

## **Interview with Bill Jones**

**Interviewed by J. L. Rendahl for the Heritage Education Commission**

**Interviewed on December 5, 1984**

**William Jones - WJ**

**J. L. Rendahl - JLR**

**JLR: This will be an interview with Moorhead educator, Bill Jones, of the Moorhead State University, as a part of the 1984 Oral History Project of the Moorhead State University Heritage Education Commission and of the Northwest Minnesota Historical Center. As interviewer, I'm J. L. Rendahl, of 415 South 7th Street, Moorhead, an Emeritus Vice President of Concordia College. The time is about 1:30 p.m., Wednesday, the fifth of December, 1984. The place is the audio studio in the MSU Livingston Lord Library. The oral history agreement form giving ownership of this tape to the Northwest Minnesota Historical Center has been signed. The length of the interview will probably be about 90 minutes.**

**Now, to complete this introductory record, Bill, will you give your full name, your address, your position, what you are doing now, and something about your family.**

**WJ: Yes, my full name is William Marcellus [spelling] Jones--I'm named after my grandfather--and I live at 1303 18th Ave S. I'm presently Academic Vice President of Moorhead State University, and my wife, Audrey Zoube [phonetic] Jones, is Director of External Studies at Moorhead State, and we are in lame-duck status. We plan on retiring at the end of this school year. We have four children--three sons, all of whom are married, and a daughter, who is not; and they live in the Southeast and the East; and there are six grandchildren spread amongst those three married offspring.**

**JLR: We have to begin with your family background as a child, a summary of your educational background, and up to the time, let's say, that you are ready to start being a teacher.**

**WJ: It's interesting that my father did not finish high school and my mother finished high school with great difficulty; she was not all that well and did not consider herself a good student. But as we go to the previous generation on my mother's side in particular, her father was a educator, a professional educator, who was an undergraduate at Harvard--had finished two years at Harvard--and then decided to come west because of his health--kind of a Teddy Roosevelt sort of situation. Came initially to Wahpeton, North Dakota, where he met his wife there and finally moved to Lisbon, North Dakota, where he established a publishing house which published educational materials. He was also a county superintendent of schools. And recognizing that one-room schools of those days had very limited reading materials, he published a magazine called The Rotary Magazine which was full of little snippets of things from the classics and always a letter from him.**

**JLR: Can I ask you what his name was?**

**WJ: Will Crocker.**

**JLR: You know, that's very interesting because as a boy, I subscribed to The Rotary Magazine--**

**WJ: Is that right?**

**JLR: and Bill Crocker--I never met him personally but he meant a great deal to me. I have a Christmas card from him--a very elaborate gold speckled Christmas card--I think I still have it.**

**WJ: Is that right? Well, Uncle Will, as he called himself, wrote a letter to his readers in every issue; and that letter was very frequently about his family--seven children in the family; they lived right next to the dam on the Sheyenne River in the city of Lisbon and my mother was the youngest of those seven. And all of the children worked in this publishing house, and I'm always thrilled, of course, to find someone who has had that experience with him. He also published The Westland Educator, The North Dakota Speller, The North Dakota Farmer--a series of periodicals. The North Dakota Farmer was done in collaboration with a pioneering agriculturist associated with NDSU whose name I cannot dredge up at the moment. But he was clearly part of, I think, the motivation which impelled all of us (and I say us, my siblings--I have a brother and I have two sisters--my brother is a seminary graduate and has a year post-seminary study and a sister has a master's degree in music and is an educator, and the third sister has two years of college, but has been a piano teacher, a music teacher, all her life) so all of us were highly motivated towards education and even though my parents did not have as much education, there was no question that we would go to college.**

**My education--I have an undergraduate degree from Concordia and I came to Concordia because of its Music Department and it's there that I met my wife on a choir trip and then I taught for a year in Thief River Falls High School and then went on to graduate school, Eastman School of Music--I have a master's degree from there; then taught at Linfield College in McMinnville, Oregon, for 12 years during the course of which I did most of the course work for my doctorate; then went to Beloit College in Beloit, Wisconsin, where I chaired the Music Department for 11 years, completed my doctorate while there; then went to Berea College in Berea, Kentucky, where I was Dean and Academic Vice President; and after three years there decided to come back home in a sense, coming back to Moorhead, which was close to where my wife is from and where my parents were still living at the time--in Lisbon--and we've been here since 1972.**

**JLR: Uncle Will was your grandfather, then.**

**WJ: Uncle Will was my grandfather, right.**

**JLR: The first time I was in Lisbon after we came to Moorhead, I asked somebody to take me down to the river and show me where The Rotary was published.**

