

INTERVIEW OF GOVERNOR RUSSELL W. PETERSON

CONDUCTED BY PETER E. HESS, ESQ.

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Q. BY PETER E. HESS, DELAWARE LAWYER: You grew up in a small town in Wisconsin, and put yourself through school. How did you end up in Delaware?

A. BY GOVERNOR RUSSELL W. PETERSON: Well, near the end of my work toward my Ph.D. in chemistry I got an unsolicited letter from the DuPont Company inviting me to come to Wilmington for the summer of 1941, and I worked out at the Experimental Station, and got so much done and was so convinced of the DuPont place being an outstanding location for doing work in industry.

..... We had a lot of bills and had our first baby, I was married, so we decided, okay, we will go out to the east for the summer. I had never been beyond Chicago in my life from my little hometown in Wisconsin. So when we came out here we got a lot done, enjoyed it very much. DuPont started talking to me about coming to work after I got my degree.

I accepted the job and came out here in 1942, arrived here about six weeks after our second baby was born. And we had absolutely nothing. We had one little end table, which I remember we had bought for \$2.98 back in Madison. And we had a big trunk with clothes in it, and our four-year-old son and our new baby. I learned that one of my bosses at DuPont lived out in Arden and he knew of a place that had just become available, a furnished house....So we went out, and when we arrived there at night, taking a bus out to Arden, we saw a little ground around this house, and our interest in trees and so on, and before we went in the house we decided we were going to rent it. And we had a great time out there. We didn't get a car until five years after I had my Ph.D. When we got our brand-new Chevrolet, that was a fantastic milestone.

Q. Arden is pretty renowned, both in Delaware and nationally, as a planned community, with a kind of socialistic outlook, and the goal of living in harmony with the environment, preservation of open space, communal ground and that sort of thing. Did the Arden experience have any influence in your development of either your political philosophy or your conservation ethic?

A. Yes. As I look back in my life, every chapter had an influence on subsequent chapters, sort of like a building process. I built on each of them as the years went by. Arden was a very exciting place for people who didn't have much money. A lot of people there, college degrees, interested in music and dance, and shortly my wife and I were very much involved in the community.

The second week we were there I went to the town meeting, and I was told before the meeting started that, yes, I as a newcomer can still speak at the town meeting. Well, they had been having a battle for years. They

have three trustees who serve for life, and one had died, and now the big question was who was going to succeed him, and the incumbent two trustees and the town meeting were battling over what was going to happen.

So I got up at that first meeting I went to and said, "I suggest you form a committee here and develop some new bylaws for Arden, and get the three trustees and the three townsmen on it, and then find some seventh person, sort of a neutral person to work with it." They passed that, made me the seventh person. And so we did, we developed some new bylaws and got them passed by the community. And I became elected chairman of the board of assessors and town secretary, for which I got \$25 a month.

Somehow, I became deeply involved in Arden, in all kinds of debates over the single-tax theory, but I got deeply involved with the co-op store, I became chairman of the board of that.

Q. Were there any lessons that you learned in your various leadership roles in Arden that you took on to the governor's mansion?

A. Many things. Because little Arden, we are dealing with a democratic process in a very effective way. Everybody talked at town meetings. And when we had these concerns about the new bylaws, well, that was a subject for discussion in every house in Arden. And that was my first real involvement in the political arena, and pretty minor kind of a role, but the basic forces were all at work there, our group of people going to establish the rules and regulations by which they operate, and how are they are going to abide by them.

But, during this time, during the time I lived in Arden, I got invited one day by Al Smith, who was very active in the Republican party, and, in fact, he was chairman of the party in New Castle County, he said, "How about helping us do some blocking out here in Arden?" And I agreed to do it. He was a Republican. If he had been a Democrat I would have gone with him too to do this. That led to me getting more and more involved, and they talked me into being state chairman of Recruit for '60, the Republican party, get more people into the party, and I organized people in all three counties, and we had a big impact on building up membership in the Republican party. That's when I first started to get known around the state.

So then I served as a delegate to the Republican convention in 1964, when Barry Goldwater became the nominee. I was there as Delaware's Rockefeller delegate. I got exposed to outrageous behavior of extremists. My wife Lillian would sit up in the balcony and she would tell me how frightened she was because the people sitting around her were so mean toward Rockefeller. The night that Barry Goldwater was going to be nominated I sat in the balcony with her. My gosh. All around us people would holler when Rockefeller came up, "Kill him, kill him." When Rockefeller came out to speak, they wouldn't let him. They booed him consistently. So I came

back to Delaware as a Republican, worked against Goldwater for the presidency.

