INTERVIEW WITH R. CHRISTIAN ANDERSON FORMER ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF BNL AND COUNCIL MEMBER AND CHAIRMAN

September 12, 1987 November 24, 1987

Dr. Hartzell: Andy, do you want to start off with your memories of the times prior to your coming on the Council, your memories of the early days at Stony Brook as far as you can recall them.

Anderson: Well, my view is that the early structure under John Toll of Stony Brook was deeply affected by the prior existence of Brookhaven National Laboratory. And early on as the System Director at the Lab I was, I guess, the point man for contacts with the University; it being quite clear that there could be a synergistic effect between Stony Brook and Brookhaven. And I had not formal connection to the University in those days. I knew Sam Gould, and I had been at the original investiture, I think it was in Rockefeller Center way, way back when; quite an elaborate ceremony. And had kept informal contact with the University campus as it developed, because we wanted to exchange staff members. Certainly we wanted to help with the students and various informal programs. There was no, in my view, by the very fact that there were no formal arrangements, it allowed Stony Brook and Brookhaven National Laboratory to interact in ways which might have been prevented by some bureaucratic structure in existence already. It's pretty clear to me that moving Stony Brook to its present location and the early emphasis on science can be attributed to the proximity of the Lab. In the history of science at the time it was clear that that kind of interaction, universities and research centers, were the key to a whole bunch of politically sensitive ideas—brain drain, or maximizing the public's investment in either research or education. And it's only in that informal sense that we have any kind of interactional goal. But it was close and deep and varied and it was not at an administrative level for the most part; but a faculty member and Lab research staff member interacted across the board. Now the thing that helped

Brookhaven, and this is a plus for Stony Brook, was that, as you are well aware, while the Lab always had a very strong academic coloration, it could never aspire to the standards of the University by virtue of the narrowness of the disciplines that support it, which I as an individual sort of regretted. There were attempts to have broadly based library at Brookhaven, but it could not support programs in the humanities or even philosophy, which might have the kinds of things developed there, and so the growth of Stony Brook into an honest-to-god first-rate University was a welcome event. And how much the Lab affected the coloration of the Stony Brook programs would be hard to define, except that I think it was very clear that Stony Brook faculty recruitment was probably enhanced by the proximity of Brookhaven, especially for many members who tried And one has to admit that right after the war, as against the present day, science was in the forefront of everybody's minds as to what the future might endless frontier kind of thing. That's changed, perhaps all to the good. But Stony Brook grew up, as did in fact Brookhaven, in a post-war sense of euphoria about the power and even the majesty of intellectual activity, especially in science. Both Brookhaven and Stony Brook benefit from the fact that they were created after the second world war under the then new conditions, and again there are plus and minuses in that. And Stony Brook was developed as rapidly as it did in the way it did because it had no debt to an academic past.

Dr. Hartzell: That's a good point.

Anderson: It is a good point in the sense that now it looks as if it's been there for a long time.

Dr. Hartzell: When were you first involved at Stony Brook?

Anderson: Well, let's see the Lab was founded as we've just been reminded in '47 and Stony Brook, then what's interesting also in this history is to relate that the National Science Foundation came after that, and then I think about that time Stony Brook, not Stony Brook but the University Center on Long Island at Planting Fields, which is what you know better than I do, is when?

Dr. Hartzell: Well, the Center actually started taking in students in the fall of '57. That was in Oyster Bay. And then they moved out to Stony Brook in September of 1962 and that's when I came.

Anderson: Well, okay, so then I've been involved, as I said earlier, with the University Center only after it had been transplanted to Melville's estate. And again it's my view that locating there is probably superficially attached to the rather generous land grant by Melville, but I think in the minds of certain of the major participants being closer to the Lab was a key to that move. And it's my view that Melville had never in his wildest dreams an idea that the thing would become a large university, or one devoted to science. I think that's fair to say.

Dr. Hartzell: He was given in '57, he was the first Suffolk resident given the award by the Long Island Daily Press then as Distinguished Citizen, that was in September of '57. And he gave quite a speech, primarily interested in the economics of public education, which indicated that one reason he had given the land was to protect the Three Village area from the encroachment of developers.

Dr. Hartzell: I didn't know he was from New Zealand.

Anderson: Oh, he's a New Zealander, oh, that's very important. As a matter of fact so was Marsden; I met Marsden when I was there. And we were treated royally, which is of course in New Zealand means something, because they are more for the Queen than

Englanders are. But anyway we went on the South Island, and we were driven by a chauffeured limousine all over the place, saw all the university centers. And I was the one to speak about the relation of universities to industrial and other research institutions. They were, unfortunately, as they were in England at the time loathe to see the connection between research and university education. Anyway we would stop in various places, scenic places along the way, and we'd signed in that we were there, and we were asked to do that because this was a high level thing, and people followed us all over the place, reporters tagging along and so forth. We got to Queenstown, which is about as far south on the South Island as we were going to go, and we were in a lounge having a drink, and someone said, are you Dr. Anderson. And I said yes; there's a lady and gentleman that want to meet you. So I went over to them, and it turned out to be the Melvilles. Now at that point I had never met either of them, and they were on a private trip of their own with several aides.

Dr. Hartzell: Remember what year this was?

Anderson: Well, I'll resurrect it now that we've talked about this. Fantastic, absolutely fantastic that the whole thing comes together something like seven thousand miles away. We had a very pleasant chat, and I said who I was and where I was from. And they didn't know that, all they knew that there was a Dr. Anderson from Brookhaven, New York, as part of this other group. They hadn't a clue at the time. We had a great talk, and then of course, I met them subsequently several times, mostly ceremonial because we have no social ties. But I thought that was, it tied so many things together about my interest in Stony Brook and what was developing there, the connection between the two, which I must say the Melvilles couldn't comprehend and really weren't interested in. But nevertheless, this sort of thing happened, it was just incredible. I'll get you a date, because it would be of interest to you, because after that it seems to me the Melvilles, as they must necessarily have been, they were not that young at that stage, although she lasted. Is she still alive, is she?

