

## **Brendan T. Byrne Interview** (August 7, 2006)

**Michael Aron:** This is Michael Aron again of NJN News, on the afternoon of August 7, 2006. We're going to talk to Brendan Byrne this afternoon. This is our second interview with Governor Byrne. We're doing this for the Rutgers project on the governors. And we will pick up with him having just been elected in 1973 to his first term.

... [Brief discussion that previous interview had ended with conversation about cabinet appointments and Governor Byrne saying that Dick Coffee was interested in being Commissioner of Banking.]

**Byrne:** Did I say why?

**Don Linky:** No. You said, "Dick Coffee was interested in banking, but had pushed for him in that. But then, he lost interest in that at some point."

**Byrne:** Is that the way I put it?

**Don Linky:** Yeah.

**Byrne:** He was under some cloud, if I remember--

**Q:** And you said, "Ann Klein, for instance, was a natural, even though she had run against him. She was interested in institutions that was a natural for her. Although, we considered her, at one time, for Transportation Commissioner."

**Byrne:** Okay. Well, I didn't--

**Don Linky:** Bill Hyland. So don't \_\_\_\_\_.

**Q:** Okay.

**Don Linky:** Joel Jacobson.

**Q:** Okay. Governor, you told us in our last interview that you went to Arizona after your election to start figuring out how to learn administration, how to be a governor. What's the first thing you have to deal with?

**Byrne:** The first thing I had to deal with, was to figure out how many cabinet officers were in the administration. I remember sitting in an airplane and putting him down. And I knew I was \_\_\_\_\_. So it was a matter of getting reacquainted. You know, keep in mind that I had been in the administration of Bob Meyner. And I had been in the administration of Dick Hughes. So the process was not strange to me. But I had to be brought up to date on it. And I knew I had to fill some posts. And I remember starting out with a willingness to keep anybody from the Cahill administration, who would be appropriate to keep. And I talked to

Bill Marfuggi who was the treasurer and asked him if he wanted to stay. I knew he **didn't, because he had told me. But I offered to keep him on. And then,** Leone was already, sort of, slated for it. But I wanted the **message to be that I'm not trying to get rid of Cahill people just 'cause they're Republican.** I asked Dick Schaub to stay on as Banking Commissioner. He stayed on for over a year, a Republican. Then, went back to the private sector.

**Q:** So this idea of asking for the resignations of everybody in a prior administration is a newer idea, or at least, something that you bypassed?

**Byrne:** Sure, I bypassed it.

**Q:** Because you were close to Cahill? You felt close to Cahill?

**Byrne:** Yeah, and I thought Cahill ran a pretty good administration. And as I said, a prior time, that I had read all the reports from commissions and the Cahill time, that basically, his income tax proposal had a ring of truth to it. His property tax reform concepts. No. I think he was on the right track. I never said a bad word **about Bill Cahill when I was campaigning, other than to say he couldn't get the votes in the legislature for his program.**

**Q:** You told us last time that you had asked Herb Stern to be Attorney General.

**Byrne:** Yeah.

**Q:** And that he didn't want to be Attorney General. So you went to Bill Hyland. Treasurer and Attorney General are usually considered the two most important cabinet posts. Do you agree with that?

**Byrne:** Probably. It depends on the time. I mean, there can be times when Transportation Commissioner might be. But yeah, by a rule of thumb, sure.

**Q:** So fill out the rest of your Cabinet for us, if you can, based on memory. Who else did you put in there and why?

**Byrne:** I put Alan Sagner in as Transportation Commissioner. Originally, I wanted Alan Sagner because of his strong background in healthcare. And he had been on the board and Chairman of the Board of Beth Israel in Newark. And had a keen interest in health. But the feeling was that I could not get through the legislature a bill that would allow you to appoint a Health Commissioner who was not a doctor. **It's since changed. But at that time, so just, sort of, took Alan Sagner out of that spot.** And he had an interest in transportation and actually wound up loving the job. He later became Chairman of Port Authority of New Jersey and New York, or **New York and New Jersey. So yeah, Alan was good. He's a smart guy. He was a developer.** And knew some of the transportation problems that we were faced with. I also had-- and this was important. I also had an orientation toward mass transit.

**Q:** What today is called, "Human Services," was "Institutions?"

**Byrne:** Yes.

**Q:** What was its full name?

**Byrne:** Institutions and Agencies, I think.

**Q:** And you put Ann Klein there?

**Byrne:** Well, I did. And that was another story. Because I did that without reading the statute. And the statute said I don't make the appointment, at all, the board does. And so I got some flak from the Board saying, "You've ignored us, and it's not right, and it's not proper." Actually, I think, I had an Attorney General's opinion and said that it's illegal to delegate to the Board appointments that the Executive should make. Matter of fact, the Secretary of Agriculture was appointed by the Board of Agriculture. I had an Attorney General's opinion on that, too. But I was, like, you know what, everybody is and should ignore it.

**Q:** Rather than do 14 or 15 individual decisions, based on your memory, who else did you put into that Cabinet?

**Byrne:** Well, I had a problem with the Labor Commissioner. Because Joel Jacobson, who had been one of my dearest friends and solid supporters, and was President of the old C-I-O, really wanted to be the Labor Commissioner and had a strong background in it. The problem was that it would have clearly divided the labor movement. Because it was splitting aspects of the labor movement and a--

**Q:** That was the A-F-L?

**Byrne:** Yeah, and Joel Jacobson just, sort of, disappeared. But at the time, it was a very telling thing. And so I wanted to avoid that kind of a split. And so I appointed Joe Hoffman, who was a lawyer, as Labor Commissioner. And then, I had to talk Joel Jacobson into taking the Public Utility spot in the Cabinet. Which, at first, he didn't want to do it. But ultimately, told me later that was the best thing I ever did for him.

**Q:** Because he learned a new field?

**Byrne:** Yeah, plus, it was a challenge to him. That job was an interesting challenge anyway \_\_\_\_\_.

**Q:** You had that--

**Byrne:** I had it. Christie Whitman had it. Joel Jacobson had it. The \_\_\_\_\_ three.

**Q:** Did you appoint people who had supported you, worked for you? I mean, is that the way it goes?

**Byrne:** Well, no. Ed Crabel was the Secretary of State under my administration. And he was an original primary opponent. Although, he ultimately dropped out of that primary and took the job of Secretary of State. He might have been the gubernatorial candidate had I not gotten into it in '73. **And then, he ran into a little traffic** early on, because of something that happened years and years ago.

**Q:** We talked about traffic. I asked you in the last interview what traffic means. Problems, you said?

**Byrne:** Yeah.

**Q:** Since you were expected to win easily, this allowed you a head start in planning a transition, even before the election. Did that help?

**Byrne:** In a way, it did. But, you know, in a campaign, first of all, they never showed me the polls. They just told me I was ahead, but they never showed me how much I was ahead. And so my attitude was, until election day, I'm campaigning. And so concentrating on organizing the government did not catch my attention until after I had won.

**Q:** Was there any jealousy between the people in the transition staff and the campaign staff that you recall?

**Byrne:** Yeah.

**Q:** Yeah? Tell us--

**Byrne:** Well, actually, there were two factions that were helping me get to be governor. One was the Dick Leone, or the egg-headed faction, if you will. And the other was the Hudson County practical politics faction. And I thought, and I did have, Hudson County was not looking to exploit the governorship. And that was good. And so I wanted to keep that. You know, people like Paul Jordan, who had been a reform Mayor of Jersey City, and Mayor Fitzpatrick who was part of a new leadership and power structure in Hudson County, were people I wanted to have a relationship. And that spokesman for that group began Jimmy Dugan. And Jimmy **and Dick Leone didn't** see eye to eye on a lot of things. And so there were times when I had to make the choice between Dugan and Dick Leone. And mostly, I came down on the side of Dick Leone because it was a, kind of, reform movement that I had envisioned. Dugan never forgave me.