Now, let me jump now back to DuPont Company. I was promoted frequently and many times in my first 17 years there. I was told by the head of the Textile Fibers Department, the biggest department in DuPont where I worked, that I was going to the head of the company by Henry B. DuPont, who was the finance chairman of the DuPont then.

At the same time I was active in the community. I was chairman of the Social Action Committee of the Unitarian Church. And that led to my being deeply concerned about low-income people on the east side of Wilmington, especially, and decided that if we didn't find some jobs for young blacks that all hell was going to break loose.

Now, at that time the Chestnut Run location of DuPont reported to me, and I checked to find out we had 60 blacks out there, all laborers. One had three years of college, one had two years of college. I went out to Chestnut Run and talked to all the management, right down to the foreman over these African Americans, and decided that we were going to promote five of those guys, such as to a truck driver, to a chemist's helper, to a plumber's helper and so on, and we were going to hire a black woman as a typist. And I was ready to implement that.

I got a call from Andy Buchanan asking me to have dinner with him in the Green Room. [in Wilmington's opulent Hotel DuPont Ed.] Now, that was a big deal. I have this guy several steps ahead of me having me out to dinner in the Green Room. I said, "Andy, let me tell you what I'm going to do out at Chestnut Run," and I told him this story. We sat there until everybody was gone except waitresses and the two of us, talking about things that I had done. He was really praising me all during that dinner.

So now he says, "Well, Russ, the reason I asked you out for dinner tonight was because of the very thing you brought up on the way over here. We have been going to reorganize all of our technical work at the Experimental Station, in the plants and the sales according to a plan that I had drawn up at his request, and we had been planning to put you in charge of it, but now we are concerned about your stability." I went home that night. I was teed off.

The next morning the DuPont Company psychiatrist, Gary Gordon, who was a good friend of mine, he said, "You know what those bastards did?" And I said, "What bastards?" He said, "Buchanan and Sinness." Sinness was number two. He said, "They asked me to check you out for your stability, and I told them you are probably the most stable guy in the DuPont Company."

I went home that night. My wife said, "What are you home so early for?" I took her by the hand, and I told her the story. And she said, "They are

the ones that need a psychiatrist, not you." And I said, "Well, I can probably get back in their good graces if I go in and apologize." And she said, "Don't you dare do that." And I said, "You didn't think I would do it, did you?"

So I decided right there that I was going to shift my plans. When people in those key positions had considered me a real problem, because of their bigotry, I figured, hell, I don't have a chance in DuPont Company to get up to be head of the company, and, furthermore, I want to go in some area where I can have more impact on these critical social problems. Before long I had organized 7,000 people in Delaware to reform the prison system, and I got a lot of publicity over that. I joined the Kiwanis Club and got deeply involved with them. Got the first black on the Kiwanis Club, and first woman, and became president of the club.

I got the Kiwanis Club deeply involved with this state-wide program which we called the Three S Citizen's Campaign, salvage people, shrink the crime rate, save dollars. We were going to tear down that old prison we had out on Kirkwood Highway. It was medieval prison.

But, anyway, we had a knock-down drag-out battle over that, our bills in the legislature.We had rallies. We had every church and synagogue in Delaware working with us. And we built up so much pressure that we got the legislature to vote our bills out of committee. And then Democratic Governor Elbert Carvel signed the bill into law.....

I was invited over to Reynolds DuPont's house. They said, "We want you to run for governor." I went home and talked to Lillian and we decided we should try it. We had a real knock-down drag-out battle because here I am, a real newcomer, and other people had been around for years trying to get to be governor. The chairman of the Republican party didn't like it worth adamn that I was wading into this thing.

Well, the net result was I won the nomination for the governorship -- John Rollins also helped me -- and ran against Charles Terry who was Chief Justice of the state before he became Governor. When I first started running we had a poll run and showed that 92 percent of the people knew who Governor Terry was, only 9 percent knew who I was. And we won it. We got all kind of Democrats and Independents, as well as Republicans voting for me. So that got me in the spot where I could really do something.

Q. I remember those days very well. Your candidacy certainly energized a broad and unique spectrum of Delawareans, in part because you were elected at a time of great social upheaval.

