

## Interview with Martin Greenberg

Don Linky. This is another in a series of interviews for the Brendan T. Byrne Archive, as part of the Rutgers Program on the Governor. Our guest today is former Senator and Judge Martin Greenberg, who has been a long time business, legal and political associate of Governor Byrne.

Q: Martin Greenberg, you have had a varied and long career in New Jersey government and the judiciary. You've been both a former judge and former senator. What is the etiquette of referring to someone who has served in those two prominent positions.

Greenberg: First of all, my career is not over. I am still here and looking for new challenges. But in response, I am reminded when I was the chairman of the judiciary committee and would meet with the Supreme Court and my committee to discuss proposed legislation that the court might be interested in or rule changes that affected the Senate. I asked the governor how he wanted me to refer to him in the presence of the other members of the court, and also my committee, many of whom were attorneys but not all. And he said the protocol is to refer to an individual with the title that is affixed to the highest elective position he held. So he would be referred to as Governor Hughes and I as Senator Greenberg. It was hard for me to accomplish that with the attorneys who appeared before me, they kept calling me judge. And I understand that.

Q: I will take that advice as direction from a very prominent person in New Jersey. Senator, before we get to your relationship over the years with Brendan Byrne, let's talk a little bit about your upbringing. You were born in 1932 in Brooklyn in the midst of the depression. Describe a little bit about your childhood and the early days that you remember, and the following years when you moved to New Jersey.

Greenberg: Sure. I was born at the depths of the depression. What I am going to tell you I obviously don't recall directly, but I remember hearing about it in the early years of my life, when we were still living in Brooklyn and my dad picked this one time in his life to enter into a business venture. He scraped a couple of dollars together and opened a men's furnishing store in downtown Brooklyn. It failed as all the other stores on that block did. I think it was Atlantic Avenue, they tell me. In any event, he couldn't get a job in Brooklyn as a sales person of men's furnishings, but he knew someone in Newark. I remember the family discussion. I was about I would say four or five, just starting school. The fact that the trip back and forth from New York, Brooklyn, would be difficult, so they began looking for an apartment. They found one and we moved to Newark. I think I was five. To 18th Avenue. I still remember the street and the neighborhood. It was mixed. There was a Polish section, a German section. We were right next to Irvington. As I was going to grammar school in the late '30s, there were marches, out of Irvington into Newark. I remember the swastikas and the admonition of stay off the streets from my parents. We had a lot of fights. Mostly it was an exciting time. I didn't understand what was going on, but I knew there were areas that I shouldn't go to. We kind of stayed on our own block and the friends that I had were neighbors and mostly Jewish.

Q: As a very young child, how stressful or how much did the economic realities of how difficult the times were got down to you in those early years?

Greenberg: I remember my mother saving money to give to each week to pay a premium for life insurance, for example, a dollar or two dollars, that was a lot of money. But in spite of that and the fact that we didn't have any money, we ate and we would get together with another family or sometimes two and rent a place in the mountains, the mountains meaning Morristown, near some of the hotels that were there, for a week or two. That was my father's summer vacation. We would all go and share a three bedroom and one kitchen place with two other families. We had a wonderful time.

Q: Were the Morristown mountains your first exposure to semi-rural life?

Greenberg: Absolutely. I vividly remember driving up South Orange Avenue and the city would end. Urban areas would end ten minutes after we left Newark. And we had mountains right in west Orange, you may recall, I don't

know if you remember, but there was a Goldman Hotel and a Greens Hotel, etc. And the people from New York City would come there, but that also was out of Newark and into the suburbs. We just went a little further into Morris County. So I went to grammar school in Newark, south 17th Street. There was significant anti-Semitism. I was one of two Jewish students.

Q: Anti-Semitism within the school or from outside or both?

Greenberg: In the school.

Q: Teachers?

Greenberg: Teachers. I remember my teacher, I was doing something stupid in class, and she said to me Greenberg, you are making it bad for all the good Jews. I remember that. I still well up when I repeat it. I remember going home and telling my parents what I had heard and what did she mean by that, this lady. And my father said well, she really doesn't understand. Why don't you give her this book, and he gave me a copy of a book called The Rogue, which I read, and then I gave it to her. It dealt with the crucifixion etc. and she read it and finished it. She said thank your father for giving me that, it is a wonderful book. I don't know whether it changed any of her views, but I didn't have a problem with her after that. But the kids in class were difficult.

Q: Apart from the book, how did your parents explain the time and the rise of the Nazis to you as a child?

Greenberg: We used to go into Brooklyn almost every Sunday to visit my grandmother and grandfather. My father's mother and father, and my mother's mother, her father had left. The discussion in the late '30s in each of those places over dinner was about the situation in Europe. All I had to do is be there, and they weren't talking to me, but they were talking about what was happening in Europe to the Jews. I understood what was going on. So it wasn't like they had to educate me. It was the kind of topic of discussion that Phil Roth wrote about in his recent book, what was it, the Plot Against America.

Q: and did you still have family left in Europe that was at risk?

Greenberg: Not to my knowledge. By that I mean I never heard reference to any. The family that I knew of had all left at the turn of the century. My grandparents came over in the late 1800's, early 1900's.

Q: You talked a bit about the ethnic makeup of Newark at the time. Describe a little bit more about who in the city were politically powerful, what groups were emerging.

Greenberg: My recollection of that really begins when I moved from 18th Avenue to the Clinton Hills section of Newark. I went to a grammar school at Bergen Street where we had an entirely different environment. There was no overt anti-Semitism that I could sense. I was right on the edge of the Weequahic section. I walked a couple of blocks to school, no problems encountered on the way; which was entirely different than I had over on the 18th Avenue section, where you took your life in your hands if you were Jewish and you went to Temple to prepare for your bar mitzvah. It was hard to make it sometimes. But as I experienced the area on the edge of the Weequahic section, I sensed that there were different communities from each other; in other words, if you went down towards Bergen Street there was a Polish community, an Italian community, etc. And they got along. And they got along at school, the kids got along, because there weren't just two of this and one of these. There was a pretty good mix even among the teachers. So it was really a delightful experience, compared to what I had been doing. When I graduated grammar school, I wanted to go to Weequahic High School, because some of the kids on the block went there, but they didn't live in the Weequahic section. And that is when I learned about politics, in the sense that my father said, well, you know, there is a guy that lives across the street who is counsel to the board of education in Newark. His name is Fox, I can't remember his first name. And you are friendly with his son. We played basketball. So he said where is David going? I said David is going to Weequahic. He said well, why don't you talk to David about seeing whether or not he could be helpful in getting you, and a friend of mine, Donald, who also wanted to go to Weequahic instead of Southside. Now, Southside would have been okay, at that time it was all

right. But I knew people at Weequahic, and I didn't know why, I didn't know how good it was, but I knew it was supposed to be a good high school. So low and behold, between my father and Fox, Mr. Fox, I wound up getting into Weequahic. I don't know who spoke to whom, I was too young and I didn't understand; but I knew that my father who had just been elected president of a local union when he was working as a men's furnishing salesman had an office on Broad Street above a theater called the Newsreel Theater, one of the few places you could go and see newsreels instead of having to wait, this was before television, instead of having to wait for news between films on a Saturday afternoon, where RKO would show you what happened last week somewhere. I knew that there were buttons that the guys in the union office were wearing for mayor, for Valani for mayor and a Jewish dentist I think, Elis Meyer. So I knew there were people running for office, and I knew that the union supported certain people that supported the union. And that if you knew the right people you might be able to get your kid into Weequahic High School instead of somewhere else. I knew that kind of thing. And I learned more about it as I did get into Weequahic High School and we had a teacher who not too long ago passed on, Dan Epstein, who was the president of the teachers union. When he found out that my father was the president of the retail workers, clerks and folks who sold men's furnishings, shoe stores, etc, he kept talking to me, Epstein, kept talking to me about Newark as a magnificent place to be; because if you were Jewish in Newark and you went to a decent school, you could get into college and you could become a professional person like he did. He expected that I would do that and go on and what did I want to do. He really became kind of a mentor to me.

Q: As a labor leader, did your father get drawn more into Newark politics?

Greenberg: Yes. In those days you would go to a restaurant on Sunday night, for example, for dinner; and it would probably be the Tavern Restaurant near Weequahic Park where he seemed to know everybody in the room. That was kind of the "Jewish" restaurant. In other words, the folks from Weequahic used to go there and after the movie to the Weequahic Diner, and you used to see all the same people, they would eat all the same food. And they would be talking about politics, who they were going to support, etc., what is happening in Europe in the period just before the war. Then the war came so it would be, I would say I may be confused with the timing actually. The war came before I was in Weequahic, I graduated Weequahic in 1950. So it was in my grammar school years that the war happened. In any event, politics were very important in Newark. And you had the sections where they had representatives. I think it was a non-partisan election process. I didn't participate, I watched and I listened. My father, in the meantime, had been moving up in the labor field. He ultimately became the international union president of the Retail, Wholesale, Department Store Workers and sat on the executive council with George Meany and Lane Kirkland and folks like that. I was in law school at the time that happened.

Q: Looking back, was your father's experience as a labor leader, and also has influence in getting you into high school, and the political contacts he had something that was consciously impressive to you at the time? That drew you later into a political career? Or was it something more subconscious.

Greenberg: Oh, it was conscious. I ran for positions in high school. I ran for a position in my fraternity at Rutgers. So I was cognizant of what leadership meant and the fact that I thought I had the ability to lead. I really didn't think about running for office in the political sphere until much later on in my life, but it was there. I read about it all the time.

Q: A little bit more about the war years in your recollections.

Greenberg: I kept a map on my wall when I lived in Newark, on Hidden Terrace in the Clinton Hills section. I had little pins in it, I was marking the movement of the various armies. I read the papers. I don't remember being vocal about it with my friends. My family talked about it a lot. And every Friday night we would have dinner and discuss it.

Q: I assume in the neighborhood there must have been people who had been drafted or joined the army and went overseas.

Greenberg: Sure. I was impressed when a neighbor came over in his Marine outfit and we all hung around and

listened to his stories. Yeah, there were guys coming and going, and every once in a while you would see a star hung up on a window shade, somebody had died.

Q: and in school how did your teachers deal with talking and teaching about the war?

Greenberg: I have no recollection of that occurring.

Q: Talk a little bit about your high school years and the people you remember, the type of courses you were interested in.

Greenberg: You can read all about me. My name isn't used, but Philip Roth was my classmate. He chronicled our years, starting with *Goodbye Columbus*. We sat together on the bus that took us downtown to play baseball, softball. Those were wonderful, wonderful years, but it was a very unique high school. I don't know, when I talk about it, I don't think that the other schools that I know of and the people who went to those schools have experienced that which we had here. I mean everybody went to college with very few exceptions out of Weequahic. They lived in this tiny little community called Weequahic. Having moved from Newark in the 40's I would say, into two or three family homes, very few people had their own home at that time. And it was a tight community. After school you played basketball with the guys, the girls would hang out together at the various ice cream parlors that were around and stuff. Almost everybody was into school. Very few people were goof offs. People were prepared, they did their homework. Some were brighter than others, obviously, but for the most part it was a learning experience that we enjoyed.

Q: and at that time I assume the schools were still segregated.

Greenberg: There were very few black people who lived in the Weequahic section, so there were very few black people who went to Weequahic High School. Maybe two in my class. So segregation was a result of where you lived. You lived in an area, you went to Southside or Weequahic or Central or whatever, depending on where you lived, unless you knew Mr. Fox. He might help you get into Weequahic if you were a block short of where you had to be at the time. So the segregation in high schools occurred as a result of the geography and where you lived. It was a pure white 98% Jewish high school.

Q: Politically, talk about the ethnic divisions, Italian, Irish, others.

Greenberg: Well, as I said, I wasn't involved in politics except as an observer. I knew that if you were coming from the section of the North ward, there would be Italian representation on the council. And that the same would be true with regard to the Jewish folks who elected someone from the Weequahic section. When you got to a mayor, the mayor was selected by the council, if I recall, and normally was the one who had the most votes, typically. So there was a push to get votes out. I viewed it from the perspective of organized labor, because that was what was discussed in my house. It was important for there to be a connection in city hall, because if you were on a picket line on Broad Street, dealing with an employer who would not recognize the union, even though the employees, let's say there are six or seven in the jewelry store that would sign cards and win an election; he didn't want to deal with them. So as a consequence, they would picket. And depending on the relationship between the owner of the store and the Newark police department, you would either be arrested and spend the night in jail; or you wouldn't be arrested because he didn't have the relationship. For the most part, police officers don't want to arrest people on the picket line, especially if the mayor is pro-labor. So that is why it is important to have, that is why I learned it is important to have representation in places that controlled law enforcement; and also the designation of who the local magistrate was. If you got a judge who was appointed by a mayor who was friendly to labor, you probably were not going to have to spend too much time in jail, even though there might have been some violence on the picket line. By violence I mean don't patronize this store, and you might interfere with someone walking into the store. And it was kind of the rough and tumble days of unions at this time.

Q: I wanted to bring you back to your memories of Philip Roth. What type of guy was he?

Greenberg: I wasn't close to him. He was in my class. He had some friends, a few, as I recall, but for the most part Phil would leave, my knowledge of him is that Phil would leave at the end of the day and go to the library and read. I would not have predicted his career. A, because I didn't have that much contact with him; and b, because I didn't hear from him the type of conversation or communication which indicated the very vast and broad capacity he has to find interest in so many different things. I don't recall ever talking about the war with him or his relationship with the Jewish presence in the community. It really wasn't anything to talk about, it was there. Those were the people you lived with and worked with and played with and went to school with. So I don't remember Phil demonstrating the type of imagination that you see in the books he has written. There is no question he was very bright.

Q: Do you recall, was his reputation as a teacher's pet or ...

Greenberg: Oh, no. There weren't any such animals in Weequahic High School. No teachers' pets. Everybody wanted to learn for the most part. I hooked up with a guy who didn't want to learn, I remember, and I thought that was cool. Especially in Spanish, which I couldn't handle. So I sat in the back of the room with this kid, and I paid no attention to the class. And I failed it. My folks were furious, but my father understood. He said he couldn't handle Spanish either. So in order to graduate I had to go to summer school in another location, Southside High School. That was the only guy I knew, in addition to myself, that goofed off in a class. So they didn't even pick on me, the teacher just let me sit there and knew that I wasn't going to do this. But I think she knew, it was a woman, she knew I could do the stuff if I really wanted to do it, but I didn't want to do it. I didn't know why I didn't want to do it. I liked this kid that sat in the back of the room.

Q: Any other recollections about high school days that you want to give us before we move on?

Greenberg: I don't think I better say anything else. I think I better keep my mouth shut about that stuff, because you know we were, this was 1948 or 1949, I was sixteen, seventeen years old, you don't want to know about that.

Q: We'll leave that. Now you are getting toward graduation from high school, what are your thoughts about what you want to do and what were your parents advice?

Greenberg: I remember being talked to by my father about becoming an attorney. He was impressed by what a lawyer could do in helping people accomplish laudable goals, like organizing folks and getting a decent wage and being able to get living conditions, working conditions that were safe and stuff like that. He knew that lawyers were, for the most part, the movers and shakers in the legislative area, as well as to protect their clients who were unions against employers who had more money and clout, etc. So I kept hearing about a particular law firm that they used, I knew the folks. And I think from very early on I wanted to be an attorney. As a matter of fact, at our 55th reunion last year in 2005, somebody got up and read from our yearbooks what we wanted to be, and there it was. I didn't even remember that.

Q: What was the extent of the education of your father and your mother?

Greenberg: My father started college, but needed to earn a living since his brothers lost their jobs and he lost his and his folks were, my grandfather was a carpenter and had to shape up every day with the union. And my grandmother made sandwiches for the folks who were carpenters. There was no money. And he went to accounting school and lasted one semester or a year, then he quit and got a job.

Q: Were you parents born in this country?

Greenberg: Yes. No, my father was and my mother was very young when she came over. My mother did not have a college degree. I believe she graduated high school. She was in the millenary industry, she made hats.

Q: Well now you are thinking about what you do after high school, you have this idea, I guess, about being an attorney from a fairly early period in your life. What about for the options and the money issues and what you do in trying to fulfill that career?