**Q:** You had a falling out with him?

**Byrne:** No, not really. I mean, Jimmy Dugan was there on things like the income tax. I mean, he was head of the Judiciary committee. He did not ever, for spite, do anything. And when the income tax was on the board, he spoke in favor of the

income tax and helped mobilize the Senate vote to get it passed. If he wanted to destroy me, he could have.

**Q:** Did you make him State Chairman?

**Byrne:** Yeah.

**Q:** Right after--

**Byrne:** \_\_\_\_\_ one point, but initially.

**Q:** <Inaudible>.

**Byrne:** What happens with State Chairmen is that, traditionally, although technically, the State committee elects a State Chairman. A strong tradition is that the Governor picks the State Chairman and tells the State committee. And so **that's what I did.**

**Q:** Right after the '73 primary?

**Byrne:** Well, before I became Governor, yeah. He had that job no matter what happened to me.

**Q:** This tension between the eggheads and the Hudson County types--

**Byrne:** Yeah, and by the way, most of the Hudson County politicians are very smart people, both academically and otherwise. And guys, like, Jimmy Dugan and Paul Jordan and Bernie Hartnett, very bright guys.

**Q:** Nonetheless, these two factions that you've identified--

**Byrne:** Yeah.

**Q:** Did the tension between them lead to problems later?

**Byrne:** Sure.

**Q:** Okay. Well, tell us.

**Byrne:** **It carried over to the '76 Democratic Convention and who controlled the New Jersey delegation.** And Jimmy Dugan controlled the New Jersey delegation. Ultimately, made his deal with Carter, but ran his own slate, which was not the pro-Carter slate that we should have had.

**Q:** Who was it, pro-Kennedy? Or--

**Byrne:** I think they ran an Independent slate. And their attitude was there's a lot of good candidates out there. New Jersey ought to be able to look at them all. And I had been closely identified with Carter.

**Q:** One thing that, maybe, we forgot to touch on when we talked about the campaign was David Garth. Was he important in your election?

**Byrne:** I think so. Remember Garth had me and, I had gotten Garth-- First of all, I went through the primary without a media advisor. We did all direct mail in that '73 primary. **Now, it comes time to pick a media advisor for the fall campaign. And** I interviewed with David Garth. And he had just done the Bradley campaign in California, Los Angeles. And so he was not busy. And the nice part about New Jersey is **all the media consultants are available, because it's an off year. So we** made a deal with Garth. He did some effective television. And I think it was very helpful.

**Q:** What did you think of him, at the time?

**Byrne:** Of David?

**Q:** Yeah.

**Byrne:** A hard-nosed, very practical guy. He had Jeff Greenfield working for him at the time. So I interfaced more with Jeff than I did with David. But put together-

**Q:** He was, sort of, "the man" back then?

**Byrne:** Oh, yeah. Well, not quite. The next year he handled, both, Ella Grasso and Hugh Carey. **And that's what really established his firm's** reputation. Because he did those campaigns.

**Q:** So he won New Jersey, New York and Connecticut in the space of two years?

**Byrne:** Yeah. I once made a funny where I forget what the situation was--

**Q:** <Inaudible>.

**Byrne:** Oh, he had Ed Koch, too, remember.

**Q:** That would be a few years later, I think, '76?

**Byrne:** Yeah.

**Q:** Your second campaign--

**Byrne:** I once made a funny where Koch, Carey and I were testifying before some committee. And I said, "You guys could have saved a lot of time and just let David Garth come in. \_\_\_\_\_."

**Q:** Were you surprised that Dick Leone wanted to be treasurer rather than in the governor's office?

**Byrne:** No. Because he had been in the **governor's office**. I mean, he had been in the **governor's office** when Dick Hughes was governor. And so I think he had told me of his interest in being the State Treasurer. And he was a good one. And plus, **he gave the message that we're not fooling around.**

**Q:** Because he was so serious and intelligent?

**Byrne:** No. Because, I think, somehow he helped project the image that this was **an administration that had a lot of integrity and wasn't for sale, and wasn't peopled** by anybody who was interested in other than good government.

**Q:** You're a newly elected governor. You've gone to Arizona to think about this and to get a little relaxation. You come back to Trenton and Princeton.

**Byrne:** I was in West Orange at the time.

**Q:** Were you? Oh, that's right. You're sworn in.

**Byrne:** Yeah.

**Q:** What was your typical day like during this period of time?

**Byrne:** Transition?

**Q:** Yes.

**Byrne:** Talking to a lot of people, evaluating candidates for different jobs, trying to figure out how to structure the government, figure out aside from Cabinet officers, who else we wanted in government. And getting ready to take over. There was a budget problem. There was a shortfall. Not a bad shortfall. And the trouble I got into, remember, **by saying we don't need an income tax for the foreseeable future,** was a statement I thought was honestly represented. The fact that I could balance **the State budget if I didn't have to deal with the education problem. And I kept** saying that I was going to deal with the education problem separately. But I got that other thing hung around my neck.

**Q:** I think John Degnan spoke about that in our interview with him this morning, and said that people thought you were parsing it a little too finely. And all they remembered was you didn't think there was a need for an income tax.

**Byrne:** Yes, absolutely. And if I had run against Cahill, by the way, we both would have been for an income tax, because Cahill was. And I had said that I would only **be for an income tax if a necessary criteria, and that all got lost. And that's the way** he did with the public. And John Degnan, by the way, is the one who advised me not to try to justify that statement, but to take it for what the public viewed it as **and go from there. And so I never tried to say, "Hey, look, I really did say."** And my opponent, in the whole '73 campaign, accused me of being for an income tax.

**Q:** During the transition, did you come to Trenton every day? Or did you work out of your home?

**Byrne:** No. Bill Cahill gave me some offices across the hallway from the **governor's office.**

**Q:** In the State House?

**Byrne:** Yeah, I could get to Cahill in 20 steps. So he was very, very nice about that. We had access to whatever in State government we needed. I talked to Cahill about who might have been good in his administration. He had a black Health Commissioner, and in concept might have been ideal. But he did not recommend him for whatever reason. And so I found my own Health Commissioner.

**Q:** Who?

**Byrne:** Joanne Finley, a great lady, as we speak is still alive, and was a good Health Commissioner. Invented **the diagnosis related groups, the DRG's.**

**Q:** Very controversial--

**Byrne:** Which was then and is now. But it's still used in some--

**Q:** Is it? You don't hear that term anymore.

**Byrne:** Absolutely. No, you don't. But there's a lot of repayments, based on the DRG concept. Whether that's what they call it or not, that's what it is.

**Q:** Who did you make your Insurance Commissioner?

**Byrne:** Jimmy Sheeran. And Jimmy Sheeran and I go back to high school days, where he was captain of the football team and, clearly, the most popular guy in school. And had a great war record, and had done some insurance work for Cahill. So then, he had the background to go into that and became a very tough Insurance Commissioner.

