got through my administration, he got through the Lawrence administration, and then he was gone. But he did a fantastic job.

Birkner: You got a good man there after all the aggravation.

Leader: I had a good acting superintendent during the interim. Not outstanding, but a good guy who'd keep the lid on, and I didn't have to worry that it was going to go crazy under him, so I didn't have a nervous breakdown worrying about it. But Charlie came, and Charlie, as I say, lasted eight years. He turned that office around 180 degrees, and made a real force for education, and did a real job of getting science and math and some of those good things on the way.

Birkner: Would you say a word about John Rice, who you appointed to your cabinet?

Leader: John Rice was a very nice and able man, but John was a typical businessman. At first he served on the Liquor Control Board, I think as chairman, and he did a good job. One of the worst places for corruption would be the Liquor Control Board. I always wanted to know [that] two of those three people up there were absolutely honest, and John, when he was on, was one of the two. I couldn't think of the name of Henry Harner a while ago when I needed it; Henry was on there, and he was absolutely honest. Always had two on there that I knew were unbuyable. And John was there. Then John came to me and said, "I promised my daughter, when she graduates from Gettysburg College, we'd take her on a trip around the world. I'm going to have to resign. I know I can't be away that long." So he did. And when he came back after the trip was done, he said, "I think we're going to elect a Democratic president in 1960. I'd like to have a cabinet job to be in a political position that I can have a good shot at being an ambassador." I had a vacancy that I created by firing my Secretary of Property and Supply, and I put him in there.

John did a good job.

However, John delegated a lot. You've got to have somebody in Property and Supply who is really, really on top of it, because that's the second-worst place, or maybe the first-worst place, for corrupttion. I fired the first guy for corruption. He didn't know it, though, [and] the public didn't know it. I fired him because he had one of his female employees out in a state car at two o'clock in the morning and had an accident. I had my eye on him; I had everybody and his brother in there watching him, because I'd heard he was doing some bad things. I had the Pennsylvania Economy League in there. I had a study going on out of the Department of Administration. The more [people] you have looking at them, the more nervous they get. By the time of that incident, I didn't have to wait to catch him doing something bad—that was bad enough. He was a married man, and I fired him. He thought Mayor Lawrence was responsible for it, but David Lawrence had nothing to do with it. *I* fired him.

Anyhow, John [Rice] took that job. He delegated a lot in there, but he was not an outstanding Secretary of Property and Supply, because of that. I think [it was a department that needed] both delegation and tight supervision—tight, tight supervision. He was there and he stayed there until Andrew Bradley took over, and then he became the ambassador to the Netherlands. I stopped to see him over there, and we had dinner with him in their residence, and took me along to work the next day in his limo. He had 500 people working there—250 [were at] the embassy, and 250 were from the CIA. *[laughter]* It was an open port, he told me, and John was ideal for that. John only stayed two years. I think in some ways it was a boring job because it was a job where the professionals carried most of the load, but John had the personality to be a very good ambassador, and I'm sure he related very well with the Dutch.

Birkner: As governor, did you deal one-on-one with these cabinet officers, or did you ever convene them as a cabinet?

Leader: Both. I heard reports that when Governor Fine was there, sometimes it took a cabinet officer a month to get an appointment. And I was determined that wasn't going to happen to me. First of all, I did my homework. When a cabinet officer came in, I knew what he was doing. I knew what was going on because I'd done my homework, and very rarely did somebody come in with an idea that I didn't

have some thoughts on before he got there. If a cabinet officer called up, it would've been most unusual that I didn't see him within 24 hours. And a lot of them did do that.

Of course, I saw the attorney general a good deal; he was based on the same floor, and there were many times I needed his help. We held the cabinet meetings, and I used the Department of Administration to be the teachers of the policies and to try to get some coordination. You had, of course, the budget secretary, who worked with the comptrollers, and we replaced some of those comptrollers. We got good comptrollers. When we took over, there was no pre-audit. You didn't know what the deficit was until the end of the year and you paid all the bills. So we brought in one of the major "big eight" accounting firms and [had them] work up a pre-audit program so there was no reason for anybody to over-spend their budget anymore, and we had that under control. That was, I think, a good step forward in terms of management.

But we found that there were only certain things that cut across the entire cabinet of 30-something people. A lot of things, the operations did cut across; modus operandi cut across. But a lot of the rest of the things didn't cut across cabinet portfolios. Each department had such significant things to do of a special number that a lot of it had to be done one-on-one, and we did do it one-on-one. I liked running the government. If anybody would have appointed me to be governor and I wouldn't have had to put up with the political shenanigans, I'd have been the happiest man alive.

Birkner: You would have stayed for a second term.

Leader: I would've stayed for a second *and* third term.

Birkner: Which is a good segue for us. You're limited by the constitution to one term, and by 1957 you have to be thinking about what happens after the governor years. Tell us how you gravitate toward a race for the US Senate.

Leader: I didn't really want to run for the Senate; I really was pretty well burned out. I said, "I'd like to run for lieutenant governor, and put myself in a position to run for governor again in four years." Well, my kitchen cabinet people practically laughed me out of the office. They said, "You *have* to run for US Senate." I said, "I don't *want* to run for US Senate. I want to stay here in state government.

I'd rather be a big frog in a smaller pond than get down there in Washington and be a very small cog in a very big wheel." But they all laughed me out of it. Looking back, that would've been the right decision at the time; I should've run for lieutenant governor and positioned myself to be governor in another term. But they said I had to run, so I said, "I'll tell you what. If you get me a good traveling secretary, I'll try to make the race, even though I'm 90 percent burned out." I was really, really exhausted—partly as a result of that hepatitis, but mostly just from working 12 hours a day, six and seven days a week.

So I ran for Senate. They got Pete Wambach to help me, a big noisy guy—noisier than I am, but very religious. He made me get down on my knees every night by the bed; the two of us had to say our prayers, all right. It helped to carry me though. As I told you, we had 800 weekly newspapers at that time, and Pete was writing a column for me over my name for those 800 weekly newspapers [which started out "Dear Bill and Hannah"]. Pete did a radio show here in Harrisburg for many years, "[Good Morning] America" or something, [at the start of which he always] said, "It's a great day in Pennsylvania." Pete knew a lot of people out there, and of course he was traveling to help me with the media people. We had a picnic for the weekly newspaper people, so Pete was an ideal selection. I got through the campaign all right without falling down, but my heart wasn't in running for the Senate.

Birkner: You had to win a primary to get the nomination, right?

Leader: Yeah, so did [David] Lawrence. [Clarence P.] Bowers ran against me, and [Roy] Furman ran against Lawrence.

Birkner: You had three votes for every one that Bowers had; you got 724,000 votes in the primary, and he got 252,000. Who was Bowers? Did you know?

Leader: He [owned] the Bowers Battery Company in Reading. They made batteries—a pretty good little company. Had a company plane. I flew in it once; wasn't an expensive plane, but a company plane. He was a strong supporter of mine in '54. He gathered some support together, [got a group] together. There was nothing wrong with Roy Furman, except [that] he was one of those good-natured guys who would've reverted to the old-fashioned patronage-style politics, and I

didn't want to let it slide back into that after I left.

Birkner: What did you make of Hugh Scott as your prospective opponent for the Senate? First off, what did you know about Scott going into the '58 race, besides what you read in the papers? Second, what did you think about the match-up?

Leader: We had done some surveys, and we knew the only Republican who could beat me was Hugh Scott. I could beat anybody else that you could name, according to the surveys. There was a pretty good chance that he could beat me, so we weren't pleased when he was the nominee.

Hugh Scott was very clever to get himself recorded on both sides of virtually every issue. I listened to [Senator Rick] Santorum the other day, and he had been attacked for voting against the minimum wage 12 times. He said, "But he said I voted *for* it 10 times." In a legislative situation, it isn't hard to get on both sides of an issue, and Hugh Scott had himself on both sides of practically all the issues. He was a moderate, there was no doubt about that, but he had been on the payroll of Gulf Oil for a good many years. They'd sent $20,000 to his law firm, and they'd keep $10,000 to cover the taxes and send $10,000 to Hugh Scott. Then the law firm said they wouldn't do that anymore, so the Gulf people sent him $10,000 direct, and he was under investigation for a while by the Senate Ethics Committee. But he was a slick type of a guy. I think he was probably living a little beyond his income in Washington—which isn't hard to do—and I think he felt he needed that additional money.

Birkner: For example, he collected valuable Asian art.

Leader: Jade. He had one of the greatest collections of jade, I think, in the United States. I guess when the Communists were taking over in China [in 1949], a lot of people of wealth sold their jade to get the money to get away, and he bought a lot of that jade. I understand he had a fantastic collection.

Birkner: I wonder where it is now.

Leader: I don't know who got that collection when he died.

Birkner: He lived a very long time. He had one daughter; possibly she outlived him.

Leader: I don't know about his family, but we considered him a

slickster, in not very complimentary terms. He went to Washington and he became a good friend of Lyndon Johnson's, and Johnson came to Pennsylvania and spoke on his behalf on one occasion at least. [Scott] was a dealmaker kind of a guy, and I'm sure he had no trouble at all making deals with Lyndon Johnson. He was a clever fellow; in terms of political maneuvering, he was very much my superior. I take my hat off to him.

Birkner: You had the advantage in '58 of a) a successful tenure of governor and b) an economic downturn, which was hurting Republicans across the board. You had the disadvantage of having a slick and effective candidate opposed to you, and the three percent sales tax on your back. The other factor that occurs to me is that something's going on in Allegheny County. Are there any other major factors that are contributing to the outcome in '58?

Leader: Without being too explicit, some of the things that some of the people out there wanted me to do would have been not only unethical but probably illegal, and I just said no. Some of those people were [indignant]. I had a report that they were going to cut me in Allegheny County months before the election, and I confronted Dave Lawrence with it; he said, "I don't want to hear any more about that." Didn't say he wasn't going to *do* it. But there's no doubt about the fact that they traded me off out there.

You've got to realize [that] the Lawrence machine and the Mellon machine, so to speak, were in bed together for the sake of Pittsburgh. Mellon set up the Allegheny Conference, and Dave Kurtzman was the principal fiscal man in the Allegheny Conference, and he did Dave Lawrence's budgets for the city of Pittsburgh; when Dave became governor, [he brought him along] and made him budget secretary. I had offered him the budget secretary position when I promoted Andy Bradley to Property and Supply, and he turned it down. Said he wanted to stay out there, he didn't want to come to Harrisburg—which I could understand, because of his family. But anyhow, Mellon controlled half of Pittsburgh, including US Steel and Gulf Oil and Alcoa, among others; collectively, they controlled half of Pittsburgh. But they liked Lawrence as mayor because Lawrence was rebuilding the city, and when Mellon came back from the service in World War II, he made up his mind he was sick and tired of having Pittsburgh labeled as the worst, dirtiest city in America, and went to work trying

to improve it, with considerable success. He needed the support of the Democrats, and they needed the support of the Mellon resources and influence.

Birkner: In trying to understand why a loyal Democrat would cut a loyal Democrat, you need to have a motive. The implication I'm getting from the way you're talking is that it was convenient for the Lawrence people in Allegheny County to nod over to the Mellon people and shift a few votes to Hugh Scott. I can't believe Lawrence's relationship with Scott was close.

Leader: It was close enough to be on the Gulf payroll. [Scott] had been getting money from Gulf, I'm sure, as a congressman, and when he wanted to run for Senate in 1964 against Genevieve Blatt, he announced to the press, "I have just slipped a large block of Democratic votes out from under Miss Blatt's bustle." So you know he had connections: she was a Pittsburgh girl.

Birkner: Right. But is there a Gulf-Mellon connection? Is that what you're implying?

Leader: Mellon had big control over Gulf. They had big interest in Gulf and Alcoa and US Steel.

Birkner: The implication is still a bit fuzzy in my mind. It's that Pittsburgh Mayor David Lawrence, who is running for governor at the same time you're running for the Senate, finds it more convenient to divert votes at the next level of the ticket because he wants to remain friendly and have good relations with Mellon?