Dr. Hartzell: She's still alive, yes.

Anderson: But I suppose that

Dr. Hartzell: Not well, no.

Anderson: She's a marvelous, they were both marvelous.

Dr. Hartzell: He lived to be 90.

Anderson: Well, that's not bad, not bad.

Dr. Hartzell: We're slowly approaching 90.

Anderson: We're getting there, getting there, except for the aches and pains. Anyway the other connection with Stony Brook in those days was that I would be occasionally called to Albany for some sorts of meetings. As a matter of fact I was a member of the, maybe was appointed by Rockefeller, to look at research and development in the State of New York, and I would have to get out my papers on this thing. And it was at that time that there were discussions about the growing importance of Stony Brook and methods by which it would be further strengthened. But like most gubernatorial commissions, very little came of it.

Dr. Hartzell: Why, do you know?

Dr. Hartzell: I've just been to San Diego, University of San Diego. It's quite a difference.

Anderson: Yeah, well, even on the record, but off the record, when we were trying to recruit to replace Johnny Toll, we had a couple of beautiful people in our sights who came here, who looked at that thing and said no way. Now, if we had had the same structure as California, we would have some of the very best people in the country in the SUNY system and at Stony Brook, on that one issue; and they were right, they were right. Now, how were we going to convince Albany, whoever the hell they are, that this is insane. It's not a matter of money, and I still insist that through 10% less if Stony Brook could manage that money, we would be that much better off. Well, anyway, this kind of argument ought to be on the record, somebody ought to be saying what you don't say in Albany because it's politically, even my daughter says, you don't want to fight Cuomo. Well, I'm not really fighting Cuomo, but I'm fighting the system that Cuomo is readily exploiting. The other person I still, well, I'm trying to remember his name, Gould, because think of the good people that were welcome to the SUNY system that left for other places out of sheer disgust and dismay and frustration. Pellegrino is as good an example as any. Now these people are not ne'er-do-wells or soreheads, these are distinguished people, and the State lost them. And unfortunately Stony Brook is as good an example of the baleful effects of that. Now, again, Johnny Toll had probably expended all his political capital and his psychic energy on getting Stony Brook to the point it was when he was lured away. So I don't take it in that specific instance, it would have been a tragedy to have lost Johnny. You needed a sort of consolidation of what was an enormously but it had to settle down, because even I was dismayed at some of the disjunction of the University then. You remember as well as I do. I. I. Robbie made one point about Brookhaven which fails in the long term but which I used to futilely argue with Haywood about, that for even scientists they need an atmosphere which is aesthetically pleasing, and Brookhaven has no aesthetics at all, and the failure at Stony Brook was the same thing. It is now a campus, but it could have been

done much better with the same amount of money, but you had bureaucratic intervention in the creation of the building. Again, another fault which can be put back that it's not statutory and therefore you had another part of the government saying how we build buildings and must make them look like prisons, and you can't have that; I'm sorry, it won't work, it doesn't work.

Dr. Hartzell: Right. I'm going to change the record.

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Did you have a hand in bringing in Toll?

Anderson: No, not directly. I talked with Gould about it, but at that point he said that they had somebody in mind, and I asked him who it was, and he said he was not at liberty to say, because you know those are generally kind of things if you let the news out, very often you lose the quarry. And it turned out to be Johnny Toll. So my effect was, I suppose, along with a million other people to press to get something there because things were going pretty poorly, in my view. I don't know whether they were or not. But you just can't have a growing institution without somebody who's going to take in a direction firmly, it may be the wrong direction, but something has to happen. Because with so much lost in the sense of not, there's no community on Long Island, that's another problem, but even the community that exists, there was no great local force, there was suspicion, there was a lack of focus among the leadership of all sorts. The connection with Brookhaven was, and Brookhaven's focus, as it necessarily was and shouldn't have been, was to Washington. And Stony Brook's is to Albany. It's not to Long Island, and so the local community has remained, we've been unable to galvanize any support.

Dr. Hartzell: I think the only time that there was support galvanated was when the report of the Muir Commission on education for the health sciences came out in '63 and flatly stated that the first comprehensive health science center should be located at Stony Brook. And then the Meadowbrook Hospital and the Nassau people complained about

that. And Lee Dennison and the other Suffolk legislators really got behind the report. Do you remember anything about that.

Anderson: No, again, my only memory of it is that, unfortunately, I took the iconoclastic view that their interest was only the typical parochial political interest in something that would create jobs in the new facility. In my view the good thing about the Muir Report was, yeah, it established the Center, but it ignored again the idea that it should be imbedded in a first-rate university. I know the words are there, but from my point of view there was no examination of the foundation on which this thing would be put in conjunction with the University itself.

Dr. Hartzell:	•••••
Anderson:	

Dr. Hartzell: I can remember Muir and Lester Evans of the Commonwealth Fund coming into my office in the fall of '62. I had been on the job about two months. These two gentlemen came in. I had no idea who they were, and they came in, said what they were interested in doing, and one of the points they made, they wanted to locate health science center on the campus of a growing institution where the administrative structure was not yet set in concrete, and they had an idea that the two institutions could develop together and that that would be an advantage to both institutions. And so they were inclined to favor Stony Brook. I got our Graduate Council together while they were still on campus, and we had a good long session. I had been on the board of a hospital in Cedar Rapids and the board of a school of nursing in Pennsylvania, and we talked back and forth. I think their idea was there, it was pretty firmly in their minds. The Commonwealth Fund is the one gives only in the field of medicine. Now how well all that has worked out, to a certain extent yes, and from other standpoints, probably no.