**Q:** Was there a Department of Community Affairs in 1973?



**Byrne:** Yeah, and I think Pat Sheehan, from the get go. I'm not sure.

**Q:** Okay.

**Byrne:** But she was the Community Affairs-- At one point, I tried to abolish that department. And Pat Sheehan **was so popular that the legislature wouldn't let me do it.**

**Q:** Did you have to select a new head of the State Police or did you inherit someone?

**Byrne:** No. I inherited Colonel Kelly, who was an excellent head of the State Police, had been there for a long time, well regarded. But there was a feeling that there was a stagnation in the State Police. And so I did not reappoint Kelly. I let **him stay there and was happy to have them there. But he didn't like the idea of my not reappointing him and, ultimately, left.** And I think I made an interim appointment and then, had to search, which is a story in itself, which came up with nobody. And so I appointed Clint Pagano because I knew him from my prosecutor days.

**Q:** He's probably the longest serving State Police superintendent that we have ever had.

**Byrne:** I don't know how long Schwartzkopf was there. But he may have--

**Q:** Who was your Education Commissioner?

**Byrne:** Ultimately, Fred Burke. And Fred Burke was also controversial. I got him from Rhode Island, where he had been an Education Commissioner. And Fred had some good ideas, but looked a little pugnacious when he appeared, and was an easy target for people who hated, either, the education program or the way he was administrator or the amount of red tape. And so he was there when we went through that whole education reform. And Tom Kean made a campaign issue of Fred Burke, **how he was going to get rid of him. And so he didn't have a chance, after--**

**Q:** He lives on in the name, "Abbott versus Burke."

**Byrne:** Absolutely.

**Q:** How about David Bardin? What did he do for you?

**Byrne:** David Bardin is an interesting guy. My staff wanted somebody else who **had been in the Kennedy administration. And I interviewed the guy and just didn't have the rapport with him. And so the name, "David Bardin", came across my desk.** He was in Israel at the time.

**Q:** He was going to be?

**Byrne:** Who, Bar--

**Q:** Bardin.

**Byrne:** Oh, no. Always for--

**Q:** D.E.P. I'm sorry.

**Byrne:** Always for D.E.P. And yeah, like, he's the guy that wore sandals and no tie and so forth. Character. And I think, when I get the feedback, David Bardin was a good Commissioner of Environmental Protection. And by the way, it was David Bardin who resurrected the Liberty State Park concept, and it had been dead for a couple of years. The idea had been there and had been proposed, but nobody was moving on it. David Bardin did that. And I think David Bardin, as we speak today in 2006, deserves a lot more credit for Liberty State Park than some of the people whose names are on plaques there.

**Q:** What was your first impression of him when you first met him?

**Byrne:** He was an interesting guy. And the environment is full of interesting guys challenging people. David was able to, immediately, I think, gain the confidence of the environmental community.

**Q:** You inherited Phil Alampi, and you said a moment ago that the Governor doesn't appoint the Agriculture Secretary. But what was he like?

**Byrne:** The Board. Phil Alampi was the best showman that the state has ever had. And he was good from that standpoint. What happened with Phil Alampi is when I did the Pinelands, the farmers were totally against it for pretty good reasons. I mean, putting their farms in the Pinelands affected the property value of the farm and frankly their ability to borrow money. So Phil had to walk the fine line between my determination to save the Pinelands and the farmers' outrage that I was interfering with their private property. And he did that pretty well. But he certainly was a good spokesman for the farm industry and for the state.

**Q:** You say, "He was the greatest showman the State has ever seen."

**Byrne:** Well, he had been on W.O.R. doing the early morning, the five o'clock Farm Market Reports. So he had a sense of public relations, great sense.

**Q:** Higher Education, who did you put there, as Chancellor of Higher Education?

**Byrne:** I think I started with a holdover. And that was a guy by the name of Ralph Dungan, who had all kinds of qualifications, difficult personality. But he was well respected. Did not get along with Stan Bergen, who was running the Medical

School. But he was good. He was not all that imaginative. But he was certainly competent to hold a job.

**Q:** What would you ask a perspective Cabinet Officer? What type of questions would you ask somebody when they came in for--

**Byrne:** \_\_\_\_\_ with a job and-- Now, doing something like Law Enforcement or a Utility thing, where I knew something about it, was one thing. If it was an Education Commissioner, I might not have asked deep probing questions about school financing and \_\_\_\_\_.

**Q:** Did you have to ask a question, "Is there anything in your background that you wouldn't want to see in the newspaper and that would bring discredit upon the administration?"

**Byrne:** Well, no. Not that we didn't have pretty careful background checks and State Police checks. And every once in a while, that would turn up something which disqualified a candidate. Whether I asked them, point blank, "Did you ever commit a crime?" I don't think I did that. But I had some pretty strong documentation of where they were and who they were and what their background was.

**Q:** You mentioned Dungan as a difficult personality. Did you ever have a falling out with him?

**Byrne:** No. I remember one time I went to dinner and mediated a dispute he was having with Stan Bergen. And they were bitter towards each other that night. Now, I've talked to, I think, both of them since then. And they said, no, it was just a passing argument, which you have all the time in government. You have one view of something and he's got another view. But they're--

**Q:** You get inaugurated. Let's go back a second. You mentioned Stan Bergen. And I think some people have wondered about Stan Bergen, in light of what's been happening in modern times at the University of Medicine and Dentistry at New Jersey. Did he create the system that got out of control years later?

**Byrne:** No. When Stan was there, whatever else, Stan was in control. And Stan knew what was going on and could tell you what was going on. He was regarded in some quarters as high handed. But he had control of the thing. And I don't think anybody thought, in Stan Bergen's time, that this was a dumping ground for political appointees. I never even thought of suggesting to Stan Bergen that he hire somebody. I mean, that was his operation. It was run, for good or bad. And I thought it was run for good. He ran it. He was in control. And by the way, from the beginning, I took an annual physical at the College of Medicine and Dentistry, so that I got to know some of the doctors there. I was assigned a personal physician. And so I projected the feeling that it was my medical school, too.

**Q:** What were your early contacts with the higher education community?

**Byrne:** Well, I remember campaigning in '73 and appearing before a meeting of the New Jersey College Presidents Association, and being asked what I wanted from higher education. And I remember telling them that I had seven kids, and each one of them had different capabilities, and that I wanted a higher education program in New Jersey which would recognize the individuality of each one of my kids and provide an education consistent with bringing out the best of each of those kids. And from that little capsule, I think, I got my message across that that's the kind of education system I wanted.

**Q:** That must have impressed them. It impresses me.

**Byrne:** Anyway.

**Q:** Good answer or a good statement. Who was <inaudible>--

**Byrne:** The trouble there is that I didn't have the kind of money that you really needed to make the State colleges as good as, frankly, I think they are now. I mean, I think the State college, if I had a Chancellor, like I wanted to keep. You know, if they kept the Chancellor, Christie Whitman and got rid of this Chancellor, it would help a lot. Susan Cole disagrees with me on that. But there you go. Anyway, I had Ted Hollander ultimately in the State college. You asked me about Rutgers. Ed Bloustein had just been made President of Rutgers, I think, a year or so before. And I had great faith in Ed Belstein before. Because, you know, all I gave him, he wanted more and was always criticizing. And that was his job, sort of, because we were on a tight budget. You remember our budgets were very tight budgets, even though a lot of money for education. But it was a redistribution of existing dollars. It wasn't more dollars. So Ed Bloustein and I would have difficulties in terms of how much money Rutgers got.

**Q:** What was your assessment of him as a leader or Rutgers--

**Byrne:** I thought he was good. I really thought he was good. I loved his wife, by the way, and who was a very smart lady that died prematurely, but had a real feel for people. And so did Ed. And I think helped with the image of Rutgers.