Greenberg: Sure. We didn't have any money to speak of. We were still living in an apartment. And it was a given that I would go to Rutgers because of the tuition, the reasonableness of the tuition in those days. I was pleased that I was able to live on campus in New Brunswick. My dad was still the local union president, he made a living. My mom wasn't working. They had just purchased a house in West Orange, a very small house in Pleasantvale. Apparently, they had enough where withal to permit me to live in college, on the campus. I worked from when I graduate high school in January of 1950, with Phil Roth's class, so to speak. And I had six months before the September semester started, so I went up into the mountains and I was a busboy and waiter. I made enough money in that six month period to give me a, well, I could buy a car.

Q: The mountains in the Catskills?

Greenberg: The mountains are the Catskills, there are no other mountains in the world other than the Catskills or the Adirondacks, both of which I worked in in the summers to make enough money not to be a drain on the family.

Q: What were your memories of Rutgers in those early days? Were you intimidated by going to college? Or did you just fit right in from the start?

Greenberg: No, I was not intimidated by going away. I loved being away, and I loved living in the fraternity house. I loved living with the guys, and I met some very special people.

Q: Talk about a couple of them.

Greenberg: Well, my roommate, just before he left, he was a year ahead me, and I. He became I supposed the best known advertising executive in America. His name was Jay Chiat. He headed up Chiat Day. We were roommates. He didn't have two nickels either. He didn't know what Rutgers was. He came over because he had applied for a full scholarship, and they said yes. He didn't know where it was when he arrived. He was a year in front of me, as I said, so that he already was a sophomore when I became a freshman and we became very friendly. That lasted until he died two years ago. He was my closest friend.

Living away from home with the folks in the fraternity house, which happened to be a Jewish fraternity house, well, that is not true; there were a few non-Jews, but for the most part it was, there were guys were who Jewish. But religion was not an issue at Rutgers, we were friendly with a whole bunch of people from different fraternities and non-fraternities. But living away was a lot of fun, the first time I had that experience. And working in the mountains as a waiter and busboy was spectacular. I grew up that first six months after high school. I had never been away. I was living with folks who were professional waiters and busboys, because it was winter time and the kids in school were still in school, in January and February, until June. I made money the first week, and I lost it all in a poker game. I called home and said I am coming home, send me some money so I can get out of here. My father said no, that is the best thing that ever happened to you.

Q: Which hotels did you work?

Greenberg: I started at the Concord because one of my family had worked there. He knew the maitre de. I worked there the second year. And the third year, that was the Catskills, and the third year I worked in the Adirondacks in a place called Scaron Manor. I learned a lot. That was the best part of my education.

Q: Did you ever have contact with any of the celebrities who used to perform in the hotels in those days?

Greenberg: I learned all the routines of the comedians. I used to perform them at the fraternity house where I lived. I still remember some of them. Subsequently I became president of the Golden Nugget in Atlantic City. And I used to talk to these guys that I had seen at the Catskills and go over some of the routines. But any way I am digressing.

Q: But which celebrities in particular, which comedians?

Greenberg: Well, Milton Berle. Henny Youngman was my favorite. His one liners I still remember to this day.

Q: Take my wife please...

Greenberg: I asked him where does he get that from? I was running the Golden Nugget in Atlantic City when he was playing there. And we had dinner. I said where did you get that from? He said I walked into the theater with my wife, we were half way down the aisle and the usher came up to us. I realized I had to go to the bathroom, and I said to the usher take my wife, please. And the guy sitting on the aisle broke up laughing. He said then I realized what I said was funny. I saw those people in a different setting when I was working at Atlantic City. But I loved working in the mountains. I learned what it was to work hard and lose money. I never played cards again in the mountains, I worked too hard for that. And I knew what it was like to try to dance with a guest's daughter, who viewed me as a busboy, a waiter. And he instructed her not to see me. I didn't know how to handle that. I mean didn't he know I was going to go to college, was in college, and I wasn't going to be a professional waiter? And even if I were, what is wrong with that?. I saw him subsequently in a case that I had. He was a, I sued him. I didn't sue him for what he said about his daughter not seeing me. One of my clients....

Q: Are you sure of that?

Greenberg: No, I didn't, look, I didn't say I didn't enjoy suing him, but that is not the reason why we filed suit. In any event, it was an experience. I learned what it was to work very hard, seven days a week, and what the value of a buck was.

Q: Bringing you back to Rutgers, what were your favorite courses, extracurricular activities?

Greenberg: My favorite extra curricular activity was for the letter that I won or earned by having a radio program... [side one ends]

Don Linky: In your law school days, again, what were the courses you found most interesting or the most boring and how did that shape where you wanted to go?

Martin Greenberg: Labor was a course I found most interesting. I grew up in an environment where labor was the subject for discussion at the dinner table. I got to know people like George Meany, when my father became the international president.

Q: What was he like?

Martin Greenberg: George Meany? Oh, a charming guy. Magnificent guy. And a great gin player. How do I know that? Because he would not fly, so when they had to get from Washington to California, he would take a train. He wanted my father to accompany him, by which point my father was a member of the executive council of the AFL-CIO. They would play gin for four days or whatever it took to get across the country.

Q: Did your father do any better than you did at poker in the Catskills?

Martin Greenberg: My father was an excellent gin player, that is why George wanted to play with him. He loved the challenge. Max was a great gin player. I was never anywhere near. But he used to tell me stories about George Meany, and whenever I was in Washington for whatever purpose, I was asked to stop in and say hello. I loved George Meany, and Lane Kirkland who I got to know as well. My father became, I mean it was natural, I always knew he was bright and he spoke wonderfully, and he was able to deal with the guys who worked in the shop and the employers, negotiating a contract. I was very proud of him.

Q: You mentioned at the beginning of your first year in law school, you seemed a little bit intimidated by the courses.

Martin Greenberg: Oh, god, I said look, let's get this over with. I am not going to make it. Let me go back to Rutgers and I'll take that last year and save six months. I was really kidding, but I was somewhat fearful that was going to happen. So I was just floored when I made law review in my first year. Floored.

Q: Were you really floored? Or was there a point before that where you thought everything sort of came together?

Martin Greenberg: Only when I saw the grades in my first semester final grades. And we had one grade at the end of the semester. I don't remember seeing tests marked during that process. I never knew what was going to happen. I participated and worked very hard, and I thought I had to work very hard, because I didn't understand what the hell was going on. And everybody in my class was one year older than I was, but after a while that didn't matter. We were 21, 20. I made some very, very good friends there in law school. I loved it. I loved law school.

Q: Any professors you particularly remember?

Martin Greenberg: Yeah. I loved Willard Heckel. He wanted me to stay after I graduated to teach. I loved Malcolm Talbot. His "roommate", they shared the house together I think. And I loved the labor course which Blumrosen taught, Alfred Blumrosen, a wonderful teacher. I loved my experience at Rutgers Law School. I made law review...

Q: What about your fellow students?

Martin Greenberg: Terrific. I did something I really am not proud of, but it kind of, I would have expected it knowing where I wound up in the senate. I would have expected that I would have done this. I ran for a president of the class, I can't remember exactly how it happened. But you had to be elected to the council first, then the council members would determine who the president was of these seventeen people, let's say, who were on the council. The day school where I was matriculating, and incidentally I am living home at that point. There was no campus to speak of in Newark. The day class had one more board member than the night school. I decided I wanted to run for president in my last year, but I had an opposition from someone who was even more popular than I. I counted the noses, I said I am going to lose by one vote. So I made a deal with the night school. If they would throw their votes to me, I would vote for the rest of the ticket, composed of night schoolers. I won by one vote, and the rest of the council officers were night school people. I am not proud of that.

Q: Did the opposing camp resent this political slight of hand?

Martin Greenberg: The individual did.

Q: Give the name?

Martin Greenberg: No, because I am expected to have dinner with him next week. He is now a professor of law in the University of Alabama.

Q: So you pushed him into an academic rather than a political road?

Martin Greenberg: I guess, but he has said to me from time to time that was a great thing you did for me, because I have so much free time and I love what I am doing, teaching, writing, he has written four or five books. He seems very happy with his life.

Q: Any other law school recollections about other students or other things you want to talk about before we move on?

Martin Greenberg: I made some close friends there, I still have them, except for those who have passed on.

Q: Do you want to mention a few or are you afraid of forgetting a couple?

Martin Greenberg: Well, my closest friend is gone. He and I and George Fregota and a third fellow, we would study together. And George was brilliant.

Q: But who was the closest friend?

Martin Greenberg: George Fregota, he was my closest friend, but he is gone. He was an engineer as well as an attorney. And I supposed my best friend there, who is also gone, was the editor in chief, and he stayed on and taught for a while. Willard Heckel induced him to remain.

Q: And that was who?

Martin Greenberg: His name was Arthur Kahn. And Arthur became chairman of Schnader Harrison in Philadelphia. His wife was a classmate of mine, she is an attorney, Donna. I see her relatively often. She lives in New York City. So some folks I've lost through death as friends, and others have just moved away or whatever. But it was a wonderful experience, after I knew I could do the work and that I wasn't totally lost, which is where I thought I was in the first semester. Then it became fun. But when Willard suggested I stay on and work as an adjunct professor or however, I wouldn't do that. I wanted to get going. I wanted to see what I could do in applying it. Teaching did not interest me.

Q: What other options were you considering? As a young lawyer you could have gone into government, become a prosecutor or join a law firm or a business legal career. What were the sort of pros and cons on those?

Martin Greenberg: We didn't know anybody in business, I didn't know any, I had no contacts. I thought about going into government. And I interviewed with law firms. I interviewed with major Newark law firms, nobody was interested in me. I suspect that has to do with the fact that my father was an international union president at the time, and these guys were representing the employers. I suspect that.

Q: You think also there was still some anti-semitism among the major law firms at the time?

Martin Greenberg: It is possible. I didn't think that at the time. In retrospect, there weren't many Jews working in those firms. I think the fact that I was Jewish and the fact that I came from a labor background, even though I was law review and graduated, I don't know, third or second or fourth or whatever in my class. Somewhere in the top five. It did not enamor me to those firms. I never got a bite.

Q: Did you family attribute this to a labor bias?

Martin Greenberg: No. At least they never mentioned that to me. What my father said was you know, you ought to think about going into government, maybe the attorney general's office, if you could get there. I have a friend who happens to be the secretary of the state board of mediation, where my father served. Alan Weisenthal was his name. And the governor at the time was a young man named Bob Meyner, who was supported by labor. Heavily. And so I sat down with Alan Weisenthal and said what do you think. He said I think you'd love it. I'll make a call. So I got an interview with David Furman who was the attorney general at the time. And I was offered a clerkship. I am sure the commissioner of labor had something to do with that. He was Carl Holden, who happened to come from the old CIO and was a friend of my dad's. And Alan Weisenthal. So I went down there and my life turned around, everything. It was amazing how lucky I was not to get a job in some whatever it was at the time. Amazing. First of all I met a lot of people who were clerks, who went on to become very close friends of mine, like June Strelecki, who became a judge. And a whole lot of folks that were clerking there. I shouldn't say a whole lot, there were maybe six or seven of us, not a big office, the AG's office, at the time. I did the clerkship and I took the bar. I was sure I failed. I died opening the letter. I mean I should have had more confidence in myself, after what I described I did in law school. But I didn't have that confidence. I didn't understand any of the questions, I didn't think I did. In any event, I passed and stayed on to become a legal assistant. For some reason, the governor's office called, and I don't know of anybody who did this, I think it happened because they needed an assistant to Harold Kolofsky who was counsel to the governor, and maybe Carl Holderman spoke to him, he was the commissioner of labor at the

time. I don't know that. I never knew why they called me, but I thought that they needed somebody, I was a clerk at the time, still hadn't been sworn in. They needed somebody and nobody wanted to go over there. I didn't understand how important it was to be in the governor's office. Just Harold Kolofsky, Dave Goldberg and me.

Q: And did that call come directly to you? Or go to the attorney general first?

Martin Greenberg: the attorney general.

Q: And how did he describe the contact?

Martin Greenberg: They would like you to come over there and they want to interview you for a job. I said what kind of job, I am not even a lawyer yet, what is it? Well, a legal assistant to the governor. So I met David, he was spectacular. And Harold Kolofsky was the best. And they interviewed me and offered me the job. I don't know whether it was because my father was an international union president at that time or they were impressed with the fact that I was on law review for two years and president of the class. But I could speak and I think I make a decent impression. I think the governor, who also interviewed me, wanted a connection to the Jewish community. I believe that was true. Nobody ever said that to me, but he already had David Goldberg in there, so I didn't think that was so important.

Q: What do you recall of your interview with the governor?

Martin Greenberg: I was blown away, overwhelmed, a very imposing figure. Tall, well-presented himself. He had a deep voice. And he was the first governor I ever met. I didn't know how you ever got there. That was impossible. And of course, he came from some place I never heard of. And I had been told by the commissioner of labor, Carl Holderman, that this was a good guy. I should consider it as an honor to serve. So I was ready to go. And across the hall was a guy named Brendan Byrne, who I had never ever heard of or seen before that. If this were a Broadway show, we would take a break now.

Q: Why don't we break.

Q: Senator, we brought you up in your career path to join the governor's office in the position, what was it named at that time, legal counsel?

Martin Greenberg: Legal assistant to the governor.

Q: What was that role like in practical terms?

Martin Greenberg: I would get research projects to look at in connection with bills that were pending for the governor's consideration. All of my assignments, incidentally came through counsel to the governor, who was, let's see, we had David Goldberg who was in the office with me, and the counsel to the governor at the time, just before he went to the bench, was, I am drawing a blank.

Q: Kolofsky?

Martin Greenberg: Yes, Harold Kolofsky. Correct. We also have David Thompson in the office. So it was four of us. And my assignments were pretty much research in connection with bills that were pending on proposed legislation. And communicating with the public, in the form of answering letters for the governor or suggesting responses, etc. I worked in an office with those gentlemen, and I saw the governor from time to time, when I had something to report about a bill that I had worked on. I also did extraditions, which I didn't know what that was, I found out what that was. I remember a fellow named Raymond Pace Alexander, who was from Philadelphia. I think he was a councilman there. He might have been, no, he was a councilman in Phillie. And we wanted somebody

extradited from Pennsylvania, Philadelphia actually, and Raymond Pace Alexander, he was the first guy I referred to by his full three names in my whole life. So that is why it stays with me. He didn't want him to be extradited. Wouldn't consent to the extradition because of it was a black and white issue, it had to do with some racial problems. It is very vague in my mind, but I remember making a recommendation to the governor. No, it was the other way around, they wanted somebody from us. I remember making a recommendation not to do it.

Q: and the governor accepted that recommendation?

Martin Greenberg: yes.

Q: And did that become a major issue?

Martin Greenberg: No, just to me. I was the only one that was interested in that, as was Raymond Pace Alexander who wanted him. It was that kind of stuff. I was also asked from time to time to speak to constituencies of the governor, if it were somebody, for example, in the labor world; because they knew my background, my father's background, etc. Or some Jewish community, even though there were other Jews in the office that could have done that. They were doing more important things. I mean Harold Kolfsky was writing veto messages, although I took a had in some of those. It was fascinating. A fascinating experience. I was bowled over by what I considered to be the majesty of the governor.

Q: Apart from the three lawyers in the governor's counsel's office, what were the other sort of units on the governor's staff at that time, and who were the key people?