Anderson: Well, the old joke is the only worse for a university president and a medical school is two medical schools. But the tensions all not all bad in the modern world, and I think has certainly exactly the right idea, that let's see if after all of the twists and turns one can't try to re-establish what I think may of us believe to be

absolutely essential, a coordinated relationship between academic institution and a health facility. A health facility needs the class and style and point of view of what we take to be traditional research. Medicine is a profession, it's not a science in that sense. Now they picked a good place at the time under Johnny Toll. But again my feeling is that the underpinning is where whatever failures are taking place, and I'm afraid there are some in the division between the institutions as they view or are viewed by Albany again. Now Albany looked at Stony Brook as an integral institution, both of these pieces under one common head. It would make a large difference. It will never heal the professional dignities of positions on one hand and Ph. D. Nobel Laureate on the other, that's impossible. But there are within all the connections a way to make a strong combination, and it should be endorsed. People ought not to be allowed to go off in their various directions. Brookhaven would have been a mistake if it was an institution for its own stand. Its value then and now is that it serves the academic community and both sides get the results. And at Stony Brook the same thing is taking place. The flaw is not at Stony Brook, but in how it's viewed in Albany. I could beat that one to death, of course. And there are ways to solve it. That is, there were during the latest Commission's deliberations, which I was much closer to obviously. The idea that yes, by god, at some point the University, SUNY, could be statutory. It could be written in so that it was accepted as a proper function on behalf of the people of the State of New York. To go and on and on, rather to be recreated every year through the normal budget processes. And there were legislators that were all for this, but it was quite clear that the Governor and lot of other vested interests would fight it to the death. So it will have to be done at another time, if at all. If you look back at Stony Brook or at Brookhaven for that matter, flaws will be seen in the fundamental, not the scientific or intellectual concepts, that underpin them, but the way Washington or Albany respectively looked at the place that these institutions were to take in the society as a whole. You know, we don't have a national university because the states prevented it, just like Meadowbrook wanted to prevent the existence of a major "competitor." Why the hell do we have to have

capitalism everywhere. It's like Wilson's at the last about really the whole edifice of science's socialistic, in fact, and he's right. Now there is the competition to be first and all of that. But we couldn't operate on pure entrepreneurship, nor should a university. I'm really not obviously, there are certain threads that go back into the period you're studying

Dr. Hartzell: Well, I'd like to carry it as far forward in time as you can remember, because I regard '71 as ostensibly a cut-off period, we had to do something of that kind. Bentley Glass left and I left and Johnny had gotten things decently started, well started by '71. But your familiarity is with the period after '71, so let's, while we're here, let's get as much of that on the record as possible.

Anderson: Another guy that you should talk to about this period would be John Burness, who is now Vice President at Cornell and who was Johnny Toll's hatchet man and did a lot of the political dirty work, let's put it that way.

Dr. Hartzell: I knew John

Anderson: Okay, he was a bull in the china shop but what he did was to mirror Johnny Toll without having any of Johnny Toll's strengths. Okay, now, you see you're making me tie this to specific dates or periods or something like that, and I really can't do that. Let's talk a little about how I got on the Council in the first place. That's pretty far back, because I think my tenure as a member and then chairman of the Council is as long as anybody's in the history of the institution and probably forever now because they reduced the term of Council members from nine to seven years. Johnny wanted not only the kind of interaction that was occurring fruitfully between members of the faculty and Brookhaven, but he wanted a more formal relationship, and I think he hit on trying to get somebody from the Lab once again, as had occurred many years before with George Collins, to sit on the Council. And it was a struggle evidently because then and now these Council member seats were taken to be a political plum, and there is an attempt, especially with Cuomo, for which I deeply fault him, to try to get all the ethnic diversity and other kinds of things involved, plus a rigid, absolutely rigid political partisanship.

The first test was and is, are you whatever the Governor is, a Republican or Democrat. I fault both sides for this because it's my view that the first question should be are you interested in the University. You can answer that yes or no, then it's perfectly proper to say are you a Republican or Democrat, and then to see what color you are or ethnic background. But it's almost exactly the reverse. So I gather, Johnny didn't so say, but a peculiar thing happened, and this is the way history comes like the loss of the nail in the shoe of the horse thing, a powerful member of the then existing Council, his turn was running out, and this was under a Republican Governor

Dr. Hartzell: Rockefeller.

Anderson: Was it still Rockefeller, I guess so. And so somebody resigned and in that resignation there was a gap of say a year or so in which an appointment might have to be made, but this powerful person wanted a full new term, which might no occur because this was, they didn't want to fill in the replacement, that is, you get your term or you can be replaced. And it's easier to put somebody in as a replacement, because all the normal tests don't have to be done, that was me. Johnny figured out they he could put my name in, it didn't have to be me, but it had to be somebody from the Lab, but I was a logical candidate because of what I was doing at the Lab. He put me in, and it went through. Then, you see the Republicans were anticipating losing the Governorship, and they were right. But this guy then stayed on a full term, and given up his own term, and I fit into the gap. So that was my first introduction of how these things happen. And then it was easy under a Democratic Governor to re-appoint me after the short interim term. But again, apparently Johnny had an awful time getting me both re-appointed and made chairman. I don't know what he did to do this, but it was probably the new Governor, who was it, Carey"

Dr. Hartzell: Carey followed Rockefeller.

Anderson: It must have been Carey, and of course he's almost as bad as anybody about making appointments. I don't know what the hell he did as Governor. Anyway, it slipped through, is essentially what happened, because both before, except when you had

......, the membership of the Council is a dismal record. I replaced a guy that turned out to be a felon, you know whatever his name was. And one of the annoying things was that he interviewed me, Johnny was, you know he was very good at kissing butt when he had to, we went to this guy's place, to a restaurant, sort of like a Mafia sort of place. I guess passed the test more or less; he paid almost no attention to me, looked at a couple of letters that Johnny asked him to sign, so I got the blessing and was allowed in. In this interim appointment that we're talking about, not the full term, and then of course the political nature of the Council really came out during the search for a replacement for Johnny Toll, and you know that story. It was for me a bitter, frustrating, maddening kind of business.

Dr. Hartzell: I thus far have no one dealing with it. You probably know better than I do what actually went on. I think we ought to have some of that.