**Q:** Did you have any relations with some of the Catholic colleges of the State?

**Byrne:** Sure.

**Q:** <Inaudible>.

**Byrne:** Keep in mind I went to Seton Hall for, sort of, a semester before the war. It was chaotic. But I went there. So I've always had a loyalty to Seton Hall, and I've always been close to it. Especially, there was Monsignor Fahy in the early days of my administration, who I really loved. And I remember when we did a reenactment of a Philadelphia thing in 1776, and I had to appoint delegates to it, I

appointed Monsignor Faye [ph?] as a delegate. And we became pretty good friends.

**Q:** You also went to Princeton. Did you have relations with Princeton when you were Governor?

**Byrne:** Yeah, oh, yeah. Well, **first of all, its Governor is on the Board.** And I'm told I was the first Governor that actually went to the Board meetings and participated in the Board meetings. And at that time, Bill Bowen was President of Princeton. I had a son in Princeton at the time. Every once in a while, Bill Bowen would call me and ask if he could come over for a cup of coffee in the morning. And he would come and we would talk problems. There was one instance where the Department of Higher Education was going to tell him what courses he could run **and what courses he couldn't.** And I had to straighten that out in a hurry. But I mean, you know, things like that.

**Q:** When you said, "Come over for a cup of coffee," you were in Morven and he was in--

**Byrne:** Yeah, he could walk. He could walk.

**Q:** You had served in the Governor's office under Governor Meyner. Did you consider changing the structure of his staff, such as creating a Chief of Staff at the start of your second term?

**Byrne:** Well, there was nothing to change from the Meyner days. Because in the Meyner day, there were only about four or five of us in the whole office. There was me. There was a press secretary. There was a policy guy and a couple of other people, maybe, the Counsel. But there were only four or five of us. So there was no way of talking about organization and structure. We all did our thing. So yeah, when I became Governor in my own right, I started out with that concept, sort of. I had a Secretary, instead of a Chief of Staff. It wasn't until I appointed Bob Mulcahy as Chief of Staff that my design was deliberately to give the Chief of Staff a lot of power. And the Chief of Staff, for the first time, could make commitments that he knew I would keep.

**Q:** Why did you feel a need to do that?

**Byrne:** Because I needed somebody out there as a spokesman for me who could deal with the legislation and legislators, and the legislator know that, you know, whatever the deal was, was going to be the deal. If you had a Brendan Byrne, who was Secretary to Governor Meyner, and only Meyner could make the decisions. **Brendan Byrne could get a lot of information back for the Governor, but he couldn't make the decision and he couldn't commit--**

**Q:** Had that gotten bigger by then, do you think?

**Byrne:** Sure.

**Q:** So you needed--

**Byrne:** Well, not only--

**Q:** A surrogate Governor?

**Byrne:** Not only gotten bigger. But when I was working for Meyner, the legislature had virtually no investigative power. I mean, they came in and they had no staff. They had Sam Alito, who sort of ran Legislative Services. But they, sort of, took your word. I mean, we would have a meeting when the legislature came in during the Meyner administration. We would have a meeting of the Democratic legislators. And I or somebody **else would sit and tell them what the administration's position** was on the bills that were coming in out there. They had no independent research **to make. Not that they weren't bills on their own came to a conclusion. But they** had no structured research that helped them much. So I remember sitting with Ed Crabel, who was the Minority Leader, until three o'clock in the morning, sitting beside him. And the bills would be posted and moved. And I would tell him which way the administration wanted the Democrats to vote on those bills. Now, by the **time I'm Governor, they have staff, they have research, they have, you know, commitments. They have all kinds of things. I've a lot of lobbyists telling them** what to do. Different.

**Q:** I think you went through your first term, though, still with the Executive Secretary--

**Byrne:** Most of it.

**Q:** Format.

**Byrne:** Yeah.

**Q:** John Degnan was it for a while.

**Byrne:** Yeah.

**Q:** Who else was Executive Secretary?

**Byrne:** It started with, either Charlie Corella or Don Lan. I think it started with Don Lan, who had been the guy who really got me into this race. And Charlie Carella was there for a very short time.

**Q:** He, today, is your law partner.

**Byrne:** Yeah, and John Degnan.

**Q:** And then, in the second--

**Byrne:** And then, Henry Luther, who was the smartest political operative, I think, I've ever seen.

**Q:** Yeah.

**Byrne:** Henry Luther?

**Q:** Yeah.

**Byrne:** Good, great guy.

**Q:** And then, in the second term, you created the Chief of Staff position for Bob Mulcahy?

**Byrne:** Right.

**Q:** And did Harold Hodes--

**Byrne:** Well, what happened there is I had to put somebody up in the Meadowlands in a hurry. I forgot the guy's name. But I had a guy running the Meadowlands, and he got an offer for some place in Texas, I think. And so he resigned. Now, I've got to run the Meadowlands. And I have got to have somebody there that can handle it. So I call in Bob Mulcahy, and I say, "I want to have dinner with you tonight."

**Q:** He had been your Chief of Staff for <inaudible>--

**Byrne:** Yes.

**Q:** Years at this point?

**Byrne:** Yeah. And we went over to Bucks County. And I laid it all out to him. And I said, "But I've got to have an answer within 24 hours." So he came back, and he said he would take the job. And that started the great new career for Bob Mulcahy.

**Q:** He is now the Athletic Director at Rutgers.

**Byrne:** Sure. Bring him slowly into big time football.

**Michael Aron:** What about the NJEA during the 1973 transition? Did they lobby you to support more tax money for education?

**Brendan Byrne:** NJEA was one man and the owner. There was this guy named Fred Hipp. Fred Hipp was all powerful. You dealt with the offices of NJEA, but you really dealt with Fred Hipp. He was very helpful. We had a good relationship. He supported good things and supported the income tax, because the whole education reform was in there. I always got along well with NJEA and despite the fact that the major issues were income tax and school reform and so forth, the thing that endeared me to the NJEA was that I refused to let a judge put a teacher in jail.

**Q:** Tell us about that.

**Byrne:** There was a strike in some shore community, and a judge sent the leadership of the education association to jail. I said that I don't want teachers giving jails a good name. I pardoned them.

**Q:** You pardoned them?

**Byrne:** Absolutely. And I never forgot.

**Q:** After the fact or right away?

**Byrne:** As soon as they sentenced them to jail, I pardoned them.

**Q:** That's a kind of aggressive use of executive authority to \_\_\_\_\_ down a judiciary.

**Byrne:** I am accused of using executive power aggressively through eight years.

**Q:** Apart from Alan Sagner, who were other business supporters in your first campaign?

**Byrne:** In the cabinet? Well there were guys like--

**Q:** Not necessarily in the cabinet.

**Byrne:** I would have a group of executive-- Bob Ferguson, for example, who was with the bank.

**Q:** First National State Bank.

**Byrne:** At that time, now Wachovia. Anyway, Ferguson was the kind of guy who would tell it like it is, would holler at me. I had him on the Port Authority and was a solid guy. I got to like him.

**Q:** He would holler at you?

**Byrne:** Oh yeah. And even try to organize while the guys were waiting out in the vestibule to come in and talk to me about an issue, he would try to mobilize them to a position against mine. But the thing was that when I decided that was what was going to happen, he became reasonably supportive. He wasn't taking cheap shots. I got along pretty well with the business community. They were not vicious toward me. I remember in the 1977 campaign, the then head of the Prudential Insurance Company became the chief fundraiser for my opponent. When it was all over, he came down and sat with me and I told him. He remember **this; I didn't.** He said that he came down and sat with me and I said, "I'm not going to hold against you the fact that you actively support my opponent." I said, "But I can't



speaking for my staff.” He said he never forgot that. But I also advised him that nobody at the Prudential, which was then the most powerful company in New Jersey, that nobody that high up in the Prudential should become that partisan in especially gubernatorial elections. They followed that rule ever since.