A. Remember, I ran for governor in 1968, just the time country wide we were having this big battle because young blacks were rioting all over America, the very thing that I had seen coming in Delaware. I went to the Republican convention which was held in Miami, and we had a lot of people

demonstrating, tear gas all over the place.Now this problem boils up nationally. Governor Terry does the unbelievable thing of putting the National Guard on the streets of Wilmington for nine and a half months, by far the longest time that's ever been done in our country.

Q. You are a man of some vision, whether it is in business endeavors, social justice whose greatest reputation and acclaim is in environmental matters. Can you describe the inspiration that led you to spearhead Delaware's radical pioneering coastal zone legislation?

A. It was my nine-year-old son Peter, the new baby we brought to Delaware. Nine years later, he is getting up before the sun comes up in the morning to see what birds sing first. And I went out with him one morning to see what the hell he was doing out there. And before long he and his older brother, Glen and I go bird watching, and we all got the Delaware coast looking for birds. And then I got tied up with a bunch of other scientists at the Experimental Station who were also bird watchers, and we as a group would leave before sunup on Saturday morning, worked down the state, and end up in Ocean City, Maryland, spend the night, and then work back up the next day, all different kinds of water area, forests and so on, looking for birds. And the objective is to get the maximum number of species you can see in 24 hours. So the net result was I got to know that coastal zone and fell in love with it.

And during this period we went down to Florida for a few days vacation, and the Audubon Society was running a tour of the Everglades and I saw 60 species of birds I never knew existed before. I signed up as a member and fell in love with the National Audubon Society. But, anyway, it was my falling in love with our coast that made me rebel when I saw the plan was to have this major industrialization of our coast.

Here in Delaware the Shell Oil Company had planned to build a big refinery down in this unspoiled coastal area. The citizen group called Delawareans for Orderly Development were fighting Shell. The case went all the way up to the Delaware Supreme Court, and they voted to give Shell the authority to proceed.

Now, this was just when I'm campaigning for governor this is happening. Well, I learned that it just wasn't Shell that was involved in this, a total of 13 international oil companies, international transportation companies, one company was headed and owned by a guy George H. W. Bush, who at that time was head of the Republican party nationally.

All the unions in Delaware, obviously, were behind this. They wanted the jobs that would come from this. Nearly every law firm in Delaware was signed up by an oil company to help them.

And so when I was elected governor, about two weeks afterwards I told the Governor's Goals Committee what I really wanted to do was to reform the executive branch of the government. It was made up of 142 commissions

that were run by boards of anywhere from five to 25 members, all appointed by the governor, with staggered four-year terms. And they elected their own chairman, they hired their own executive director, had their own budget. And the governor didn't have much authority at all. For 50 years people had been trying to change this form of government and I was determined to do that.

Well, that got the attention of the reporter who was there that night. I also talked about we had to do something about saving this unspoiled coastal area. When I saw the story, and that reporter didn't mention much about this coastal zone thing, he probably thought it was a damn fool idea, as most people did.

But as the months went by, I began to see the tremendous magnitude of this effort to industrialize the Delaware coast. I got called by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce, Maurice Stans of subsequent Watergate infamy--Ed.], to come down to see him. He had 25 people in his office and said to me, "These 25 people here have been working for ten years to develop this Delaware coast. It is super important to us. And your Chamber of Commerce in Delaware is behind it, and all your big companies up there are behind it." He walked over and pointed at me and said, "Governor," you are being disloyal to your country." And I jumped up and said, "Hell, no. I'm being loyal to future generations."

I said that I really ought to try to find at least one union that would support me, and that's probably UAW, United Auto Workers, and when I called up to talk to the key guy in that union, I found out they had a chairman of their environment committee. So I got together with him and we talked about how fundamentally important that coast was to all these workers and these unions, how they and their family, for nothing, go down there and enjoy a great place for swimming and boating or just lying out in the sun, and that just spread throughout their organization.

So they supported me. The first time I ran for office, I went down there to the these big plants at Chrysler and General Motors, early in the morning, shaking hands on shift change. Almost nobody would shake hands with me. "Get lost," [in the auto worker vernacular, no doubt Ed.] they would say, stuff like that. It was really kind of hard to take. Four years later, I've had this experience with getting the UAW to work with us on the Coastal Zone Act, so now when I go down there when I ran for re-election, the leadership, the union were all out there with me, everybody shook my hand.