Anderson: Well, some time, that's a story that ought to be told but today is not it in the sense that it's going to take a long time. There's a long complicated story. As you very well remember, the search was completed, negated and had to be started all over again. And the interesting thing to me was, again, the structure of the governance of the University, because you have this peculiar system whereby the local Council is the one that finds the presidential candidate and then has nothing to do about the real appointment or the conditions of the appointment.

Dr. Hartzell: Just makes the recommendation.

Anderson: It's written in, there is no other way to do it. I mean, if the Trustees have the fiduciary responsibility, they ought to search for the goddam candidate. But you see it's one of these political kinds of construction, which has no place in the University governance. Anyway that's a good story but at another time, Karl, because that would take at least a two hour session. But sometime, the other thing I could do, would be quite happy to do, because I like to go over to the University and nose around and see old friends, I could come over there and do it over there.

Dr. Hartzell: Good.

Anderson: But, if you then look at Stony Brook, at decisive changes in its formation and maturation, I would have to say, despite the fact that I was a principal in this miserable business, there is a decisive change at the time Toll left and a new person came in. This is not to say that it would occur, this is not to say that Marburger made the difference, but the difference occurred by the transition, in other words everybody's view changed as to what the University's expectations might be, and it had more than finishing the End of the Bridge and that kind of stuff. A sea change in a sense, you saw the differences in the way the community supported it, you saw the entrenchment of the bureaucracy in Albany during that hiatus, and things that saddened me about it. On the other hand, we made it work. That is, we got a damn good person to come in there; off the record in a sense, not the first choice but we'll go through that some day. That was the point at which we got some people from the west coast out of that system who knew of Stony Brook's reputation and were more than willing to come and be considered until they saw the actual situation. Boy, boy, if I were the Governor I'd be embarrassed as hell about that, but apparently Governors aren't interested in structures which they poorly understand.

Dr. Hartzell: Right.

Anderson: That's about how simple it is.

Dr. Hartzell: I guess we get the kind of governors we deserve.

because they are taking the tack that nobody is protecting the American people and ideals, but the workers. Interesting term. So screw Wall Street and screw Madison Avenue, we got to go back and see, you know, I think the failures in the United States have been due to management. The workers are essentially indifferent, they'll work their butts off or they'll screw up the system depending upon how they are treated. So on the basis of what they deserve, I don't know. Any way, Karl, you must be about the end of this, okay. And I will, if you want to fill gaps in this thing when you get it back there, we can go back this far. And I would be happy to come some time. Can I keep these two things?

Dr. Hartzell: Sure, right.

Anderson: Some time and talk about that other, because this is not because, to repeat, I was involved in it, but because I think there were going to be certain new directions for Stony Brook in the post Johnny Toll era. The question comes up as to what they might have been and what they have become. Frankly it would have been a disaster if Alec Pond had become President.

Dr. Hartzell: Well, uh

[end of tape and first interview]

Dr. Hartzell: A second interview with R. C. Anderson of Brookhaven at his home, November 24, 1987. Yes, I went out to see Paul Damaz. What else but basically I have nothing thus far as late as the second period of Alec's acting presidency and you start anywhere you want on that. I have a good deal on John Toll, not only from him but from other people, from Mrs. Moore, in other words I've talked with her. And I've also talked with Larry Murray. You get different points of view from different people.

Anderson: Oh, absolutely, absolutely.

Dr. Hartzell: But I want to know what Sidney and I should ask him, I'm going to ask him first his period from the time that he came, which is the same year I did.

Anderson: He's been there fairly early, sure.

Dr. Hartzell: He was there in '62.

Anderson: Right, right. Well, let me start with several general observations about Alec. And this is that when I first joined the Council, he was sort of an enigma.

Dr. Hartzell: When was that, what point

Anderson: That would have been something like 14 years ago. I was on the Council for 11 plus years and I was chairman for, what, 9, something like that. It was clear to me that the relationship between Johnny Toll and Alec Pond was not easy, although all of the evidence from the outside suggests that they worked very closely together, still I think there were basic tensions between the two of them, and this says a little bit, not a great deal, about the subsequent history of Johnny's leaving and Alec Pond not being able to cut the mustard as far as both the local people as well as the Board of Trustees about his abilities to run that institution. In one sense he was used by Johnny, Johnny used everybody, to do the kind of unpleasant jobs that the president of the United States put some of his staff to. That's normal, that's the way institutions are arranged; the president is above the battle, and somebody has to engage in it, and then two people that worked very closely together, in my view, on the kind of, to me, sort of dirty work, both political on campus and political off campus was John Burness and Alec Pond.

Dr. Hartzell: Burness and Pond

Anderson: Yeah, they worked rather closely together and let me foretell part of it that John Burness is part of a, I thought, an unfortunate effort on the part of certain of the Council members to create a dossier for Alec Pond, with the clear intent that they wanted him to be president because they felt they could control him, this is my view. And Burness, without my knowledge, worked with members of the Council in producing, getting a huge number of letters, a disproportionate amount of evidence in support of his candidacy. Now the difficulty arose when it was absolutely logical for Alec to become the acting president. I mean

Dr. Hartzell: He had been before.

Anderson: He had been before. There seemed to be nothing on the horizon that would indicate the depth of feeling both ways about Alec. And one has to look at this as the kind of political capital he built up and political enmity he built up in his post serving Johnny. Anyway, I talked to him at the beginning of this period when he was the acting president when everybody agreed he was a leading candidate to become president at Stony Brook. It didn't go well because I said, not because of what I said, but as it turned out later it might not have helped things, I said, Alec, here's a real opportunity to demonstrate in a year or so, which is about what it takes to do it, that you both want and can show the administrative abilities that the job requires. What he did was very strange to me, I said that I'm sure the Trustees would be quite willing to give you additional ad hoc administrative help because this is a very difficult situation for you, that is, you're going to have to demonstrate a new character. And what he did instead was try to run the University during that year out of his pocket. He worked pretty much only with people with whom he was comfortable, and was not secretive so much as unable to set up a working administrative function that would quiet the doubts about him and at the same time solidify his credentials for the post. He, in my view, blew it in the year he was acting president for whatever reason. Now, one of the reasons, it's an interesting one, it's a philosophical one, it had to do with the fact that Alec is an ideologue, he's very much like Reagan. Johnny Toll is a idealistic man, but he's a pragmatist. He sets a certain agenda, he sees the University as being thus and so and he beats everybody to death to do it, but he's not an ideologue, he's not so fixed in his views that he can't make adjustments to see the longer or larger goal; I think that's still true about Johnny. That comes out in my view of his parentage and his time in China and the rest of it. The thing that disturbed me most about Alec during this period was that he would absolutely rigid about the size Stony Brook should be in his view. You can go back and look it, but it was the time when people were talking about a University of 20,000 to 25,000, and he insisted time and time and time again that he had a rationale for a University of that size, but would never come up with it. In other words, he had a vision, it may have been a good vision,