**Q:** Why should they not?

**Byrne:** Because you’re making enemies. You’ve got a governor who you oppose and he gets elected. Where do you really go? Or you have to deal with the big companies in New Jersey and you have to be sympathetic and helpful to them. I had my fights with Prudential on other things, too. On automobile insurance, when they were in it.

**Q:** Who were your key labor supporters other than Joel Jacobson [sp?]?

**Byrne:** Joel Jacobson. I had a traditional disagreement with Charlie Marciani [ph?].

**Q:** Over what?

**Byrne:** Over-- I’m not sure. But to begin with, over my policy of favoring mass transportation over highway projects. Charlie Marciani became convinced that I was not in-- He had been supporting Ralph Theroux [ph?] and I sort of knocked Ralph Theroux out in the first primary. I think he forever held that against me, although we had a working relationship for a while. Anyway, Charlie Marciani and I never really hit it off. But the building \_\_\_\_\_ were my real supporters. Guys like Jimmy Grogan [sp?] **who’s now the head of a whole mishmash in Washington,** building \_\_\_\_\_, and I hit it off very well. I had guys like Zack Crisby [ph?] with the roofers, and a number of other people from the old left wing labor unions who were great and good friends and we worked together.

**Q:** Was it problematic for you that probably the most visible labor leader, Charlie Marciani, head of the AFL, and you didn’t get along? Did that cause you any difficulty?

**Byrne:** I had so many difficulties. Charlie had to wait in line. By the way, the AFL did not endorse me in 1977 and were ready to endorse Ray Bateman [ph?], except that I made an appearance before their convention. They at least allowed me to speak with Ray Bateman at a big convention in Cherry Hill. I was first. I got to say the best speech of my life. I pointed out if you want this to happen, you got to support me. If you want that to-- and when I finished going through my rec-- which was a pretty solid pro-labor record, including minimum wage and all the traditional things. When I got finished with that speech, they gave me a standing ovation. There was no way then that Charlie Marciani, as powerful as he was, could get the endorsement for Bateman.

**Q:** So they were neutral?

**Byrne:** Yes.

**Q:** Did anyone that you wanted for your high staff position reject the offer, in your memory?

**Byrne:** Probably a lot of people. Offhand, I don't remember. When you start, you start with the best person you can get. And you ask them and the best person you can get may not be at all interested. So you go to the second best. I offered Ray Bateman a job in my second administration. He turned me down.

**Q:** What did you offer him?

**Byrne:** Probably one of the top jobs. I may have had a \_\_\_\_\_ or something like that. I also offered Tom Cain [sp?]. I remember I put Tom Cain on the Highway Authority, which gave him a little foothold when he saw the campaign in '81. I had to cover this very recently with Christie Whitman about whether I was too partisan a democrat. I had heard that she always thought I was.

**Q:** As governor or la--

**Byrne:** As governor. She didn't really know me other than as governor. Anyway, I think I convinced her that I was not only not partisan and the democrats knew it, but that I was really looking for the best people for the job. When I created the job of Economic Development. I created the EDA. And the first guy who I put in that job was a retired Wall Street republican who ran for congress, I think, as a republican.

**Q:** Do you remember his name?

**Byrne:** I'll think of it.

**Q:** Were you worried that Dick Leo [ph?] and Lou Cayden [ph?] wouldn't get along with the traditional New Jersey pols and legisla--?

**Byrne:** Sure, sure. And they didn't. But the context there again is that I didn't owe anything to anybody. When I ran for re-election in '77, I did not have a single county chairman in my corner. Not a single one. And Dave Wallents [ph?], who called me before the primary and told me I was going to win, called me later and said, "I was lying. I didn't think you had a chance. You didn't have a single county chairman." I didn't owe anybody anything. That was the unique part of my administration is I didn't have any county chairmen support, and I didn't have to raise a lot of money. With those two things, you can be a pretty good governor.

**Q:** Does that echo again in this moment?

**Byrne:** No, except that, of course, he doesn't need the money. He's free of that aspect of it. He's got to get along with county chairmen, because in a lot of

counties, the county chairman is instrumental in picking the candidates for legislature.

**Q:** Didn't you have to get along with county chairmen, too?

**Byrne:** No.

**Q:** Why not?

**Byrne:** I didn't have to get along with county chairmen, because they didn't do anything for me. When I had a proposition up before legislature, yeah, I had to deal with the legislators. In some instances, they had to go back and deal with county chairmen. For instance, Essex County, when I was trying to get the income tax through, and guys like Dick Coty [sp?] was in the first term and I had to one time ask how about if I come down and talk to Dick. But Dick was his own man even then.

**Q:** Did he vote for the income tax?

**Byrne:** Yes. He also got an exit off 280 into Arms [ph?].

**Q:** Were they really connected?

**Byrne:** No. I never knew until Coty told me years later.

**Q:** Who were the key county chairmen when you were first elected?

**Byrne:** They key county chairmen were in Essex, you know, the big counties.

**Q:** Essex, Hudson, Camden?

**Byrne:** Yeah. Except that the county chairmen had lost a lot of their power. In Hudson County, Harvey had a county chairman. You had Paul Jordan, who was the mayor of Jersey City and had a lot of clout in the old days. You had Tommy Smith, who **became mayor of Jersey City. But even Tommy Smith didn't control the Hudson County delegation.** Howard \_\_\_\_\_ had a lot to say in Essex County, **because he probably could have taken you off the ticket, although I'm quoted even back then as saying that if he tried to take Coty off the ticket, Coty could beat him off the line.**

**Q:** Which, I think, happened some years later.

**Byrne:** Yeah, sure.

**Q:** Are the county chairmen yet even weaker today or has it stayed the same?

**Byrne:** To give you an example, Corazon [ph?] beat the county chairman on the Weinberg situation. **That's from now, recent history.**

**Q:** Like Burton County democratic chairman wanted somebody else to take an oath on the senate seat?

**Byrne:** Sure.

**Q:** <inaudible>

**Byrne:** Sure.

**Q:** During the transition, did you meet with Chief Justice Hughes?

**Byrne:** I doubt it.

**Q:** Why?

**Byrne:** Hughes?

**Q:** Yes. Why?

**Byrne:** Well, he was the chief justice. I mean, he didn't want to get involved in political issues. Dick Hughes and I were good friends. But he was also a good friend of Roy Bateman. I think it was heart-wrenching for him to make that decision. But to call the chief justice and to say, "I want you to--" By the way, Dick Hughes was the kind of guy that if I told him that I was thinking of Jack the Ripper for a job, he would find something good to say about Jack the Ripper. He was that kind. He didn't have anything bad to say about anybody.

**Q:** But it would have been inappropriate, are you suggesting for you and the chief justice to talk at this point in time?

**Byrne:** When I first became governor, Weintraub had just retired as chief justice. I called him a lot. He and I were very close from my clerkship days. For instance, when Joe Weintraub was alive, I never appointed a judge without his blessing.

**Q:** Really?

**Byrne:** No.

**Q:** He knew them all?

**Byrne:** Or could find out about them. I used him and Alec Kowar [ph?] who was a retired judge. Kowar would find out about anybody I was considering for judgeship. Frankly, I think the feedback is that I appointed damn good judges. You don't always get that feedback about governors, frankly. But Weintraub had an absolute veto. He didn't always recommend and sometimes he would tell me he wasn't crazy about somebody, but if he said no, I didn't appoint them.