**WJ: Is that right? That's fascinating.**

**I should add that one other aspect of my career--I worked for a year after graduating from high school before I went on to college. My dad was a printer, and I worked as an apprentice printer all during high school and then worked for a year; and I have a vivid memory of Sidney Rand, whom you know as past President of St. Olaf but who was on the staff of Concordia at that time, coming into the Ransom County Gazette and I was seated at the linotype and he came in to talk to me about going to Concordia and he was the Admissions person, and you can identify with that, who was quite influential in causing me eventually to go to Concordia.**

**JLR: Do you want to tell us some more about your first position and the experiences that you had as a beginning teacher?**

**WJ: Well, I had not exactly a typical assignment as a teacher. I had responsibility for the high school band, for the high school choir, for a number of small ensembles, both instrumental and vocal. I also taught all the instrumental music at the elementary level, so it was quite an assignment. This was in Thief River Falls, which was a city of four or five thousand at that time and Lincoln High School was a very substantial high school. Actually, it turned out to be a wonderful introduction to teaching and to making music. I remember vividly that I had an opportunity to go with the Fargo School System--see, I graduated in 1944--I had been in the Service for just one year and was classified for limited service because of my eyesight; and so there was an attempt to reclassify all limited service people--this is late in the war, obviously--and either you could go in and be a bona fide combat soldier or they didn't want you. And there was no way they could reclassify me, so they discharged me and I came back to Concordia so that final year at Concordia was a year where I was one of about forty men on campus who had the unique experience of having both Jake [Christiansen] and Paul [Christiansen] seek my services as one wanting me to sing and the other wanted me to play basketball and clearly Paul won; but it shows how hard up Jake was because there weren't many men on campus.**

**But I had an opportunity, then, when I graduated to go into the Fargo system to teach music at one of the junior high schools. And I can still remember Pa Anderson, who was Director of Placement (and you know him very well, I'm sure)--I can still remember him shaking his head in wonderment when I said, "No, I don't want that position; I would rather go to Thief River Falls." He said, "People have waited for years and years and years for the opportunity to get into the Fargo system and you, as a brand new teacher, are saying 'No' to that." He couldn't believe it, but it was a wise decision as far as I'm concerned because I had a chance to have my own choir--I was more interested in choral music than in band, but I also had a good experience conducting the band there. They were very good organizations, had very good support from the administration. The previous director was another Concordia grad, Eddie Anderson, who then went on to Colorado State to be choral director there and had a remarkable career there. So things were in good**

hands when I took over there and so it was a remarkably good experience for a first-year person. As I left there, Murray Freng [phonetic]--that's another name that is very familiar to people in Minnesota education--took over and he was there for several years and then eventually went on to the state responsibility for the director of extra-curricular activities or something like that--another Concordia grad.

**JLR:** Now, you mentioned briefly your education. Should we back up and concentrate on, say, your postgraduate work--more about your postgraduate work?

**WJ:** Okay. Obviously, my experience at Concordia, I found, was a very good experience. Paul Christiansen was an inspiration to me--I studied piano with him and the piano was my major instrument; but clearly I enjoyed the experience with the choir very much. And Sig Thompson--I very much enjoyed his teaching in theory--and decided that that would be my major field.

At Eastman, I got an M.A. in Theory and did so very rapidly. I spent exactly nine months at Eastman--finished my thesis and completed all my course work in that time. I was in a hurry because our first child arrived in May of that year and, obviously, I didn't feel that I could afford to dally. It was time to get out and start to earn a living. And I did a thesis which was kind of a ground-breaking one, actually, on the application of some principles of analysis developed by Paul Hindemith [phonetic]--an analysis of melodies which I applied to Schubert's songs.

Then as I began teaching at Linfield and my responsibilities there were largely teaching piano and theory; incidentally, that first year there was a unique experience because it was the year of the big influx of GI's into the student body; and you're only too well aware of what an impact that was on a small college campus. And many of them coming back were hungry for almost everything that they could get a hold of and so they said, "You mean to tell me I can have piano lessons, and the government will pay for it?" So I had about half my students were grown-up GI's coming back, many of whom had had no piano and thought this was a marvelous opportunity. It wasn't musically rewarding, but it was rewarding just on a personal basis because they were so grateful and really such very fine students.