Leader: He might have felt obligated. They had done so much for him. If they said, "Look, we'd like Hugh Scott to be Senator," he would probably have felt morally obligated to return the favor. Don't forget, the Mellon people supported Lawrence for mayor time after time.

Birkner: So he owed them something?

Leader: He sure did.

Glatfelter: In 1954, Allegheny County went for Leader by 89,000. In 1958, Allegheny County went for Scott by 43,000.

Birkner: A huge swing.

Leader: Right.

Glatfelter: In 1954, to repeat, Allegheny went for Leader by 89,000. In 1958, Allegheny County went for Lawrence by 53,000. So Lawrence did not carry Allegheny County as strongly as you did four years before.

Birkner: That's been used as a counterargument against the cutting—that Lawrence himself did not run as well in '58 as Leader had run in '54.

Leader: Consider the Washington County figures, too.

Glatfelter: In 1954, you carried Washington County by 21,000 votes. Lawrence carried it four years later by 10,000 votes.

Leader: What did I lose it by?

Glatfelter: You carried Washington County in 1958 by 8,000 votes. You carried Fayette County; you carried Green County. You carried Westmoreland County in 1958. Your margins were less than they were four years before. In the case of Fayette County, you had twice as many votes as [Lloyd] Wood. You carried it by 20,000; in 1958, you carried it by 10,000. In 1954, you carried Green County by 6,000 votes and in 1958 by 1,700. In 1954, you carried Washington County by 21,000 votes, in 1958 by 9,000. You carried Westmoreland in 1954 by 35,000 votes, and in 1958 by 11,000.

Leader: The counties out there were ticked off at me because I wouldn't make deals.

Glatfelter: In the case of Philadelphia County, you carried it by 96,000 in 1954, and by 134,000 votes in 1958.

Leader: I didn't know [it was] that much higher.

Birkner: So you did well. I don't think we're ever going to get a full understanding of what the dynamic was there, but the fact is that Hugh Scott pulled it off, and [was] one of the few really bright spots for the Republicans in an otherwise dismal year.

Glatfelter: 1958 was indeed a dismal year for Republicans. The Republican majority in the Congress dropped significantly, didn't it?

Birkner: They were a minority already, but their numbers declined precipitously in the House and Senate.

Leader: [The rackets] are always with the majority party, where you have rackets—and southwestern Pennsylvania had a lot of rackets. Very heavy rackets. The mob was pretty well entrenched there. [Joe Barr] used to say in jest, "If you get the churches and the racketeers going in the same direction, you can't lose." *[laughter]* I think I got the church, but I didn't get the racketeers.

Birkner: From what I could see, reading the material in your scrap-books, you were a good loser. You went ahead and finished out your term as governor with due diligence.

Leader: You've got to realize I wasn't hell-bent on it. My wife said, "I wish you could be elected, but I wish we didn't have to go to Washington." I think she expressed [both] our sentiments. By that time we had four children, and our second child was blind. [He] took a lot of nurturing from his mother, a little bit from me. We had already put him in a Quaker school in Washington. I paid a $3,000 non-refundable entrance fee, and I lost $3,000 on that—which wasn't easy for me, because $3,000 in those days was a lot of money. But anyhow, we were not hell-bent on wanting to go to Washington. I wasn't especially looking forward to being a senator, and running back and forth between Washington and Pennsylvania every weekend to mend my fences. I tell you, you look at [Arlen] Specter. He visited every county—Santorum too—to keep up contacts here. I don't know how those senators do it who are farther away, but those Penn-sylvania guys [are up here] all the time. *All* the time. It's no life. I'm amazed at Specter; he had brain cancer. How they do that, I'll never know. I don't think anybody can imagine the stress they go through.

Birkner: I think politicians have a special hormone that keeps them getting up in the morning and doing this work.

Leader: You've got to really have a passion for it. I had a passion to be governor, but I didn't have a passion to go to Washington.

Birkner: Let me flash forward a bit here. I think even your political opponents would have to admit that you had a good term as governor. You did a lot of good things for the state that weren't partisan, *per se*, [and] were good for the Commonwealth. Should the fact that you lost that race for Senate in '58 have prevented you from

running for governor in '62, or did [Richardson] Dilworth have dibs on it through the [Joe] Clark connection?

The Leader children. L to R: Michael, Jane (in the governor's arms), and Freddie. At center is the children's governess, Madeline Shermeyer.

Leader: I don't remember. When the party wanted me to run again was the first time Shapp ran.

Birkner: 1966?

Leader: Yeah. They knew that if Shapp was elected, [they'd] lose their power structure—all over the state, the influential local leaders

would lose their power. And Shapp succeeded. Shapp bought up the dissidents all over the state. Sold his company for $8 million, kept four million, gave four million to his wife, and spent his four million, along with other money, to get elected.

Glatfelter: And beat the party leaders in the primary.

Leader: And the party leaders, as far as the state government was concerned, went down the tubes. Shapp had a guy running his patronage who was a member of the [laundry] union, which was considered a terrible, corrupt, [Communist-tinged] union, and he brought that guy into government. Shapp appointed my wife to the licensure board for nursing home administrators. It had to pass through that guy's hands. I said, "Mary Jane, I didn't know you were that close to the racketeers that you could get through that."

Birkner: Why don't you back up for a second. You mentioned in passing that you were importuned to run in '66. You didn't want it at that point?

Leader: I [had] started the nursing home business. We had a little over $12 million borrowed to buy, build, [or] lease three or four nursing homes, and it was just Mary Jane and me to run them. I couldn't step out of that. My bankers wouldn't have looked with favor if I took off a year to run for governor, even if I got elected. One of the reasons the Leader family can borrow $100 million of mortgage money now is because they know George Leader and his family will stick around long enough to pay it off. We've been very lucky. We have probably $100 million of mortgage money borrowed right now. I'm going to leave that to my children, and my grandchildren, and my great-grandchildren. Plus the national debt. *[laughter]* The poor kids. It's a good company; it's a sound company. My three children who are presently involved in Country Meadows own this building; I don't pay any rent on it, but they own it. [My son] Michael told me, "You can have it rent-free." Who's going to turn down a good thing? Anyhow, Michael, David, Jane, and Ted, my son-in-law, are doing a wonderful job with that company.

Birkner: [In 1966], you were starting a major business. You had done your public service. It was time to be realistic about a family future.

Leader: We *hoped* it was going to be a major business.

THE THIRD INTERVIEW

September 28, 2007

Birkner: We've traced your life and career to 1958, when you had to give up the office of governor because of the constitutional provision preventing a reelection. In that year, you were engaged in a vigorous race for the Senate. But before we talk about that, I wanted to consider an episode of your governorship that we didn't previously discuss [but is] an important piece of American history in the 1950s. I'm referring to the integration of Levittown in Bucks County.

The storyline is that a black family, the [William and Daisy] Myers family, bought a home, moved in, and faced bigotry in the neighborhood—people defacing their property, saying mean things, and even intimidating them to get out of Levittown. You were the governor. How did you see this issue unfold, and what dilemmas, if any, did it present to you?

Leader: I remember one afternoon about five o'clock, I was about to leave the governor's office in Harrisburg to go out to the summer mansion, as we called it, and throw on a tuxedo, because I was speaking at a formal dinner that night. Just as I was about to leave, my executive assistant came in and said, "We just got some bad news. The sheriff of Bucks County called and said he'd like to have some state troopers assigned." There was a problem with regards to a minority family that had moved into a house in Levittown. I was pretty shocked, and I was already set to leave the office and go out there and put on a tuxedo. I said, "We'll take care of that immediately when I get to the office tomorrow morning."

But as we drove out there, [over] the 20 minutes it took to get from the Capitol to the summer mansion, I just became more and more angry. I'd always looked down my nose at the treatment that minorities got in the Southern states. I thought, "How in the world can something terrible like this happen in Pennsylvania, especially down in *that* part of Pennsylvania?" It was so important to William Penn, our founder—a Quaker, a pacifist, a decent, moral, ethical per-

son. [When] I got to the mansion, I got on the phone, called my executive assistant, and said, "You call the commissioner of the state police and tell him to send troopers out there right away." They did, and once the troopers got there, they tended to settle things down, and the crowds dispersed. I think they got it going again the next day or so, but when they saw we meant business about maintaining order, and not tolerating throwing stones through the panes or whatever they planned to do, that pretty well took care of it, for the time being.

But it was an intimidation thing, no doubt about it. It must have been terribly intimidating to the Myers family, who were inside that house being shouted at, threatened, and that sort of thing. Later on there was a court case [about it]. My attorney general at that time was Tom McBride. Tom was a former chancellor of the Bar [Association] in Philadelphia, and Tom was a fearless person; he didn't just send a deputy down to that courthouse to represent us, he went down there himself. He later said, "It did my heart good to see the instigator of that thing down there on the trial stand, shaking." He said he wasn't so great when he was up there all alone—certainly not as great as he was when he was surrounded by hundreds of people, intimidating the poor people in that house. Tom enjoyed shaking the leader of that gang. I enjoyed the shaking, too.

Birkner: It's interesting that in the coverage of the incident, and your sending in the state police, there was a great negative reaction on the part of some neighbors and others who were watching, viewing this as Gestapo tactics by your state police. Do you recall that?

Leader: No, I don't recall that. I felt the great majority of the neighbors were favorably inclined, and felt that [the Myers family] should be allowed to live there in peace and tranquility.

Birkner: That's interesting. One of the documents I have in front of me comes from the Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission. You may or may not remember this document, but it's perhaps a typical document sent to you in light of your actions in Levittown. In it, your behavior is called "brutal." You must have gotten a fair number of non-fan mail letters at this time.

Leader: I don't remember. I don't have any idea of the makeup of correspondence at that time.

Glatfelter: To the best of your knowledge, did the Myers family stay

there?

Leader: Oh, yes, they stayed there. And I think in the great majority of cases, they were well-treated.

Glatfelter: Did the state police stay there very long?

Leader: As far as I remember, [there were] just a couple of days that they had a presence there.

Birkner: I think that's right; I think it cooled things down. What I found most impressive is that you did not equivocate or hide behind somebody else. You're quoted, "People have the right to live where they can afford to buy a house, and it doesn't matter whether they're green, black, white, or whatever." That was just a fundamental assertion of equality.

Leader: Well, my good Pennsylvania Dutch background, and my grandmother, [who] reared me—we were never pacifists in my generation, but we certainly believed that human beings should be treated equally, no matter what their color or what their religion or what their race. I've got a piece in my poetry book in which I say, "Why do people love to hate?" I go back and start with the Ku Klux Klan, and up through the days [when] all of us liberals were called Communists, when all we wanted to do was practice the teachings of Jesus Christ. That, for several decades, was enough—if you really wanted to practice the teachings of Jesus Christ in Pennsylvania, and in most of the nation, thanks to people like Joe McCarthy, Senator from Wisconsin, you were called a Communist. Fact is, in my campaign in 1954, the lieutenant governor at that time came to York County and made a speech in the courthouse [referring] to me as a Communist. So it was tough to be a Christian when everybody was calling you a Communist. Either *we* were confused, or *they* were. I prefer to think that they were totally confused, and had no idea of the meaning of our constitution.

Glatfelter: Did you have any further contact with the sheriff of Bucks County? He could have called upon you because he thought your authority was needed, or he could have called upon you because he was scared. Did he have any further contact with you?

Leader: No, he didn't, and I have no way of evaluating that whole situation from his perspective. He might have really felt he needed

[help], because when people start gathering in substantial numbers, you never know how quickly something like that might get out of hand. I guess if I'd been in his shoes, I'd have done the same; I think getting the state police there promptly was a good calmer. I think decent people didn't want to tangle with the state police; they had enough respect for law that they wanted to be on the right side of [it]. And I think a lot of people who might have been on balance, or who might have come just out of curiosity, probably didn't show up.