**Q:** How about prosecutors? Did you have someone--?

**Byrne:** Yeah, same thing.

**Q:** Who?

**Byrne:** Weintraub. But keep in mind, I had been a prosecutor and I knew most of the guys who were-- either those who worked for those jobs or had the job. In the case of a prosecutor of Essex or Morris County, the county where I sat, I knew what **was going on. I think I had a pretty good eye. I had run the best prosecutor's office in the state.** I really had. Anybody will tell you that. I knew what the standards were and I knew--

**Q:** What are the standards for measuring the best prosecutor's office in the state?

**Byrne:** Good trial lawyers, guys who have a great ethical sense, guy who was committed to organizing the office and running it well.

**Q:** When you were filling your cabinet and you say you were sure you were turned down by some first choices, was salary a big reason?

**Byrne:** Maybe. I don't remember that. We were paying up to \$60,000.

**Q:** Okay, we're going to take a little break.

**Byrne:** What was the guy's name, I forgot, from EDA?

M1: Rob Powell--

<break in tape>

<crew talk>

**Q:** Governor, when you took office, you had a pretty close relationship with Marty Greenberg [ph?], who was elected to the state senate in the same election in which you were elected governor.

**Byrne:** He had lost an election two years before.

**Q:** How did you know him?

**Byrne:** I knew Marty Greenberg for the first time when I was working in Meyner's administration. Harold Kallospy [ph?] was counsel to the governor. I was secretary to the governor. I remember, for some reason, Harold Kallospy coming in with this **young guy and saying, "This is the smartest law clerk I've ever had."** Harold was a pretty good lawyer, which I began how to-- So I meet Marty with that strong **introduction from Harold Kallospy. We worked together in the governor's office for a short time.** Then when Meyner set me up to become the acting prosecutor in Essex County, Marty asked if he could come up with me. I took him up. He

handled one difficult investigation at the medical school, actually. Then we became law partners for a while. We've got a strong history.

**Q:** Law partners before you became a judge?

**Byrne:** Yeah. Once I became a judge, I had no more law practice. Except I did have a short time when I declared in the primary and I became technically a member of that law firm again. But I never really accomplished much there.

**Q:** Did you and Greenberg used to drive to Trenton together from West Orange?

**Byrne:** East Orange. Actually, I would meet him. Governor Meyner had a second car. He had a state car which he drove. He drove or the trooper drove. He had a second car, which was a standby car, which he gave to me. Now I got the state car and I got to know John Farley, who was an old Passaic Herald Newspaper reporter who had become Meyner's press secretary. Marty Greenberg and Vince Biuno [ph?], who had been counsel to Meyner, but he became a federal judge. So we would meet in East Orange. Our cars would be parked on a side street in East Orange near the Parkway. I would pick these guys up-- Barry Sass [ph?], by the way, was often part of that group.

**Q:** He would become U.S. attorney.

**Byrne:** He would become U.S. attorney. We would drive down together. We would handicap horses on the way down. It was a good time. We sort of looked forward to it.

**Q:** Bring us now up to '73 and '74. You're both newly elected, you and your ex-law partner. He comes out of a different faction of Essex County?

**Byrne:** No. Marty had run on the organization line two years before that, I guess, and lost. Then--

**Q:** Ran for senate or assembly?

**Byrne:** I think the senate. Now it's 1973, and in fairness to Marty, they had put together that line before I was an announced candidate. So he had that line or nothing. I didn't have a line.

**Q:** They backed somebody else?

**Byrne:** They were on the line with Ralph Theroux.

**Q:** Who was from Essex County?

**Byrne:** Sure. And had the organization's support. In fairness, I think, when I got into that race, Marty Greenberg, frankly among I think some others, decided just to campaign for themselves and not to campaign for the rest of the ticket, especially

for the gubernatorial candidate. But he did. There was Theroux's unauthorized sign for Greenberg. I may have one somewhere in the archive. Everybody knew he was for me in that election. When I became the elected candidate and prospective governor, Marty gave me a lot of good advice. Evaluate personalities and whose qualifications match what job. I got to rely on him a lot. Then when he became a member of the senate, he helped me get some nominations through that otherwise might not have been so easy to get through.

**Q:** How good was it to have a friend in the senate like that?

**Byrne:** Nice. First of all, Marty was smart. As Harold said when I was first introduced to him, "He's the smartest law clerk I've ever--" He's not only smart, but he's got street smarts, he's got experience, he comes out of the labor movement, and knew how to deal with people.

**Q:** Was he known as Brendan Byrne's guy in the senate?

**Byrne:** Sure. If somebody wanted a judge kicked out of Essex County, they probably knew to go to Marty first and try to get his blessing. Marty never asked me to compromise anything. For instance, when he would give me a recommendation for a judgeship, a guy like Dave Landow [sp?], for instance, he was giving me a guy who had gone to law school at Harvard and who clearly was a qualified lawyer.

**Q:** You were going to check him out with Joe Weintraub anyway?

**Byrne:** Sure, yeah.

**Q:** Do you think anybody in the senate was jealous of this rookie Greenberg?

**Byrne:** I have no idea. But he got along. He got along. I don't think he made enemies as such because of the relationship with me.

**Q:** The legislative leaders were not--

**Byrne:** I don't think so.

**Q:** This young freshman had a direct pipeline into the governor's office?

**Byrne:** Nah. I don't think so. Who knows?

**Q:** You mentioned off camera, a name from Passaic County, Tony--

**Byrne:** Grossi [sp?].

**Q:** Grossi.

**Byrne:** Tony Grossi, yeah.

**Q:** Tell me about him.

**Byrne:** Tony Grossi. I really got to know Tony Grossi, because he was one of three commissioners on the Public Utility Commission. I was one of them and Bill Osgood [ph?] was one of them. We got along famously together. Osgood was a difficult personality for everybody but me. We got along well. He was a brusque, abrupt, no-nonsense kind of guy, republican. Tony Grossi was a smooth, typical politician from Passaic County. He knew the county, he knew how to--

**Q:** Democrat?

**Byrne:** Oh, yeah. Knew how to get along with people. He also had a great affinity for horse races and really taught me to become an expert in horse racing, which I **am. I don't win, but I know what's going on. We had a lot in common with politics** and horse racing and just became good friends. Now, when it looks like 1973 is going to happen and we got a chance, I had several meetings with Tony Grossi. We would meet with some of our mutual friends and he would advise me. At first he **advised me that I couldn't beat Cahill [sp?]. We disbursed. Then when it came to** where Cahill was having his little problems, we would meet again. I remember Tony Grossi organizing a couple of strategy sessions for me with people and he came out storming for me.

**Q:** Was he influential in getting you the vote in his county?

**Byrne:** Yeah, because Passaic County was always difficult for me, for some reason, because I was, I think, a too liberal a democrat for Passaic County. You had the Herald News up there. But Tony was helpful. He already had a job, so that he **wasn't looking for anything, just out of friendship.**

**Q:** Who were some key advisors, other than Joe Weintraub, who weren't in the administration, but were perhaps part of what sometimes is called a "kitchen cabinet"?

**Byrne:** Yeah, well early on, Archie Alexander [ph?]. I don't know if you remember that name.

**Q:** You've mentioned it in the last interview. He was your initial finance chairman.

**Byrne:** That was young Archie.

**Q:** Oh.

**Byrne:** But his father had been Secretary of War, back in, maybe even the Roosevelt administration. Anyway, very well respected guy.