Martin Greenberg: Of course, I remember Brendan Byrne, being over in the, I think the office was the appointments secretary. So he would be in 1957, maybe 58, but I think it was 57. And that was the composition, as far as I can recall it, of the complex known as the governor's office. You had an appointments secretary, governor's counsel, across the hall where we were, and then you had the governor's suite, with his secretary there. So Brendan Byrne was there, that was the first time I had ever met him or seen him. And as I say, I came from the attorney general's office, so I knew the folks up there, like David Furman and David Satz, etc. And when I met Brendan Byrne, I found out he had a car given to him by virtue of his position. He didn't own it, but he could use it to drive back and forth from West Orange where he lived. And I was renting, I had just gotten married, in East Orange. And David Satz was living in that area as well. There was a young deputy attorney general named David Landau who lived in our area. And up until that moment I had been commuting by train, which was kind of neat. I got some reading done on the way down and back, and except for the trip from Penn Station back to my apartment, which was always difficult, they weren't air conditioned buses and I didn't have a car that I could use at that time. My wife used it. Now we had a car and we had to fill it. So I was asked to join because the other folks in the counsel's office didn't need transportation or lived locally, I think Dave Goldberg lived down there somewhere near Trenton. There was a fellow who came along for the ride, oh, who also was in the governor's complex, the press secretary, John Farley. So it was a very interesting group of people. I guess all lawyers, and John Farley. He came from Boston and he had a million stories, a million stories. Loved him, I loved John Farley. And he told them, he told those stories and then we would talk about politics and the -election, because we were in the first term of Bob Meyner.

Q: Did you take turns as drivers?

Martin Greenberg: We did, except for David Landau. We wouldn't let him drive. The reason we didn't want him to drive is because when he would get into a conversation, he would turn around and talk to us. We would yell at him to look straight ahead, but he had that habit of turning around.

Q: And how was Brendan Byrne as a driver?

Martin Greenberg: Everybody was good except Dave Landau. He was a good driver, he just couldn't focus on the road long enough.

Q: Do you recall anything about your very first meeting with Brendan Byrne?

Martin Greenberg: I can't say I do. He was across the hall from us and he had an entirely different, I never dealt with him in connection with his function and mine.

Q: What was his specific function as you understood it?

Martin Greenberg: He was like the appointments secretary's job which was to keep a list of people who the governor could look to if he needed people for certain positions, governmental positions, with an obvious political overtone to it; because whoever you nominated for something would have to go through the political scrutiny process. I don't remember whether in those days in that process political considerations were paramount in Brendan's functions. I think he was more of a conduit between people who were recommending people to the governor and the governor's need for people. And Brendan would kind of screen them and make recommendations as to who he thought would best fit the bill, whether that bill was 80% political or 92% talent or whatever. I think Brendan had a lot to do with guiding the process so that the governor would be well served by whoever came through that process.

Q: Was his position viewed at that time as equivalent to the counsel's position or was there no formal structure?

Martin Greenberg: He is probably going to be upset at this answer, but since I know him for 123 years, I can tell you that my understanding of the two offices, the counsel's office, Kolofsky's office, the counsel to the governor, and appointment secretary, I think the title was, were not the equivalent of each other, not equal. One was legal, purely legal, except for when he wanted to know who knew so and so, he being the governor. Whether anybody would know the person he was having a meeting with or a problem with, otherwise it was purely political. Writing of veto messages was critical, the speeches, he also had a press secretary that I mentioned, John Farley. And Brendan's responsibility was to shepherd the appointment process from its initial stage to its fruition, conclusion.

Q: How much direct contact did you have with the governor?

Martin Greenberg: Not a lot. I was the new guy on the block in the counsel's office. You had Dave Goldberg and then you had Harold Kolofsky. Those people had been there for several years before me. I am trying to remember, I came in 1956, I guess the election was in 54? I can't remember. So I was there when Harold was appointed to the bench, Kolofsky. And David, not Goldberg but Thompson, he became counsel to the governor. We really didn't interface with Brendan's office or his functions. But I saw him every day both on the way down and on the way back, and sometimes we had lunch together. So that would be 1957 let's say. Brendan was a piece of work. He was a very impressive young man.

Q: In what specific ways?

Martin Greenberg: He had a wonderful sense of humor. He shared all my views politically. I think everybody in that office did. We were liberal Democrats. And we were impressed with Bob Meyner and we wanted to help him. We liked what Bob Meyner did, so we were all on the same page. But Brendan was different. Brendan was very quick with comments that were concise and funny. I never met anybody like Brendan Byrne. First of all he was good looking, he was a genteel person that I had not ever been exposed to. Liberal, caring, bright, good looking. He was from a different world. Everybody I knew was Jewish.

Q: In your drives back and forth, and your lunches and other contacts, did you try out any of those Catskill jokes you had learned and memorized?

Martin Greenberg: I held my own.

Q: Do you think that the importance of humor cemented your relationship with Brendan Byrne?

Martin Greenberg: In retrospect, I think that is accurate. I mean I don't know why when he was designated as an acting prosecutor because the county chairman would not have him as prosecutor; and wouldn't permit his senators to confirm. And the governor appointed Brendan anyway as an acting, oh, as the deputy attorney general in charge of that office. The process by which Brendan was hiring folks to assist him in a hostile environment, where the county chairman didn't want him, left us all in a position where we were the outside guys coming into Essex County, even though we lived there all our lives and were Democrats. But we had a chairman who didn't want us there, so we were like in a bunker mentality in that office and we were very close to each other.

Q: Elaborate more of the sort of political context of Essex County at that time. You had suggested, because until you came down to Trenton, your knowledge of state politics and how things got done was fairly limited. I assume you must have had to learn fairly quickly when you joined the governor's staff.

Martin Greenberg: That is true. I was aware of the fact that there were other counties other than Essex, but I had never been to any that I spent any time in. I didn't know the game and the politics and I had no idea, except my boss was a Democrat from southwest, I think, Jersey. And I was impressed with him. And I didn't know the system, I didn't know what was going on. Harold Kolofsky was very helpful in that regard, as was David Goldberg. And Brendan was a guy from my home town in West Orange. We knew a lot of people together. He worked as a life guard at Goldman's Hotel and I had heard of Goldman. I didn't know him. I mean when I went down there as a clerk, I needed approval from my county chairman. I didn't know who he was. I remember it was not all that easy to get it, that is where Carl Holderman was very helpful. So we were like in a bunker mentality in the prosecutor's office. What question was I answering? Or trying to answer?

Q: I think you were trying to get to the political context of Essex County at that time, who were aligned on which side, why you felt sort of in a bunker?

Martin Greenberg: I knew that the county chairman did not want Brendan Byrne as a prosecutor.

Q: Why?

Martin Greenberg: I knew from a very short list, in perhaps a year that I had spent in Trenton, a short period of time that I was there, that the prosecutor's office was a critical office to a county chairman that didn't select the prosecutor. Especially if the prosecutor was a young guy who came from a Harvard and Princeton background, and who wore white bucks which he would clean every day in our office by hand. But this is not the guy, the kind of guy, that a county chairman would be comfortable with, especially if he is coming in as a deputy attorney general, because he is not getting confirmed because the chairman doesn't want him. Why doesn't he want him? Well, who knows what this kid is going to do? He has a grand jury across the street that he can convene any time he wants. He has a governor who is his buddy or at least is his mentor. So you don't want a stranger in that office, and he viewed Brendan as a stranger.

Q: The county chairman at the time was Dennis Carey?

Martin Greenberg: It was.

Q: and do you think his opposition was equally based on some fear as to the types of cases Brendan Byrne might bring as the prosecutor, as well as the fact that he was just not his person? In other words, he was not someone he had suggested and supported for appointment to the governor.

Martin Greenberg: Well, the latter was obviously true. And what goes with that truth is that therefore you have no allegiance to that person. I believe, and it is my belief, not based on any knowledge that I have beyond my belief, that they viewed Brendan as a person who if he saw what he considered to be wrong doing, would not be influenced by the fact that that guy happens to be county chairman or a Democrat, and that's what you are and that is what the governor is and you ought to try to work something out so that you don't explode the party in the county, which is a very important county in terms of the state of New Jersey. So they didn't want him. They

meaning actually the county chairman and those around him. Because this was a kid from Harvard and Princeton. I mean he worked at Goldman's Hotel, that is as close as he came to politics, I think. His father, as you probably remember, was a councilman in Newark. But Brendan was different and they didn't have a feel of him. I don't remember how long we sat, but we didn't get appointed and sworn in for some time.

Q: In your personal considerations as to whether to go along with Brendan Byrne, what were you weighing in terms of the pros and cons?

Martin Greenberg: It didn't take me a second. First of all, I liked him a lot. We used to drive back and forth, and he was very funny. He was very funny and there weren't a whole lot of funny people in that car.

Q: Just the two of you.

Martin Greenberg: I think Dave Satz I love, and Dave Landau I love. But they are not, they don't have Brendan's sense of humor. I think Brendan has a Jew sense of humor, even though Dave Satz and Dave Landau were all Jewish, except for Brendan. I don't want to make too much of that, I am being a little bit facetious. Brendan was a unique person, no one knew what to make of him in Essex County. They were afraid of him because he had a tremendous amount of freedom, he wasn't brought in by them. So it was exciting. I didn't have to wait a minute. I mean when he asked me to come up, I said absolutely.

Q: Weren't there any considerations about leaving this highly prominent job on the governor's staff?

Martin Greenberg: I was no longer on the governor's staff. I had become counsel to the Department of Labor, I think at the request of Carl Holderman. I don't know how that happened.

Q: And that was a position that you didn't really miss resigning from?

Martin Greenberg: Not in comparison to an assistant prosecutor's position. I enjoyed it, working with Carl, Mr. Holderman, he was a wonderful human being. He tried to be like a father to me down there, where I was obviously a fish out of water.

Q: At that point did you still feel that your ultimate career was going to be as a labor lawyer?

Martin Greenberg: yeah, the thought was floating around in my head. I suppose, I think the answer is yes to that question.

Q: Going up to Essex County to join the prosecutor's office, how do you sort of recall the political deadlock between the governor and Dennis Carey being resolved?

Martin Greenberg: How did I...

Q: What do you recall about how it did get resolved and actually Brendan Byrne took over as deputy attorney general and later as prosecutor.

Martin Greenberg: I haven't thought about that subject in some time. I haven't refreshed my recollection with anyone or anything before coming here today. I don't remember. I don't recall.

Q: What was life like in the prosecutor's office under Brendan Byrne? Did you feel like you guys were coming in to pursue a mission, to sort of clean up Essex County? Or was it somewhat less obvious to you on the staff?

Martin Greenberg: It was certainly I did not feel the former. I did not feel there was a mission, in that we had organized crime flourishing or anything close to that. Or that we were there to clean up the Democratic organization that had controlled the county for a long time. None of that was in my mind. As a matter of fact, several of the

assistants who were in the office under former prosecutor Webb, I think, were asked to stay on and assist us in the transition. Also, they were familiar with some of the cases that were pending, etc. I didn't sense there was gang busters, we were not cleaning up anything. We had a regular list, there were some judges who as it turns out were under review by folks in law enforcement as to their conduct. I learned about that many years later, nothing occurred during the time I was an assistant prosecutor. That led me to believe that we were gang busters.

Q: You and a few others on the staff have remained very close professionally and personally to Brendan Byrne over the years. Talk about a few of the other people on the staff.

Martin Greenberg: Sure. It was a great group, a wonderful group. Brendan tells me that he was going to ask me to be the first assistant prosecutor. He told me that many years after we were in that office. But I used to come in late, and one of the reasons I would come in late is that I had a ride that would always bring me down late. In those days, you could be an assistant prosecutor and also have a law practice, which I did. I would come down with my partner in that law firm. He didn't have to show up in the prosecutor's office at 9 o'clock in the morning, but I did. And I didn't have another car, so it was difficult for me not to go with him, especially when he kept saying I'll be on time. And Brendan loved punctuality. I mean he wanted to start a meeting at 8:30 or 9 o'clock, whatever, and so I was aggravating him. He liked me and I liked him, but I was affecting the morale when I would walk in five minutes late.

Q: Did he ever tell you this?

Martin Greenberg: Only years later. Years later. I thought to myself when I told it to me, it probably was a good thing I didn't become first assistant prosecutor, because I might have made a career out of that somehow. And that is not where I wanted to be. I never tried a case before in my life, except for some attorney general's matters which were not really before a jury, they were quasi "criminal" regulatory stuff. So I think the way he got me in to that office, by which time he had already had some rapprochement with the county chairman, was to tell him that he needed me because we had a case that requires a center knowledge and background and experience, of which I had none. So I proceeded to lose the case, which was tried in Morris County because of the heightened level of politics involved in it. But I had done that and I had tried it and I thought I had tried it well. I figured well, I am going back to the attorney general's office now, but he said no, no, you are going to stay here. So I was still a deputy attorney general, acting as an assistant prosecutor. And then some how or other that process evolved, and I don't remember how it happened, where he was confirmed and we all became assistant prosecutors. I just don't remember. I might remember by the next time I am here.

Q: Do you know if your appointment was held up by Dennis Carey or was it easier because your father was politically influential?

Martin Greenberg: My appointment, as well as the appointment of everybody in the office, was held up because of the lack of rapprochement with Brendan and the county chairman. So that all of us were being held up in the capacity of deputy attorney generals acting as prosecutors, irrespective of our families or where we came from. Nobody was getting through.

Q: So it was a matter of principle politically for Dennis Carey as opposed to personalities?

Martin Greenberg: Well, he wanted, I am sure, this is my guess, but I am sure he wanted Brendan to be his man. And Brendan wasn't his man.

Q: I asked if you would talk about the other people on the staff, what their roles were and what became of them.

Martin Greenberg: Joe Lordi became the first assistant. I find out subsequently that happened because I came late to the meetings, but I don't think so. I think it happened because Joe Lordi was a very good assistant prosecutor or deputy attorney general acting as. And he had administrative skills and had worked with other folks in that office, like Julie Feinberg, as a kind of team to go from county to county where there were problems in the

prosecutors offices and straighten them out.

Q: Do you feel there was any political balancing in that in terms of an Italian as the number two person to an Irish man as the number one.

Martin Greenberg: I don't think so. I don't think Brendan was even capable of even thinking that.

Q: But it wouldn't have been something that Dennis Carey would have suggested?

Martin Greenberg: Oh, I don't know. But if it had been I suspect Brendan would have rejected it out of hand and he would not have appointed them.

Q: In addition to Joe Lordi, who were the other key people?

Martin Greenberg: John Crane, he was the first assistant at one point in time when I was there, and I don't remember how that happened. But John Crane, Julie Feinberg, John Crane and Joe Lordi were a kind of a team that worked together with, oh, Ralph Fusco when they were kind of floating prosecutors, where there were some hot spots. and Ralph then went on the bench and those gentlemen came over to Essex, having been asked to come by Brendan. It might have been transferred from another county prosecutor's office. I don't know. June Strelecki came with me, from Trenton, she was a deputy working along side of me. And Julie Feinberg, did I mention him, he was part of the group that worked in other counties and came along with the Joe Lordis. They were very very close so they must have been working together elsewhere. Then you had some folks that had never experienced criminal law of any consequence, like Ben Bendit, who came in that first class, so to speak, with me. Since it wasn't a full time job, you could share a desk. So I would have it in the morning, and then I would go to my law office and Ben would come in the afternoon. Everybody loved Brendan Byrne in that office, everybody respected him. Everybody knew that there was no question of his integrity. And you got stronger for that, you knew that your boss was straight and that he wanted to do a good job. That he wasn't looking for glory or as a stepping stone. It was like let's do a job here, do it right. I am trying to remember some other folks that came through. [someone whispering to the side] Oh yes, Charlie Carella. I don't know how Brendan knew some of the folks that came into the office, but Charlie was delightful. This was an opportunity for those of us who had never thought about prosecuting to prosecute, to do the people's bidding in a prosecutorial setting. And Charlie Carella was a joy, because he had a couple of guys working with him who were not assistant prosecutors, but rather detectives, and they were all named Charlie. So it was called the Charlie squad.

Q: And what did the Charlie squad do?

Martin Greenberg: They ate a lot of Italian food, and they also were kind of outside of the normal here is an indictment, try it, etc; they were a group of men and I think there was a woman involved as well, I am not sure whether June Strelecki worked with that squad, but she would be the woman if I am correct in my recollection. And what they would do would be to go undercover sometimes, they were dealing with an anti-gambling structure. They were a group apart from those of use who got an indictment and went in and tried the case. They had a function which was important in Newark and Essex County, which was to, there was obviously gambling going on; and as I understood their function, I did not work with them, and we hardly saw them, they were out on the streets. I understood their function to be the infiltration of and the break up of organized criminal activity....