Birkner: Suppose you had continued on to the governor's mansion and acted the next morning?

Leader: No telling what might have happened that night. My powers are very grave in office.

Birkner: It's also intriguing that this is the summer of 1957, weeks before the controversy develops in Little Rock that leads to the confrontation between state and federal authority. You were an example of how state authority acted responsibly within the law.

Leader: And promptly.

Birkner: Governor Faubus was an example of how politicians determined to advance their own interests did *not* act responsibly, and the president was forced to call him on it. It's a very sharp juxtaposition. Obviously public opinion was encouraging Faubus to do what he did; I'm curious whether you feel the fallout of your strong action had an impact, positive or negative, on your standing as governor.

Leader: I know that we were not measuring opinions on a regular basis, as they do in more recent times, and we never checked that. If anybody else checked it, I never saw the statistics. I think it probably cut as much one way as the other, because there were a lot of decent people in Bucks County, who were certainly not [racists] and didn't like that kind of intimidation.

Birkner: Let me ask you one more question about your governor years, and this is off the cuff. You attended several governors' conferences; I'm curious as to whether you made friendships or drew conclusions that you want to share with us, either positive or negative, about your peers as governors.

Leader: I think governors' conferences today are much better than they were 50 years ago. I came away from most of those governors'

conferences really feeling that we'd accomplished virtually nothing. At that time I was very much excited about what we were doing in terms of mental health, and I tried to engender some enthusiasm amongst the other governors regarding mental health; I remember quite well [being] disappointed that I couldn't find that much interest at all. I was very much involved in industrial development; we were the first state, I guess, to have substantial state money behind industrial development to create jobs. [But] there wasn't much interest in industrial development amongst those governors.

I think a lot of states were in the same condition politically and governmentally as we were in Pennsylvania, prior to my administration. I think that being in the cabinet of the governor was an honor. They gave it a couple of days a week; if you were a big campaign contributor, you got a cabinet post, and you gave it a couple of days a week. The government was really run by the bureau heads, and the bureau heads were concerned with protecting their jobs so they'd have a nice pension one day, [and] government was staggering. There were a few progressive governors, like Governor [Earl] Warren in California. At that time, for example, in higher education [California] had community colleges that offered students free tuition—two years of college for free. That was Governor Warren. It was no accident that the development in computers and computer science took place in California; they had the intelligent people to do it. Back 50 years ago, 55 percent of the students in California were getting higher education; in Massachusetts, it was over 60 percent. We in Pennsylvania were down at 26.8 percent. Why? What do you expect? What do you expect if you don't train young people—if you don't train the talent, the engineers and scientists and mathematicians and historians?

Glatfelter: You could go on television and say the same thing today.

Leader: Yes, I suppose so.

Birkner: Today we have a mantra that everybody should go to college, which I think itself may be problematic, because a lot of people should be learning trades.

Leader: There's nothing wrong with sending people to technical schools. You're absolutely right. I started a program to try to get the downtown [Harrisburg] students interested in staying in high school long enough that they could go to college. I started out saying, "I'm

college bound," which was the basis of my program. Then some of the tech people said they would be shortchanged, so we changed the title to "I'm college or career bound." Even then, I couldn't get the boys to stay in school—the boys were dropping out. Overall, it was like 70 to 75 percent dropouts in Harrisburg. That was true of most inner cities.

Birkner: Let's go back to the governors' conferences. Did you meet any governors who impressed you particularly as being sharp or dull, obnoxious or enthusiastic? Were there people at these meeting that you put in your memory bank as special people?

Leader: I sat next to [Orval] Faubus, since the governors sat on the table at the order in which they adopted the [US] constitution, and we were third. I think Georgia was— Was it Georgia?

Birkner: Faubus was from Arkansas.

Leader: The governor of Georgia at the time—big tall fellow; drank so much.

Birkner: You might be thinking of Big Jim Folsom of Alabama.

Leader: I did not get to know all those governors. You're there for three or four days, and you don't see a lot of each other. Actually, you *do* see a lot of each other, but you don't get together in settings where you can sit down and really talk. Today they have a much more formal agenda, and they bring in talent, and they really come to grips with some of the problems of our times. Government today is a lot more sophisticated, a lot better organized, and a lot better fortified with people of knowledge in various fields—specialists. I think government in general is far better than it was 50 years ago.

Birkner: We wanted to segue, at least briefly, into one more go-around on the election of 1958. It's a significant piece of American history, and it certainly changed your life. Charlie has done some statistical analysis. What we're trying to understand is what the variables were, [and] why an election [that] you should have won you didn't win. It was a Democratic year, you were a very successful governor, and you had, presumably, sufficient money. We want to just clarify things a little bit. Charlie, do you want to talk about the data?

Glatfelter: If we start with the 13 counties, what I've called the Eastern section, you carried nine of those 13 in 1954. By 1958, [Leader]

carries fewer. In 1958, the majority registration was still Republican; it didn't become Democratic until '60. I thought as I looked at this that in 1958, some of the people who voted for you in '54 and who were probably Republicans may have gone back to the party.

Leader: I think that's true. Yes, I think they did. After four Republican governors and very little to show for it in terms of what they did for the Commonwealth, I think people were ready to vote for a Democrat. However, that didn't mean that they were going to switch over and become Democrats on a permanent basis. I think we should have expected some shrinkage in the Republican vote when I ran for the Senate. Plus the fact that at that time Congressman Scott, who I was running against, was considered a moderate Republican. By the way, he was also a very hard man to run against in this respect: he was very flexible in his voting record. When we started explaining his voting record, he had voted on both sides of every major issue, including committee votes and amendment votes and final votes. You couldn't pin him down; he was absolutely impossible to pin down. I tend to believe that he voted expediently. He constantly was saying how this vote would impact [his] future politically.

I guess that's not unusual; there are lots of congressmen and senators who do that. I remember speaking in the caucuses of the Democratic Senate and the House in Pennsylvania, and I used to say, "Vote your district." That meant, "Don't vote your conscience, don't vote your ethical standards, vote for what's going to do you the most good in your district." You know the old story about a young man who went to the House of Representatives? He was in there, and one of the old-timers came to his side and said, "Do you know what your major job is right here, your major goal?" The young fellow was naïve, supposedly: "It's to serve the people in my constituency, my district." "Oh, no, no. Your major job is getting yourself reelected." If you look at the long runs of members of the House and some of the members of the Senate, they've done just that. Otherwise, they'd have sooner or later been defeated by somebody who more closely represented the feelings, philosophy, and beliefs of the people in the district.

Glatfelter: If you go to the southeastern part [of the state], there are five counties here, and except for Philadelphia, this was obviously Republican country.

Leader: It was in those days; it isn't necessarily anymore.

Glatfelter: It was then. You carried Philadelphia County by 116,000 votes, and in 1958 won Philadelphia by 131,000 votes. All the other counties were Republican. So we go to the northern tier, and I've got something like 20 counties there. There was a Republican edge here in both '54 and '58. You carried a number of those counties, but as far as the total is concerned, in 1954, there were 2,000 more Republican votes than Democratic, and in 1958, your opponent carried this northern tier by 42,000 votes. There was a Republican edge here in both years. The thing that strikes me is that if you look at Lackawanna County, it was an extremely Democratic county in an area that certainly wasn't. You carried Lackawanna County by 16,000 votes in 1954, and by about 15,000 votes in 1958.

Leader: Yes, I did very well in the anthracite counties in '54. I think I did well in the anthracite counties because my industrial development program had a lot of traction there. In the anthracite counties [and] some of those other counties, the Democratic Party was very lean; they're the kind of counties that many times didn't field a ticket. Many times, those guys up there didn't even have candidates for the General Assembly.

Glatfelter: Now the south-central [region], including Adams and York, and *except* for York County, was mostly Republican country in '54 and '58; the Democratic majority in your county was half in '58 what it [had been] in '54. In '54, you carried York County by about 19,000 votes, and in '58, it was down to 10,000. Do you have any idea why you might have done that much better in '54?

Leader: Well, I was new and shiny, and hadn't offended anybody by my various positions in '54. By '58, some people, certainly in York County, many of them Republicans, were not pleased with some of the things I did as the governor, I'm sure. And there's bound to be some wear and tear, being in public.

Glatfelter: You did get about 2,000 more votes for the governorship in York County than Lawrence did. You still retained [a measure of goodwill].

Leader: I retained some of it.

Glatfelter: Let's go to the western counties. In 1954, there was a

23,000-vote Democratic majority in the western counties; by 1958, it had disappeared. In '58, neither you nor Dave Lawrence carried the the western counties, although you had carried the area in '54. Lawrence lost it by about 60,000 votes in '58, and you lost it by about 24,500 in '58.

Leader: It's odd to see that that's the case; at a time of [recession], there should have a lot of Democratic voters. But I think the Republican Party out here is so much better organized, and so much better financed. I remember when we ran in 1952, the entire Democratic budget was $60,000. We bought one statewide hookup of radio stations, and Judge [Guy] Bard, who was running for the [US] Senate, took half the time. I think it was 15 minutes, and Genevieve [Blatt] and I got about 15 minutes or something like that, and that's all we got. The Democratic Party was virtually ineffective back in 1950. The thing you have to remember too [is that], back in those days, the candidates didn't go out and raise a lot of money. I don't think I made five phone calls for money. The party raised the money, and whatever they raised is what you had. I don't know how much money I had in '58, but in '54, we had about a million and a half; today, that wouldn't last you a week in a statewide campaign. So the Republicans were so much better financed and so much better organized than we were back in those days, it's remarkable that I could win in '54. It's remarkable that Lawrence could win in '58. We were so poorly organized by comparison.

Glatfelter: Let's look at the last section, the southwestern counties—Allegheny, Beaver, Fayette, Greene, Washington, and Westmorland. In 1954, these six counties gave you an 185,000-vote majority; every one of those counties voted for you. Take a look at Beaver County: you got one-and-a-half-plus votes compared to your opponent. You carried Fayette County in 1954 with two-thirds of the vote; you got twice as many as your opponent. In Greene County, the same thing is true. In Washington County, you don't have twice as many as your opponent, but you're pretty close. In Westmorland County, that's just about two votes for every vote that your opponent had in '54. When you come to '58, both you and Lawrence carried those six counties. But what happened in Allegheny County stands out like a sore thumb: Lawrence carried it by 53,000 votes, and you lost it by about 33,000 votes.

Leader: I made a lot of enemies out there, no doubt about that. The state chairman in '53, just before I ran, was Maury Splaine. Maury Splaine was probably the most potent man in the Eagles fraternity, and was very well-connected with all the other lodges of that type. Governor Fine had taken all the slot machines out of the clubs, and Maury was absolutely [furious] that I hadn't put the slot machines back in. I said, "No, I think it's good riddance; we're going to leave them out." He never forgave me for that. He was one of the people that organized the vote out there against me. So I don't know if it was the church people or the racketeers, but I lost one or the other and didn't get that vote. The rackets are always closely affiliated with the party in power, and in Allegheny County they were the Democrats. In Washington County they were the Democrats, and the chairman of the Democratic Party in Washington County was a Mob lawyer.

Birkner: What was the Mellon factor in the southwest? *Was* there a Mellon factor?

Leader: There was a Mellon factor to this extent. When Richard Mellon came out of the service, he organized the Allegheny Conference, and the Allegheny Conference was bipartisan in its approach. They supported Republicans when it suited their purpose, Democrats when it suited their purpose. They supported [David] Lawrence; in fact, Lawrence's budget was made by [people] on the payroll of the Allegheny Conference. The day Dave Lawrence became governor, he brought David Kurtzman in to become his budget secretary; I'd tried to get David Kurtzman for [my] budget secretary when we moved Andy Bradley to Property and Supply. Anyhow, the Mellons put the money into the Allegheny Conference. Richard Mellon wanted to make Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, and western Pennsylvania [in general] a better place to live—and he did a good job. However, the Mellons controlled Gulf Oil, Alcoa, US Steel, and a lot of companies out there, [and] Lawrence worked with them very closely. Also Hugh Scott, who was my opponent. [Scott] was one of the attorneys, [but] basically he was a lobbyist; he was on the payroll. In fact, before he left the Senate, the Ethics Committee gave him a bad time.