We never had a detailed plan like that [of reforming the commission form of government] for the Coastal Zone Act. I just had to do something about this super controversial thing. I just barely won the election as it was, you know. Almost certainly, if I had made that an issue, I would have been in trouble with the business community. And I hadn't developed a plan yet. Immediately, during this same time before I'm sworn in, now I'm beginning to think, okay, what are we going to do, and that's when I

decided, damn it, I'll declare a moratorium. Later when I was sworn in and talked to my staff they said, "You can't do that, Governor. You can't just declare a moratorium." "The hell I can't," I said. So I declared a moratorium. No more building.

Q. What was the legal authority for the moratorium?

A. Fletcher "sandy" Campbell was my counsel, and he had just recently graduated from Harvard Law School. Super confident guy. And I put him in charge of helping to work on this Coastal Zone Act and what we could do about declaring the moratorium and so on. He and I would meet repeatedly - I would say, "Sandy, the thing we got to be concerned about is this commerce clause of the Constitution, and you have to write this thing so we are covered in that issue," which he did. It really held up. [The "dormant" commerce clause provides that legislation cannot be designed to promote home state businesses and discriminate against out-of-state businesses. Ed.]

When I did declare that moratorium, boy, then all hell broke loose. I signed that bill into law in late June 1971, and within one month, plus or minus a couple of weeks, I got invited to come to New York to the Waldorf Astoria for a black-tie dinner of the World Wildlife Fund. And they gave me their gold medal for what we had done in Delaware. This was only now one month after we had done it. The chairman at that time was Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands. He and I got to be very good friends over the years after that. But he said to the group that night, "This is the first time in the world that any community has won such a battle with the oil companies." Remember, now, his family and them, they were big shareholders in the Royal Dutch Shell Oil Company too.

All over the world, back at the very time that I became governor, 1969, the world environmental groups were up in arms about what was happening. Remember, in this country there was one river that caught on fire, it had so much oil. The United Nations had planned their first environmental world conference, and President Nixon had signed some of the most important environmental laws we have ever had, Clear Air and Clean Water Act, National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, all those things. The environmental movement was just blowing up.

So what we were doing in Delaware, unbeknownst to me, was being talked about all over the world. Here is this little state over there, they are taking on all these world companies and this issue which we consider so super important now. As soon as I signed the bill, almost immediately I get these awards. And since that time I've been awarded 16 honorary doctorates. Every time I get one, somebody refers to the Coastal Zone. This was a worldwide thing, and what we were doing was being watched way outside of Delaware, not only the United States but worldwide.

In subsequent years I became deeply involved internationally, heads of international groups. But, of course, no governor is going to do these

things by himself. He has got to have a legislature. I was fortunate to have a legislature that I was able to convince to work with me on these issues. And we had so many people in this community who were working to get our legislators to vote for the Coastal Zone Act.

We just barely got that bill through, both the House and -- it just so happens about, between 11:00 and 12:00 o'clock at night in the House, and later in the Senate, the final voting was made on that bill, and we got it through by one vote. And so this last day in the Senate, leadership of the Senate was convinced they had this ten votes, and they broke up to go for dinner, and after dinner one of my aides came running into my office, "Governor, Governor, the lobbyists," we had dozens of lobbyists in there working against us, and they turned around two of the senators, and so we got the top two people in the Senate and these two senators in my office, and for two hours we talked to those guys and got them convinced to go with us. Immediately, the leadership of the Senate went down and called the Senate into session before all those lobbyists could get to these guys again, and they voted, and we got it through.

It was a much bigger picture than I had appreciated at the time, certainly that the Delaware people had appreciated at the time. It was super important to majority of them. But we didn't realize the role we were playing in a big-world scene.

Q. It seems to me that the time that this coastal zone proposal was most vulnerable was during that year and a half of the governor's moratorium when it was basically you standing up in front of the oil companies and saying no, while the legislation was in the process of being created, but there was no strict legal authority. In retrospect, do you have any insight as to why there was no challenge to your the moratorium itself?

A. Well, I think that they were absolutely convinced that this bill would never get passed. And they had such tremendous number of lobbyists down here. Remember, the whole Chamber of Commerce, heads of companies like DuPont and others were fighting for this industrialization of our coast. I think all those people thought--just like my staff did at the start--come on, Governor, that's not going to fly.

Q. You described this period as kind of a genesis of modern environmental law, Within a year after Delaware passed the Coastal Zone Act, Congress passed the federal Coastal Zone Management Act. What role do you think Delaware and your administration played as impetus or catalyst for the passage of national legislation?

A. Well, I went down on at least two, maybe three times to testify to Congress about their Coastal Zone Management Act. Maybe what we were doing did stimulate some of the people in Washington.