Dr. Hartzell: Who was in Albany at the time, was Larry still there?

Anderson: Yes, there were a whole bunch of clowns, I think I made myself clear about the kinds of people that had important positions there.

Dr. Hartzell: Was Dearing there?

Anderson: Dearing, I don't know. Hank Dullea was there, now Hank's okay but I think he's, in my view, failed the University in his post as a confidente and aide to Cuomo. There was a crazy guy who was the head of the Construction Fund, who raised cattle, a pleasant sort of chap.

Dr. Hartzell: Not George Dudley?

Anderson: No, no, no, another guy. But he was doctrinaire the way Alec was, I mean they had some fixed Rockefellerian view of how big things should be, and they could never realize that this was a sort of target and not a God-given right and expectation. So you can forget about the fact that Democrats have done poorly by the University, but Rockefeller's ideas were pretty grandiose. I mean nobody adjusted, in my view. Anyway, that year was also, in my view, a disaster because of the kind of politicking that surrounded whether Alec Pond would or would not get the presidency. As I mentioned earlier, when members of the, all the Republican members of the Council wanted to clearly control who the president was and after that control how the president

would operate, and they had meetings or a famous meeting in the office of the then Treasurer of Nassau County, the guy that I have admired as a Republican, whose name will come to me in a minute, without my, I was then Chairman, without my knowledge. And the whole purpose of it was to set up an arrangement whereby they could engineer Alec Pond's presidency. Well, of course, I obviously heard about that, and that was the beginning of my saying he's not the right person for the job. I really do think I was very open-minded when I talked to him at the beginning of, I said to him, Alec, this is an opportunity for you, you can convince people that you are the man for the job. I think he didn't see it as that, he thought he was a caretaker for winding down Johnny Toll's tenure, and didn't realize that this would be a test of his own. He had opportunities to repeat I said to him, I'm sure, and I think I was perfectly correct, that he could have gotten extra help from Albany on an ad hoc basis, which he desperately needed. Johnny ran too thin a show at the top. It was a mistake, but it's what happens when people are single-minded. Alec was single-minded in a different way. Anyway the irony is that if my fellow Council members had played the game a little more intelligently, I think Alec Pond would now be president, and it would have been a disaster. They tried to rig too much.

Dr. Hartzell: I've heard from others that Alec was tarred with Johnny's brush as far as the Central Office was concerned.

Anderson: I can't answer to that. But if anything, I think Alec Pond came on even stronger about certain issues than Johnny did, and both of them were a little overwrought about it, that is, when Johnny went for example to Maryland one of the conditions he imposed on the appointment was that he would have access to the Governor. And I don't think that has made a damn bit of difference; he had a vision that he could create what he wanted if he had access. And that's still true in Albany, everybody thinks if you can get to Cuomo, you can get what you want. I don't think that's quite what the game is. I mean, the University is a desperately important part of the State system, but it's not the

whole State system; there are other things that command people's attention. Well, there were clear manipulations in the search committee.

Dr. Hartzell: Who was chairman of the search committee?

Anderson: Well, that was another fiasco, that was another fiasco, which I said later was a mistake I didn't catch at the time, I was.

Dr. Hartzell: You were, uh huh.

And that's wrong, because in the nature of things the chairman of the Anderson: Council, or any Council member, should not be intimately involved in the search process. And yet, I can't recall, I would have to look back and see how this happened. But this was, I think, something Johnny sort of pushed, and I think the members of the Council pushed on the grounds that I would be easy to convince of what their requirements were. They were acting the way the Board of Trustees of Ohio State University fired a football coach, he's not winning kind of thing, the preemptory kind of thing. They thought, they ignored, because it had never come up in the State system, they thought whatever they wanted the Board of Trustees would buy. And yet there must have been earlier, what you mentioned a minute ago, that SUNY Central and the Trustees were pretty unhappy with the kind of activities taking place at Stony Brook, with the demands made that is. They were large demands, they were rigidly presented, and vigorously pursued against other demands on the system, so both Johnny, and in consequence, Alec had lost a lot of political capital up there, I think Johnny knew that. And the fact that he had this quite good offer from Maryland made it easy for him to leave at that juncture. I think you would agree with me.

Dr. Hartzell: Johnny I think had good relations with Hughes who was then Governor. But the new man is something else again and

Anderson: Well that's it, that's what happens, that's what happens. You can't, I don't think state universities have to be politically aware and sensitive, but they're institutions that last longer than given administration or any complexion of the State Legislature and all that kind of stuff, and I doubt whether I could do a creditable job with

that, but the glory and finally the deficits of the University are due to Johnny. But things now are different. We're in a completely different world. And I have to say that the end result of the search and the agonies and the disagreeablenesses have turned out pretty well. Marburger was by no means my individual first choice, but the Trustees couldn't get up the scratch for the really, I think, excellent, this is not to say Marburger's not excellent, but we had a choice of some people, other people, from the California system, but they quite rightly wanted more than the University was willing to go for. In other words, I don't think Blinken

Dr. Hartzell: Was it salary?