I continued at Linfield until 1955 (I went there in '46), at which time I took a year's leave, went to Indiana University, spent a very, very intense year--that year started in June with a summer session, continued through the nine months, and then another summer session--and during the course of that year, accomplished almost all my course work--all except I think maybe one course, got my dissertation topic approved, did both languages, and got my qualifying exams out of the way; and it was the kind of year that required obviously a massive family effort. We had four children at that point, and Audrey and I were not exactly well heeled. Linfield was a small denominational college unable to pay salaries. I started at \$2300 in 1946 and I think by 1955 I was probably up to \$3200 or \$3400 or something like that. I had an assistantship, and we lived in low-cost student housing but we had hoped that Audrey would be able to teach. We had written ahead of time and she had been encouraged by a couple of superintendents to come see them when we arrived. We

arrived and the first place we went was in Brown County--and if you know Brown County, it's out in the woods about 40 miles from Bloomington where we lived. We had to ford a stream to get to the school, and we decided that kind of a commute she simply could not do; and so then we finally went to the other superintendent. She still had to commute over 40 miles to a little village called Freedom where she taught English, physical education, music, and several other things. I mean it was one of those places where there are only three or four people in the high school. During that course, with the four children, of course, and she commuting, leaving early in the morning, I would see to it that the children were put on the bus to the school and get the children off to the babysitter, go and take in my classes, and do my teaching as part of my assistantship, come back in time to pick up the children at the bus, fix dinner, and by that time Audrey would have arrived. We ate dinner together and then I disappeared to study for the rest of the evening. That's how we spent those nine months. It was a very intense time, but very rewarding time because I did the basic work towards the doctorate in those 15 months. I wouldn't like to duplicate them, however.

JLR: What was your thesis?

WJ: My thesis was devoted to the works of Ernest Block [phonetic], a Swiss Jewish composer who lived in Oregon and whom I'd gotten a chance to meet several times and became interested in his work.

JLR: And, your major, then, was music.

WJ: That's right. The Ph.D. was in Music Theory, but I taught piano--about half my load was teaching piano at Linfield and I would give recitals and was also active--had a very good church choir there. Linfield was a Baptist school, and my background is Baptist. I was kind of a unique person at Concordia, as a matter of fact, back in the late '30s and early '40s actually--I matriculated in 1940--because Concordia was very, very much Lutheran--Norwegian Lutheran--in those days. That's simply not the case now. There's a much more diverse student body. I was not Norwegian. I was not Lutheran, but I did marry a Norwegian who was Lutheran, so--.

JLR: Now, what led up to your present position?

WJ: Well, my experience at Beloit was an experience that, first, involved rebuilding a Music Department which had gone into a decline. Interestingly enough, it was a decline that was precipitated by a very difficult tenure decision, where a very popular faculty member--popular with the faculty and with the students--was denied tenure. It became such a controversy the whole campus got involved in the controversy. They brought in three experts--the President was a fairly new President, and it almost brought the President down--his negative decision on this person's tenure. They brought in a team of experts--the Dean of the University of Michigan, the Dean of Washington University in St. Louis, and Chair of the Department at Knox College--and they looked over and made recommendations. One of their recommendations was to bring in an outside person to become the new Chair, and I ended up being that outside person. And frankly, the situation was in shambles; and, of course, they had a very poor physical facility and the

faculty was demoralized. I began to organize the college choir, and I had 13 people try out the first try-outs we had.

**JLR:** In what time frame was this?

**WJ:** Well, this was within the first month that I arrived.

**JLR:** I mean the years.

**WJ:** Oh, I see, yes. I came there in 1958. So it was a process of building which took several years, but which was quite successful and very satisfying. And then I became gradually more and more interested in Beloit as an experimental college. We were going through a very elaborate curricular reform, we moved into a calendar--the trimester calendar; we had an interdisciplinary core that was a part of every student's experience there and I was heavily involved in the design of that core and I was also heavily involved in most of the major committees. I chaired, for example, the committee on faculty status for four years and gradually was identified as a person who really ought to seek administrative responsibility because I was involved in things very heavily outside the department, even though the department itself was going well. And began to look at those possibilities, and I interviewed at, oh probably, half a dozen places. A couple of the interviews resulted in offers which I decided I would not take; and finally, the opportunity at Berea emerged and I accepted that position.