Actions which occurred in the courts thereafter, particularly the Norfolk Southern plan to lighter their coal in the Delaware Bay, take coal from barges, transfer it to these big ocean-going colliers, that was stopped by this act, and went all the way to the Circuit Court of Appeals. And they came down on our side.

And then the Norfolk Southern lawyers said there was no point in going to the Supreme Court because they knew they couldn't win it.

Q. Losing your re-election campaign didn't seem to put a damper on your career and dedication to environmental causes. What happened next?

A. I lose my bid for re-election in 1972. I didn't like it. It is much more fun to win than it is to lose. I was already thinking about what I was going to do next.

So all of a sudden, what is it, nine weeks or so between the time you lose the election until your successor takes office, I got all these unsolicited big job offers, and a further example that the broad community knew what the hell we were doing in Delaware, more so than the Delawareans did.

Nelson Rockefeller called me, whom I got to know when we were both governors at the same time, and he said, "Don't take any job until you come to see me." So I went up to New York to see him. He said, "I'm going to form this national commission on critical choice for Americans, and I want you to be my right arm in this program." And he told me how he had done a similar thing earlier and the guy whom he got to be in charge of it was Henry Kissinger. He says, "Look what happened to him."

By now I was determined I was going to get involved in worldwide environmental issues and I figured, boy, now I'm going to be working with Nelson Rockefeller, who was obviously still thinking about running for the presidency.

And so the first time I really had driven much in four years I drove that car up to the Rockefeller estate. The very next morning I got a good job, no interlude in between. But now subsequently I got a call from some of my friends in Washington who said that Russell Train is leaving the chairmanship of the Council on Environmental Quality, you will report directly to the president. Well, I thought, boy, if I wanted to get in this international field of environment, boy, that's the place where I need to get.

Nixon Chief of Staff Gen. Alexander Haig called me and asked me to come down to the White House. I went down there and he said, "Do you realize the President thinks all you environmentalists are kooks? Why the hell do you want the job then?" And I said, "Because this is one of the most important things in the world and I want to change the President's mind."

So the next morning Haig called me and said, "You got the job." But I didn't have the job. I had to be confirmed by the Senate, by this Committee on Environment and Public Works, with Scoop Jackson chairing, see, and they had 13 members of that committee, seven Democrats and six Republicans. Now, before going to the hearings I talked to members of that committee. Two of them were former governors. And they each said this to me, separate conversations completely in their offices. They said, "My oil company friends have come to see me about blocking your nomination, and I want you to know I'm going to have to give you a hard time, but, don't worry, in the final analysis I'll vote for you because we governors have to stick together."

But, anyway, so now I go to the first day of the hearings, and the only people there are the six Republicans, not a single Democrat. And those Republicans really gave me a hard time. I'm still Republican, see. And they gave me a hard time about the Coastal Zone Act and some of the other things I had done. They were obviously working hard to block me. Then Scoop Jackson comes in and he says, "I heard from my staff that your Republican colleagues have been giving you a hard time and I thought you needed a good Democrat to come here to support you," which he did.

But before long, all 13 were up there, all the Democrats supported me, all the Republicans opposed me. We had three days of hearings. In that kind of a job, hell, they take care of that in an hour or two. When they finally voted, they voted unanimously for me for that job.

I got a lot of credit for what I did at the Council on Environmental Quality. It was established under the National Environmental Policy Act, back in 1970, which is sort of the Magna Carta of the environmental movement. This is the definition of the policy: "The Congress, recognizing the profound impact of man's activities on the interrelations of all components of the natural environment, and the critical importance of restoring and maintaining environmental quality to the overall welfare and development of man, declares that it is the continuing policy of the federal government to create and maintain conditions under which man and

nature can exist in productive harmony." To me that's a super important statement. It should have said "development of man and woman."

Q. How did you go about putting that profound statement into action?

A. Well, the National Environmental Policy Act called upon the chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality to do what was necessary in order to get the executive branch to implement what the act called for. And one of the key things was the environmental impact statement. And throughout the whole executive branch they were opposed to that, as another big job for which they didn't get any additional money, no more staff, and to carry out these in-depth studies of the impact of their proposals on the environment was an irritant.

Q. So basically, the thrust of the National Environmental Policy Act was to require the promulgation of a comprehensive study of what impact any federally-funded endeavor would have upon the environment? And this was unprecedented in federal legislation to that point?