Birkner: He was a lobbyist for who?

Leader: For the Mellon interests.

Birkner: You know this?

Leader: Yes. I think directly for Gulf Oil. Gulf Oil was giving his law firm $20,000 a year—they would send apparently $20,000 a year on to him. Then they refused to do that, because they knew that it was illegal and they wanted to get out of it. Then I think Gulf Oil sent him $10,000 a year directly.

Birkner: We're trying to understand this tremendous turnaround in votes between '54 and '58.

Leader: Hugh Scott was a personal representative of the Mellon interests in Washington, both as a Congressman and as a US Senator. I'm sure [that] if the Mellons didn't engineer support for Scott, [they] were very much pleased that Dave Lawrence and some of his associates did.

Birkner: What was your relationship in the '58 campaign with Lawrence? Did you both go your own ways, or did you coordinate?

Leader: We coordinated. I went to him and I said, "Word's out that you're going to cut me in Allegheny County."

Birkner: You said that to him?

Leader: Yes, face to face. I said, "What do I do now?" And he said, "I never want to hear that again!" Then he said he didn't do it.

Birkner: Did you say this before it happened?

Leader: Yes.

Birkner: You had your finger in the wind.

Leader: Well, I think people saw it coming.

Birkner: What would be the advantage to Lawrence of seeing Hugh Scott in the Senate rather than George Leader?

Leader: Hugh Scott was a Mellon favorite. They were very much in favor of him when he ran for Congress, and so forth. Dave Lawrence thought he was behind because he was Catholic, but the bigoted voters got confused because his opponent was [Art] McGonagle, and people thought *he* was the Catholic. So they voted against McGonagle instead of voting against Lawrence.

Glatfelter: I remember hearing someone say [in 1958] that Dave

Lawrence believed he could not be elected governor of Pennsylvania because he was Catholic.

Leader: For years he believed that. But he wanted to run. They wanted to run a nice young fellow out there from Alleghany County, and he would've been, at age 52, for the Lawrence organization, a nice young man. If I'd supported him, maybe what happened wouldn't have happened, but I don't know. Scott, I think, got the support of the Democrats out there against me, and six years later he ran against Genevieve Blatt and said to the press—it was in the Pittsburgh papers—"I've just slipped a large bloc of Democratic votes out from under Miss Blatt's bustle." He had the arrogance to announce it before the election.

Birkner: Looking back, were you not aggressive enough in courting the black vote or the labor vote? Scott did well with both.

Leader: I think the fact that he was considered a moderate probably gave him some votes. He'd be smart enough to give labor some key votes; he certainly would've given blacks [some]. There was a time when he was considered anti-Semitic in Philadelphia, so he had his people go through the phone book, pick out the Jewish names, and send them cards at Yom Kippur. Hugh Scott was a very shrewd politician. He brought Lyndon Johnson to York County to make a speech—I heard it, I was present—and LBJ said, "Hugh Scott is one of the finest senators in the Senate." [He said this] in my own county! That was when he was president, and Scott was a senator. Scott and he were both very clever politicians, and they were both, in a way, trying to use each other. And did.

Birkner: You've seen this document I sent you, which I found in the LBJ Library, in which you were on a television show with LBJ. At least nominally, he was going to help get you elected in '58.

Leader: They have a studio in the Senate, near the Senate chamber; we were cutting tapes there, and we had different people come in, politicians giving an endorsement on television for me. LBJ came over, and he did endorse me. That was in '58.

Birkner: But it didn't count for that much.

Leader: I don't know if we used it, or how much we used it. We had it.

Birkner: In ’58, you’re dealing with a very shrewd opponent who’s well-funded, and running against a hard-charging governor. Inevitably—you’ve alluded to it—you’re going to offend some people. [As you said,] you’re not bright and shiny anymore. So it strikes me that really it’s a bunch of small nicks, and then that larger one in Allegheny County, that did you in.

Leader: I lost in Allegheny County by 23,000. But carrying it by 30,000 would’ve been a drop of 50,000 votes, and I’d still have been a Senator.

Birkner: Did Lawrence ever contact you the night of the election, or afterwards, and say anything about it?

Leader: He offered me the job of Secretary of Welfare. I declined it. Looking back, I probably should’ve taken it; it would’ve put me in a good position to get into the Kennedy cabinet in that field. But I didn’t take it because I felt I couldn’t get an adequate budget; I didn’t believe Harvey Taylor, who controlled the Senate, would give me an adequate budget. Welfare is the second most costly department in state government, right behind highways, and it’s the biggest item in the general fund. I didn’t want to go in there and do a bad job because I couldn’t fund it. [If] I couldn’t fund it, I would’ve been very embarrassed, and there’s not much I could’ve done about it, because Harvey [Taylor] controlled most of the votes in the Senate.

Birkner: In a 1994 interview with [former Pennsylvania Democratic Party state chairman] Otis Morris, you were talking about your financial situation as you left the governor’s office. You said you had a “lot of opportunities to steal” that you “chose not to take advantage of.” What did you mean by that?

Leader: I think a lot of people in office are gaining favor with people who have companies or positions that can do good things for you. I did not cultivate favor with influential people, so when I came out, I really didn’t have many opportunities.

Birkner: It wasn’t dishonest graft or honest graft; it was connections. You didn’t cultivate these connections.

Leader: I did not. I was very busy trying to carry out programs, and I mostly succeeded. I always say we got at least 80 percent of our legislation through, despite the fact that we didn’t have either house

in the second two years, and only had the one house in the first year. And we had a lot of balls in the air. We used 67 consultants, for example, most of them selected by [the] Fels [Institute]. We had good people in the positions—good professionals, good staffs—and we were carrying these things out. We got a lot of attention and [had] a lot of motivation.

Birkner: You're a blank slate, in effect, leaving the governorship.

Leader: I didn't have anything in line when I left the governorship. I tried, privately, to do some industrial development, and I didn't succeed. Then, [because] I'd been so impressed with what we'd done with third-mortgage money in the Pennsylvania Development Authority—I couldn't believe what mortgages could do in terms of developing the economy and creating jobs—I went into mortgage banking. First [was] with a Quaker firm called W. E. Clark; after two or three years, it was the Greenfield Mortgage Company, [then it was] called Bankers' Bond & Mortgage.

Birkner: You said in the [1994] interview that you learned a heck of a lot about that business.

Leader: It served me all my life, right to the present day. If you're in a business that's heavily real estate-oriented, it's good to understand what's available out there, and under what terms and conditions. It's helping a lot, yes. I think it helped me to build the first company, which we lost control of in '81, and the second company, which my children own now, and a third company, with another man, operating in that space.

Birkner: What did the transition to private life mean, positively and negatively, for your family?

Leader: I'd say the greatest thing was [that] I didn't have to read a lot of newspapers every day. Harrisburg has always had a very sophisticated press corps, and for a governor to get up in front of 30 to 35 of those people, some of them following state government for 15, 20, 25 years, you'd better be pretty well-informed. That's pretty intense, some pretty tough examiners. That is stress. I was always amused, mildly, by [Ronald] Reagan and his press conferences: several hours after every press conference, they'd try to straighten out the boo-boos he made. But he went down in history as a great communicator.

He *was* a great communicator, because he had a whole corps of people to fix up his boo-boos when the press conference was over. I would've been too proud for that, if that had happened to me. Fortunately, I didn't have to have the depth and breadth of knowledge that a president has to have.

Birkner: Were you entitled to a pension?

Leader: No. In those days, you had to have 10 years of service, minimum; I had eight. Now they're counting your military service time. I was three years in the navy, [so] I would've had a pension. But [there was] $7,500 in the pension fund that I had contributed, that I got back. The governor only made $25,000—a fraction of what he makes now. I see the [head of the] Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency is going out, and his pension is going to be, like, $269,000 a year. It's in today's paper.

Birkner: His salary was something like $300,000, and he was awarded a bonus of something like $190,000.

Leader: Yeah. That was the best job up there, the head of PHEAA. PHEAA is leading in about 34 states. They make good business out of it, and as a result, there's a profit. They had incentives built into their salary structure; they were well-paid. It's a business, a big business, and they had the right kind of contracts to benefit by it individually.

Birkner: Did you work in any way for the [John F.] Kennedy campaign in 1960?

Leader: I might have had some kind of honorary title, and I introduced him when he came to the York Fair, but I did not get deeply involved in it, no.

Birkner: That was because you were doing your work in private life?

Leader: Yes. I was working hard to make a living for my family.

Birkner: You did make one more bid to get back into public life by running for national committee member when David Lawrence passed. I take it that western Pennsylvanians did not go for you.

Leader: Not only did western Pennsylvania not go for me, but they made a deal with Bill Green to get the Philadelphia delegation lined up [against me]. When you've got Philadelphia and Pittsburgh going

in the same direction, [it's] pretty hard to combat it. I forget who they elected; ultimately they elected Joe [Barr], probably. In any event, what happened was they came to me and said, "How would Mrs. Leader like to be treasurer of the United States?" I said, "Probably not, but I'll ask her." If I had agreed *not* to run, they would've agreed to vote for her as treasurer.

Birkner: They had the connections all the way up the line. Interesting. So that was pretty much that.

Leader: That's just an honorary job; doesn't amount to much. Sign your name on the dollar bills!

Birkner: What about this business of you possibly running for lieutenant governor at some point?

Leader: I wanted to run for lieutenant governor, then for governor when the four years were up. Seriously, I never was ambitious to be a United States senator. I had been in the Senate of Pennsylvania; I didn't find it a very satisfying position at all, and I wasn't anxious to get back in the legislative body. It's just too long before you get to the point where you can accomplish anything, and I'm action-oriented: it's hard for me to wait. I'm not a patient person. I did say to my inner group that I'd like to run for lieutenant governor, and then get myself aligned to be running again for governor when those four years were up. All of my closest associates said, "George, you've got to be crazy. You'll never want to do that after being governor."

Looking back, that wasn't as crazy as it sounded. It probably would've been a very wise move, because I would've been elected lieutenant governor, since the governor was elected, no matter who the candidate, and then I would've had a shot at running [for governor] again. Now, that doesn't mean I never had a shot after that. The powers that be wanted me to run when Shapp ran, and said they'd raise the money for me and all that. That was the great part in those days—you didn't have to go out and raise your own money. By that time, I had about $12 million worth of debt; I didn't want to walk away from that, and I didn't have a big organization that I could step out and say, "You take it over, Charlie." I didn't think I could do that. My wife was helping me as it was, and I wouldn't have given her anything more, because not only was she helping me, but she had children to raise, and she was a really good mother.

Birkner: I want to be sure I'm getting something correct. This thought of running for lieutenant governor, which you then put aside, was in 1958, and the race for national committeeman against Joe Barr was in 1966. Does that fit your memory?

Leader: I certainly couldn't dispute that.

Birkner: One more question [about political] chronology, and then Charlie will ask about your new field and new endeavors. In 1968, you attended the Democratic National Convention. It was the most tumultuous Democratic Convention, probably, since 1924, and at that time, if I understand it correctly, you actually spoke out, not for the Humphrey-Johnson forces, but on behalf of the kids who were getting beat up in Chicago. Is that right?

Leader: I don't recall. I had [my son] Michael with me. Mary Jane had a small child; she couldn't very readily make the trip. But I did go over and see those National Guardsmen that were called out, and when we came back and I saw that played back on television, I said to Michael, "There's no way a Democrat is going to get elected this year. That's the finishing touch. This can't succeed." I don't know that I spoke out particularly *for* those kids; I don't remember taking a position. Michael was with me, and Michael was sympathetic because he was in that age group; he was a college student at that time. I don't remember exactly. All I can tell you is that, the way it was handled out there, I may have spoken to the effect that having done that—having to call out the National Guard, and the way they handled those kids—we couldn't win the election. I may have spoken out on that; I don't know. I knew who would lose, and who would gain.