**JLR:** Tell us about your Berea experience.

**WJ:** Well, Berea was a unique place, of course. It's a school that was established in the nineteenth century shortly after the Civil War and ostensibly to educate mountain youth and freed slaves; and that interracial tradition and also the commitment to the region was still alive combined with a program where students were required to work at least 10 hours a day [week?] and in order to provide opportunities for student labor, the institution ran a whole series of student industries and, of course, the students also worked as assistants in the educational enterprise as well. And students paid no tuition--it was a very rich school. It had to be, obviously, because with no tuition income and not being a state school, it had to have other sources of support and there were many, many generous donors. For example, a member of the Danforth family has been on the Board for years and a very generous supporter. Barry Bingham, who was the publisher of the Louisville Courier Journal was Chairman of the Board of Trustees while I was there, so in many ways it was a very, very interesting place. It was a place that was going through, however, a lot of tensions--tensions which I had experienced at Beloit prior to coming to Berea. I came to Berea in 1969 and the year before I came there, racial tensions erupted in Beloit. The City of Beloit had a population of about 15% black, and these were the times of black consciousness and very tense times; and in that year, there was a lot of destruction on campus--dormitories set on fire, lower floor of the Library flooded, and the Administration Building occupied--incidentally, not done by black students. Black students were very much making their presence felt, but the whole era of unrest caused many of the more radical white students to take advantage of that to try to vent their displeasure with the

way society was going and that venting often took on some destructive aspects. Well, then I moved south and somehow or other history repeated itself. We had, I think, probably a questionable decision was made the year before I arrived at Berea to substantially increase black population in the student body. I arrived there in the summer of 1969 and discovered that the freshman class had a very large component of black students, doubling or tripling the number of blacks as I remember, and discovered to my horror there wasn't a single black faculty member, for example. And that was just a situation that was not a happy one, and I worked very hard that first summer identifying some people who could work with those students because I knew they would also have educational needs as they did and they were not as well qualified as some of the other of their freshman colleagues. And we did create a situation where we got through that year in pretty good shape. Subsequent years, we had two different times of great racial tension, and that was an interesting, very demanding kind of experience as well.

During the course of my third year there, that fall, I was involved in a NCATE accreditation visit, interestingly enough, to an all-black school in Georgia and a dean from Moorhead State was chair of the team--Gladden Robinson [spelling]--and he mentioned that there was a deanship open at Moorhead State. My parents were then--my father had retired three or four years earlier and his health was not all that good. They were living alone in Lisbon still, and then the possibility of coming back to what we still considered home was an attractive one. So I ended up making application for the position, and ended up coming back up here.

JLR: What was your position at Berea--your assignment?

WJ: I was Academic Vice President and Dean of the College.

JLR: And, then, at Moorhead. Would you summarize your experience here?

WJ: Well, at Moorhead I started out as Dean of Arts and Humanities, and one of the attractions of the position, as I looked at it, was that I would be able to teach again. I did teach two of the years I was at Berea, but with some difficulties. As a matter of fact, the second year I drafted my wife who had embarked on a program to complete her masters at Eastern Kentucky while we were there to join me and we team taught a course in the new curriculum that we had initiated at Berea--a course called "Religious and Historical Perspectives"--it was a required course for all sophomores. And we were teach it together because I knew that I would not be able to meet all classes and it ended up, unfortunately, that she taught a lot more of it than I did. It wasn't unfortunate for the students, but it was unfortunate for me and my objectives. So this was an attractive possibility, coming back to Moorhead. And the first year I did teach, I think, a couple of quarters, just a course; but that was all I had intended. Only one other year did I teach. Unfortunately, the administrative responsibilities simply got heavy enough so that I ended up not finding the time to teach. The second year a Dean resigned who was Dean of Social Sciences and I took on his responsibilities, so I was Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences; and then I arrived there in 1972 and in 1977 the Academic Vice President left to take the presidency of Winona State. I chose not to be a candidate; I really enjoyed the deanship because I had a

**much more direct relationship with faculty and more contact with students. And so the first year I was Acting Vice President while they instituted a search which turned out to be unsuccessful. The second year the President asked me to be a candidate and I finally decided to become a candidate; and after a second search, I ended up being appointed Vice President.**

**I came to Moorhead State at a time when they had just experienced a fairly long pattern of growth which**

**[Begin Tape 1, Side 2]**

**a growth both in size of student body and also as far as the physical plant is concerned; and in 1972 all of a sudden the draft was over and thus the pressure for young men to go to school and escape the draft, which was one of the motivations of men going to school at that time, was removed. And we experienced that first year there a very considerable drop in enrollment. We all anticipated that that would be the beginning of a long, long decline because the demographics were such that that seemed likely. And in that year there a necessity for a considerable reduction of staff and faculty and it was not exactly a comfortable situation for a new person to be in. I can remember one veteran faculty member looking at me with a twinkle in his eye and bit of glee in his voice, saying "You know, you're the only untenured member of the administration?" And I said, "Yes, I'm aware of that." And I seriously contemplated moving. The deanship at Beloit opened up that year, and I was asked to be a candidate. As a matter of fact, I had been kind of the heir apparent for many years as the Dean at that point was seeking presidencies and everybody assumed that he was going to get a presidency and then everybody assumed that I would probably move into his situation; and his presidencies never materialized. So I did consider moving that first year simply because it did seem a relatively unstable situation, but finally decided that I simply would not--that things looked better and I was enjoying the situation here; it was a real challenge. And the President, I must say, went all out to try to keep me here and I was enjoying my association with the President and Vice President and the faculty as a whole, and so stayed on.**