A. That's right. And one thing, one Secretary of the Interior made a lot of national publicity over the fact that he got a 95-pound impact statement, and I went to see him about that, his comment, because it was belittling the whole impact statement process. It was ridiculous saying all these words they put together don't mean very much. And so I went to see him. Anyway, I think I convinced him that day there was something more to this than just collecting those pieces of paper.

But another thing, some SOB by the name of Dick Cheney, who was Chief of Staff for President Ford, asked one of the members of the cabinet, Bill Simon, Secretary of the Treasury, to call a meeting of the cabinet officers to talk about what they could do to deal with this environmental impact statement. So I called up Simon and said, "I just want to let you know, Bill, that I'm calling a meeting of all the cabinet officers. We are going to talk about what we can do about controlling the interest rates." Anyway, he hemmed and hawed. And I said, "I just wanted to let you know, I don't like it worth a damn, you call this meeting, don't invite me to come to it." He said, "Well, I'll send you an invitation." But he didn't, he called off the meeting.

They had this big campaign on to discredit the environmental programs by saying that they were the major cause of inflation in the country. Remember, we had 14, 15, 16 percent inflation. And I didn't believe that worth a damn, that environmental regulations had that impact, so I got my staff to study and they came up and said, "It has to be less than a half of one percent."

Well, I was concerned about taking on my administration on this gut issue that they were making so much to-do about around the country. We hired two outside groups. They all came back with the same conclusion. So now

I felt confident. And so I started to talk about this, and how it was not true, it was less than a half percent impact.

And then the plan was to have meetings all around the country discussing what caused this inflation, and I got invited to several of them. And so one day I got, this, the final sessions of this operation, these meetings around the country was to meet for a summit meeting over which President Bush would preside in Washington. So on a Friday I got a call from the Secretary of Commerce, asking me if I were coming over to dinner at his office. I said, "No, nobody offered me to come to dinner." "Didn't Cheyney invite you?" "No, he didn't invite me." He said, "We were planning to have this meeting over here, we are going to have a little dress rehearsal, what we are going to do to me at the summit meeting. We want you to make your presentation. You have four minutes."

So I sat at my desk making some little notes about what I might say, and I went over to this meeting in the office of the Secretary of Commerce. And there were the CEOs of DuPont Company, Herb Shapiro, AT&T, General Electric, General Motors, Sears & Roebuck, Secretary of Commerce and me. I remember when I got over there they had been meeting all afternoon about something, see, and they were having sherry to drink, and I tried to get a sherry to drink. I finally said to the secretary, "Where the hell do I get some sherry?" He said, "It is too late now. We are going in to eat right now." It wasn't a very warm reception.

And so we go in to eat. After a lot of pleasant discussion around the table with your dinner partners, one of the things we talked a lot about was what I had done for the DuPont Company dealing with launching new business ventures.

Then the Secretary says, "Okay, now you have all got four minutes, except Peterson has got two minutes." And so they go through all those guys, included in their message environmental regulations, it's a big problem, and so then I get up and say, "No, it isn't problem. It has less than a half of one percent impact."

Now, one man who turned out to be a Congressman from Michigan, got up after I made my comments, says, "We can't let Peterson go in there tomorrow and say what he said here, we got to tell him what he has to say." And I jumped up and said, "Hell, no. If I go there I'm going to say what I know is true. If you want to say something else, get somebody else to say it, not me."

And then Herb Shapiro, he was a lawyer when I worked at DuPont assigned to be the lawyer for our division. We were good friends. I liked the guy very much. But now he said, "Russ, you are getting to be the most anti-business guy in Washington."

I said, "Come on, Herb. I think I do more good for the free enterprise system than you people around the table do for it," because I talk about

my experience with DuPont, and the damn environment, saying those things to people, they carry more weight.

Before I could talk, President Ford had left because his wife was having a breast removed that morning, and so he didn't hear what I said. Now, Monday morning, two days later, I come into my office and my secretary is all upset, she said, "The President himself called you and he wants to see you over in the Oval Office right away." So I went over there. My office was in a neat little house in Lafayette Square, across from the White House. And on the way over there I thought, boy, this is where I get fired.

Now, I remember how beautiful the lawns were and the flowers were around it, and the guards were so friendly when I came in. So I said to myself, this is the last time, Peterson, that it will happen for you. But I get ushered in immediately to the Oval Office, and there is the photographer. And the President and I had a very good conversation. He said to me, after I talked about his wife's problem and so on, he said, "I'm sorry, Russ, I couldn't be there yesterday for you to talk. I appreciate you telling me what you had to say yesterday."