Glatfelter: Were you a Humphrey delegate at that convention? It was McCarthy versus Humphrey, essentially, and McGovern had a late bid in '68.

Leader: I never got enthusiastic about McCarthy. I thought he was way out in left field; he was impractical in his approach. I didn't think that he dealt with the realities of the situation. I thought he was a very idealistic guy, and I admired the people who admired him, but he was not my type of candidate. I was a Humphrey man.

Birkner: Would you have voted for Humphrey over Bobby Kennedy, if Bobby lived?

Leader: By all means. I never forgave Bobby Kennedy for being on Joe McCarthy's staff, and I can't believe my liberal friends who could. I couldn't understand my liberal friends who did.

Birkner: The Bobby Kennedy of '68 might have been a different fellow than the Bobby Kennedy who supported and worked with Joe McCarthy.

Leader: I think he had enough of Joe Kennedy's genes to be totally pragmatic, and totally unethical, and totally immoral.

Birkner: You're not a Bobby Kennedy fan. That's very clear.

Leader: I am not a Bobby Kennedy fan. I put him right in the same class with [McCarthy chief counsel] Roy Cohn, and I say that Cohn was neither a gentleman nor a scholar.

Birkner: He was a sleazy character, frankly.

Leader: Anybody who supported Joe McCarthy, who referred to our fellow Pennsylvanian George Marshall as a traitor, anybody who could do that—I wouldn't use the language on this tape that I would *like* to use. And anybody who served on [McCarthy's] staff, like Roy Cohn and Bobby Kennedy, will always be suspect to me.

Birkner: I thought Bobby Kennedy was the *minority* counsel. I think he may have worked for McCarthy earlier than 1954. And Joe Senior had interactions with Joe McCarthy.

Leader: I can see that picture of Bobby and Roy Cohn with Joe McCarthy. So as I say, I never forgave Bobby for that. I'm sorry he was shot—I'd have rather seen him defeated.

Birkner: Fair enough. You're a partisan, aren't you? You're a little like Harry Truman.

Leader: I don't know if it's being partisan when you call a spade a spade for Democrats the same as you do for Republicans. I expect ethical and moral standards for both. One of them is going to get elected, so they'd better both be good, because I've got to live with whoever is going to serve.

Birkner: Yeah, but you have a [straight] edge in terms of the way you play politics. I'm saying it the same way I would say it about Harry Truman. I admire you both, but you are not consensus builders. You

knew that the Democratic Party represented the values that mattered to you, and the Republicans represented something else, and you were tough fighters. Is that fair?

Leader: That's fair.

Birkner: As a result, making use of your elbows, you probably did get some people mad at you who were willing to [fight] back at you.

Leader: No doubt about it. No doubt about that. Our polls show that I would beat any Republican except Hugh Scott. We ran that poll early, before he announced. So I knew I had my work cut out for me with Hugh Scott.

Birkner: In '64, Genevieve Blatt lost to Scott, despite the fact that LBJ carried Pennsylvania by an enormous number of votes—more votes than anybody had ever amassed in a presidential race. Did it surprise you that Scott won in '64, or did you see that writing on the wall?

Leader: That's another story. Otis Morris was the Democratic state chairman. He'd been on Dave Lawrence's staff, [and] he'd been on my staff. I know that he was a good friend of mine. He's gone now; he was a nice guy, and I really liked him. He did a great job for me in the governor's office. But Otis called me up and [asked me to] be campaign chairman for Michael Musmanno. I try to be loyal to my friends, but Michael Musmanno was not someone I deeply admired. The fact is that Michael probably was a card-carrying Communist when he was younger, and he spent the rest of his mature life trying to show how anti-Communist he was so they wouldn't pay too much attention to youthful indiscretions. So I said, "Yeah, I'll do it."

I hadn't seen Michael for a number of years. He came to Philadelphia, and I've got to be there, I'm his chairman, so I went to his first press conference [there]. I didn't realize that this man had really faded physically—[he] either had Parkinson's or something else, and he shook. It was a terrible presentation to the press that day; [he] came off as someone who was not physically or emotionally qualified to go to the Senate. But he went out and he got a lot of Democrats, and he had a lot of organization. The Democratic chairman at that time was Frank Smith, who had been my insurance commissioner, and apparently Frank wanted [Musmanno] because Frank was trying to get in the good graces of the Italian voters of Philadelphia. So

Musmanno went out and got a lot of Italian votes lined up [to] beat Genevieve Blatt. She got the women, and he got the Italians.

Birkner: She beat him, but it was close. He was not a good loser.

Leader: Scott was partially Italian also, and I think that helped [him] with the Italian voters. He got a lot of the Italian vote.

Glatfelter: Do you think people voted against Genevieve because she was a woman?

Leader: Probably to some extent. There was still probably some of that; I wouldn't rule that out. But Scott went out and got a lot of the Italian voters, [who were] Democratic in those days—probably still are—and what he'd done when he "slipped those votes out from under Miss Blatt's bustle," I don't know. I always thought it was the Mellon group, and Lawrence, and everybody out there—the same group that voted against me.

Birkner: I have to confess, I'm a little surprised that you endorsed Musmanno over Blatt. You'd worked closely with Blatt for years, and run twice with her on a statewide ticket.

Leader: Blatt hadn't come out yet [as a candidate] when they asked me to do that, I think. If she had, I probably would've supported her; I would've been committed to her earlier. I know Dave Lawrence said to me, "If she wanted to run, why didn't she tell us?" He had already endorsed Musmanno, and I think he felt pretty bad about it. She had done service for him for years, at her own inconvenience, and I think he felt bad about what he did.

Birkner: She didn't get out of the gate fast enough.

Leader: That's what it was. [Musmanno] was a fabulous orator, if you like that kind of oratory, and that's the way I went. I don't think Genevieve ever forgave me for not supporting her.

Birkner: I want to switch gears. In 1960 you opened your first nursing home in York County and became an entrepreneur and innovator in this field. One of the things you've told interviewers in the past is that you were inspired by a visit to England, and that this helped firm up your idea that you could do this here. Were you nervous that this could actually bankrupt you?

Leader: I didn't worry about bankruptcy. My brothers and I owned a

piece of ground on what is now the first interchange south of York on [Highway] 83. I went down there to an old hotel man and said, "Is this a good site for a motel?" I had to get into something; it was back in the days when I was trying to do industrial and commercial leases. He said, "Yeah, it's a pretty good site—big highways." There's been a motel on that site now for the last 10 years. [But] he said, "If I had your background, I wouldn't be going into motels."

If I'd gone into motels back in those days, and continued to grow [that] the way we did the health care, I would've been a very wealthy man, with a lot fewer headaches than in the long-term care field. [But if I had] to meet my maker, and He said, "What did you do with your life?" I'd say, "Help take care of a lot of old people who were sick." I think I'd be received a little more readily than if I just had motels.

But anyhow, I said, "What if you had my background?" He said, "I'd be going into nursing homes." I said, "I've very rarely seen a nursing home that I'd want to put my name on." In those days, they were converted houses and mansions. Some of them [were] well-done. Most of them [were] not very well-done, because they didn't have the capital.

Glatfelter: Were there many of them?

Leader: No, there were only a few then, and I didn't know anything. I don't know if I'd ever been *in* one. He said, "There are some that you would be glad to put your name on." "Where are these?" "California, Washington. Fact is, they were written up in the *Reader's Digest*. They're in my files; I'll send them to you." He did, and I read it.

I picked up the telephone and called the president of the company [that owned the homes]. Told him who I was, that I'd gotten interested, and that I wanted to see him. So I went out and spent a couple of days with him. He took me up and down the West Coast, and showed me about half of their 20 buildings. They were small, but they were really nice, and they had crisp, white uniforms for the nurses. [I thought], "This is wonderful. This is what Pennsylvania needs." I came back, and they offered me a percentage interest if I started a chain of nursing homes on the East Coast. But I had to raise $285,000, and I couldn't raise it; I didn't know how to raise that money. That was my first effort.

Then later on, I met a man who was a consultant with one of the

big health-care consulting firms, and he came to me for a mortgage. I said, "If I had your background, I wouldn't be looking for a mortgage for others. I'd be looking for mortgages for myself." So after we finished our business, I met with him, and we started the company. He raised $350,000, mostly with my friends, but [also] with his "brass." [For me,] going around asking people for money was not easy. If I'd had to do it back in my political days, I wouldn't have been able to do it; I just didn't have the kind of brass to go out and say, "Charlie, why don't you give me 20 or 25 thousand dollars." But that's what they do today. You can't run today for major office unless you're willing to spend four or five hours a day raising money.

Birkner: Even at the Congressional level.

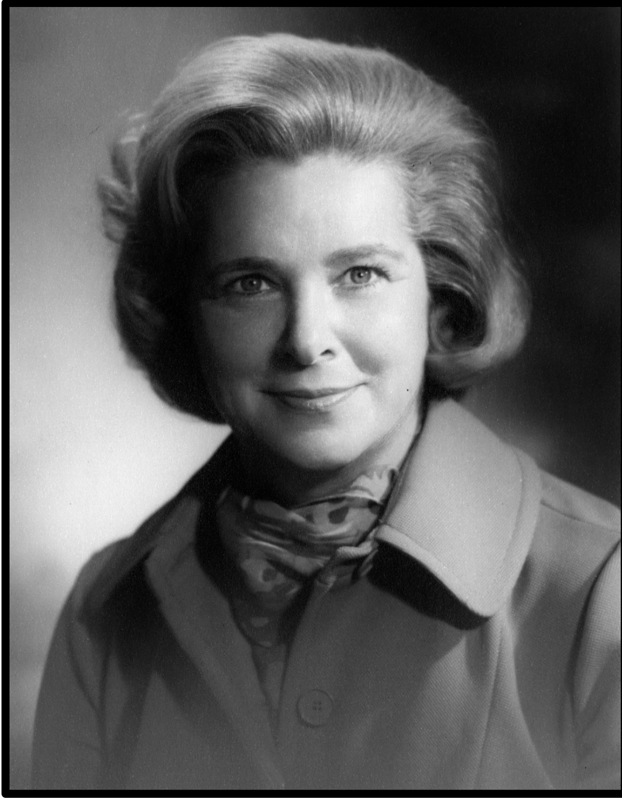
Leader: Yeah. That's what's wrong with the system; that's why the system is malfunctioning, or non-functional. Anyhow, I got started, and he was taking a salary of $25,000 and driving the company Cadillac, and I was the CEO and making nothing. Pretty soon, we were 90 days behind in our payables. I went to him and said, "I can't sleep at night. Nothing's worth that. Buy me out, or I'll buy you out." So I bought him out.

That's how it started; that's the way we raised the first money. Mary Jane, who had never been in a nursing home, was taken to a nursing home and [told], "You're now the administrator." First time she'd ever been in there. That's a new place.

Birkner: Where was this?

Leader: It was the one in Camp Hill. My wife and I borrowed enough money to bring the payables down to 60 days. Mary Jane called them all up and said, "George is going to borrow some money, [and] we'll pay it all down." Paid it down to 60 days, and had [no trouble] after that.

Birkner: What was your operational role? Were you doing the nitty-gritty stuff, or [the] big-picture stuff?



Mary Jane Leader.

Leader: I do nitty-gritty stuff today.

Birkner: I notice you plant shrubs, too.

Leader: Yesterday I took big 'mums, a bag of potting soil, and a bucket of river stones down to plant for urns in front of our building in Dover. I tend to get big into whatever I do. I think that's the fundamental thing here.

Birkner: Were you involved in hiring staff, ordering supplies, and stuff like that?

Leader: I'm doing it now. Still, at 89. That's my modus operandi. I really get into the nitty-gritty.