**Q:** What part of the state?

**Byrne:** Somerset County. He came up to see me at least once. When I was on the bench in '72-'73, I would have people call me and take me out to lunch, political people, and talk about the gubernatorial campaign. Helen Meyner was one of them. I think Helen always liked me as a potential candidate. Archie Alexander, Ray Manahan [ph?], people who were not totally enmeshed in the day-to-day running of democratic policy, but who were interested in who does run it. I had a series of lunches like that. **Most of the time, I would tell people that I didn't think I was interested in doing it, it didn't look like. And I liked Cahill, frankly. Ultimately in March or April, and I talked to you about this, when it looked like Cahill was not going to be beatable, I go hold of some of those people and we put it together.**

**Q:** How about Dan Gabey [ph?]?

**Byrne:** Dan Gabey was a little bit interested in becoming Commissioner of Community Affairs. Smart guy, a guy I respected. I got to tell you, it was Dan Gabey and Steve Delgato [ph?] who came to see me a year or two before, when it looked like Pete Williams was having alcohol problems and that we might need another candidate. They came to see me about being that candidate. Dan Gabey and I, I think, have always shared a fairly liberal philosophy. **I don't know what happened, but he didn't get in the administration, but he was a respected advisor.** He may have been more interested in doing things for the administration than being in the administration.

**Q:** In those days, he was the head of Keys Martin Advertising Agency.

**Byrne:** Yes.

**Q:** I remember he used to fly around the state with you sometimes.

**Byrne:** Dan? I wouldn't be surprised.

**Q:** How about Joe Katz [sp?]? Was he part of your gang?

**Byrne:** Joe Katz had been a reporter for the Old Newark News and was a liberal reporter among-- at least the super\_\_\_\_\_ for the Newark News was very republican. He never said a good word about me editorially. I got good coverage with the Newark News, but never editorially. Joe Katz was the kind of guy who would call you and say, **"Here's something you might do that would get you some publicity."** I remember one time,--

**Q:** As a reporter, he would do that?

**Byrne:** Might. I remember there's a picture of me somewhere in the archives here of me holding some guns and everybody thinks that it had to do with \_\_\_\_\_. Actually, I was making a pitch to the freeholders when I was a prosecutor, for more

money to buy ammunition and I said that reloading the used shells wasn't a good idea and that a couple of the guns had actually exploded. I don't know whether Joe called me on that or whether I called him. But he was the kind of guy if you had a good story, would be sympathetic and help you make the best of it. As a matter of fact, Joe Katz also became press secretary to Dick Hughes. **Part of what I'm telling you is suggestions he made when he was in government, too. It was Joe Katz who you could bounce something off and he'd give you a practical answer to it. He was somehow related to Benny Bendon [sp?], who worked for me and so forth. Actually, the statement I made when I announced for governor in the governor's office, was written by Joe Katz. I told him what I wanted to say and what I was going to do, and he wrote the statement. He knows that.**

**Q:** Ken McPherson?

**Byrne:** Yes.

**Q:** What about him?

**Byrne:** I wouldn't have been governor without Ken. What happened, when I changed my mind and decided maybe this would be the year to go, I called a guy by the name of Dave Waters. There was this law firm of Waters and McPherson. I had been with Dave Waters on the Public Utility Commission. He was secretary of the Commission, so I knew him. I called him when I'm doing this exploration and I say, "Maybe I'm going to look at this. I need your help." He says, "I don't know anything about politics. You ought to talk to my partner." The partner was Ken McPherson. As I say, without Ken McPherson in the early days, I would have gone absolutely nowhere. Ken McPherson helped get me appointments with the key people in Hudson County and was a catalyst for feedback I was getting and what was happening. This was all within 10 days, by the way. And stayed with me, did not want to come into government when I got elected. I put him on the Port Authority for a while. Even there, he'd just bite the kibitz. He was a brilliant guy, a brilliant lawyer, well-respected lawyer, did well in the law practice, partly as a result of my becoming governor. I think he was able to broaden his law practice. Clearly, a well-respected political figure and a lawyer.

**Q:** What about Sandy Jaffrey [ph?], was he someone you spoke to as governor?

**Byrne:** Yeah. Sandy was more a theoretician than a practical politician.

**Q:** Who was he?

**Byrne:** Sandy Jaffrey was a guy who Joe Weintraub recommended to me. He had been a law clerk for Weintraub. When I was prosecutor, Weintraub called me, as he fairly seldom did on the issue of personnel. He called me and told me that this was a guy who wanted to be a prosecutor and that he was good and I should take him and had no political credentials. Naturally, if Joe told me to take him, I would take him. He worked for me-- when Kennedy became president in 1961, he had the

U.S. Attorney's job in Newark to fill. He offered it to me and I didn't want it. He gave it to Dave Satts [sp?], but they insisted that I give him an experienced prosecutor. I gave him Sandy Jaffey. Sandy went to the U.S. Attorney's office, developed a great name for himself there and later became head of the governor's commission to evaluate the New York riots. He did a great job there. He was with the Ford Foundation after that. He was always a talent you could tap. I don't think he ever really was too interested in the day-to-day operations of the government. But he was the kind of guy that you would like to know.

**Q:** Is there anybody else we're leaving out among this--?

**Byrne:** Don Land [ph?], who became eventually my Secretary of State, was one of the first guys to approach me. When I turned him down, I revived that association. When I decided I might want to try again, he was the first guy I called. It was Don and I said, "Do you think things are still open?" Being Hudson County had not made a commitment to any candidate, with only two weeks to go. Don said, "Well, let me make a couple of phone calls." He called me back and he says, "I think we might be able to explore this." He got me started in making phone calls and so forth. It was Don Land and Ken McPherson who were with me when I went over to see Francis Fitzpatrick the night I got the endorsement of Hudson County. Everything flowed from that.

**Q:** So Land-- refresh my memory. You didn't appoint him immediately?

**Byrne:** I appointed him originally to work in the governor's office. He always wanted to be Secretary of State. When I asked Ed Cravial [ph?] as Secretary of State, he deferred. Then later I had an opening for the Secretary of State and I made Don Land the Secretary of State. Don Land held onto that job. We had a little falling out when it came to who was going to be my successor. I had too many friends running for a member. Gibson was running, John Degman [ph?] was running.

**Q:** For your successor as--?

**Byrne:** Governor.

**Q:** As governor.

**Byrne:** Yeah. There were a bunch of good candidates running. And Don Land--

**Q:** We're talking about '81?

**Byrne:** '81. And Tommy Smith was running. I thought Don Land, who got into it sort of late was just spoiling it for John Degman, for instance. We had a little falling out over that. But I regard him as a good friend to this day.  
<crew talk>

**Michael Aron:** Did you get any advice from prior governors? Monitor, Cahill, Driscoll?

**Brendan Byrne:** Well, Monitor was quoted into my term as saying that he had to bite his tongue a lot of times. Monitor was a lot more conservative than I was, and yeah, he would come to see me once in a while, and recommend things, and help me in the campaign. The first campaign especially with contacting people. And a **lot of the people supported me in '73 were people I had met through the Monitor administration.** Still a couple of county chairmen left, it was a small county, and so forth. So yeah, from that standpoint, there was a nice relationship we had continued. Monitor was a pretty good tennis player, and he would call me every time he had a spare moment to play tennis with me. I have a few-- and I would arrange the tennis foursome for him. So yeah, we maintained our relationship/friendship. And then when Helen ran for-- well, Helen ran for congress, because I asked her to. I was the district-- this is veering off on something else-- when I was the district, I wanted Bradley to run. And when Bradley decided not to run, he wrote me a letter, and told me why. And then I turned to Helen \_\_\_\_\_, who always sort of resented that I was-- that she was my second choice.