**And then we moved into a rather different kind of situation which, I think, is very important in the history of Moorhead State. The Public Employees' Labor Relation Act allowed for the possibility of the faculty and all public employees, as far as that's concerned, entering into a collective bargaining situation; and so our faculty, as part of a systemwide unit, became a collective bargaining unit. And the history of that, I think, is very important as we think about the impact of that on Moorhead State. Moorhead State has had a long, long history of good leadership--academic and other kinds of leadership, good administration, and a very good relationship between administration and faculty. The kind of tensions that were present on some of the other campuses simply did not emerge here and the quality of the academic programs and the kind of self-image that the faculty had of themselves and of their school was really excellent. And all of a sudden we were confronted now with structures which were alien to all of that because there had been heavy involvement of faculty in matters of governance and now we were faced with how to relate to each other--administration and faculty--within this new, new kind of situation and**



we were also faced with the fact that we were part of a systemwide unit; that is, the contract was negotiated in St. Paul. To some degree that whole process seemed removed from us and yet the results of that negotiation had an impact on us, and again we had difficulty knowing exactly how to operate. A third factor that was very significant was the basic approach that was a factor as far as both the bargaining process and then the kind of orientation that we as administrators of a contract, because that was our new role--we were to administer a contract--the kind of orientation that we got was really, I think, unduly legalistic and unduly confrontational. And we were all neophytes at this, as administrators and as faculty, not knowing exactly how we could relate and, of course, the bargaining process itself resulted in the abolition of all faculty committees. And this was simply a totally new ball game, as a result. Here we were, a faculty and administration that had developed over the years a way of relating to each other that had proved very productive and relatively tension-free and all of a sudden it was dissipated. This was in 1975--the spring of '75--that this first came into effect. And we struggled to try to make this work and I think it is to the credit of both the faculty and administration that somehow or other it did work, there was no deterioration of services to students, the institution still maintained its basic orientation as far as a quality education; but nevertheless it was very, very difficult; and gradually we began to work to try to find ways to relate to each other in a productive way. And that has been a very, very long process and, obviously, it's still in process. But nevertheless we are achieving now a way of relating which has made it possible for faculty to reassume roles in institutional governance and for the kind of confrontational aspects of us and them to be minimized. In the process, there are some very positive things also that have happened as far as this new situation and I became much more intimately involved with this when I assumed the Vice Presidency in 1977 because the President at that time chose to make the Vice President be essentially the person who would be the most active person as far as developing relationships with the faculty within this formal structure. The Meet and Confers, for example, which is the kind of formalized way of communicating between Faculty Association, on the one hand, and administration, on the other hand, were my responsibility essentially. And the grievances--and again that was one of the aspects of this whole new situation that was untested on the part of both parties; again, the Vice President was the key person as far as relating to these grievances. And early on we had a fairly large number of grievances, although not nearly as many as emerged out of some of the other campuses. But nevertheless, we were all testing just exactly how this could work and that was a major responsibility of mine. But the positive things, I don't think there's any question in the last two contracts have been advantageous to the faculty as far as their compensation and we were always in a difficult position in that in a sense although we were (we--I'm talking about administration broadly conceived) negotiating salaries, for example; nevertheless, the State of Minnesota, by and large, set the parameters within which this negotiation should occur; and so the amount of room [in which] we had to move was very limited. Nevertheless, there have been two quite successful contracts and, I think, part of the success is due to the collective bargaining process which has given our faculty the kind of salary structure I think they deserve and so that's a plus. I think the grievance process, on balance, has been a plus. The larger you get, and we were starting to get larger again, the more difficult it is to depend on personal relationships in order to deal with questions of status and so this process enables you, if there really is truly a difference--and this happens rarely--maybe once a year at the most--where those

differences simply are so irreconcilable, that they have to go on to a third party, well, the third party is available to deal with those. And the knowledge that that is available does make a difference in how you deal with those differences. So that's been a very interesting part of my experience at Moorhead State.