Anderson: Salary and other things that are inherent in the system out there. This is nothing new. Why come to the east coast at a disadvantage, I mean, I was appalled, I really was appalled at the reaction from Albany on all sides about what was clearly going to be an issue: the prerequisites of a president of a distinguished institution. They did not produce, and under those circumstances it was very likely that we would get an Alec Pond. For him it would have been a step up; but for somebody of say Johnny Toll's caliber, we had to do a lot more and didn't do it.

Dr. Hartzell: Was Wharton there then?

Anderson: No, who's this now?

Dr. Hartzell: Wharton was Chancellor.

Anderson: Oh, Wharton. Yes, unfortunately he was Chancellor, and I think he was a disaster, and now I'm unhappy to see that as a retiree he's making a half a million dollars a year running TIAA and CREF. I think I've on the record for the second time; I find that disagreeable. He obviously had to be given a post of some merit and distinction to get him the hell out of there, but they didn't get him out of there soon enough. That's another story.

Dr. Hartzell: What was the trouble with him, do you think?

Anderson: He wasn't that competent, and he was using the then enormous sensitivity in academia about affirmative action. He blithely came from a distinguished

background; his father was in the foreign service and all that, so he lucked out. And I think we could have been better served by another person, black or white. My problems with him were not that he was black, but that he wasn't competent. You know it's a little like Reagan, a personable, articulate, with-it kind of person but somehow not geared into great adventure. This is a silly thing to say, but I think a lot of people have felt strongly and properly that Stony Brook was going to be very special. It started out that way, it grew that way, and it still may be distinguished, but it's not going to be special. That day is gone for a variety of reasons, and maybe we, as dreamers, wanted to push the dream a little too far. Anyway, Wharton was a mistake. He couldn't get along with the Governor, his relations with

Dr. Hartzell: Was that Carey then or was it Cuomo?

Anderson: It was Carey then and Cuomo was even worse, of course. Carey was not in there, he'd work an hour a day and that was it. I had two meetings with him at political rallies, had relatively long talks with the Governor, how many minutes or hours can you get, I had minutes with him, and I really talked to him. I sensed that his political instincts were beautiful, that's why he became Governor. He covered beautifully, but it was clear to me that he didn't know what the hell was going on. Cuomo is a much brighter guy, but his views about the State system, State University, are neutral or probably negative. He's a private school guy.

Dr. Hartzell: Private school guy, right. Well, it was lucky that Dewey came from the University of Michigan and had the vision of a state university.

Anderson: Yeah, we needed that. Just as I argued during the Commission, the Davidson Commission, I argued that Stony Brook should have, but lacking that and understanding how it could not happen, the Trustees of the State of New York should not be so parochial, that is, there ought to be people drawn nationally for at least one third or one fourth of the flock of the state university.

Dr. Hartzell: But that does something to the patronage.

I understand this. Then I backed off and I said, well, look the patronage Anderson: available through the Council is limited, do it through the Council. Why not, for each of the campuses, Binghamton, Buffalo, Albany and Stony Brook, have one or two Council members drawn nationally, what harm would there be to that. What a cachet it would be to have, you know, and it would shake up the local dunderheads that are appointed. Oh, you know dreaming, here we are dreaming again. Anyway, the one year that Schmidt was here was a really healing year, in my view. It was a brilliant choice. Wharton had asked me to approach the head of Sloan Kettering at the time, the guy who wrote Life of the Cells and who was at Stony Brook in the medical department for a while. I went to him, and he was very cordial about it. He was miffed that I was sent to do the duties of Wharton, and I sensed that. Jesus, the kind of crap, really, for the rewards of it, I enjoyed going there and talking with him, but it was quite clear I was a spear carrier, and there was something going on that they didn't want to talk about, and he dismissed it eventually out of hand. And Wharton never called me back about that, which he was famous for. He would never check back; he would give you some dirty job to do, and you go ahead and do it, and then he would never come back. Then the second go around I think was a lot healthier and produced a decent result, but that was all unnecessary.

Dr. Hartzell: Did Frank Yang have

Anderson: Yes, position, what was his, well, he was very strongly for Alec, very strongly for Alec; and his, well, let me tell you now, this is off the record.

Dr. Hartzell: Okay, well what kind of questions then should we ask Alec.

Anderson: Well, I would go back to what I think is still an important general position, find out from Alec what he then saw the University becoming both while Johnny was still there and what he thought the University would become when he was President,, you know he was a candidate for the presidency. And then if you wish to push it, did he think this vision was possible under the circumstances. And see how it flows from there because he may have changed, I suspect, he's had to change. And maybe he will look back and say, well, the kind of things he was pushing

for may have been unrealistic, but I don't know. But don't do it on a with personality and all that, do it on the basis of vision, what he thought was, ask the same questions you ask anybody else, what did we think Stony Brook ought to be, what did he see it becoming at the time that Johnny was leaving, and what did he see he wanted to do with it. He did not articulate that to me at the time. What he wanted the University, except for that one crazy thing, the physicists obsession with quantitative measure; he thought it had to be a certain size to do whatever he had in mind for it; but he didn't articulate, you see. I'm a scientist too, and I understand the faults of going quantitative; it leaves out the richness of all the qualitative things. Now, that is not to say that the traditional academic can handle the university in the modern world because numbers are important. The educational scheme of things must not only include science but be pretty much predicated on this modern view of a society. So you can't have a historian or the traditional philosopher trying to run the goddam thing, and here was a guy with all the credentials: a physicist in the post second world war world who ought to be able to manipulate. Well, it didn't work, and we never and a different president But from my point of view I admire a lot of things about Alec.

Dr. Hartzell: Well, what were some of them?

Anderson: Well, he was on the surface and to a very large degree self-effacing. And I think he was put up to this, that is, I think when it became clear Toll was going to go, there was an enormous amount of dismay in the scientific departments that they are going to get some asshole liberal art guy running it, right. You know, it was very important, as a matter of fact, that Marburger was a physicist, and that wasn't trivial, that wasn't trivial, as it turned out.

Dr. Hartzell: Well, that's typical of scientists, they think the hard sciences required a top level of intelligence and that you won't find that level among any of the other disciplines.