Glatfelter: What was the operation at that time, compared to what it

is now? What did you hope to do for the first people who came into these homes? Was it to keep them until they die?

Leader: Yeah, exactly. When we had the nursing homes, that was true; now we're in assisted living mostly. But even in assisted living, we're allowed to have hospice patients. I was down there in Dover yesterday, and I said, "How many hospice people do you have?" [The manager] said, "Two." Lutherans are very active in that, by the way; they do a lot of that for us. We can keep some patients until they die, but some of them have to go to nursing homes too.

Glatfelter: What is the difference between assisted living, independent living, and long-term care? Within the last month or two, I saw in the paper that the government is recognizing one of these stations as a separate program.

Leader: Long-term care.

Birkner: For the record, [Mr. Leader is] drawing on a piece of paper right now.

Leader: *[Points to paper]* This is all long-term care nursing homes. What we call "assisted living" now is not assisted living, technically—it's mislabeled. What we do now is personal care in Pennsylvania. We've got this license. What you saw in the press about a month ago is going to be called assisted living, which 30-some states have now. What's happening is that these people in nursing homes are getting sicker and sicker. About 10 or 15 years ago, hospitals put in a thing called DRG—Diagnostic Reimbursement Groups. When they did that, people started staying in hospitals for days instead of weeks, and lots of those people went into the nursing homes; nursing homes today have very sick people, for the most part. Additionally, there's personal care, independent living—we talked about independent too. We provide assisted living, which has just recently been signed into law by [Governor Ed] Rendell.

They haven't done the regulations on [assisted living] yet, but it's going to be some of the lesser needs that people have. Just as the hospitals are sending their people to nursing homes, the nursing homes are going to be sending people to assisted living. Personal care is what we're doing now. I forget how many patients are in personal care amongst that number.

Birkner: What's the difference between personal care and independent living?

Leader: People in independent living can take their own medication, bathing, dressing, bandaging, etc.

Birkner: They can pretty much take care of themselves.

Leader: Pretty much take care of themselves. They get three meals a day, they get transportation to the doctor and the hospital, etc. They have activities.

Birkner: Are they in either a cottage or an apartment, or is it strictly an apartment, if they're independent living?

Leader: Right now, they're mostly all apartments. However, if they want to live in a cottage, [they can]. Most places, you have to pay anywhere from $150,000 to $250,000 for a cottage today.

Birkner: My father-in-law is in one at the Brethren Home; we moved him from Pittsburgh just last year. The one in New Oxford—they call it Cross Keys. He loves it.

Leader: I know Cross Keys. They do a good job there. I remember when they started that, a long time ago. That's a big, big place now.

Glatfelter: I remember a period over a fair number of years [of] watching WITF [the public-broadcasting station for central Pennsylvania], and listening to Michael Leader talk about the different kinds of facilities you have, and how people can match their own needs to these facilities.

Leader: Basically, we have all of this now. We're really doing assisted living too, mostly personal care and independent residents, but we have everything. Michael has two nursing homes. But everything else is in this category, in these categories down here—assisted living, personal care, and independent living. With our modern buildings, I don't know what they're going to come out with for assisted living. Those regulations won't be out for a year or two, but when they are, we'll deal with them, I'm sure, and we'll be doing that as well. This is all long-term care. We only have two nursing homes, and nursing homes are having a hard time, because Medicaid rates are so low that you just can't come out ahead on Medicaid rates. A lot of nursing homes are going into rehabilitative services, where the government

pays $300 to $400 a day, and they can come out [ahead] on that.

Birkner: You started before there was Medicare and Medicaid.

Leader: Yeah. I remember the first Medicare we had, they paid us $18 a day. I talked to an old-timer in New York and said, "Can I afford to put some of those people in my nursing homes?" And this old-timer said, "Anything is better than an empty bed." Probably companies in this field have a tendency to become purely bottom line-oriented, and tend to do less and less of a good job.

Birkner: Were you purely and simply engaged in an all-for-profit business, or did you see this as a service at a time when more and more people were reaching [their] senior years? My impression is that George and Michael Leader and [their] family are in it for more than the bottom dollar.

Leader: They better be in it for a little more, or I'll take them out of my will. The first place I went to get money for nursing homes was [Albert M. Greenfield], a big realtor in Philadelphia. He owned a mortgage house.

Birkner: That you [had] worked for.

Leader: I needed to raise, I think, $285,000 or $385,000 to build a nursing home. He said, "How can you want to make money on old people who are sick?" He's a pretty good man, and that was a good question, and I didn't have an answer for him at the time. I knew there was a need; clearly the need was out there. I thought about it a long time, and the answer was, "By giving value heaped upon and running over."

Yesterday I was having lunch in a restaurant here with two girls from our office. A man walked over to me, and his wife followed. He said, "You're George Leader, aren't you?" I said, "Yes." He said, "I just want to tell you, my mother and father were in your home down in Leader Heights." I'd given all that to my family; it was so important, I gave all that to my family. Then he said, "My father died in December. My mother's still there, [and] she has Alzheimer's. I want to thank you for the great job you're doing." I said, "Thank you for coming by." After he walked away, I said to the two women, "You can't buy that with a million dollars."

You know, if you can do something with your life—and I say this

to my grandchildren, my nieces and nephews—try to make a real contribution to mankind. I'm carrying this quote here in my pocket. I just heard the [United States] poet laureate, Charles Simic, say—

Birkner: He's from New Hampshire.

Leader: He is from New Hampshire. He said, "Poetry is to remind people of their own humanity." Pretty good, isn't it? He's a good man. Who appoints him? Does the President appoint him?

Birkner: I would think so. Obviously, he's got counselors who give him the recommendation. I don't think George Bush is reading Charles Simic's poetry right now.

Leader: I want to read his poetry.

Birkner: It's very good.

Leader: Is it?

Birkner: From what I've seen, yes.

Leader: I'm always a little humbled by real poets. I read some of Jimmy Carter's stuff and I was impressed with it, because Jimmy Carter's become a real poet. You get all that good stuff in there—

[The interview pauses while Mr. Leader swats a fly!]

Birkner: We know that you've had several phases or incarnations of nursing home corporate activity. One of them is the Leader Nursing Homes, founded around 1960; Country Meadows, [founded in] 1982; [and in] 1998, Providence Place. We don't want to go into micro-detail, but it would be useful for the future just to know something about the transitions from one to the other.

Leader: We went in the nursing-home business under very difficult financial circumstances. In about three years, we were able to get it into the black, and go to New York and raise a little over $1 million. That made it possible for us to develop a nursing-home company. Being Pennsylvania Dutch, I stretched that $1 million to buy as much as possible, and that helped us to build a pretty nice company with about 3,200 beds over an 11-year period. Then, in 1981, we had tied up with a firm in Chicago called Cenco, and they were a great relationship because they didn't bother us at all—they just let us go out

and do our thing. However, when you become part of a New York Stock Exchange company, you never know who you're going to be in bed with next week, and that company was sold and was taken over. Leader was taken over by Manor Care [of] Silver Springs, Maryland, and then things really began to happen.

I did have a contract, I guess, but they didn't need me in that company. They were only interested in the bottom line, and the head of that company said, "George, you really don't care about making money that much, do you?" I said, "Well, my philosophy has always been if you do a great job, the money will take care of itself." And it did, for us. Anyhow, I lost control. I was out of that, and Michael stayed for a year, and then he pulled out because they were jacking up the rates so fast he just wasn't willing to be the tool to do that. So he joined us in what was Country Meadows, which Michael is now running. Some years later, I promised him [that] when I turned 80, I'd turn Country Meadows over to him so he could be the CEO. He'd been president, by the time I made the promise, maybe 25 years, so he was well-qualified to take it on, and I knew he would do a good job. So in 1998, as I promised, I turned it over to him. Also, Mary Jane and I gave him enough of the voting shares that he had 52 percent of the company. There's no real strength in a title unless you've got the power to back it up, so I gave him the votes!

I was at loose ends for about six months. When I got out of the company, I was 80. When I went to the banks and talked about money and asked for a 25-year mortgage, they looked at me kind of funny, because I would've had to live to 105 to pay it back. Anyhow, I took on a partner that we had trained in long-term care work several years earlier. He was a good deal younger than I was, about 25 years younger, and he's now the president of the company, and I'm CEO of a company which we operate as Providence Place.

Birkner: And his name is?

Leader: His name is Jesse Achenbach. He's from Pottsville, and he was the executive vice president of the Leader Nursing Center back in the days when we had it.

Glatfelter: There's another way to spell that: A-U-G-H-I-N-B-A-U-G-H.

Leader: That's probably what it was in the early days.

Birkner: Is this new community currently four communities, or is it more?

Leader: It's just four. We had acquired the properties and they contained anywhere from 15 to 40 acres. We developed campuses. Another four or five years and we should have it pretty well completed. We have about 500 beds, and the company is just now operating profitably. It's a very competitive industry today, but we're working hard at it, both Achenbach and I, full-time. And it's coming along.

Birkner: Pennsylvania is one of the states [with] the largest percentage of senior citizens, is that not right?

Leader: Second or third; I think third maybe.

Birkner: Part of that has to do with taxes, I suspect, and part of it is just [that] we have an aging population.

Leader: I think we lost a lot of the younger population 40 or 50 years ago, when the industrial regions were declining in terms of employing labor—regions such as the rubber industry, the glass industry, agriculture, the anthracite and bituminous areas. All those different areas declined as employers of labor. That also stabilized the population of Pennsylvania, because we were losing so many young people.

Glatfelter: How many Country Meadow facilities are there now?

Leader: Country Meadows has 11 campuses of anywhere from two to five buildings. All our campuses still have one building, but we are going to add to that; we have enough ground to expand. But you can't run ahead of your market, otherwise you won't be generating the capital to carry your mortgages [and] the debt on those properties. When you're Providence Place, as it is right now, it must carry $29 million worth of debt, all of which we put into that company in the last nine years.

Birkner: What are the implications for your being in the black with people living longer—in some cases, considerably longer—than they have in the past; for example, compared to when you started out?

Leader: Years ago, the average age in our place used to be 78. Then it gradually crept up to 81 or 82. Now, a lot of our places, the average age is 85. It's not unusual for us to have several people in our facil-

ities that are over the age of 100.

Birkner: How [are you] able to stay in the black?

Leader: People are coming in later, and they're surviving to a higher age. But I say their average stay is still maybe around two years or so.

Birkner: Really, only two years?

Leader: We have Alzheimer's sections in all these buildings, [and] those people come in and stay somewhat longer, because Alzheimer's may go 10, 12, 14 years. That doesn't mean they belong with us; they don't come to us until they have a real problem. As long as the family can care for them at home, they do it, because putting someone into a place like [ours] with Alzheimer's, or any form of dementia, is an expensive thing to do.

Birkner: When did you make your beginning commitment to philanthropy? It obviously took you time to raise capital and to be making money [before you could] give money away. One of the themes that Charles and I wanted to pursue was your philosophy of philanthropy.

Leader: I started [by] looking out for my family, which is natural. I think I started way, way back when my children were young. I gave them all stock in the company. Then the grandchildren came along, and I gave *them* all stock in the company, and then I began generating enough cash that I could give [to] some other philanthropies. Robert Schuller was one of my earliest philanthropies, because he had an Institute of Successful Church Leadership.

Birkner: Is this the fellow that has the big church out west?

Leader: I gave him, over a period of time, anywhere from $15,000 to $25,000 a year for a long time; I must have given him at least $375,000 [altogether]. Then I started, about 10 years ago, putting a lot of time and energy into philanthropies. I started a program in the Harrisburg schools called Upward Bound.

[Parts of the conversation were lost in a tape change, as Governor Leader launched into a discussion of his work with the prison population.]