The other interesting part has been that almost with the onset of my movement into the Vice President's office has been a remarkable and, in many ways, unexpected large growth. We, from 1977 to 1981-82, increased our student body by almost 25% and it posed some tremendous difficulties, as you can attest, as this kind of growth. And we were handicapped in that the state adopted a policy that said this kind of growth that's occurring is obviously temporary and so we are not going to support those students which make up this enrollment bulge other than allowing you to keep the tuition received from that surplus of students which meant that we had to accommodate these larger numbers without the resources that we really should have. And so that meant some very interesting and difficult decisions as to just how to deal with that particular set of circumstances. In the meantime, our growth was occurring as far as the curriculum was concerned, in areas that were understaffed and so that we had to deal with that question also as to how to increase our staff in Computer Science and Business Administration and Social Work and Mass Communications and still maintain the integrity of the Liberal Arts even though the enrollments there were not growing; as a matter of fact, in most cases, were declining. And that was a very difficult administrative problem particularly when the resources simply were not there in the kind of numbers they'd been in order to deal with that kind of dislocation of student options. And also we recognized that no institution can stay put as far as program definition--that we had to come up with new programs that would meet the needs of students and meet the needs of this region and so during the course of those years (let's see; this is my seventh year, I guess, as Academic Vice President--eighth year) we instituted a fair number of new programs, many of which are doing very well; and, obviously, again, to find the resources to make those programs possible took a lot of juggling.

JLR: Do you want to mention what some of those programs were?

WJ: Well, yes. We instituted a 4-year program preparation to prepare legal assistants; and that's in its third year of operation now. We instituted a graduate program for a person who wants to explore the Liberal Arts further--MLA--which has done very well. We instituted an External Studies program, which my wife's been involved with--she's been the Director of it for the last nine years, but actually was working just part time in that during the early part of it; but by the time we came aboard (and I came aboard in 1977) it became apparent that there was a lot of potential growth there in serving the older students and we added staff there and expanded that program. A program in industrial chemistry, a graduate program in computer science, a graduate program in special education, an international business program--those are some of the ones that come to mind. We're now in the process of developing an energy management program; and these, interestingly enough, all of them are very alien to my original background.

I graduated from a liberal arts college--Concordia. Linfield, Beloit, and Berea were all 4-year liberal arts colleges--no graduate programs and very few career-oriented programs, although Berea, I should add, was a bit of an exception. It had a Home Ec Department, it had an Agricultural Department; but nevertheless was pretty determinedly liberal arts. And now in an institution which valued the liberal arts rather considerably but clearly had a more expansive mission, a mission which, obviously, was not alien really to its original mission, which was to prepare people for a career--it happened to be for teaching and that's all--that was the only career. But now the career possibilities were considerably more varied, but the expectations of the students were still very clear when they came here. By and large, they expected that their college experience would prepare them for some kind of career; and yet, how to do that--how to meet those needs--and still have some integrity in liberal arts was a major task. And one of my objectives was to make sure that that requirement in the liberal arts was held onto--the one-third of the degree program devoted to the liberal arts for all degree programs, and that's true even of the professional degrees--the Bachelor of Social Work, the Bachelor of Science and Nursing, Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Fine Arts--all those degree programs along with the B.A. and B.S., all of them have that 64-hour requirement and that the 64 hours in the liberal arts have not been eroded as far as their consistently being oriented towards the liberal arts. We simply don't allow for health courses or physical education courses or any of the number of other very fine courses and very good experiences, but which we reasoned really were not appropriate substitutes for that very precious experience that all students ought to have in having a really good introduction in social sciences and natural sciences, the humanities, essentially. So that's been another accomplishment, I think, and certainly been an important objective.

JLR: Is Mr. Nordrum there? Can you see? Can we take a break?

WJ: It's been very interesting to watch Moorhead State change, of course. When I was at Concordia, we kind of looked down our nose at Moorhead State. That was the Normal School where people went to maybe have a two-year program and become elementary teachers. Oh, I dated a girl over at Moorhead State because there were lots of nice girls over there and so I'd cross the graveyard quite frequently to go over on the other campus; but by and large, didn't have a lot of status in those days. And clearly the function of Moorhead State began to change during the years and it became a college in the real sense of the word with full-blown departments and then its administrative structure changed and the whole idea that as it grew it became more than one academic administrator could handle, and actually my appearance on the scene in '72 was the result of a changing structure which said that there should be four faculty deans, and I was one of those four faculty deans. So that was one change.