Don Linky: It is June 20, 2006. We're here at the Eagleton Institute of Politics on the campus of Rutgers University. This is another in the series of interviews we're conducting for the Brendan T. Byrne Archive as part of the Rutgers Governor's Program. Our guest is former Senator and Judge Martin Greenberg. This is the continuation of an earlier interview with former Senator Greenberg on his relationship with Governor Brendan Byrne. Senator, at the end of our last session we had brought your up to Newark. You were an assistant prosecutor in Essex County working under Brendan Byrne. You were also pursuing the private practice of law as well as being assistant prosecutor. At that time New Jersey allowed assistant prosecutors to pursue a private practice. Tell us a little bit about how you balanced those two different roles.

Martin Greenberg: The office was composed of folks who for the most part were practicing privately while they were performing their functions as assistant prosecutor. And in recognition of that fact the system was that you would structure your week based upon what cases were assigned to you and when they were going to be tried or prepared in a manner that required your presence. In general, you would put in about half time or maybe 5/8, 3/4 in the prosecutor's office and then return to your practice, which you could handle until all hours of the evening as the practice dictated. So we had a relatively small staff in the prosecutor's office. I would say at the very beginning it was 10 or 12 people. And we would work it out so that there were two folks assigned to each desk. And you would work in the morning at the desk and go back to your office in the afternoon and then the afternoon shift would come in. But you would work out with your desk mates so to speak so that you would have a desk available and you would have your cases prepared by the investigators and detectives with your assistance telephonically if you were not in. But preferably be there on the scene at the time of interviews of witnesses etc. We were spending a good three quarters of the time of the working day normal working day in the prosecutor's office and again as much time after that into the early evening at the law firm. Excuse me. I had a position with a firm small firm of three attorneys that I had known from before I became an attorney and we had-- you'd walk to your office from the prosecutor's office ask walk back again. We were within blocks of both locations.

Q: Before we leave the days in the prosecutor's office what type of boss was Brendan Byrne as prosecutor? Was he very hands on? Did he get involved with the investigations or was he more of the type of prosecutor who set a large direction to the staff and pretty much let you the assistant prosecutors do your own thing?

Martin Greenberg: It's a combination. If it were a critical case, a significant case, a first-degree murder case, or a political corruption case, he would be very hands on. In many instances-- I shouldn't say that. In some instances he tried the case himself and obviously that would require his full time preparation. And he was a wonderfully prepared prosecutor. By that I mean he would interview the witnesses himself, he would do the research or at least read the research that had been done with regards to a charge or a charge that jury, etc. And those cases, which were not many, but in important, he would deal with as I just described. Beyond that he was a boss and we all loved him as a boss and we refer to him as the boss would from time to time check to see how a case was going in preparation etc. and stop in during the course of a trial to see how his assistants were progressing. He knew what the cases were about. He knew what was being tried what was be prepared, etc. But for the most part you had your own head and you, as an assistant prosecutor, would set up the case, put the witnesses in order, and review the case with your staff, the detectives and investigators, and not come into contact directly with Brendan at that stage in the preparation of the case. We had meetings every Friday morning at I think 8:00. And my recollection is that court was not in session at that hour or for that day. I don't recall. But I know we were there for at least an hour and we would review and he would sit and conduct the process of reviewing what trials were being conducted, where we were in the trials and how it was going. And everyone who was interested contributed to a discussion about the case or a case. But for the most part we were concerned about our own matters and we had a report on new decisions which someone was assigned to brief us on. It was a business, very business like meeting for about an hour, hour and a half, etc. And Brendan was there and he was interested and involved in the discussions and would raise some questions about a decision or how it would impact us etc. He was a hands on prosecutor full-time.

Q: In terms of the major directions for the office that Brendan Byrne sat as prosecutor, you mentioned in your first session that organized crime at that period in Essex County in New Jersey generally was a fairly significant force that law enforcement was attempting to confront. This was also an area and a topic that later was critical or important at least to Brendan Byrne's political career in his first run for office. Was this sort of unstated or was it within your staff a major objective that dealing with organized crime, dealing also with gambling as sort of the financing tool for organized crime was a major goal for the prosecutor's office under Brendan Byrne?

Greenberg The cases that were tried, criminal cases that were tried, that involved organized crime for the most part were gambling cases. There was a recognition of the fact that there was organized crime and I as an assistant prosecutor did not participate in the organized crime unit established and instead was assigned cases to try and I did. So I had little contact with the operation of the organized crime section of the office. My recollection is that in terms of the manpower that was being available and spent in prosecutor's office organized crime was recognized as an existence but most of the time consumed by the prosecutor's office was in the prosecution of cases that we

brought to the grand jury and tried. And overwhelmingly those were non-organized crime cases.

Q: At some point you make a decision to go to private practice full-time instead of balancing the public and private roles that you had been pursuing. Tell us a little bit about the personal considerations you had in making that decision.

Greenberg Sure. When I came out of the attorney general's office at the request of Brendan Byrne to join him as an insistent prosecutor actually as a deputy attorney general because we had difficulty confirmed which I think I discussed earlier for political reasons. I became involved and a partner in the law firm with a couple of folks that I had known from earlier on in my life. And I was attempting to build a practice because I did not intend to become a or remain a prosecutor for any significant length of time. I thought I'd make my contribution and learn what I could in terms of trying a case.

Q: After our short break Senator, let's continue with the period when you're in the Essex County prosecutor's office and office practicing privately. What were the options you were considering that that time in terms of your future career?

Greenberg Oh I was getting to the point-- I say went there in '59 so this was about '61 where I was interested in seeing whether or not I could develop a practice and so I was spending more time in the private practice and less time in the prosecutor's office for a short period time when I recall Brendan asking me whether I was interested in joining his firm. At that time there were essentially two partners, Brendan and Harold Talcer [ph?] and there were a couple of associates working there. And I was interested and I told him that. And I interviewed with Harold whom I did not know before that and Brendan and they offered me a position as an associate in that firm. And I accepted it. Told the folks over at the other firm that I would be leaving and why and where I was going. And then I resigned from the prosecutor's office. So I was then working full time practicing law.

Q: Going back a year or so in 1960 there also was the presidential election where John Kennedy was elected President. And also during the run up to the nomination by the Democratic Party of John Kennedy, your former boss and Brendan Byrne's former boss, Governor Minor, made a foray into national politics. But I believe you with not politically involved at that time. But did you discuss at all with Brendan Byrne the minors of candidacy and his role at the National Democratic Convention?

Greenberg Not at that time and I do not remember discussing subsequently either. And I had no political aspirations at that time and I was not politically active. So what I knew about is what I read in the papers and what I discussed with my friends.

Q: Now we're at the point where you're in full time private practice. You still have communications with the Brendan Byrne from time to time. What topics did you talk about and what sort of relationships? Were they purely social, distance or whatever?

Greenberg No he was my-- he became my partner.

Q: Later?

Greenberg This was after about a year or so I became a partner in that firm. And our discussions were purely and simply about the practice of law and the outside of the prosecutor's office. I rarely discussed prosecutor's office with him except in passing where some of my friends were still located. And we would chat from time to time. But our meetings were about clients and developing a practice. And Brendan was a part of that. Obviously non-criminal, civil matters.

Q: Any discussion of local politics?

Greenberg If so, I can't recall any. Oh yeah. There came a point and time where the designation deputy attorney

general was no longer necessary because there was confirmation. I can't recall when it happened. And I think it happened while I was still in the office where we were all sworn in as prosecutors and no longer designated as deputy attorney's general. That would have involved a discussion about a reproach Mont with the county chairman etc. I did not play a part in that.

Q: In those days how did you build a private practice?

Greenberg Well, I suspect, as most people do, you started with your friends and your contacts and you got active in the bar association and you took assignments from the partners, or in this case, partner was Harold Talcer for the most part was developing his and he had a practice at that time. And I would handle cases for him and them. We had a couple unions that we represented and some friends of the family brought matters in and slowly over the year or so or two I had some reputation as a trial attorney from the prosecutor's office so I did get some matters brought to me directly by the client essentially in the civil area. I'm trying to recall whether there was any criminal-- no there was no criminal practice because of Brendan's association with the prosecutor's office. So it was all civil and it was word of mouth and it was friends and clubs and neighbors. Typical way when you come a family that doesn't have any lawyers in it and had no friends of the family who had legal problems of significance, that's how a practice would be built and that's what I did.

Q: Did your father's role in the labor movement have any positive impact on the practice?

Greenberg Yeah. Shortly after I joined Brendan's firm there were a couple of labor unions that sought me out. They were not in my father's union. And it was not with his knowledge, as I understand it. Asked me if I would be available to represent them in connection with organization, organizational activities of the union and worker's compensation cases and matters involving automobile accidents of their members etc. The typical stuff you would do if you were representing a union.

Q: And what was Brendan Byrne's particular area in private practice that he found the most enjoyable?

Greenberg I have no idea. I rarely saw him in the office. He spent almost all of his time in the prosecutor's office. And occasionally a matter would come in from or through Brendan who would be a family member of a friend of a family member etc. and there was no significant business "produced" by Brendan in that firm. But we loved him and we wanted to see him as often as we could.

Q: Okay. Well let's bring the story a few years forward. Now what are your recollections and particular your relationship with Brendan Byrne after this point where you're in his firm practicing privately? He's still in the prosecutor's office. What happened next?

Greenberg That office grew dramatically from 10, 12 assistants, to 25 and 50. Business increased so to speak in the prosecutor's office and Brendan became more and more a fulltime prosecutor. He had essentially been that from the beginning but he hardly saw him a accept for dinner occasionally, breakfast meetings, etc. And so Harold and I had-- I became a partner after about a year and Harold and I expanded the firm. We brought in some folks who had been in the prosecutor's office that were seeking to practice privately. And so that firm started to grow and Brendan did not change his relationship with it. He remained conjecturally he associated with it. I don't think he handled matters. I recall one matter where he and I appeared together in a civil case. And the next recollection I have is Brendan's departing from the prosecutor's office. I don't remember how that occurred. I don't think I think it was at the end of a term. There were five-year terms I believe. And I think he went from there to the Public Utilities Commission as chairman. I can't recall the year and I don't remember the circumstances.

Q: And so you don't recall any conversation with him about his decision to accept the appointment to the Public Utilities Commission?

Greenberg No. Just that he was going and we would miss him.

Q: And I assume your contact with him then either dropped considerably given that he had no formal relationship?

Greenberg That's true. We saw him from time to time socially. We being Harold and I and Brendan and at times as socially with our wives and Jean. Infrequently though.

Q: Now at some point you start to get involved in local politics in Essex County. Talk about how that occurred and who the key players were.

Greenberg Sure. So let's see. I would have left-- I did leave the prosecutor's office I believe in '61-'62 and practice into the-- I'm now thinking about early seventies and building a nice practice. Harold and I had a decent practice. And we had some other folks in the firm who were working and bringing in clients. We were not gonna challenge any significant law firm with our practice but we had a good time. We were happy with each other and we were comfortable. Then I started to get itchy about doing the same thing for ten years now. And so I put my foot in the water and decided to run as a county committee person in Livingston where I was living with my wife at that time, I think one or two of my sons. I have three sons and one daughter. So we had two children at the time and I ran and lost. But it was interesting. And County Chairman at the time I think it was Dennis Kerry [ph?], I can't recall, saw me at a dinner. I started to go to the democratic functions and said, "Why did you run against the party committee member?" I said, "Because I wanted to get involved and I didn't know how else to do it." He said, "Well, you could have knocked on the door or come in to see me, etc." I said, "I didn't know you could do that." So he said, "Yeah. That's what people do." I said, "Well, thanks for the advice." And that continued for a while until a friend of mine was running for the United States Senate. His name is Bob Peacock. I had met him in the Attorney General's Office. I think he was commissioner of insurance or deputy commissioner of insurance, Bob Minor's campaign, term. And Bobby asked me if I would run a dinner for him among the attorneys and I said yes I would and I did and we raised some money for him. And he lost. He was running against-- I don't remember if he got the nomination but I know the senator at the time was Clifford Case. I don't think-- I think maybe Bob did get the nomination. Any event, some more years by and I became more and more interested in the party and what was going in Washington and locally and a senate race was shaping up for I would say 1971. And at that time there were five senators in Essex County and you ran at large. And Bob Peacock came back to me. Not having seen him a few years ask he said, "Why don't you take a shot at the senate? I will be happy to support you as the Chairman of the Livingston Democratic Party, which he was. And let me worry about trying to get you on the A-line." And the next thing that happened is I had a meeting with the then Chairman, Harry Lerner [ph?] who said, "Bob Peacock speaks highly of you and we would like you to be a part of the ticket." Something else happened in the meantime. There's an organization called City of Hope. It deals with emphysema, a condition known as emphysema. It's located in California and one of my friend asked me if I-- he was a labor leader local union. Asked me if I would be the honoree of a dinner. I said well-- I explored what the organization was all about and I thought it was good thing. If they wanted to use my name for purposes of selling tickets to other labor organizations because it was a labor-sponsored dinner essentially and my father had been and was at that time International Union President having been elected in early sixties or late fifties. So he was fairly known and he had a large organization in the United States and Canada. And I suppose they used my name and his relationship with me and the rest to sell tickets to employers and labor leaders, etc. and I invited my friends to sit at the adieu, including David Satz who had been United States Attorney, Brendan Byrne. This was a nonpolitical event affair so I had the County Chairman, Harry Lerner, and a bunch of labor guys and made my first large speech to a large audience. And it was horrible. They tell me it was really bad.

Q: In content or delivery or...

Greenberg Both. Nothing was good about it. I learned some stuff. Short jokes. Very very short and quick.

Q: You hadn't learned that in the cat skills?

Greenberg You know, I didn't apply what I had learned in the cat skills. Had I done so I probably would have done a better job. In any event my name started to be more well known in the Essex County. And so Bobby Peacock came and asked me if I would take a shot at this. He would like to support me and endorse me. I said, "I really, you

know, if I'm known it's in West Orange and in South Orange and that part of Essex County where I live." And I didn't even know where Nutley was, Belleview. My name was Greenberg and still is. And I didn't think I could bring anything to the ticket. He said, "Well you know, it isn't a ticket that's being elected. It's you individual." And I was given a spot on it at the democratic county nominating committee meeting. And I was one, two, three, fourth name on the line. And it was a two-year term at the time. I think it was two four and four. And the first three got elected, democrats and the republicans caught the next two. And I learned about campaigning and going from house party to house party and I expected to win. I didn't know that relationships would be formed between candidates from the two tickets. I learned that afterwards. I was totally naïve. And I came in sixth I think out of ten folks. And I was upset. It was first shot at a election of consequence and I had lost and I had a bad taste in my mouth.

Q: What were the relationships or the deals made in your campaign that you weren't aware of that the time?

Martin Greenberg: Well, I was advised and I don't know whether or not it's true, that the one of our candidates had formed a relationship with one or more candidate on the other ticket based upon religion, ethnicity. And so those candidates that shared that religious conviction won across the board. I don't know if it's true. I, you know, gather. It's too suspicious not to have been arranged. It's too coincidental. In any event, I now understood something that I didn't learn before. But it hardly mattered because the next time an election occurred, districts had been formed. And so you would be running one against one. So I didn't have to concern myself with my back so to speak.

Q: Well talk a little bit more about this ethnic politics of Essex County at the time.

Martin Greenberg: Well sure...

Q: The Lerner family was obviously politically prominent in West Orange and the Degnans also Irish-Americans in West Orange. But there was also strong Italian political people and in the emerging, I guess, Jewish constituency. Was there deliberate efforts to package tickets?

Greenberg Oh sure.

Q: To meet each constituencies interests?

Martin Greenberg: For example when I first ran and we had five candidates for five spots. You had Pat Dodd, Wynona Lipman...

Q: An African American woman.