**Q:** But she won!

**Byrne:** Yeah, in a tough district, too.

**Q:** Cahill, did he give you any advice? You told us last time that he left you a note.

**Byrne:** Yeah! He would call once in a while. And by the way, he was very helpful. Let the record show that the first year I was in office, I put up a major bond issue, and it lost. And it was a bond issue composed of transportation and various things that were \_\_\_\_\_. I lost it. And that taught me that bond issues had to be bipartisan. And so I established what was then called the Cahill Commission, and Bill Cahill headed it. And they were to evaluate capital needs requests from their various cabinet officers, and education and so forth, so that when a proposition got on the ballot for a bond issue, it had bipartisan support. And I think-- so they continued that for a long time. Where bond issues were regarded as bipartisan-- and I think they still are basically. They should be. When I was governor putting up a bond issue, that makes it partisan automatically. So bond issues go on, on a bipartisan concept.

**Q:** Makes sense. How about Driscoll? Did you talk to Driscoll?

**Byrne:** No. No, I liked Driscoll, by the way, and Driscoll had originally appointed my father to the **Essex County Tax Board because Driscoll didn't like the democratic organization in Essex County at the time. It was back in the late '40s, early '50s. And so my father was sort of a renegade democrat. At least he wasn't part of the inner group.** And the republican chairman of Essex County recommended him. Republican chairman of the Essex County Tax Board. And my father was appointed with Republican Sponsorship. And then by the time of his reappointment came up,

I was sitting in the governor's office! I had to reappoint him, and then went on and on. And finally Cahill called me and says, "Your father's in his '80s now. It's time for him to retire!"

**Q:** You agreed?

**Byrne:** Well, he fought it. He wanted me to sue Cahill. But it was time for him to go. And my brother and I talked him into it. Good timing.

**Q:** Tell us about your inaugural.

**Byrne:** We had the inaugural at the old-- Trenton Armory has long since gone-- we raised some money, it was-- there was nothing about that inaugural, which I thought was particularly noteworthy, except that maybe-- it was to celebrate becoming governor.

**Q:** Was it black tie?

**Byrne:** I think it was. Yeah, I think it was. But it wasn't...

**Q:** Did you have to give a speech that day? Do you recall anything about your inaugural address?

**Byrne:** Oh, when I was governor? Sure! Sure.

**Q:** Who swore you in, Hughes, the Chief Justice?

**Byrne:** Yes. And the speech basically, you know, I had various drafts, but it was basically written by Jeff Greenfield.

**Q:** Really?

**Byrne:** Who, as we speak, is a very highly visible commentator on political affairs nationally.

**Q:** Right, CNN, yeah. Used to be ABC.

**Byrne:** Is that what he's on now?

**Q:** CNN, yeah. So he was working for David Garth at the time?

**Byrne:** Sure.

**Q:** He was your speech...

**Byrne:** I gave him a lot of stuff. But he put it together pretty good in the drawing room. I did things like-- either I or Dick Leon-- picked out the quote from Woodrow

Wilson, where I said, "If you worry too much about being re-elected, you're probably not worth re-electing!" That's what I told you the last time.

**Q:** You used that \_\_\_\_\_.

**Byrne:** Yeah, we went through that.

**Q:** Yes, we did. You said off-camera that you were less formally dressed for it.

**Byrne:** I think I was the first governor that didn't use the formal morning dress at an inauguration. If you look at the pictures.

**Q:** You wore a business suit.

**Byrne:** I wore a business suit. Sure.

**Q:** Prior to that it was tails.

**Byrne:** Yep. Yep. I have a picture somewhere of me greeting, or Dick Hughes greeting me at his inauguration. It's in some collection that's here. And he was formally dressed.

**Q:** How did your family feel about you being elected governor? Your immediate family.

**Byrne:** My then wife said it was up to me. I think the kids got a kick out of it. You know, Billy was four years old at the time, and had some trouble adjusting, but you know, because he had been raised in a quiet-- the first four years-- in a quiet life of a judge's kid. He was sort of isolated. Now all of a sudden, the campaign starts and there's people at my doorstep starting at breakfast! And then milling around the house, and the house is no longer what this four year old kid's expecting. But the rest of them-- well, Tom Byrne, at the time was a freshman at Princeton University. He was a reporter for *The Daily Princetonian*. Had written an article saying that it was too late for me to get into the race. And they were upset that he didn't have a scoop on the story when I did get in. So, you know, he had always liked politics and became a solid friend.

**Q:** Once you became governor, to some extent, you're in a fishbowl. Was that difficult for wife and your children?

**Byrne:** Well, if you asked my wife at the time, she would've said it was difficult. I think they were able to maintain their own sort of lifestyle. I mean, they moved into Moreland <ph?>. We did live in Moreland virtually the whole time I was governor, and not like Tom Kane <ph?>, who rarely used it. But I think the kids adjusted pretty well. Nancy was in college part of the time I was governor and so forth. So yeah, I think they did all right. Fortunately, by the way, Nancy was in college when the ceiling fell from her bedroom at Moreland! And we had to redo

the whole thing. But if she hadn't been in college it would've hit her in the head, I mean, when the ceiling fell.

**Q:** What was Moreland as a place to live?

**Byrne:** It was a nice place. And the kids liked it, and it was two blocks from the center of town. And they could come and go. There was no fence for the longest time we were in Moreland. We only put up a fence when the security people sort of made us. You know, people would come wandering into the house. One time somebody came wandering into the house during an energy crisis, and I had ordered thermometers down in the house. Somebody knocked at the door, told us that they wanted to read our thermometer. So we let them! Fortunately, we were doing what I asked everybody else to do, too. But it became too much to just let people wandering around. Especially with all the security problems.

**Q:** Did you have a state police detail there every night?

**Byrne:** We would have one State trooper on duty all the time. Yeah. But it wasn't like it is now. We have all kinds of security things. I had one State trooper assigned to me, and no advance. You know, like now I have an advance, and I have a following car, and I have a lot of-- it's grown. I helped grow it. I remember one <inaudible>, Bob Byner <ph?> gets up and says, "He's got four troopers now, and I only had one!" When I got up, I said, "You only had one trooper, but you didn't have any income tax!" <laughs>

**Q:** What was your typical day like as governor?

**Byrne:** I think I spent a fair amount of time in the office. And then I would-- a typical day in this weather anyway-- I would go home at about 5:00. I would find either one of my kids, or one of my staff or somebody, to play a set of tennis. Then I would go out for the evening stuff, which was usually a couple of dinners, and try to get home by 10:00. And I had a lot of meetings at Moreland. First of all, I would get up in the morning, and I would have my breakfast.

**Q:** What time?

**Byrne:** 6:00/6:30. And then I would have breakfast, and I would use the phone early in the morning. People knew that between 8:00 and 9:00 they could usually get me at Moreland. Then we would do things by telephone. And then I would get into the office about 9:30 maybe. And by that time I would have a lot of stuff done.

**Q:** Who would you typically talk to between 8:00 and 9:00?

**Byrne:** Legislators, cabinet members, politicians. People who would just as soon talk to me on the telephone as to march into the State House. And sometimes people would come to the house, who didn't want to march into the State House. A guy like Kenny McPherson, who doesn't hide, but he likes his privacy. And it's

probably more convenient to come down. It's quicker to get to Moreland from Essex County, too, than to Trenton. Anyway.

**Q:** I think this is a good time to stop.

<crew talk>