So we had a nice little conversation. Not an unpleasantness at all. Went to the door, he put his hand on my shoulder as I went out the door. I came to my office. My staff was anxious to see what the hell had happened to me. I told them I just went over there for a conference and was not taken to the wood shed. I like Ford. I never, ever heard, I was right in the middle of a political campaign, re-election, he personally never mentioned environmental things causing inflation, in spite of all the characters around him trying to teach him that.

And when I went to resign to him, I was going to take another job, the president of the World Bank, Douglas McNamara, called me and asked me to see him, and I agreed to go to that job. So I came to report to Ford that I was going to resign and go, and he thanked me very much for all you had done over there. He says, "I was sorry all the problems these extremists in my office gave you." He should have fired the bastards, is what he should have done. But anyway, again, I wished him well in the campaign, and he said, "That damn Reagan," he said. Reagan had run against him in the primary, see, and Ford had won that primary. But he says, "Now on the regular campaign he is running me down."

Q. And he lost the election to Carter?

A. Right, that's right. But here was a guy who was a moderate Republican, and those right wingers like the Goldwaterites, the Reaganites, they didn't like him worth a damn. The last thing, particularly when he made, the fact he made Nelson Rockefeller vice president indicated where he came down. And the last thing they wanted was a Rockefeller to become president. And they blocked Ford from making

Rockefeller this candidate for re-election as vice president. Really wounded Nelson.

Q. Yu subsequently discussed a new position with Nelson Rockefeller?

A. When I got there he said that he and 60 other members of the Kennedy and Johnson Administration were forming a new organization called New Directions, was patterned after Common Cause, but where Common Cause worked on domestic issues, New Directions would work on world issues. And those Democrats needed a liberal Republican to be president of it. Hence, I accepted that job, president of New Directions.

Q. So you began that in 1976. How did your experience as an environmentalist shape your vision to work with New Directions?

A. Well, the environmental problem was one of the principal problems globally, see. But we had a whole string of problems which we worked on, but that was one of the principal ones, see, and that's why I had been talking about the global significance of that, going to world meetings and so on about it.

And I know quite a few of those Democrats, and the Kennedy and Johnson Administration knew me and liked me. That was another reason why they asked me to come. So now they had just rented an office, didn't even have a typewriter in the office, and they had \$25,000 worth of bills and \$5,000 in the bank deposit. That was New Directions. And I was the only employee. But, anyway, among the key people I was asked to work with was Margaret Mead.

Q. The anthropologist?

A. Yes, and Norman cousins, Father Ted Hesburgh of Notre Dame, and [former Defense Secretary Robert] McNamara. So I was asked to meet with each of those people, which I did, and so I really got to know them pretty well and I liked them all. So I was really one of them, instead of one of those conservative Republicans.

Jimmy Carter gave us credit for passing the Panama Canal Treaty. See, we built this nationwide citizen effort at New Directions, following Common Cause. John Gardner was one of the members of this group and he was the one that had founded the Common Cause.

Q. How long were you with New Directions?

A. I took a new direction. I got disillusioned by New Directions because, after spending all our effort and all our money trying to build a bigger membership, we only had 14,000 members. And all these people sold me on this, they were convinced we could have 300,000 members. But people weren't as much interested in working on world issues because our issues are the same issues that Jimmy Carter had. And [they would why

the hell are you doing this, Carter is already doing that, see, sort of thing.

So anyway, I got a call from Ted Kennedy. He wanted me to have lunch with him and a senator from New Jersey, a Republican senator from New Jersey, Clifford Case. But anyway, Congress had established this Office of Technology Assessment. They were on the board of it, and it had become highly politicized, getting all kinds of flak in the press. And their job was to advise the Congress on the impact of various programs on the economy, on the environment, on the safety. There were four things that had to advise the Congress on. And again, they wanted a liberal Democrat. They didn't say that because Case was there, Ted Kennedy, he was the chairman of it. We got to be good friends, too.

So anyway, I went home and talked to my good wife, and I could tell her now, look, instead of having this organization where we are practically broke, no pension plan, no health plan, anything, now I would become a real member of the Senate staffing, and I would have good healthcare plans, a bigger salary, pension plan, all those things came with it. And what Ted Kennedy really sold me on was you can work over here on those same things you are working on in New Directions, but you are working right with the people here in the Congress, and, furthermore, you got some resources to do it.