Anderson: really is embarrassing to be scientist, and your statement is entirely correct, but they entirely wrong. Wrong, Karl, for god's sakes.

Dr. Hartzell: But that shows how little they understand what's going on outside of science in the other disciplines.

Anderson: Exactly, exactly, and Alec is in that mold, I'm sorry to say. That's why he failed administratively and politically in the larger sense.

Dr. Hartzell: Did he have opposition from people in the social sciences and the humanities?

Anderson: Uh, well, very likely, but it was very muted, because they were frightened to death. It was almost like living under Hitler for a lot of those people. Here was a juggernaut of scientists going to run the thing. And if, in fact, Alec got in, they would have been foolish to have been on record as being against him. I am sensing this, I think I am right in sensing this. Now there were a few of the older guys who made representation, but the majority of the faculty outside of the scientists was surprisingly quiet, and I'm drawing a conclusion, which may be wrong. You know, even under Johnny it wasn't easy to be anything else but a scientist, right?

Dr. Hartzell: Yeah, yeah. I noticed in the early years that Johnny had poetry besides his bed on the bedside table.

Anderson: Did he ever read it?

Dr. Hartzell: I assume he did, but actually he was interested in the field of religion.

Anderson: Right, well that's again the background, and it's the saving grace of Johnny, that is, when push comes to shove on certain kinds of issues, he remembered his background and the echo comes to him, and he realizes, anyway.

Dr. Hartzell: He was without guile and did not

Anderson: No, you didn't have that problem. You got fed up with Johnny, and you felt you were being used, but it was without any darkness to it. He was

Dr. Hartzell: It wasn't a personal egotism.

Anderson: No, no, no, uh, with Alec it was something else, and maybe you pinpointed it. It was a quintessinal post second world war scientist. Now, I say that deliberately because I come from before the war so I prejudice myself, but in the old days

the scientists were reasonably broadly educated people, they weren't technicians. Now we don't give scientists a chance, I mean, or doctors a chance. I mean now they are all technicians of a certain kind in the modern world, and you wouldn't pick a doctor or a Ph. D. in a science to run any large anything.

Dr. Hartzell: Ed Pellegrino's concept of the kind of doctor that should be turned out is a broadly educated person.

And I went to his talk at Stony Brook, and I sensed in the audience a sort of shock that anybody would still talk about that crap when he was telling it, telling the important thing. Did you go to that talk?

Dr. Hartzell: Yes, I did.

Anderson: I thought that was very interesting. I talked to Pellegrino afterwards, and I said there's the old story of the, in Turkey, that anyone that speaks the truth should have one foot in the saddle in the stirrup, because it wasn't welcome. There were a couple of young people that had certain kind of questions as if ethics was another course, that is, what course can I take to solve the problem you're suggesting to me. I mean the depth of misunderstanding was profound. Well, I guess, you know, we're not living in. But the other thing about Alec would be to look at who was he identified with, in other words, how did he, what was his relations with Burness, who was he comfortable with, who did he think were misusing their privileges at the University, i. e., were they, because to be blunt about it, there were a lot of terrible things happening at Stony Brook under Johnny Toll's administration in the liberal arts. I mean, some of the courses were just abominably bad; the teaching was awful, the services were terrible. The way the students were treated was, I think, just a scandal; and it was because Johnny was looking at other things and presumed that his staff were doing those important things. It was not a humane place. And Alec, I think, has to bear the brunt of some of this because Johnny assumed as an Executive Vice President those kinds of housekeeping details would have been looked at with some care by somebody. It was just probably a mistake to have two physicists working together in that sense. Now, Sid Gelber or somebody else would have

been a hell of a lot better, and in fact that did exist at one time, wasn't he Executive Vice President?

Dr. Hartzell: He succeeded Bentley Glass.

Anderson: Right, well, Bentley was, you know, Bentley is the kind of person I am, we're pre second world war, so forget it. You can't run it that way any more. Great people, but I mean, Jesus, forget that. That was another little awkwardness, aside from Alec Pond, was Sid Gelber was on the search committee, and so it was pointed out to me that there were a lot of people that thought he might very well be a candidate for the post of president. You may, as you just did, have a reaction to it, because my reaction. So, I thought, Jesus, I don't like the looks of this, so I went to Sidney. We had a long talk, and I said these thoughts had crossed people's minds, and if you serve on a search committee, that pretty much eliminates any consideration of your name for president. He was in the hopper some place along the line. And at that point he said, no, I am not a candidate. But I mean, that was terribly awkward, but again it's the kind of thing that erupts out of what is a dramatic change in course.

Dr. Hartzell: Well, I think he's a nice guy, he's a broadly educated person with experience in western civilization at Columbia, an excellent pianist, he's not a particularly strong administrator

Anderson: That's right.

Dr. Hartzell: And not the level that you need for an institution of that kind.

Anderson: I couldn't agree more, you said it perfectly. But at the time the fact that he was named

Dr. Hartzell: He was an alternative to a physicist

Anderson: Exactly, exactly, but you see the emotions at the time were pretty high. Anyway he finally sat on the first committee, and there were only a few changes, but I think critical changes for the second time around. But then we had a terrible meeting in New York when Alec suddenly realized that he wasn't going to get the prize, and he then didn't act, I thought, very prudently. He started to lash out at people, wanted probably

the last shot at me, except that was face to face not important, and we had a meeting at the Elk Hotel in Port Jefferson about finding out where the Trustees stood on his candidacy.

Dr. Hartzell: You and he or

Anderson: No, no, just the two of us. This was toward the end of the year and I had made it clear to him that I thought his administrative maneuvers were inadequate to the task, that he had done nothing, that he had perpetuated what some people thought was a sort of in-pocket kind of administrative approach; he would deal with only people he was already comfortable with.

Dr. Hartzell: That's typical of a lot of scientists.