Leader: We're down now to about 20-some churches. However,

we're switching over to the probationary people. We're getting a lot of probationary people in our computer program, because nothing diminishes the self-worth of a person like having a court adjudicate them—a judge saying, "You broke the law, and you're going to have to be under someone's close supervision, or [else] go to prison." So we have quite a few of those probationers now on our computer program. We train them when they're on probation, and then when they're discharged, we give them a computer to take home. Obviously, when they go home, if they're [asked], "What did the probation program do for you?" they can say, "They taught me how to run a computer." "And besides that?" "They gave me one to take home. If you want to come over, I'll show it to you." That's one of our programs.

Birkner: There are certainly a number of success stories as a result of this program. There are others that probably don't produce results as much.

Leader: When I started out 10 years ago, the statistics showed about 49 percent of the white families had a personal computer in their home, and about 11 percent of the black families had computers in the home. I said, "I want to level the playing field." So we did that. That program was a success, and we've continued it. Now we're shifting over from the churches, where from their standpoint they have really completed their missions, and going over to the probationary people. I started a prison program about 10 years ago, which we developed in conjunction with Second Chance Ministries, called "Walk Your Faith." [It trains] prisoners to become missionaries in the prison, working under the supervision of the chaplain. We have Course I, [and] when they complete that, we have a second follow-up course, Course II, which is like a graduate course; it's on the Bible, leadership, and how to sell the ideas. We're fussing around now hoping to get a third program in there which would permit them to be licensed as ministers, and then ordained after they get out, if they get a full-time job in the ministry. We haven't completely gotten that ready to offer yet, and we don't know how it'll go over with the authorities, but we hope it'll be acceptable. We're in 21 of the state prisons. We also have about 10 of the county jails with our computer program. What else?

Birkner: You've given money to HACC [Harrisburg Area Commun-

ity College] for nursing.

Leader: I got into the nursing end of it [because of a nursing shortage]. In 2010, we're going to be about 17,000 nurses short in Pennsylvania; in 2020, we're going to be 40,000 nurses short. What's happening is, the hospitals are hiring our LPNs, which we used to have in long-term care almost exclusively; they send them to school, pay their tuition, and get them upgraded to RNs. Then they're starting to steal the home-trained certified nursing assistants by paying them $2 or $3 or $5 an hour more, and they're taking over the work that the LPNs were doing. They're stealing the trained talent out of long-term care just at a time when we need more, not less. So I put $40,000 into one organization, with the idea that we'd try to get three or four innovative ideas through the LPN licensing board. After I put about $40,000 in, I was prepared to put $40,000 more in. They said they didn't want to do that; they wanted it to be plain vanilla. I said, "I didn't plan to put $80,000 into plain vanilla." So I dropped that; I'm not doing that now. What else am I doing?

Birkner: You told me this summer about a remarkable program in Africa that you're involved in.

Leader: Oh, yeah! I forgot about my Africa program. Dr. Douglas Yeboah-Awusi, the head chaplain down at SCI [State Correctional Institution at] Chester, had dual citizenship [in] the US and Ghana. He was down there as head chaplain for seven and a half years, but he'd promised God that when he got on his feet, he'd go back to Ghana and try to help the people [there]. Things were so bad in prison[s] in Ghana: they can't all lie down on the floor at the same time and sleep—they take turns. All the food they give [the prisoners] once a day, you could get it all in your hand like this *[he gestures]*—a few beans and a casaba, I think it is, is their starch food. They starve to death there, and their water is bad.

There's four prisons in this guy's territory, and I gave him a truck-mounted well-drilling rig. There are thousands of wells in Africa that are inoperable because the screens that are put in the bottom of the well to screen out the silt get clogged up; if they don't clean them out once or twice a year, they stop pumping. [It's done] by hand; they're all hand-pumped. So I gave him a well-drilling rig. I also gave him a large compressor to blow this silt out.

I'm working with an organization called GAIN—Global Aid In-

ternational. It's part of the Campus Crusade for Christ, which is an international organization. I've given them a well-driller and two compressors. A well-drilling rig can drill 50 to 100 wells a year, depending on how deep they have to go and how [lucky they are with the] rock, whereas a compressor can blow out 5 to 10 wells a week. GAIN is very strongly based in Benin. Benin has 1,700 wells that they know have not been functioning. They've turned 700 of them over to GAIN, and I've given GAIN a well-driller and two compressors. They're going to spill over into Nigeria, and I'm going to give them more compressors. There are thousands and thousands of wells in Africa that don't work, that they can't pump anymore, and that can't pump good water. Those people drink the polluted water and get internal parasites, those worms growing in their stomachs. I think half the children over there die before the age of five from bad water, because they drink whatever water they can get, and they can't get good water.

So I'm working on water in Africa. I'm going to give a lot. I'm not going to give any more well-drilling rigs, but I think I'm going to give compressors. GAIN buys them used and rebuilds them. I can get a compressor and a Toyota pickup truck, ship them over there, and have GAIN train the crew, for $30,000.

Birkner: Are you confident that [the money is] being used as you expect it to be used?

Leader: All these people set up a little congregation of Christians around those wells. The problem with those wells is that somebody has promised to take care of them, but they abscond with the money. So they don't have the money, but they're charging as much as $1,600 to blow out a well over there. We think we can do it for $300 or less.

Birkner: $300?

Leader: It's very corrupt. Ghana is one of the most corrupt countries in Africa. They're all pretty corrupt, you know.

Birkner: But you feel like you're getting something done?

Leader: I know I'm working with dedicated people. They are strong Christian groups, and they are going to set up a Christian church membership to put in charge of those wells. On the prison side, [Dr. Yeboah-Awusi] is going back on the 3rd of October. I'm assuming

that I'll see him in a week. He's going to give us authority to work with those four prisons, and if we do a great job there, we'll probably get more.

I'll tell you what else I'm doing, in addition to the water: I'm going to buy [Dr. Yeboah-Awusi] 100 acres of land along the river, not far from the ocean, and he can get free prison labor to farm it. He has one container over there, and I have just bought another container for him. There's one going over now with clothing for the prisoners, and pipes for the well-drilling rigs. We're going to clothe them, buy 100 acres of ground, and get free labor to come Monday morning and go home Friday night. They send two guards along. I'm looking now for irrigation equipment for him; he was just going to get a regular lawn sprinkler and put it up on something. I'm going to try to get him one of those that stands about three [feet] high and does a quarter-acre at a time. I've got the GAIN people looking for it now. So I'm going to get him 100 acres of land, and half the food will go to the prisons, and half he'll use for his orphanage and his mission generally.

Birkner: What about the government?

Leader: It's not the top guys in the government that are corrupt; it's everybody who administers the programs down the line. We wanted to get something released from Tema, the port city for Accra, and [the official] said, "You'll have to pay me so much. I'll get this paperwork out for you in three days." Chaplain Douglas said, "I'm a minister—I won't pay you off. You're going to have to do this." Which shocked the guy, who had probably never done [anything] before without pay. As I left there, he said, "I'll get this out for you in three days." Chaplain Douglas said, "Sometimes, you just have to stand up to them."

Down in Benin, you have to give a half-interest in the well-drilling rig to the government, then they'll furnish the trucks and certain other things. If you don't give them a half-interest in a driller, they'll confiscate it, sell it, and keep the money.

Birkner: Did you say the government will furnish the trucks?

Leader: They'll give you some trucks. Now we're putting our own trucks over there. Those compressors are on two wheels, and they're $30,000 new, and we're buying them for $4,000 and rebuilding them.

The well-driller is rebuilt in Ohio; the guy I work with out in Canada, when he comes down here, he takes them to Baltimore and puts them on the boat. He's going to come to see me this time. He rebuilds the compressors before he sends them over.

There's only certain worn parts. That's a $30,000 machine there. *[points to a copier]* I bought it for eight. I'm paying it off in three years with no interest. I said to the salesman—and we've done a lot of business—"Are there many worn parts in there? That machine had a million copies on it before we bought it." He said, "Nah." About four or five months ago, the thing was giving [my office assistant] trouble, so she called the guy. He was out here half a day, replacing all the worn parts. That thing now runs like new. The same thing is true of that $30,000 compressor: there's only certain things that wear out. It didn't cost us anything to put the new works in it. We pay him so much a month for so many copies, and it's very reasonable because it's black and white. Now, if we want color, a color machine new is $30,000, and it still costs you eight cents a copy to run it.

Birkner: We haven't discussed the Leader Educational Endowment Trust.

Leader: I gave $500,000 toward the nursing school in Harrisburg. Then they went down to York, and I gave another $500,000 down there toward that school, and they named it for me. My name is on the nursing school up here, too, but it's in a health-care building which has "Select Medical" on the name. All we have is the nursing school.

Birkner: Isn't the Leader Educational Endowment Trust something else? That's at the York County Historical Trust.

Leader: Not York County. Harrisburg.

Birkner: I read in the paper "York."

Leader: When did they start this?

Birkner: 2005, at the Historical Society, the Leader Educational Endowment Trust.

Leader: I don't think I can take credit for that!

Birkner: Somebody must have given some money in the Leader name that you don't know about.

In April 2004, Gov. Leader and family endowed a nursing area at the Lancaster Campus of Harrisburg Area Community College. L. to R.: John Ford, Dean of Allied Health Programs, HACC; G. Michael Leader, CEO, Country Meadows; Gov. Leader; Michael Klunk, former Dean, Lancaster Campus, HACC; Maida Connor, Executive Director, HACC Foundation; William Morgan, President and CEO, Eastern Program & Construction Management.

Leader: It could have been; maybe [my brother] Henry did some. Anyhow, it hasn't been announced yet, but I have a charitable remainder trust that Mary Jane and I were getting 8 percent a year [on] —around $400,000. But they had a bad year last year in the stock market, and it was going down, so we stopped taking the 8 percent. We've got it pretty well brought back up to about $400,000 now, and I am giving the income from that for an LPN nurse training scholarship at [the York campus of HACC]. HACC's up to 1,700 students down there. That's where everything is going. I'm giving the income from that for scholarships.

Birkner: It seems to me that, even though we're all in favor of small liberal arts colleges and liberal arts education, the action in America in terms of future economic viability is going to be at the community-college level. Your support for that, it seems to me, gets a real return.

Leader: With Pell grants and all, this is where people get a second chance. The average graduate from HACC is 31 years of age, which

means they've probably paid for their own education, with whatever help they got. I said one time to Dr. [Edna V.] Baehre, the president [of HACC], "$1,000 per year isn't enough [to help]." "Oh," she said, "it is. For many of our students, it's the difference between coming and not coming." That's from Dr. Baehre, and she's a smart woman.

Birkner: I think it's a great use of your philanthropy.

Leader: Well, thank you. I am trying to help. You know, I should give my money to Fels, because Fels gave me my master's degree, finally, in 1963. If I was a success as governor, 90 percent of the credit goes to Fels [Institute of Government]. Did I ever tell you the Fels story?

Birkner: I think you [did], but you can tell it again.

Leader: First of all, Dr. [Stephen] Sweeney came up, the director of the school, and said, "What can I do for you?" I said, "What would you *like* to do for me?" "First of all," he said, "if you'd like, I'll have a study made of all the major departments between now and the end of the year, and you can hand that to your appointees in the cabinet posts." We had the wisdom to accept that, and he did it. Then he said, "You don't have a staff in the governor's office." And I didn't. The [outgoing] governor didn't have the people to help him be governor. He didn't have a staff, and all his cabinet people only came in three days a week. He didn't get to know their departments all that well, and didn't have the professional skill to manage them.

Anyhow, [Dr. Sweeney] set up the Department of Administration, and sent Dr. James C. Charlesworth up there to run it for two years. Charlesworth at that time was the president of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, one of the top public-administration people in America. He came up, set it up, organized it, recruited the people—some from Penn State, one from Temple, one from Pitt, etc. Top-notch people. The third thing they did for me was [this]. We used 67 consultants, and Dr. Sweeney and his faculty probably picked 60 of them, and we carried out their recommendations. We had access to the best brains in America. George Leader didn't have to be the best brain in America. He probably wasn't.

Birkner: Well, you need to know where to go to tap into them.