And so I did have one hell of a good staff of talented people who were frustrated to beat hell because what this group had done, board of OTA, Office of Technology Assessment, they had voted that they, each of them would have access to one of the staff members of OTA, and so if a staff member was working on like how much land in Alaska should be set aside for national parks and so on -- that if the senator from Alaska had different ideas of how much should be set aside, and this staff guy worked for that senator, but they came out with they didn't have much credibility, and that went through the whole damn organization.

So I told Ted Kennedy and Clifford Case that I would take the job if I had the power to hire and fire, and if they would get rid of that regulation. I said, "You can't have members of our staff working for the members of Congress like that and then expect the reports that come out to be credible."

And I got called before I took the job by Phillip Handler, president of the National Academy of Sciences, come to his office. And I went down. And he had the head of the Medical Institute and of the Academy of Engineering. As a scientist myself, now, this is quite a thrill to come with those top three guys in the country dealing with this field. And they thought, they wanted me to take this job, we got get some credibility. Those are the ones that pushed the creation of this organization. But when it came up for a vote in the Congress and the House of Representatives, they voted to get rid of all the members from outside of Congress. All the members of the board from Congress, half from each

house and half from each party. And so, therefore, the scientists were cheated off of what they thought was going to be a real important organization, wouldn't be anything. And so that's what it turned out to be, a highly politicized outfit.

So Ted Kennedy and Clifford Case said, "Oh, we agree with you. We will give that authority." And so then I went around to talk to some of the members of the board, and I talked to Stevens in Alaska, and he is the one that had this guy working on, and we had, one of the key members of our board was Congressman from Arizona, ran for the presidency [John McCain]. Anyway, he wanted a hundred million acres. And Stevens wanted 25 million acres. So I met with Stevens in the basement of the Capitol, little tiny room down there. And he said to me, "You push this program to get rid of this provision and we can have a staff person" -- he said, "Who the hell do you think you are? You work for us. We don't work for you." And he said, "You push that thing through, I'm going to cut your budget in half." Well, he was minority head of the Office of Appropriations, Committee on Appropriations. And so I shook hands with him and left.

Then I went to see a democratic senator who was on the committee from South Carolina. Anyway, had the same damn conversation. Obviously, they had compared notes. He said to me, "Who the hell do you think you are? You work for us. We don't work for you. And I'll cut your budget." He was the chairman of the appropriation. We had the chairman and the minority head telling me they will cut my budget in half. I said to each of them that I would rather have half the budget and a credible organization than twice the budget and nobody paying any attention to us.

Anyway, these guys told me they were going to cut my budget in half and so on. And then Kennedy called me again. I went to see him. And he said -- Clifford Case was there with him -- "We are going to have to go back on our agreement with you, that we would give you authority to do this." And I said, "Okay." I resigned. "I came here with that clear understanding with you, and I'll be damned if I'm going to get wrapped up in that political mess you have got over there now. I'm going to resign."

And they really begged me to reconsider, reconsider. And finally Kennedy said, "I'll have to pick up some of my chips with Senator Stevens." That means they agree at sometimes, I will support this bill for you if you will agree that some day when I need you you will support me.

Q. Horse trading?

A. Horse trading, right. And that's how democracy works. So, I agreed to stay there. And we made that happen. But then, it was then that, in the middle of this -- no, no, I had already been in that job for a couple of months, and I got a call from the head of the National Audubon Society saying, "I called to tell you we want to offer you the job of the president of the National Audubon Society." I dreamed of that, you know,

being in that job, but I had looked up who was president of Audubon, before he was my age he had been president of two universities, he was Phi Beta Kappa, he was Rhodes scholar, Secretary of the Army, and so I figured, what the hell, Peterson, you are never going to get that job. And so here I get this call offering me the job. And I said, "Why the hell didn't you call a few months ago? But I can't possibly leave this job now."

Every quarter they did that until the end of the year. And he said, "How about going down to Texas and meeting with some members of our search committee?" Which I did. He said, "We will keep it all on QT." I went down there and any problem I had, I said, "Look, I can't leave right now. I have to be in the federal government five years in order to get pension."

"Oh, don't worry about it. We will take care of that. We will give you a pension covering exactly that, plus we will give you then a separate pension for" -- everything, they had all these, all these good things. So now a year and a quarter had gone by and--

Q. As the Godfather said in the movie, they made you an offer you couldn't refuse.

A. Yes, right, right. But anyway, anyway, I decided to go to Audubon.

**END OF PART I
DELAWARE LAWYER CONVERSATION WITH
RUSSELL W. PETERSON**