Martin Greenberg: Yeah. But folks voted for her 'cause they thought she was Jewish. They didn't know who she was. And me. And a Polish American candidate from Irvington. Oh and another an additional Italian. I'm sorry. Yeah. Carmen Orecchio. So you try to balance your ticket with all of the major ethnic groups represented which is what happened. And the other side was exactly the same. The Republicans did the exactly the same because you, you know, you went into a place like Belleville, or Nutley, or Bloomfield and that was a strong Italian stronghold at the time. Newark obviously was in most areas of Newark the black population dominated so you had to have black representation. The Polish and the Jewish communities were much smaller in number. So those two candidates, me, and the fella from Irvington were the four and fifth, if you go across the line. You have to really want to vote the line in order to get to us. And you lose people at those spots.

Q: Was there a political power broker for the Jewish constituency at that time?

Martin Greenberg: Sure.

Q: Who was that?

Martin Greenberg: His name was Macklin Goldman [ph?]. He owned Goldman's Hotel in West Orange. He had

been a state senator. And he was on the executive committee of the Democratic Party.

Q: How did he exercise his power? Was it informally? Was it direct? And did you have to go interview him and convince him of your credentials?

Martin Greenberg: There was only one boss and that was Harry Lerner, who happened to be Jewish. And whom I did not know except as I ran into him at that dinner that I described and got to know him during the campaign where he consented to my being on the ticket. So I was not a someone who came up through the ranks. And I had to be sold to him. And I think Bob Peacock did that together with some folks from Livingston who didn't control much of the politics at the county level but had significance in Livingston and South Orange. And you could bring, a Jewish candidate could bring, assuming that ethnicity was a factor, could bring to the table significant votes in those two communities.

Q: You said you had a sour taste in your mouth after that first campaign.

Martin Greenberg: I didn't like losing. I mean that was a very bad thing for me.

Q: But it didn't sour you enough to give up politics.

Martin Greenberg: No. On the contrary. I wanted a shot again. And then I ran into a problem because as I understand from Harry he had already promised that spot, that spot being the 28th District, which was South Orange, Irvington and Newark. Did not include West Orange where most of the folks that I knew were living. Then he had committed that or told me that he had advised someone that they could have that shot. And in those days the county chairman and I suppose to a large extent today, made the decision and then there was a rubber stamp by the committee.

Q: What year would this have been?

Martin Greenberg: That was for the 1973 campaign election in which Brendan Byrne was elected governor.

Q: Now when did your political contacts renew with Brendan Byrne as he becomes and considers a candidacy in '73?

Greenberg After I had obtained the endorsement of Harry Lerner to run and he changed his mind apparent with regard to that spot, Democratic senate candidate in the 28th District. After I had obtained that nomination and endorsement from Harry Lerner I got a telephone call from Brendan who said he'd like to-- would I come up and have lunch. He was on the bench. So he had left the Public Utilities Commission and become assignment judge in Morris County.

Q: Do you recall any talk about an earlier candidacy by Brendan Byrne? Perhaps in the 1969 campaign?

Martin Greenberg: I do not. I do not. We always talked about Brendan being the perfect candidate for governor. He would make a wonderful governor. But that was from the early days even in the prosecutor's office. But nobody seconded that motion. There was never any-- it never got past his immediate friends, nor was he pushing it.

Q: Well let's go back again to 1973 and your role in that first campaign.

Martin Greenberg: Okay. I'm on the ticket. And the head of that ticket was the gentleman that I "replaced". As I said in those days it was-- you were a senator from Essex County. You're not from a district when I lost my first race.

Q: And just for background, that change occurred because of one-man, one-vote and court decisions, which threw out the old county based district, had passed.

Greenberg Correct. And so the folks who had some say in the district being processed would be the incumbent senators for example and the counties that had delivered democratic pluralities. And so the district in which I was living, which was and I lived in South Orange at the time, was the 28th District and I said it was composed of Irvington, South Orange and a piece of Newark. It's a safe district. And the senator who lived in it was Ralph DeRose who determined that he wanted to run for governor and had the endorsement of the Essex County organization, Harry Lerner etc. So the I was on the ticket as the senate candidate from the 28th District and my the head of my ticket or the head of the ticket that I was on was Ralph DeRose also lived in South Orange. And I received a telephone call from Brendan Byrne who said he'd been approached. I went to have lunch with him. He told me he was approached to run and he was thinking about it and what did I think. We talked about who approached him and how that happened and what he thought he needed and wanted to know what my views were on the subject.

Q: Do you want to identify the people who approached him?

Martin Greenberg: Yeah. He told me Don Lan, who was the County Chairman of Union County at the time and had other chairmen, the names of whom that I don't remember but some smaller counties supporting Brendan. He wouldn't have Essex because that was already committed to Ralph. And I was sure all hell was gonna break loose when it would be announced because here was another Essex boy so to speak challenging the organization in Essex County. And Brendan had a great reputation in Essex County having been prosecutor and coming from a politically connected family. His father was in politics all his life as I recall I've been told. So-- I'm sorry I've forgotten your question.

Q: Well, you're put in a fairly difficult personal and political position in this race because you're running on a Essex County organization ticket.

Martin Greenberg: Sure. If that were to happen I envisioned that I would have difficulty and I didn't know what the reaction of the chairman would be and the party itself. Don't forget we are at the stage where it's in the primary stage. And there were folks that were gonna be running against us in the primary. Headed I think by, in my district, there was Joel Jacobson who's a friend of mine in the labor movement. He was United Autoworkers I believe. The old CIO. So we were looking at that primary and then I envisioned if Brendan took a shot at it, he would be obviously on a different line in the primaries so we would have in a sense three lines. The regular organization, the Jacobson organization and Brendan. That did not interfere with my analysis of whether he should go or not. He asked me as a friend what I thought and I thought he would make a great governor. I didn't know if he could get the nomination and it appeared to me that he wasn't really committed to being a judge. I didn't think that he would entertain it-- entertain an uphill battle. He didn't have at that moment and time sufficient support to win a primary. He would need at least one major county.

Don Linky : Senator, before our break I was about to ask you about the impressions you had of the key Byrne people that you came to know better during the general election campaign in 1973. Can you describe those people and what your dealings were with them and how you assessed them as campaign people?

Martin Greenberg: I'm going to try to separate the first campaign from the second campaign and sometimes they blur. There are three people that-- Oh, I shouldn't say that. Let me start with the two most impressive new folks for me and they were Dick Leone and Lew Kaden and as I might have mentioned earlier my recollection is that we had the good fortune of their being available when the- Dick Coffee I think was in the campaign as a candidate and withdrew in the primary and they became available to us and joined our campaign in the general election for the general and perhaps earlier I don't remember but I met them during the general election and I was overwhelmed. They were extremely bright and are extremely bright people. I've maintained a relationship of sorts with both but almost from year to year I might see them once here or there. I think that they lent a- an insight into the issues that had not yet been covered by any person in the campaign and they quickly demonstrated their ability to be perceptive, articulate and sensitive to a state with which they had not had- as far as I knew had a great deal of exposure and I think Brendan shared that view but for me, which is where the question is, I was very impressed with them. And I would sit in at meetings where a policy was being discussed and positions were being taken and

those were the two people I think most responsible for the positions that Brendan took. That is not to say that he didn't have his own mind functioning and would on occasion, and I can't remember specifically- specifics, go in a direction other than where the recommendation was directing him from either one or both of those two gentlemen. Alan Sagner was not a- was not in a position and did not offer policy recommendations and positions except as it might affect the business community in New Jersey where he had practical experience and was solid in terms of his views in my opinion. So if you put the politics together with the economy and the business community in New Jersey, those three gentlemen were the guiding lights in the campaign, not to mention of course Alan's ability to assist in fundraising which was critical. He was our main guy. There were many others who didn't have the platform that Alan had in terms of fundraising but there were numerous significant supporters of Brendan who had not a large or lengthy experience politically but were friendly with folks in our campaign. I specifically remember Joe Lordi's ability to reach into the Italian business community, Joe and his brother, and we had very successful fundraisers with folks like that who had a particular area of contact. Alan was someone who had across the board access and we did okay financially. We were fine. Those are the three individuals who I think once you're past the pure political considerations like a Don Lan for example who would be of help with regard to other county chairpersons.

Q: Lan was chairman of Union County--

Martin Greenberg: Yes, he was. I don't-- There came a time when Harry Lerner was on board 100% and it was obvious, as I mentioned earlier, early on he was a little reluctant and I think wanted to be romanced. So he did- he became helpful politically as it became more and more apparent that Brendan was going to win.

Q: What was your perception of the Hudson County position and role at that point and who were the key players?

Martin Greenberg: Fitzpatrick was a key if not the key player, Bao—[ph?]

Q: Francis Fitzpatrick?

Martin Greenberg: Correct, Francis Fitzpatrick, and one of my jobs was to keep in touch with the Hudson folks and make sure that they were happy. Now Mr. Fitzpatrick's representative if you will in the Byrne campaign was Jimmy Dugan and Jimmy had open access to us and to the campaign and was free to and did participate in fundraising and politically- and political activity throughout the state. He was going to be a significant force in the administration assuming Brendan won. Hudson had some things that it wanted in order to support Brendan. I didn't think it was going to be difficult because if Essex was with Ralph DeRose, Hudson would be with someone else and that someone else was not on the horizon except for Brendan Byrne in the real world. There were other candidates but I think Brendan was the most logical for them to go to. And Brendan had a close relationship with- in Hudson County with an attorney who was our liaison with the Democratic party with Mr. Fitzpatrick and the negotiations that took place before Brendan- I'm backing up now, actually announced were sensitive, difficult as far as we could tell, but in retrospect I understand there were- really was not an issue that it was going to happen but there had to be a meeting of the minds on a couple of issues that Hudson was interested in and that Brendan had to sign off on and one was Jimmy Dugan for example as the state chairman.

Q: The attorney you mentioned, was that Ken McPherson?

Martin Greenberg: It was. It is- was.

Q: He was the key intermediary—

Martin Greenberg: Communications went through him. There may have been others but he's the one that I know who would convey okay, that's agreeable, to us or them.

Q: Do you remember any other conditions or requests from Hudson County apart from the chairmanship for Jim Dugan?

Martin Greenberg: I think there was something about an exit on the turnpike in Bayonne.

Q: You mentioned participating in the discussions about policy positions during the campaign. The campaign strategy and issue focus changed with the nomination of Congressman Sandman who was a rabid anti tax person over Governor Cahill who actually proposed his own statewide broad based tax during his only term in office. What do you recall about those debates within the Byrne campaign about what position to take on the broad based income tax or some other type of broad based statewide tax?

Martin Greenberg: What I remember is that it was not deemed wise to be supportive of a statewide tax in the face of New Jersey's history and a candidate in opposition who was opposed to it and the discussions that we had had to do with how to be honest and truthful with regard to that issue because we need to balance the budget and we were not in favor of gimmicks. Brendan really wanted to do it right but he also wanted to see whether or not we could avoid a broad based tax that would serve as a function of raising money only and we talked about the problem with the real estate taxes and whether or not there could be a combined approach where we would attempt to reduce one and replace it with another or at least partially accomplish that objective. And so we discussed an income tax might be something that we would have to deal with down the road and accomplish two things, one, to raise money if necessary from a new source and two, to reduce the burden of the real estate taxes which were not as bad as they are now but certainly a problem for a lot of people but we didn't have to cross the bridge we thought at that time. And so my recollection is Brendan's position ultimately became one that he was comfortable with and that he believed in and that is- that he did not foresee an income tax in the foreseeable future. The word 'foreseeable' was intentionally selected as meaning not tomorrow but it might occur sooner rather than later depending on what happened to the economy and New Jersey in particular.

Q: In your recollection, there was a deliberate strategic decision to choose that word 'foreseeable' or was it more an off the cuff—

Martin Greenberg: I don't think it was the latter. I don't think it was intentionally selected with that in mind. It just evolved because we really didn't know A, whether it was viable as a concept, before you start to run off with that you've got to know that you got a chance of making it happen, and B, that it's necessary, and I don't think we had a handle, at least I didn't, on what the economics of the situation were completely. I hadn't sat through budget hearings and I wasn't quite sure of what was going on but I knew, and we all knew, and I think Leone in particular knew that there was a problem.

Q: In your own campaign were you getting attacked by your Republican opponent on the tax issue asking you to pledge that you would never vote for a broad based tax?

Martin Greenberg: Never. It never came up.

Q: As the polls show Brendan Byrne pretty comfortably ahead going into the general election in November, was there any debate within the campaign of saying we have this won, why don't we come out more forthrightly about the need for a more stable statewide revenue source to deal with the property tax problem and the school finance problem?

Martin Greenberg: I don't recall any such event occurring and I'm not suggesting that there was an acknowledgment that our position was not a forthright position.

Q: As the campaign wound down toward November, were you supremely confident that Brendan Byrne was going to be elected governor?

Martin Greenberg: I was confident.

Q: In fact, I believe Dick Leone has said in his earlier session during the series he actually created a transition committee during the campaign as opposed to waiting until the election results in November. Were you involved at

all in that, in sort of suggesting who might be helpful on the parallel transition committee that was working while there was a formal campaign—

Martin Greenberg: No, I don't remember being involved.

Q: Do you remember any of the people who were involved? I believe Dave Goldberg was one, some of the other prominent Democrats from prior administrations?

Martin Greenberg: No, I do not remember. That doesn't mean it didn't happen. I just don't recall it. I was busy with my campaign, I was busy with his campaign, and I knew something was going on over there and going on in the sense that preparations were being made for victory but I don't know the people. I don't remember the people being identified to me.

Q: We've also had comments from Dick Leone and others involved in the campaign that Brendan Byrne was not the most effective campaigner on the stump or as a speaker. What was your own impression of his abilities as a day to day campaigner?

Martin Greenberg: He's much better now. Yes. We were working with close presence and general speaking ability.

Q: How would you rate him?

Martin Greenberg: At that time the best thing that I can say about him is that we are fortunate in who his opponent was. He just got better each day but he started from such a- an unflattering beginning and position that he had to get better, there was no other place to go, and he did and he became more comfortable and as he sensed what we all sensed he became more confident and with the confidence came a more relaxed approach. I can't say that it happened between X and Y period of time but it was clear that at the end of the campaign he was a campaigner. He was not the best campaigner that ever campaigned but he was certainly- he was- had gone through some battles and he knew how to handle himself in terms of questions and being attacked by an opponent who really did not attack effectively. So it would be like he started- Brendan started to become a one line response, bright, and the thing you see now was just beginning toward the end of his campaign.

Q: Given the many years that you had known—

Martin Greenberg: Excuse me. I want to tell you he made a wonderful appearance physically. He was a good looking man and he carried himself very well and the press would kid about his clothes and his shoes and his white bucks and things like that but it was cute.

Q: But given—

Martin Greenberg: Excuse me. One more thing: And they all knew that he didn't come from money and that he wasn't buying anything with money and that whatever he achieved he achieved on the basis of his ability and you may recall how the public reacted to the press's disclosure of a wiretap that law enforcement had set up with regard to some folks in organized crime who mentioned that Brendan couldn't be bought. So once that happened, the man who couldn't be bought became almost- it couldn't- you couldn't have planned this and it wasn't planned because it was- obviously it was said by guys who really were frustrated at the fact that they were going to look- they were looking at somebody who was probably going to be elected and they couldn't make a deal.

Q: I suppose his awkwardness as a campaigner might have been a plus during that—

Martin Greenberg: Oh, he was fresh, new, not in politics. Everything was working for him, even the- even stumbling in speeches and debates. It was looked at as-- He was looked at I think as a honest, fresh face, bright, Harvard, Princeton, how could you- who can't be bought. How could you lose?

Q: Since you had known him for so many years before 1973, did you get some feeling of, as he's thinking about becoming a candidate for governor, that his awkwardness as a speaker or other liabilities as a campaigner might be a detriment in the campaign?

Martin Greenberg: We were worried.

Q: You were worried.

Martin Greenberg: Uh huh. We were worried because all we knew was him. We didn't know who he was going to run against, we didn't know what that person was going to be able to say or do, and we really didn't- we didn't know about he can't be bought and that stuff happened unplanned and it all just fell into place. Yes, we were worried. We-- I remember trying to talk about and getting him some help from some experts in terms of presentation and speech, et cetera, but he became Brendan Byrne. He always was what he is now. It's just he's had some more experience and his sense of humor has attracted people throughout his exposure as a politician. He's really not a politician in the sense that most people view politicians. He's a guy that did a job and I think history will reflect that he did a good job.