Leader: That's right. I remember specifically one example. We were having trouble collecting the sales tax, and we got McKinsey & Company [to help us]. They brought in the top sales-tax collection management man from the state of California, and we sat down with him and picked his brains. We never would have found that guy in California all by ourselves, but McKinsey & Company knew where the guy was. That's the kind of people we had. We had the Public Administration Service from Chicago. My predecessors had abused the personnel system; we had 69,000 [civil servants in Pennsylvania], and thousands and thousands of classifications. If you had a friend and you were in a classification that said you couldn't make over $20,000 a year, I'd give you *another* classification that would maybe give you $25,000 or $30,000 a year. We brought PSA in, and they reclassified the entire system. Then we hired the man they sent here to do the work [as] our personnel administrator. We had a personnel secretary, [but] he was just to appease the politicians, because everything was patronage. So we kept [that] man on, and the politicians came to him, but then the application had to go to the personnel administrator. He had a job description, and if they didn't meet that job description, they didn't get the job.

Birkner: Sherman Adams and Alfred Driscoll, both Republicans, did something similar, as we've already discussed. The very phenomenon you describe as being problematic in Pennsylvania was problematic in New Hampshire and New Jersey as well.

Leader: And probably every other state in the United States.

Birkner: Yeah, but not everybody tackled it. You did. I want to ask you a quick final question; Charlie may have his own. In reading a lot about you, and reading interviews you've done with others, I notice you've discussed your dad as a person you greatly admired, [a man] who set the standard of values and priorities that you've tried to follow. Would you like to say anything about that, or about anybody else who made a difference in terms of being a model for you, or someone that you had aspired to be like?

Leader: My dad was a very positive person, even in the Depression. He didn't have it very good in his middle years; not at all. Even during the Depression, we were always assured we were going to go to college. I'm sure my dad didn't have the vaguest notion at that point

where the money was going to come from, but [he said], "Yeah, you're going to go to college." He wanted to go to college so bad he could taste it, and his father [had] said "No." There was no Social Security, and his father knew that he'd just about have enough to get him through his old age. Sell the farm, buy a house in Jacobus, which he did, and live off the proceeds of his sale. I think the interest rates then were 1.5 percent, so he had $1,000; he got $150 a year. He went to the York Markets long after they'd moved out to Jacobus, because my step-grandmother would make things like hominy and homemade stuff to put on the stand. They didn't have the garden vegetables any-more in large quantities like they once had.

The governor being interviewed, 2006.

Anyhow, Dad wanted to go [to college] and couldn't. He had one year [of education] beyond eighth grade. At 17, he passed the test to become a country schoolteacher, and taught there until his health failed him. He had to walk from our place in Leader Heights over to the school in Spry, and he'd go over early, start a fire up in the furnace, and then he had to work there all day. Then he had to sweep the floor at the end of the day, and bank the fire for the night, and hope it's going to be there the next morning when he got there early. I don't know what he did on weekends.

Birkner: Wasn't that a walk that was six miles one way, or something like that?

Leader: No, I don't believe it was that far. It might have been two or three miles to Spry one way.

Birkner: Maybe a little more?

Leader: No—wait a minute. I think he went to Dallastown, and that would've been twice as far. Yeah. I don't remember, but I thought it was Spry.

But the point is that we always were assured we'd get an education, and we all took advantage of it except my brother Paul, who dropped out of high school in his junior year. My father helped Paul to buy a farm. Paul became a turkey breeder. But Paul was very wise: he also married a woman who got a large inheritance. His wife inherited somewhere between $1 million and $2 million. That's where I made my mistake: my wife only inherited $1,000, which I spent the next day! *[laughter]*

Birkner: Your dad was someone you admired.

Leader: Dad—yeah. He was always interested in education, and ran for the school board, and one time he won, and one time he lost; twice, I think, he won. His father had been on the school board; Grandpa Leader, for whom I was named, was on the school board when I was a student in York Township. He was self-educated too, but Dad was *really* self-educated. We ate supper at 5:30 most times on the farm, and by 6 or 6:30 he was in his easy chair, with an overhead lamp there. He read for about three hours every night, and he read everything. He just soaked it up like a sponge. I didn't feel any of us

ever quite made it up to Dad in terms of intellectual curiosity. He was something. He was interested in everything.

Birkner: Is there anyone else who impacted you in a way you'd want to reflect on?

Leader: I had a couple of good teachers. I had a teacher in country school—Harry Hovis, Raymond's father. Married to a Glatfelter; I can't remember her first name anymore. Her daughter was Beulah, but I forget the mother's name. Anyhow, Harry Hovis taught at the [Jessops] country school. Back in those days they really taught grammar, and they really taught arithmetic well. I would say three-quarters of the people who go through our system today, up to and including Gettysburg College, come out and don't know their grammar. All you've got to do is listen to the television if you want to hear some bad grammar. If my [four] new adopted grandchildren from the Azores make a mistake on the [case] following a preposition, I try to explain it to them. But somebody should've explained it to those guys on television when *they* were in school.

Birkner: Did you want to close this with any questions, Charles?

Glatfelter: Didn't the Historical Society in York give you some kind of award in the last few years?

Leader: Somebody gave me an award about four or five years ago, and I think it was two organizations, one of which might have been the Historical Society. I'll have to talk to Henry; maybe Henry can refresh my memory on that. They had me down there, and it was a great evening—a lot of people that I knew as a young person were there. Most of them are retired. Some of the people I went to Sunday school with, some of them I went to school with, and it was a great evening, a memorable evening. It might have been the Chamber of Commerce, or something like that, along with the Historical Society. Henry would probably remember; he was on the board of the Historical Society for many years.

Glatfelter: He was president at one time.

Leader: I guess he was, yeah. I think he tapped me for some money at one time for that. I'll ask Henry who sponsored that.

Glatfelter: Are you thinking of any new ventures, or will you continue pursuing those that have been successful in the last few years?

Leader: Well, people see the successful ones, [and] think everything I've turned to has been a success. I don't know too many people that have been successful in everything they undertook, and it's certainly not true in my case. I tried some things that didn't work. My College Bound program [in Harrisburg] didn't work. Fortunately, when I was dropping out, they were getting a new superintendent, Superintendent [Gerald] Kohn, who was pretty good, I think, and the legislature [turned the school board] over to the mayor, and he got a better board than they had before. The board before was only interested in one thing: patronage. They were not interested in education.

The African [project]: it's ironic that I'd have a farm of 100 acres alongside a river in Ghana. I'd say that if I were a little younger, I'd go over there and help to develop that land. Anyhow, mostly right now, I'm dedicated to working with GAIN, and dedicated to helping get some of those wells in operation, to give them pure water instead of that contaminated water. I'm also dedicated to trying to help those prisons over there to stop starving people to death, giving them bad water, and jamming them into cells like sardines in a can. I know that colonial government was bad in some cases, but Ghana and Sierra Leone were English, and I'll bet you the English were much more humane to those people than [their own people are].

That is hard for me to comprehend. There's one theory now that all mankind came out of South Africa, and came up through the Middle East, and one branch went east, and one went west. The DNA seems to support that. Now, if the Orientals and the Occidentals were capable of developing civilizations almost from the beginning, why can't the Africans develop? Why are they not developing intellectually, and hopefully morally and spiritually?

Birkner: That's a multifaceted issue, and I don't think you or I could settle it. I want to say this has been a great conversation, and I think we're going to get a good result.

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Prof. Michael Birkner.

George M. Leader (1918-2013), a native of York, Pennsylvania, rose from the anonymous status of chicken farmer's son and Gettysburg College undergraduate to become, first a State Senator, and then the 36th governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. A steadfast liberal in a traditionally conservative state, Leader spent his brief time in the governor's office (1955 to 1959) fighting uphill battles and blazing courageous trails. He overhauled the state's corrupt patronage system; streamlined and humanized its mental health apparatus; and, when a black family moved into the white enclave of Levittown, took a brave stand in favor of integration.

After politics, Leader became a pioneer in the area of assisted living, with a chain of Lutheran nursing homes in central Pennsylvania. He multiplied his philanthropies, endowing a nursing center, funding education and reintegration programs for prisoners, and providing supplies and expertise to impoverished Ghana. By the time of his death, George M. Leader had lived as vigorous, productive, and—to use a word he might have appreciated—useful a life as any Pennsylvanian of his time.

On three occasions in 2006 and 2007, Gettysburg College history professors Michael J. Birkner and Charles H. Glatfelter engaged the former governor in interviews about his life and times. Leader talked expansively and candidly about his wins and losses, his prides and regrets; the excitement and bitterness of politics, the satisfactions of philanthropy, and the sustenance of family. These interviews, ranging over nearly a century of political and state history, tell the story of one of Pennsylvania's most remarkable sons.

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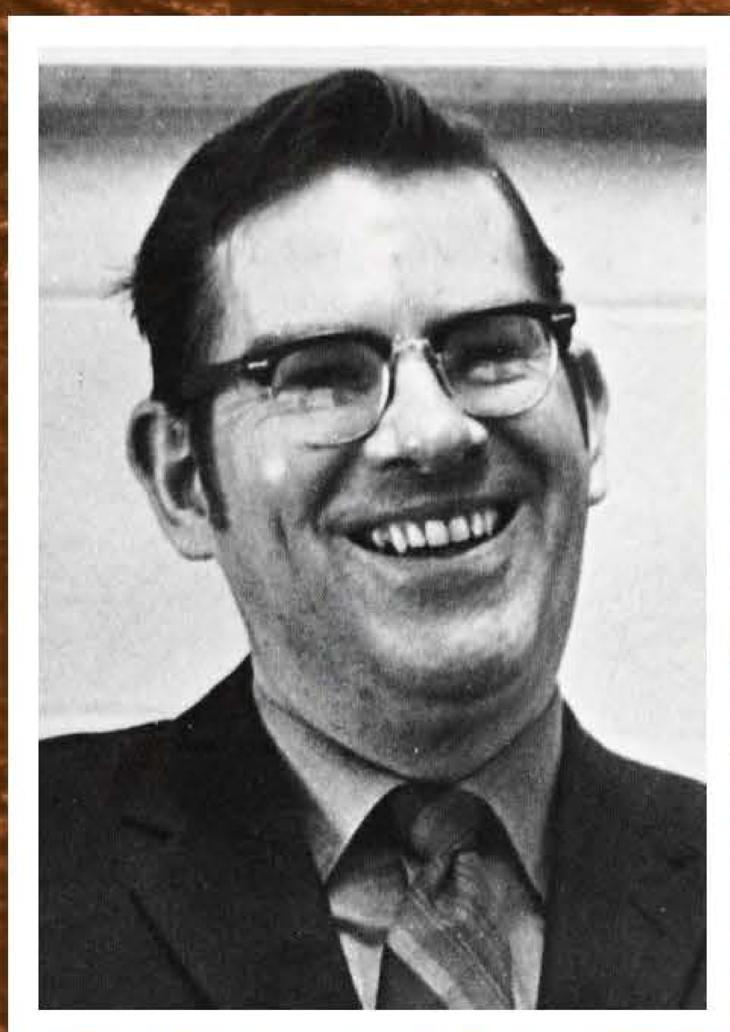

The late Charles H. Glatfelter taught History at Gettysburg College from 1949 to 1989, concluding his career as Franklin Professor. He served as Dean of the College from 1960 to 1966, and for more than four decades was the executive director of the Adams County Historical Society. Among his many works are *Pastors and People* (Pennsylvania German Society), a two-volume history of German Lutheran and Reformed Clergy in the Pennsylvania Field in the colonial period; and a two-volume history of Gettysburg College, *A Salutary Influence: Gettysburg College, 1832-1985*.

This volume was assembled under the aegis of Gettysburg College's Musselman Library, in particular its Special Collections and College Archives division, whose sizable George M. Leader collection is available to researchers. The volume is made possible through the kind support of G. Michael Leader, Karen Leader, and the Leader estate.