Another change that clearly was important was much more consciousness of being part of a system. There are seven state universities; we clearly are regarded as a unit as far as state appropriations are concerned. The budget is a system-wide budget which then is reallocated by the State University Board and thus we became much more conscious of that; and frankly that posed real problems for us because although we recognized we were part of a system, we think of Moorhead State as being of one of the more distinctive

**institutions within that system. We believe that our standards are higher; we believe that our faculty is more professional; we know that our student body is slightly better at least because our admission standards are slightly higher; and we are the only one institution that is located in what could be, if you count the Fargo-Moorhead community as a metropolitan community, located in a fairly substantial metropolitan community with all the cultural assets that one associates with that. And so to be kind of identified with some of the other institutions and to be really forced to kind of trim our sails to sail the same way as the others has not always been easier. We've tried to maintain our distinctiveness and with some success.**

**Some other successes, it seems to me, is that we've had a very cosmopolitan faculty. We've not been hesitant about hiring foreign nationals, even though we get criticism for it; and part of this, of course, is pure necessity in some instances--in computer science, for example, we would not have a faculty if we decided we could not hire foreign nationals. Nevertheless, by and large, I think it's been very important for our students to have that experience with foreign nationals. We have worked very hard to increase the proportion of women on the faculty, the proportion of minorities in the faculty. And, again, we have clearly the best record of any of the state universities in this respect. And we've been very fortunate in that we have looked at every faculty vacancy as an opportunity--an opportunity to take affirmative action in the best sense of that word and have been able to be successful there.**

**We've also, I think, very much benefitted from the Tri-College University, an organization which was just getting a good start when I arrived on the scene. You were involved earlier, of course, in its very early stages. We ended up with a very high volume of exchanges between institutions, a certain amount of agreement that we would at least try to avoid duplication of programs, although clearly we've also agreed that we have to compete in certain areas; but nevertheless, we think we've achieved substantial economies and substantial increase in the degree of options a student has available through our relationship with TCU. And I've been a Commissioner--the Moorhead State University representative on the TCU Commission ever since my arrival in 1972. That's been a very satisfying experience because I think it is a unique cooperative relationship and as we talked about when you and I were discussing previously your career, you took a good deal of satisfaction in that. It is unique, and I have seen institutions that were in a very destructive relationship; and this is basically a constructive relationship.**

**So those are some of the things that have been very satisfying.**

**JLR: Your experience has brought you into contact with a number of interesting problems--tenure, race relations, collective bargaining, move to a university status, relationship between an institution and the larger area--your system, for example. I wonder if you could go a little more into relationships with other groups--you mentioned the Tri-College University and the university system; but also the State of Minnesota, the Higher Education Board, and the federal government--what developments have there been in those fields?**

**WJ:** Certainly, that's one of the reasons there are more administrators now than there were in the past, in that we've had to maintain these kinds of relationships. The more that federal government and state government is involved, as far as funding, the more they feel that there has to be an accountability and that accountability has required a lot of data development, and so on.

The Higher Education Coordinating Board has been a factor. All new programs, for example, and I would guess that we have submitted at least two new programs a year to the Higher Education Coordinating Board, whose responsibility it is to try to reduce duplication of effort and make sure that there is a bona fide need for these programs. I would guess that we have submitted at least two a year. We right now have an M.A. in Art before them; we have a major in Computer Information Systems before them for consideration. And that's par for the course; we almost always have one in there. And that has been--really, it has not been a problem, although as with almost any institution that prides itself on its own ability to make good judgments, it does not appreciate to have to have those actions monitored by some outside activity; and so we've kind of chafed at that, but frankly it has not posed any real difficulties.

Clearly, a major area where HECB has been influential is in the area of student aid--financial aid. And there is a traditional rivalry between the private and the public sector, which comes to focus at that point with HECB. Clearly, there are two basic objectives which become a matter of public policy. One objective is to make possible student choice, as far as institution and program and make that as possible as possible so that economics plays a minimal role in that choice. And that's a choice, incidentally, that underlines reciprocity, for example. Reciprocity--tuition reciprocity.

**JLR:** HECB--Higher Education Coordinating Board? For the record.

**WJ:** Right--Higher Education Coordinating Board. Right. And then the other pole, you might say, is accessibility. There ought to be a way for any person in the state to gain access to the advantages that higher education offers to that citizen and those two things are in somewhat tension at each other, and HECB is at the focal point in those tensions. Clearly, it is to the advantage of the private school that choice be made as broad as possible; and HECB has adopted some policies which have been helpful in this respect. Clearly, the public school looks on its responsibility as one of providing a low cost, high quality education and thus allowing students to

[Begin Tape 2, Side 1]

gain access to higher education who would otherwise not have that opportunity. And so that's been an interesting kind of tension. I think it has been, by and large, a productive tension. It is a question of public policy that is going to be debated and debated and debated.