Q: Did you have any contact with some of those campaign professionals like David Garth?

Martin Greenberg: I did.

Q: Tell us about that.

Martin Greenberg: Well, first of all, my college roommate is an individual who had a rather successful advertising agency and I approached them about handling the campaign and he said that they didn't want to do that because they don't- they really don't want to- they don't like to deal with politicians in political races but- and he'd mentioned David Garth's name and David tried to change Brendan and to a certain extent he was successful and Brendan, God bless him, took criticism in a very- he's so self deprecating at times that you can't believe it's really true that the guy feels that way but he would make fun of himself and occasionally get upset with the criticism if it got to be a little too heavy but if you approached them, and I think Garth did, in the right way you got all you could get and I think he did a good job.

Q: That was in pacing, sort of speaking more clearly, lightening up his approach. Just exactly how do you think he improved as a candidate under Garth's tutelage?

Martin Greenberg: Well, he was able to and did rely more on his wit and his sense of humor than he did at the outset and I'm not talking now about delivering a speech that was written. I'm talking about his reaction to an- in a debate for example or in a press conference. Brevity became his forte. He was able to convey succinctly and with a humorous slant or overtone that which he want- which was serious, that is to say the subject was serious, but he was able to do it and I- in a concise and manner that people would understand. I think that Garth helped him get there. I think he always had that. I remember sitting in the prosecutor's office at our Friday morning meetings and he would be funny. He was with- comfortable, he was with friends, it was people that were all together, and here he was in this world where guys wanted to kill him. I don't mean organized crime. I-- Well, no, they probably did. I don't know but it was either the Republicans were going to win or he was going to win so- and we had some dirty pool. I don't remember all of it but in retrospect it's the kind of thing that you would expect when you- what's in your background how- when you don't know. I knew everything that was in Brendan's background I thought and I still think I did and there was nothing there. So whatever they came up with was not going to be significant and it got to be petty and he let- started to let that stuff roll off him and he didn't react to it. I think Garth did a good job in getting him there.

Q: Did you attend any of the Byrne, Sandman debates?

Martin Greenberg: Yeah, I did—

Q: What were they like?

Martin Greenberg: Well, we laughed at the right places because he was funny and it was clear that, at least to us, they were trying to be critical about it, that he had it well in hand.

Q: Did he resent the long hours that you're required to put in as a campaigner?

Martin Greenberg: He liked to go to bed earlier than the campaign schedule would permit him and he was well, let's go, let's go, let's--

Q: He was impatient?

Martin Greenberg: Uh huh, yeah.

Q: <inaudible>

Martin Greenberg: It wasn't because-- I'm sorry. It wasn't because he didn't want to work. It was because his whole life was lived in a certain way where he didn't stay up late, he didn't drink, he didn't smoke and he needed exercise and it was inconsistent with appearances from 8 in the morning until 11 at night and it became clear that to continue him as an effective campaigner we had to deal with that and get him back into his schedule as much as possible.

Q: Any anecdotes you recall about on the campaign trail?

Martin Greenberg: Well, he loved White Castles and we—

Q: He's the one.

Martin Greenberg: --we would stop, oh, there's one over there, and we'd stop and he would eat and nobody else would eat that stuff. I shouldn't say that. There are a lot of people that like that. Those of us around him were not but Brendan would like that, he would like to break and play some tennis if he could even for a half hour somewhere, and he loved campaigning in a place where he would be with folks like us and county people. That was fun for him. He'd walk down the street and he liked to do that and shake their hands and stop and talk. He enjoyed that—

Q: Did he like more the street campaigning than the—

Martin Greenberg: No question.

Q: --media and the big event campaign?

Martin Greenberg: No question. He was very comfortable with the former and I shouldn't say nervous with the latter but more concerned about it than hitting the streets.

Q: What about your own campaign? Did you feel that maybe you weren't spending enough time given your role in the Byrne campaign?

Martin Greenberg: Yeah. I was a little upset with the fact that I wasn't getting more- into more homes in Irvington and South Orange which is where the votes are. Those are the active people, those are the ones with families, those are the ones with friends that are politically active. I had friends setting those things up for me and sometimes I couldn't make it and I had to cancel and it's not to say that I didn't want to win or that I would have been just as satisfied if Brendan won and I lost. No. I wanted to win but if I were asked to go cover for him somewhere and speak, which I did, or debate somebody locally who was appearing for Sandman I felt an obligation to do that and I

just-- I-- Let me put it this way. I probably did as much as I could do even if I had more time. I hit everything but in retrospect I knew that. I didn't know it at the time. I was looking at a win and I didn't want to do anything to jeopardize that but if I had to make a choice between two places to go if I couldn't get somebody to cover for Brendan I went and that was more often than not if it were someplace local they would come to me and ask me because I was a local guy.

Q: In those days how important were the newspapers and their editorial endorsements and also their coverage in elections in New Jersey?

Martin Greenberg: I don't think it's terribly different today than it was then so in answer those days are like these days. They're important. Press can-- I think press can hurt you more than they can help you. I think press was favorable generally to Brendan and he I think did well with newspaper people because I think they believed that he was honest with them and straight as much as a- any politician can be. You can't say everything that's on your mind without being irresponsible as a politician but you can avoid lying and you can avoid misrepresenting and he had that rapport with the press because he had a good relationship with them as a prosecutor and there was no negative. There's nothing-- There was nothing about Brendan that was negative that they had.

Q: What were the politics of the key newspapers at the time in terms of their ownership and editorial meanings?

Martin Greenberg: Well, the most important newspaper was the Star-Ledger. The Evening News had long gone out of existence so we had one paper and the New York papers, Philadelphia paper. My own view of- what's his name, Mort Pye, was that he shared a lot of Brendan's values.

Q: Of course, Mort Pye was the longtime editor of the Star Ledger.

Martin Greenberg: Correct, and they treated Brendan very well, the Star Ledger did. I think they did an even handed presentation of Charlie Sandman's campaign. I think they did a good job for a newspaper which is what their job is, even handed, but you could tell by reading- and ultimately the editorial position, which was favorable to Brendan, you could tell by reading the coverage for example of a debate that they were sympathetic to Brendan's positions and to his campaign and to the personality. It was all good. It was-- I didn't know how good it was because it was really the first campaign I was involved in.

Q: How about your own campaign in terms of you selling your candidacy to the Star Ledger? Did you attend an editorial board meeting and what were the types of issues that came up there?

Martin Greenberg: I did with the local papers in Irvington and South Orange as well as the Star Ledger, all three. They all ultimately endorsed me and what they wanted to know about was- income tax was an issue, law enforcement was an issue. They knew about my labor background and they wanted to know how I felt about labor related issues and they wanted to know about my relationship with Brendan Byrne and I told them. I remember being asked in the Ledger's office, editorial office, whether I would be my own man in terms of a position that Brendan might have had that I did not support and I said I would but I couldn't conceive of one that was really a significant issue where we would disagree because I knew him well and I think he knew me and- or at least from my perspective we were on the same page on everything that was consequential. And considering he was of a different religion and grew up in a different environment, that had absolutely no impact on our views and doesn't today- does not today. He's-- I'm more comfortable with him than almost anybody that I know in terms of my own views on morality- issues of morality, sexuality, the church, relationship to Judaism, et cetera, children, marriage. It's like talking to myself when I talk to him.

Q: What about abortion? It wasn't a major issue I guess in that campaign but it was becoming an issue both nationally and in New Jersey and here is Brendan Byrne as a Roman Catholic. Did you discuss abortion?

Martin Greenberg: You're right. It was not a major issue in the campaign and I don't remember it being raised frankly as an issue in the campaign. I have discussed abortion with him but not in the political context and certainly

not in that campaign. It was never raised.

Q: Before we close for this session I wanted to get your recollections of election day and election night.

Martin Greenberg: Well, I was out campaigning throughout election day even though they told me it's a waste of time. I had missed some time for obvious reasons with Brendan's campaign in the background and so I went to the various headquarters to see how the votes were coming and I checked with the local unions which were doing-turning the vote out for us and I had key people in Irvington and South Orange who were working with me on behalf in- of my campaign and they were reporting about the- reporting to me as I would travel around or call about what kind of turnout they were getting and what they heard, et cetera, et cetera and then I would stop in at Brendan's headquarters and we kept circling. I really wasn't accomplishing much but I was too keyed up at that point to not do anything so I thought about going to the movies and reading a book but I couldn't do any of that and I don't remember seeing Brendan that day until the end at the- when he won and I remember I had my dad with me at my headquarters, which was in South Orange, and took the returns there and spoke to my people, that is those who had been working with me in my campaign, thanked them, cried and then we all went over to Brendan's campaign headquarters—

Q: I assume your father was very proud that day.

Martin Greenberg: Well, I- yeah. [ph?] Yeah. He cried.

Q: Why don't we break for this session and we'll continue on with your subsequent career in the legislature, in Atlantic City and as a lawyer and thank you for today.

Martin Greenberg: I just-- You're welcome and I thank you very much. I just-- I think I'll say it now but you'll find out after our next session that I just cannot hold a job. I just can't. I seem to be moving on in other places but thanks again and I look forward to coming back here.

Q: Thank you.

##### End of Martin Greenberg interview 6/20/06 #####

Don Linky : The Byrne administration in its first term runs into major political problems, largely because of the income tax. What was your perspective as you see your good friend Brendan Byrne being criticized in the paper, being labeled one-term Byrne and essentially being viewed as a governor who may have succeeded in getting tax plan through but had a fairly bleak political future as he considers whether he should make the decision to run for a second term?

Martin Greenberg: You're asking my view of how it affected him or-- let's start with that.

Q: Okay.

Martin Greenberg: He felt the pressure. He felt the sense that if he ran he might not win. And, you know, his ability to make jokes about things that are serious is legendary. I mean in retrospect after he finished the second term he would say, "You know it's really nice. I walk around, I ride around and people are waving me with all five fingers." He was-- I remember landing with him once at the Atlantic City Racetrack where he had to present a trophy to the winner, the owners of the winner of a certain race and that was my first experience where he was booed as we got out of the helicopter. So it was toward the end of his first term. I don't remember the month. It was summertime. And he laughed it off. His view of it was, you know, this is politics. It had to be done. I got it done. I think I can-- I think I got a shot. But he wasn't the same self-confident person who had won the first election and was flying through successes during his first term until the income tax. But that didn't mean that he was down on himself or that he was negative about things. He treated everybody in a same fashion as before. But asked a lot more about views, third parties' views about his chances of success. So, it was still fun with him. It was still fun to

play tennis with him. I remember playing with him once. It's OTB. We were in the OTB period and the score was 6-6 and one of the foursome said, "Well you want to play a sudden death or what do you want to do Governor?" And he said, "No. Let's play it out until somebody wins by two. I've got this place until January 3rd." And it breaks me up. I mean, okay. So, we'll finish the game.

Q: What was your own view of his chances for success?

Martin Greenberg: They were bleak. They were-- I knew he was gonna have trouble in the primary. There were a lot of people that wanted to run against him in the primary. And in the primary, you know, I figured the chances were better in the general election than in the primary because in the general election, I mean you knew that you were gonna lose votes to the republicans on the income tax but the democrats probably would stay with you once you got through the primary. And after all, it was a democratic state at that time. So I thought primary was the problem. We had a lot of guys coming out of the woodwork and maybe a woman. I don't recall. I don't remember. There was talk of-- well, in any event there were a lot of people. So I was concerned about the primary.

Q: What advice, if any, did you give him about whether he should run or not?

Martin Greenberg: Whatever you want to do. Whatever you want to do. I said, "Can you handle a defeat?" 'Cause it was realistically possible that he would lose. And that was the nature of it. I didn't urge him to run. I didn't urge him not to run. I just didn't want him to be hurt. See I was not looking at him as a political candidate. I was looking at my friend. And I really left it up to him to decide whether or not he could take it. That is to say not the campaign. That's-- he was kind of into campaigning. He kind of liked to run around the state, talk to people. But I wanted to make sure that for himself and his family that they could handle it if he lost. And I asked I said, "Whatever you want to do is what you should do." There were those urging him not to run and there were others urging him to run.

Q: Do you recall specifically who was on which side?

Martin Greenberg: I remember Degnan, John Degnan, was urging him to run. I can't recall. Let me think through. I think some of the folks in the legislature that I knew did not want him to run again. They were afraid he'd take the ticket down.

Q: What about the family? Could you sense any consensus as to the family's thoughts about whether he should run again?

Martin Greenberg: No. I knew that his wife, Jean, was not in favor of him running initially and I'm not sure that that's correct. But I know that she was unhappy with the effects of his running. She was a very private person and she did not enjoy strange people walking through the house at all hours of the day. Strange meaning they didn't belong there and they don't live there and they were talking about stuff that I don't think Jean had much interest in. And so I sensed that she did not want him to run again. But I also sensed that he knew that. But I didn't think that that was gonna be dispositive in his mind. And he was really-- and the kids were all over the place. By that I mean physically. School, Tommy I think was in Princeton, maybe two of them were in Princeton I don't remember. But they were treating him and the subject matter as politics and I didn't sense any pressure from the family except I think Jean. The people I knew who were his friends, not politically friendly with him, were concerned that he not be embarrassed or hurt. And once I concluded that he was okay to go with it and kind of gearing up for it emotionally that he wanted to take a shot, then it's all go. But I hadn't-- see I had no interest in the game any more, the political game any more once I left. Now I was trying to build my practice up. I had spent, you know, six years or so outside and I needed to get back and build it, rebuild it. So I wasn't one of those whose fortunes were tied to his winning or losing and I thought the most important thing would be his own reaction to a loss. And I suppose to the game. I mean he really would feel great. I guess I thought if he ran and won after all of the bricks and bats that were thrown at him.

Q: In fact he does decide to run for reelection. Do you recall when he told you he had made that decision and your conversation with him?

Martin Greenberg: I remember him saying, "Okay. We're gonna go back again and you're available. I need your help." And I said, "Whatever you want."

Q: We'll talk about your role in that re-election campaign for the governor.

Martin Greenberg: For the most part I stayed in his campaign and not my own because I really wasn't-- if he weren't gonna run I probably would not have run. I had had a-- I'd been beaten up a little bit in the papers because of my relationship with him and we had an insurance company that we had formed a long time ago with which neither of us had anything to do at the time that we were in office. But because of some hearings that were going on in Washington, involving that company, the Star Ledger ran a series of articles about the company and in each one in which they said Brendan Byrne was the founder and Martin Greenberg was a founder and therefore whatever they did wrong, if anything, and it developed nothing, we were being tarred by the same brush day after day after day. Anyway that ended. And I frankly found that the business was not something that I wanted to pursue. I was not interested in being in politics beyond where I had achieved what I wanted to taste. And that was the ability to make an impact in areas that I felt that were important, like for example, the minimum wage and help defeating the death penalty while I was there while he was there and trying to do some stuff for the employees. Because of my labor background I was interested in developing a method of resolving labor disputes. And I tried, I played with the idea of, you know, getting arbitration for instead of just the constitutional prohibition on the right to strike getting arbitration for folks like fireman and police and, you know, public teachers. Those were the battles that I was involved in and for the most part I thought I did what I could and I wanted to get back to my real life. So, when he ran the second time I had no real interest in prevailing. I won. But I didn't make an effort because I had a pretty safe district and I thought I could handle it by doing a minimal amount necessary. So I spent a lot of time at the headquarters with Brendan and on Route 22 I think it was in union, the second term and the primary in connection therewith. And the primary was more difficult than the general election. The primary was one in which folks ran against him who should not have done so. That is to say he put himself out for some people along the way. Tried to help them during his first term and they turned on him. I can't remember. There were several.

Q: And Bob Roe, Jim Florio.

Martin Greenberg: And yeah.

Q: And Joe Hoffman, one of his cabinet members.

Martin Greenberg: And one of his cabinet members. That was I think the most difficult one for him to accept. And to a certain extent DeRose, whom he had gotten something for so that guy would be able to remain somewhere involved in politics and make a couple of, you know, bucks.