Anderson: Yes, that's again, you see, it happened in a sense peculiarly enough, and I'm not, this is not to put anything on my plate, I could understand these kinds of people, you see, from my own background. I knew what the hell the problem was, but I couldn't Alec to somehow recognize it and adjust. He could have made a couple of simple adjustments in that year he had, and it would have been clear sailing. No one would have objected; but I'll be goddamned if he did. It got worse instead of better. He was stronger and had more influence at the beginning of that year as Acting than toward the end of it without regard to anything else. And I would be curious to know and will never find out whether the scientists didn't suddenly realize, Jesus, they were putting their money on the wrong horse. I'll never find that out, because some of the things they wanted weren't going very well either. It was as if we were just going to go deep freeze until the prize is at hand, and then we'll do the things necessary to change it in our image. This, again, fixation of what the University ought to be without letting anybody know what that vision was. You know, it's almost the kind of thing that happens to scholars anyway, they get this bright idea they are not going to let anybody know until it's published, right.

Dr. Hartzell: That's right.

Anderson: Well, I would like to talk to you again over at Stony Brook after you've been with Alec for my own edification and to pick up any loose ends that you think I can

tie up for you here, because I think what you are doing is fascinating and a useful exercise for the sake of the University.

Dr. Hartzell: Well, I think it will be helpful to, whenever they decide that they want some kind of history written. See I wrote the history of New York State on the homefront during World War II

Anderson: Right.

Anderson: Great, great. No, no, the lag between what scholars, for example, see as necessary and then their own efforts to carry these things out, there is a tremendous time lag. Now, we have these, we have a whole bunch of ways of recording and cataloging information that didn't exist, and we are not doing this with any great sense of urgency, partly because, again, you need, I think, bridging people the way you are. The new people really don't give a damn about the content that's in the archives, I mean, you have to be somewhat selective, the kind of crap that is now being produced is, think of Reagan's library, my god, there's not going to be very useful in there, because they've trashed everything useful, among other things. And so for a while we'll be able to bridge between the way one once viewed great institutions and people and events and now when it's all hype. It's almost all hype, surprisingly enough. There was a poignant little thing about a minister who was reacting to somebody's complaint about the funeral services for a dear departed friend to be given by a minister that didn't know the family or anything, this is, and he, the minister, was complaining that, how can I come in at the last minute

and give me the first names of the children, expect me to say anything realistic about this situation. So, it's all hype. People who lived irreligious all their life suddenly want a funeral service. Oh, dear. But you went to Bucknell, didn't you?

Dr. Hartzell: No, I was a Wesleyan graduate.

Anderson: Uh, huh, well, that says a lot.

Dr. Hartzell: I was a Wesleyan graduate.

Anderson: That makes more sense.

Dr. Hartzell: Phi Beta Kappa and honored in history. No, I was Dean of the University

at Bucknell.

Anderson: Uh, huh, okay.

Dr. Hartzell: I was there for six years and came here to Stony Brook from Bucknell.

Anderson: Well, that was after that the beginnings of Brookhaven, of course, that was another case. You came in as the archivist then, right?

Dr. Hartzell: I was

Anderson: What was your official title?

Dr. Hartzell: My title was Administrative Officer, and I was essentially an assistant to, he and I knew each other; he was a year behind me at Wesleyan, and we were at Harvard at the same time. And he saw the manuscript of my history of New York State, called *The Empire State at War*, and offered me a job, September '47.

Anderson: I came exactly a year later, I had come the spring of '48 to order some equipment but didn't sign on. In the old days you did this all for free, for god's sake, and came a year later. So your line number must have been about 200 or something, do you remember your line number? Mine is easy, 2001, is that a good line number. Well, that's another story, and you must be up to your eyeballs in physicists because, again, the same in my view, that both the good and bad things about the Lab work, the mentality of physicists, not chemists or biologists or engineers or god knows what, they were physicists.

Dr. Hartzell: There was one chap. I was in a car pool with

[end of tape]

Dr. Hartzell: So did I.

Anderson: He and I were on a platform before an enormous audience of young people, and somebody asked the question, well, what are your own backgrounds that led you into science. And Sam immediately blurted out that his father made toilet seats. You know,, isn't that typical of Sam. It probably was true, but you see, in the United States you would never admit to this humble. Sam's life is one of the bittersweet kinds of things, you're quite right, one of the most marvelous, genuine, bright people you are ever going to run into, and his early feelings that it was a mistake to have left Egyptology, which was his first love, you know you feel a little sad about that. How the hell did he ever get into science, well, a man of course would, and all that kind of stuff. No, Sam, but you see he would have made a terrible administrator, working for the federal government. Now in a European university as the proctor or something, brilliant, brilliant, because the money is assured by the state and they don't horse around with the kind of crap we have here; but he would have made a great director. The fact that he came to Brookhaven as a number of others with simply historical consequences reacting of Europe. was at Michigan or something, they

Dr. Hartzell: He was at Michigan with

Anderson: Making \$1,800 a year, for god's sake, you know.

Dr. Hartzell: He and somebody else, I can't remember the chap's name, something like Olenburg or something of that sort.

Anderson: Ulenbeck.

Dr. Hartzell: Ulenbeck.

And Ulenbeck was another interesting character in his own right. And Sam, I think, clearly was the junior author on that but nevertheless he made a definite contribution to it. Yeah, loved Sam, and his winding up at, what, the University of Nevada, which has a famous basketball team but that's about it. Well, he had family problems obviously; he never got over the fact that he thought somehow he had the typical Jewish sense of guilt that he might have saved his parents, I don't think he had a chance, one way or the other, that preyed on him. He was a lousy husband, I suspect that's true. He remarried at some point.

Dr. Hartzell: He had a terrific a train set for his daughter, but he admitted it was really for him. Well, thanks a lot, I think

Anderson: Well, it's always good to talk to you because we can both reminisce and then argue about what I think are still, and will remain for a long time, important issues in the academic world. But do give me a call after you've been to New Jersey, and let's pick up, as I said before, whatever makes sense to you, okay. Good, all right.

Dr. Hartzell: All right.

[end of interview]