Q: Discuss Essex County's position. In particular we discussed the first campaign, the very same situation you found yourself in running for your senate seat. How had things changed by 1977?

Martin Greenberg: Well, not all that much. I only, the only factor was me. I mean I was out of it at that point. I was on the ticket. If I, you know, they, I think, I had expressed the desire not to run again. And I remember Harry Lerner saying, "Please don't do that." Now this is a guy who, you know, is not beholden to me. He doesn't owe me anything. I mean if anything I'm indebted to him. And I said, "Why, you know?" He said, "Well," I thought he was gonna say, you know, Brendan's gonna need help or whatever. But in his mind I suppose he knew that Ralph DeRose was gonna go again. But more important he didn't want to have 27 people seeking the seat that I was gonna vacate. Ralph was taking care of who was gonna be the candidate again. And then had all these people that wanted my seat. And it's like, you know, I'd rather have you in there even though yeah may not be my man, than make 26 enemies and, you know, 26 ingrates in one first person who was in love with you. So, he said, "I think you ought to stay and now do whatever you can for Brendan and, you know, we got the same situation going on with Ralph, gonna run and whole bunch of." It was chaos in Essex. Everybody had a piece of Essex. And at that point Brendan had made certain relationships and liaisons which we had developed with a chairman, a here town chairman here, and families and you could, you know, he started as a guy who was born in West Orange and he still

had those relationships. Some of which he lost along the way. It was a pretty good example without mentioning names. There was a municipal chairman whose son wanted to be a judge. And that Chairman was a loyal democrat and on the county committee. And Brendan would not appoint him. And we all knew this young fella. And I tried-- I spoke to him. I said, "What's the problem?" He says, "He doesn't get good grades." He says, "I think we're gonna have a problem with him on the bench." And the bench was very important to Brendan. He wanted top quality people. I'm not talking about morality. I'm talking about ability. He wanted top people. And so he, you know, at personal jeopardy rejected somebody who's father was very influential in the county organization. And if Brendan gave two minutes thought to it me might have said, "Well it doesn't matter. I don't really have the organization to begin with." But I don't think he even thought way. He just said, "This is not a guy I want on the bench." And that's the way he treated every appointment, which was, you know, he's very proud of those elections to the Supreme Court and the county and to the district and to the trial court. And that comes from having practice before and being a member of the judiciary. And he knew Weintraub, Joe Weintraub for whom he used to work and was then the chief justice, intimately and you almost were sitting watching a chief justice function as a governor when you watch this. That's how much interest he had in and attention he paid to the quality of the judiciary. In any event back to your question, we had a piece of Essex and the other guys had a piece of Essex. But we had others around the state. And fortunately nobody was strong enough to beat him. We worked very hard and he took I think as much pleasure in that victory probably more so than he did at winning the general election the first time. After that the general was easy.

Q: I want to pursue a little bit more your comment about his great respect for Chief Justice Weintraub. Any other conversations, anecdotes, thoughts about the Byrne, Weintraub relationship?

Martin Greenberg: Yeah. He tells me that he once appeared before Justice Weintraub in a I believe it was a Supreme Court argument. And he tells me that he was making the argument before the court and the responding to the question posed by the Chief Justice. And when he finished the Chief Justice said, "I disagree with your argument." And he took it apart. And he ultimately ruled against Brendan. And Brendan said he went back afterwards into chambers, which we could do in those days, especially if you knew the judge. He wasn't gonna change anything. But he said, "I don't understand." He said, "You taught me everything I know and I thought I did a pretty good job." And he said the chief said to me, "But I didn't teach you everything I know." And Brendan loves those little anecdotes where he gets put down by somebody like Weintraub who he loved and respected. And he did what many governors do and what people in power do and authority do and have responsibility to make appointments do. And that is to ask around of those people that you respect. And when it came to the judiciary he would rely on his former relationship with Justice Weintraub and pests by him thoughts that he would have etc. about the judiciary. He really is quite proud of the quality of the Supreme Court that he had a hand in fashioning. I think I may have told you when Justice Handler left the bench he called Brendan to thank him for having giving him the opportunity and he said Brendan said to him, "Thank you for making me look good." That's a typical Brendan response where he doesn't take credit for putting a guy on or in a position as much as having that person perform well and making the governor look good.

Q: You mentioned that when Steve Wiley's nomination to the court was upset because of the constitutional issue of him voting or him not voting but being in the legislature when legislation increased the salaries of the judiciary that the governor told you that he wanted to act quickly to fill the seat after Wiley's nomination was blocked. Do you remember any other conversations about that and that appointment?

Martin Greenberg: Well I gave him one name and that was the individual that I had grown up and I knew intimately whose experience on the bench as a trial judge and appellate judge I feel was magnificent. And I thought his performance was satisfactory at a minimum and if not certainly relied on by the governor as counsel to the governor. So that was the name I came up with. Especially-- no. In addition to the contribution that I thought he can make I recall that when I induced him to leave the bench to take the job as counsel to governor where he was when we were having this discussion he had indicated, he, Alan, him had indicated to me if at all possible he would like to go on the bench at the end of whatever period the governor needed him etc. And I thought was a fair request and I spoke to the governor about it and he said, "If I can, I will unless something unusual happens. Then I have no problem with that."

Q: And then of course at that time the governor's political prospects were somewhat bleak?

Martin Greenberg: Absolutely. So, when that vacancy-- that opening remained open that was my conversation with him and I had no one else to name and I would not be surprised if he called 14 other people as well. But certainly by the next morning that was done and he called me and told me he was gonna put Alan's name in or he called Alan first. I don't remember. And I think, you know, that was a great choice.

Q: Jumping back to the 1977 reelection you discussed Essex County position. How about Hudson County? Some of the actors that you've already mentioned in other context Jim Dugan, Francis Fitzpatrick and others were key in the 1977 race. What are your memories about where they stood and what, if any, contacts were made to try to bring them on board?

Martin Greenberg: You can tell this is not rehearsed because it's been a while and I'm drawing on my memory. As I say I spent most of my time at headquarters dealing with keeping county organizations in touch with us and we with them etc. And I don't remember any particular problem with Hudson County. I think Hudson County, if my recollection is correct, you're talking about the primary?

Q: Yeah.

Martin Greenberg: Yeah.

Q: Well on a personal level Senator Dugan and Governor Byrne had some rocky times...

Martin Greenberg: Sure.

Q: During that first term didn't they?

Martin Greenberg: Sure. They did. But I don't remember that relationship, that rocky relationship interfering with the support he got from them in the primary. I could be wrong. And Brendan spent a lot of time himself in that regard dealing with the Fitzpatricks of the Hudson County. And you had-- let's see. You had Musto, I think, still in office and a friend. And he had the northern part of the county pretty well controlled.

Q: And of course the candidate that was probably most feared at least early on as the '77 campaign was in its infancy was Mayor Paul Jordan of Jersey City who in fact surprisingly had his own political problems within the city.

Martin Greenberg: That's right. I had forgotten about him. I can't-- I'm drawing a blank. I don't remember. My recollection is it terminated and I can't recall why except we had a bunch of meetings and he was persuaded.

Q: Okay. In any event the governor's political weakness in a way helped him to win the primary because there were so many opposition candidates splitting the anti-Byrne vote. In retrospect do you think that was the key to the primary election was this...

Martin Greenberg: I do. I do. I think the governor would acknowledge that if he had a candidate on whom the opposition could focus that he would have had a very difficult time winning the primary. Just the Democrats thought he was gonna lose the general election. I mean the sense of the pulse you could get out there was that he did what he said he wasn't gonna do and we don't like income taxes and he's nice guy, he's a funny guy, he's an honest guy and nobody said he's now, you know, a man that money can buy but that had worn off and now you were dealing with the fact that it was costing some money to live in New Jersey that it didn't used to cost before. And Brendan Byrne is uniquely responsible and solely responsible for that. I mean they took it out on some legislators as well but Brendan was the focus of that. And it's clear that if he had-- I mean I think we all agree that if he's gonna win it's because there's so many people running.

Q: During the time you spent in meetings at the campaign headquarters was there any conscious effort to stop the opposition candidates from coalescing behind one or two single leading candidates.

Martin Greenberg: We would never do such a thing. That's dirty pool. At least I don't know if it's occurred. And if I did I certainly wouldn't tell you.

Q: And again, with the...

Martin Greenberg: I'm being facetious. I don't know of any such conduct.

Q: Okay. With the luxury of time why don't you think the opposition candidates didn't see the handwriting on the wall and say "Well, gee, we can't all be in this race and win and let's figure out who the best one is as challenger to win."

Martin Greenberg: My recollection is that anybody could have won it. It was tight. At least in their own minds they each thought they he or she had an opportunity to win that thing. Which is another reason why not only the fact that there were so many running against him but there was no real strong opposition and therefore I might as well run. I might as well take a shot at this because I got as good a chance as anybody else. I suspect that they didn't get together and I don't know of any effort. If you've heard to the contrary, I was not a part of it and I don't know of it.

Q: Now with your labor background was that an area where you were assigned to be the special liaison to keep the labor support? Brendan Byrne had a somewhat difficult relationship with AFL-CIO leadership at that time didn't he?

Martin Greenberg: He did. My affiliation was the old industrial unions, not the craft unions. And I knew those folks. You had other people in the campaign like Jimmy Zazzali, for example, who was counsel to the I think the laborers or the longshoremen. I don't remember which. And I had the retail guys, locals and Jimmy was important to the support that Brendan got from those portions of the craft unions that were would still support him. Not everyone did. And what did that mean? In addition to money that you get for by way of political action committee contributions, it meant turning out voters on election day. To my knowledge the labor unions did not coalesce around any particular individual in opposition to Brendan. And we had some labor support which the way it broke down was enough. It was kind of chaotic. And it changed from day to day. When Paul withdrew as my recollection, I'm conveying on this, Paul...

Q: Jordan.

Martin Greenberg: Jordan. Thank you. Withdrew that was very helpful in terms of eliminating someone who could have taken the same votes that Brendan was gonna get. They shared a lot of in common in terms of philosophy.

Q: Of course Bob Roe had strong labor support.

Martin Greenberg: Yes he did. As I say, it was fractured. It was fractured.

Q: Well in fact he does win the primary. But still faces an uphill battle in the general election against Senator Bateman. At what point did you think the election started to turn around towards the Governor Byrne 's side?

Martin Greenberg: When Brendan coined a phrase describing a position taken by Bateman and...

Q: Bill Simon.

Martin Greenberg: Simon, Bill Simon. By referring to it and using the initials of their last names. "The BS position," he said and I can't remember the issue of it which he labeled that a BS position. And I think it had to do with taxes but I can't recall. It's 20 plus years and I can't recall. But he took the position that that was truly a BS

position and he explained why. And he did it in a very coherent forceful way. And between the earthiness of his labeling and the persuasiveness of his argument I think he turned people. And I don't think they recovered from that. And I can't recall the point in the campaign at which that happened but it was a point at which we were feeling much better about the campaign as it went forward. And I think Brendan handled the debates extremely well. He felt-- he demonstrated a feeling of confidence and humor. And the humor was very important and still is on this thing. You know, his ability to use brevity and wit I think Shakespeare put it together in Hamlet works.

Q: Also I believe Senator Bateman has been quoted as saying that toward the end of the late stages of the campaign he came back home from a heavy day of campaigning, tired and exhausted, and opened his mail and found his income tax rebate in his mailbox.

Martin Greenberg: I forgot about that.

Q: And then said he thought he had lost.

Martin Greenberg: It's over.

Q: Do you-- that was obviously a very shrewd political move...

Martin Greenberg: It did not happen by accident. That's correct.

Q: What do you remember about that decision?

Martin Greenberg: I got a great idea somebody said.

Q: Do you remember who?

Martin Greenberg: No. No. It's the idea that lived. The author is, you know, I would not be surprised if Brendan-- Brendan signed off on it. I don't remember where it came from. Somebody speaking to you must have taken the credit for that.

Q: We're exploring it in the archives.

Martin Greenberg: I don't have it.

Q: We're tracking it down.

Martin Greenberg: I don't have it.

Q: What do you recall of election night in 1977?

Martin Greenberg: Euphoric. Euphoric. Happy guy. You know, a lot of people had written him off and he took the chance. And I think it was much more confident in the first election than this. But as I say he was very happy winning the primary. That was a big deal because that was-- that kind of put a lid on the OTB arguments and he felt that he was I believe in your conversations he indicated that he felt that he was a much more seasoned campaigner than he was initially and that he had grown being able to handle his press conferences and even his clothes he said. He wears them better now. And he felt like that was a significant victory for him because I believe he liked Bateman. He liked him and he respected his intelligence and had guy was not a pushover. And he had to do well in the campaigns and in his responses to Bateman's campaign as well. So, it was a very very exciting night. It was a wonderful culmination of a person who developed every inch of the way. So he's now an entirely different person than he was when he started this process in running. You know he speaks frequently and he's in great demand and it's not only because he has the ability to succinctly discuss a subject and come up with a well thought out position on it but that he can do it in a manner that's light heart handed and as Senator Gormley says makes you laugh.

Q: Now you mentioned your own ambivalence about running for reelection for your own seat. After the 1977 November election and you are re-elected, did you consider going into the administration? Were there any thoughts about that?

Martin Greenberg: No. No I really wanted to get back to the practice of law. I mean I had four children by then. My daughter, who was the latest of the children to be born, Jennifer, was hardly ever saw me. And my firm was not-- I mean I wasn't contributing to it. I was a drag on it. And I knew this was gonna end at some point. I mean I wasn't-- I had no thought of going back into government. I wanted-- I had four kids that had to go college. And, you know, I needed to earn a living and do that and I had experienced what I had hoped to experience. I was very satisfied with what I had done. I did not enjoy the confrontations with regard to some of the shots that the press was taking at Brendan and me, especially before the election, the second election. But for the most part I was a reluctant candidate. I won and I was looking forward to that was gonna be it. But when we passed the criminal code and I saw that the rest of it was gonna be some more fights over things like that and dealing with the political issues were not as rewarding to me any more. I had no further desire and in fact as I indicated I had seriously thought of not running a second time. And they did persuade me to run. So that I was anxious to get out and I thought I saw a window where it would be good for me to step down.

Martin Greenberg: My firm was kind of needing me to produce business that I had in the past and wasn't able to now and Brendan wasn't going to run again. The time seemed appropriate. We had finished the Atlantic City bill. We had finished the casino gaming hearings. It was then-- I think it had been approved by that time so the judiciary committee of which I was chairman was finished with that subject. By then I was chairman of it. It started with Dugan and ended with me and I thought that I had done what I could do and I was anxious, really chomping to get out and practice law.

Don Linky: Before we let you get out of the senate, let's discuss the special role of the judiciary committee and you as chairman of the judiciary committee in nominations to the bench and nominations of prosecutors. That's a very sensitive political role and maybe even more sensitive by your special relationship with Brendan Byrne who was making those nominations, wasn't it?

Martin Greenberg: Yes.

Q: For the record, describe the politics and the process of how those decisions get made.

Martin Greenberg: As I think you know, I'm sure you do, and as most people who are interested in this subject know, the concept of senatorial courtesy is an unwritten process of by which any senator- and it evolves depending on this- on the organization of the senate at the beginning of its term, who could exercise courtesy as determined by the majority in the senate, by the caucus of the majority in the senate. That is to say whether every senator in the county from which an individual comes has the ability to block his or her nomination or only those of the party in the majority or only those that represent that portion of the county in which the individual resides, et cetera. All of those things are determined at the beginning of a term but once in place they are followed assiduously. They are written in stone. So if you have an individual coming from X county through the nominating process by the governor and having been supported by a senator in- from that county uhm.. who recommended the candidate to the governor on the assumption the governor didn't know the candidate to begin with, which is probably true most of the time, and then you've got an individual from the same county also a state senator who has a problem, in quotes, with that individual, it could be a meaningful problem, that is to say someone whom that senator has heard is abusive to women or folks of color or minorities while practicing law, et cetera, something that's significant versus something that would be personal where they had a dispute, that person exercises- exercised courtesy by not signing off physically on a piece of paper or picks up the phone and tells the chairman of the judiciary committee I'm blocking So and So, not going to sign off. Now the custom is that it doesn't move, it never comes to a vote. That's why you see a call from the governor's office or senators that support a candidate or from anyone including the press, put it up for an up or down vote in the judiciary committee. No, that's not the system. You never get there. And there was- there were several instances where it was a very personal objection being made and I thought it was unfair and it was unfair. It had nothing to do with the guy's- one's ability. It had to do with the fact that when

they were both practicing law the objector and the candidate had an argument or a dispute and it came over my dead body kind of reaction. So the governor is really powerless in that situation except to say I think it's inappropriate and I'm not going to look favorably on any of your recommendations as a result of what I think is a very unfair attitude toward this human being that I have nominated. And beyond using his power in that sense, in that manner, he's frustrated or she's frustrated in a position-- Even as the most powerful executive in the country, you can't get the senate to change as a body but my view was the chairman of the judiciary committee could call a vote in spite of the fact that the senator from X county does not sign off. And then it depends on what happens in the judiciary committee and if you have enough members of that committee that would vote to release for example over an objection the name would come to the floor and courtesy would have been broken. And I was there- almost there twice and in each instance I threatened it. This was not with Governor Byrne's- at his urging. He was not unhappy. I said this is what I'm going to do, I know this guy, I've interviewed him personally, he's a good man and the problem with the senator who's objecting is such and so and I don't think we ought to-- I think there ought to be a type of courtesy that exists for certain circumstances and not for others. Let's do it slowly, one step at a time. I thought that would be a good thing to leave with because a lot of people got hurt in that process and they backed down- the senators backed down twice and they backed down because- different senators in each instance, is because the objection was so egregious and so personal that when and if made public could hurt the senator as it did subsequently in Morris County in an instance where there was courtesy raised over a judge and- over a sitting judge with regard to I think his renewal second term and he was voted out of office as a result because the judge was well liked in the county. So you can get to where you want to go sometimes without upsetting the process, just by in this instance threatening to go and- because it didn't matter to me at that point whether or not he- I would be liked by that senator. I thought it was more important that the institution be looked upon as being fair and recognizing that there are customs that should be followed because those customs in fact permit the total good to occur in other ways. The power of the judiciary committee chairman is immense. If you don't call a bill up it never gets up on the agenda. You control the agenda. And I think my experience there was that if you treat the members fairly and you tell them what you're going to do and why you're going to do it and you have an argument about whether or not this bill should be listed, my view was all bills should be listed unless there was some reason not to and I rarely found a reason not to list the bill. So I think they respected that and if they lost on a vote because I might have been in the majority or the minority, I tried not to be dictatorial and I found that the most enjoyable part of my time in the senate but there too it was getting to be repetitious and for the most part it was kind of boring for the most part and I didn't- you look forward to confrontations. If you're looking forward to confrontations, then you're really not having a good time and I considered my duration as one where I enjoyed doing it and I was able to do things not all the time successfully but at least help get to where I wanted to go as a matter of personal policy. And I think Brendan appreciated it as well and I think the- I got pretty good rapport with the senators. I think I handled that job well and tried to be fair and I think I was.

Q: Did you discuss with the governor your decision to resign your senate seat?

Martin Greenberg: Yes. Yeah.

Q: What do you recall of that conversation?

Martin Greenberg: "Why do you want to do that?" And I told him why I wanted to do it and he said it's only another year or so to go. I said yeah, but you know what, it's important to the firm and I got to have a life after this. I said I'm not going to be retired as anything, I don't have a pension and I don't- I need the income and I also want to preserve what's left of the firm after my not having been there. I was there but I was not really helping it for six years. I said I don't know what your future is but I know your past and I know your reputation and I believe that you don't have the choice, you can't quit now, I can, and I hope the people say nice things on the floor and you might even come in and say goodbye. And what he did, which no other governor had ever done before, was appear in the balcony when I- it was announced that I- it was my last term, my last day there, and he just sat and watched and listened and I was really moved by it but he understood what I was doing and it really-- He didn't need me anymore. He was there and there is I think a year or year and a half to go and he had made close enough relationships with folks that would help him the rest of the way although I will say that I was called on from time to time to help speak to senators when there was a problem getting a vote or two in a very important matter dealing

with one of the justices whose terms was expiring. And I got a call from the justice who said Brendan suggested that I might talk to you to find out what I could do to help get that 21st vote and so we went through it and I offered whatever assistance I could but for the most part I was seeing my kids and trying to build this firm up again and then Steve Wynn called and Steve Wynn called and he asked if I would be interested and then I said what are we going to do[ph?] and then we had dinner and we talked about it, et cetera, and he said I don't know anything about this process, we don't have this in Las Vegas.

Q: For the record, who was Steve Wynn?

Martin Greenberg: Well, he had a freestanding casino in downtown Las Vegas called the Golden Nugget and he's a fascinating human being. My wife and kids met him and they were just bowled over by him. He is a genius in my mind. He has unfortunately, and it's well known, a retinitis pigmentosa condition so he was slowly going blind and it's worse and worse and worse today so he's almost-- He used to put his hand on my shoulder when we walked through a casino and would bump into things because he couldn't see at night but he paid meticulous attention to the color of the wallpaper and the pictures that were going to- the music in the elevator going up versus the music coming down to set the mood for the folks who wanted to gamble but he had no ability to build a casino in Atlantic City without public funds and no casino had ever raised public money before. So we sat down with Mike Milken and he suggested this concept of using junk bonds, which means they were less secure than most bonds, and we did a dog and pony show around the country with Mike Milken's company—

Q: Drexel Burnham?

Martin Greenberg: Yeah, Drexel, and Steve was outstanding. He was a true, real, great salesman, very, very articulate and very knowledgeable about the industry and he would then introduce me as somebody who's in the senate so that I'm familiar with the procedure to make sure that he doesn't stumble and get the place licensed. And then we raised the money, which at that time was a pittance compared to what it takes to build now, and hired some folks. I prevailed upon a friend of mine from the attorney general's office who had sponsored- who had drafted the criminal code with some other folks to come over and work with my firm and help Steve build it. And we spent a couple of years doing that and then I became president of the Golden Nugget during that process and once it was operating after about a year I returned full time to the firm and we were general counsel to the company and somebody wanted to buy it named Bally and we negotiated that. Steve wanted to go back to Vegas. He didn't really like New Jersey. They were-- They made his life difficult. The process by which you get licensed is difficult and in part I'm responsible for that as the rest of the committee and the staff are. And Brendan took great pains in explaining to people the quality of the integrity of the system. I think the second chairman or maybe the first was his friend Joe Lordi who was the first assistant when Brendan was prosecutor and Joe continued the reputation for the integrity of the system which I'm very proud to say has never had a scandal in all the years that it's been in business. People have been bounced out, they've been denied licenses. Even major corporations in one instances- one instance was denied a license but for the most part the licensing procedure has worked- not for the most part, I don't know of its failure. The bad guys didn't get in and we sold the casino and Steve went back to Las Vegas and built an empire and then sold that empire because of the problem he had with the underwriters who wanted to see better profits, et cetera, et cetera, and now he is again on top of the world with his new Wynn Casino and the new one that they're building next door to it called Encores I think and he's got two- one place in- going up in- off Shanghai, I can't recall, he won that bid. So it's been interesting.

Q: How did it come that he first called you—

Martin Greenberg: He met with-- He tells me he met with Steve Perskie because Steve was in the senate then, I was gone, and he said I'm interested in coming here. Steve knew his name he said because even though he only had one casino he was a guy that was bringing a different kind of talent to Las Vegas, Willie Nelson type stuff which folks from the strip would come downtown to see and eat his Chinese food that he had that was wonderful and play some craps and blackjack or whatever. And he asked Steve to recommend the names of some folks that he might interview to be counsel because he didn't know how to do it and I guess among other- I know among other names or at least Steve recommended me and perhaps others. I don't know. And so he interviewed me and we chatted,

went to dinner with our wives and Willie Nelson was in town and it was very glamorous and we talked about the process and I asked him a lot of questions about his background and how he got there because I was concerned that if I was going to do this I wanted to get it done. I didn't want to find out we had a problem and that interview was important to me and Steve was very open and discussed his father who was an inveterate gambler and how he has leave law school in the second year because his father died and he took over the business which was a bingo parlor or something like that in- outside of Washington. And somebody took him to Vegas to see what it looked like and he said the bingo parlor is not for me, this is what I want, and then we went through the history- his history and what people he knew, anything in the woodwork that I should know, and et cetera. We interviewed him.

Q: With your different hats as state senator, casino executive, casino lawyer and with the luxury of time, were the mistakes that New Jersey made in structuring the regulation of the casino gambling industry in New Jersey, have we frustrated the creativity of people like Steve Wynn in doing their thing and building the types of casinos they would like to see? How do you feel? Has Atlantic City been a success or a failure or somewhere in between?

Martin Greenberg: It depends on how you define success. The city itself and the effort to rebuild Atlantic City has not succeeded. It's been a long time and it has not succeeded. The creation of jobs is a plus, it's there. The contribution the industry makes to the state and to other investments which are authorized and required under casino regulations and statutes has been a significant help. Witness the fact that one of the things that is motivating the crisis today as we are shut down for the first or second day of this period is this- the closing of the casinos and the loss of a tremendous amount of money on a daily basis but in specific answer to your question I don't think the regulations have hampered the construction of that type of hotel that the developers want to build. We went, as you might recall, from a limited period of being open to 24 hours now, and that has evolved over the period of time, and it permitted the investment community to recognize New Jersey as a place where these endeavors and the construction of these mega millions and hundreds of millions of dollars of hotels are not in jeopardy because of exposure to criminal elements. No casino that's open has lost its license. None has really been in jeopardy and when I say Steve Wynn sold and went back to Vegas because of his distaste for the process, that doesn't mean that a corporate structure, which is what almost all the hotels are now, have any resistance to coming here. On the contrary, they're expanding, they're building towers, et cetera. So I think the experiment worked for the industry, it worked for the employment of a lot of folks in the industry and it worked for the creation of a new source of funds which has helped New Jersey in many ways. Is gambling good or bad for people who are prone to addiction to things? I-- I'm not an expert on that subject but obviously people have gotten hurt just as they probably get hurt going and buying lottery tickets. This is easier and we try to keep an eye on those folks and limit the amount that can be bet under circumstances but that really has not prevented people from falling into a trap that's been set by the legislation not intentionally but it's there. And you go to the racetrack and people bet and they bet more than they should at times so I don't think-- The one failure of the experiment is that Atlantic City has not developed into what it used to be which is what part of the motivation was. As a matter of fact, what we had when we opened was T-shirts with the following imprint on the front. We were I think the third one to open. It was We're Going to Make Atlantic City Famous Again and it didn't become famous for what it used to be, the family resort where you watched the horse jump into the ocean and you ate stuff that made your teeth bad on the boardwalk but it did create a new industry. In fact, it is the only industry that is constitutionally established in the state of New Jersey and it did a large part of what it was intended to do but not everything but we ain't finished yet. There is still time to go obviously to bring the town back and get the people employed more fully than they are from the communities which- from which we could draw employees and to get housing for the folks who really are not living well and I- we've tried and we've struggled. It's a very difficult problem not terribly different from Newark. That's the governor's next problem after he gets everybody back to work and he gets the taxes on real estate down.

Q: Let's proceed with your career after Steve Wynn leaves New Jersey. What did you do next?

Martin Greenberg: What did I do next? I went back to my law firm and I practiced for a bunch of years and then in 1992 I decided it would be fun-- The firm had performed nicely and I had a chance to have my kids go through college. Two of the boys became attorneys and I think I told you the third one makes money. He runs a focus group business. That's Andrew in California. And my daughter is married and has a child. Jennifer has a child and is pregnant with her second child which we hope will be healthy and bring joy and happiness to the grandparents as

well as the parents and her other child and I thought it would be nice to try a different aspect of government that I had not been in. I'd been in the executive and the legislative branches and I thought that I would like to try a judgeship. So I became- I attempted to obtain a nomination which I did and I became a judge in Essex County and then the best of all things happened to me which really was spectacular and that is the chief justice assigned me as the chancery judge in Hudson County. So that had twofold benefits. The first was that I could try cases in which Jimmy Dugan was before me which was a gas but I could do what the chief justice said the job entailed and that was to do the right thing. Chancery judge is a spectacular position, is one in almost all counties and you control your own docket, you determine when cases will be heard, you are your own person, and coming from the background that we have discussed these last couple of sessions it was important for me to have that freedom. I don't know that I would have lasted as a judge if I were just handling cases assigned to me by an assignment judge but in a sense I was my own assignment judge and the cases were fascinating including teacher strikes in Hudson County and political problems there as well as constitutional issues involving First Amendment, speech, abortion cases, et cetera. It's fascinating. And then I had to retire when I hit that magic age when I was declared incompetent—

Q: Seventy?

Martin Greenberg: Yeah, 70, and then the next important thing that happened was my coming here to—

Q: There were a couple other things.

Martin Greenberg: I guess.

Q: You went back to the practice of law at least partly.

Martin Greenberg: I did and I'm with some friends that used to work for me and now I'm working with them and I'm also general counsel and chief financial officer to a New York corporation.

Q: What's that corporation do?

Martin Greenberg: It manufactures reproductions of antique lighting and sconces and bathroom sinks and faucets and stuff that I am interested in and from a period of time dealing with art deco and art nouveau designs that I find fascinating and we just opened a new showroom in Chicago and it's good.

Q: Before we close, any final thoughts on your relationship with Brendan Byrne or anecdotes that you'd like to preserve for the historical record?

Martin Greenberg: There are so many. First let me say, as many others before me have said in my presence when we're having lunch or when we're at an affair and Brendan is there, that he's changed my life and I'm not the only one. I met him 50 years ago and from riding back and forth to Trenton from Essex County with Brendan and two or three other folks who were in the attorney general's office or the governor's office we quickly determined that there was a bond in terms of our objectives and desires and our views towards politics and government. So he was one of the few people that I would impose upon to come to a wedding of one of my kids and he knew my dad and I knew his father and the four of us played golf together and I thought his father was wonderful and he loved Max, my dad, and we were helpful to each other along the way. I think I was helpful to get him the AFL/CIO endorsement when he ran for governor and that produced money for his campaign and workers and stuff like that and when he left Bob Meyner's office to become acting prosecutor or deputy attorney general in charge of the office he asked me to come with him as one of his assistants and my life changed. And he is- he's a- the first person I think of to have lunch with when I don't have anybody to eat with and I have time to work other than at my desk and he does the same thing and we've had tragedies and- that we've shared and happy times and there's no more rewarding experience for me than when he came to me and said I need a story about such and so. This is a guy who has stories for everything and when he came to me I said wow, I made it, and I found something for him.

Q: Has he still recycled some of the jokes that you memorized in the Catskills?

Martin Greenberg: Absolutely. We do that with each other but he has the unique talent to create something on the spot. It obviously wasn't planned when he comes to somebody's retirement party and you find that there has been an accident outside and the cars are jammed up and some- the helicopter is trying to extract somebody. He would walk in and refer to that incident as if it had happened years ago and he had 14 lines from it and it's just amazing, his capacity to create and see humor in things that other people can't begin to. And it all has to do in my opinion with the fact that he is brief and he has developed a speaking ability in which he underplays the punch line, he almost doesn't say it, you sense it yourself that he just- he kind of stumbles into it, and the place is in an uproar. I've never seen any- and I saw a lot of comedians at the- in the Catskill. I never saw anybody deliver a punch line understated like that, almost never articulating it. You-- If you're asking me to repeat his stuff, no. I'll tell you the one line that I thought was really Brendan Byrne and that is when his name came off the building. I don't know if I mentioned it here the other day. If I have, you can delete this but his name came off the building and I said to him don't feel badly about that, Brendan, it was a political decision that was made and it has nothing to do with you. And he said what do you mean, feel badly, I was immortal for three years. So the concept of immortality for a period of time is some- is you have to have a sense of humor that sees that in order to appreciate it is very clever and it's demeaning too. It's-- He's a self effacing guy.

Q: Thank you.

Martin Greenberg: Thank you.

##### End of Martin Greenberg interview 7/5/2006 #####