**JLR:** With regard to outside events having an influence on education and on your experience--World War II, of course--that was when you were preparing for teaching; but

such things as Sputnik and McCarthyism and changes in the political climate and the student protests of the last '60s and the '70s and the legal environment and expanded role of the school--what are some of those that have come your way and created problems for you?

WJ: Sputnik, of course, was--I felt that the art suffered to some degree any time that we have that kind of movement because the emphasis is on science, mathematics, and languages; and those emphases were very definitely in evidence at Beloit as a result of Sputnik and to some degree the arts then have a harder time competing for resources.

Now, the tensions as far as students are concerned--I've referred to those to some extent. But I was involved in a considerable number of events that were very, very disruptive--some of them very, very positively so, some of them not so. One of the more positive things, for example, was in 1970 when we had the difficulty at Ball State and at Jackson and the students were aroused. We were afraid that our campus might well erupt, as it did at the University of Kentucky, for example, where they burned a building down, and so on. And we sought to diffuse this--we organized a caravan of faculty and students; we couldn't use college funds for this, but we got donations from the faculty, and so on. Got a bus and a caravan of cars and we drove to Washington and we visited with--I can remember vividly--we visited with Senator McGovern and Senator Baker and Senator John Sherman Cooper and Senator Thurmond and quite a few to simply lay some of the concerns that students, faculty, and administration shared as far as where our nation was going, particularly as it related to Viet Nam. That was a productive and educational thing. It cost us, incidentally--we know of at least one federal grant that we did not get because we were too activist in this respect; but nevertheless it was a price that I think was well worth paying and frankly it made possible constructive, rather than destructive, actions in this respect.

I again was the person who had the best relationships with the black students in the administration at Berea when on two different occasions we had a takeover of the administration building. I stayed in the building; I spent all night with the black students on both occasions and was the key person as far as negotiating with them, as far as precisely what their grievances were, how we could deal with them. In the first instance, for example, a black student was apprehended because he was searched and found, by a policeman, that he had a gun on him. But it turned out that the reason he had the gun which obviously he shouldn't have had, but nevertheless the reason was that black students were very threatened in this all-white town and they were very, very afraid because the mountain youths--the white youths--would come down in their pickups and look for the lone black student or, particularly if there was a mixed couple walking, and they would simply beat up on the kid. And this had happened; it happened many, many times and they were just absolutely at the end of their rope as far as tolerating this. And to try to keep a lid on a situation like that, I can still remember coming over to the faculty meeting which was held to try to decide what to do about this when the black students were in the President's office and saying--. In the first place, these kids are scared. They don't really know what to do but they really feel that they've got to say something. "We can't continue this way--to be the objects of abuse." But they are not being destructive; they've brought their books; they are studying. And, you know, to try to get some perspective on this whole thing. One of the

more vivid memories I have of the second night they were still there and we brought them food and it was certainly angry in that sense, you know. But I had a white reporter who insisted on staying in the President's office with the black students. The black students did not like this; it was a student. They do not like this student; they did not trust him. And they wanted him to leave and I finally told him he had to leave and he refused and I took him by the elbow and ushered him out. I went home that night about 2 in the morning. And at 3 in the morning, one of my staff called me and said, "There's a warrant out for your arrest now for assault." "Well," I said, "You could have told me at 6 o'clock or let me sleep at least." And, you know, that was from this reporter that I'd ushered out and that's just illustrative of the kind of tensions that were in evidence during those times--tensions that had some very productive and positive aspects to them but were also very difficult.

The second such occupation was much more difficult because we had a student body where a black counselor had turned out to be really a person that we did not want to continue. He was pandering and we finally decided that we were going to have to have him removed from his position, and he was one of two black people on the faculty and very, very popular with the black students. So it was a very difficult thing to do and again we had this time and it was exacerbated by the fact that many of the white kids had guns on campus; that was an Appalachian tradition--you brought your gun so you could go squirrel hunting and so they had them--and some of them were also exacerbating that situation by throwing firecrackers into the hall, and so on; and so everybody was on edge. We finally ended up sending everyone home, not having final exams that term, simply because they would not have been productive. And then when they came back, we searched the whole campus for guns and we instructed the students they were not to bring guns back on campus and managed to achieve a reasonably good relationship. My responsibility was working with those students and also working with that black faculty member whom we had to let go; and that was a very difficult--very, very difficult thing. He was so far in debt that he didn't see how he could leave without the sheriff moving in on him; we finally agreed to assume his debts which turned out to be a major, major expenditure--much more than we ever anticipated. But again, I was the person who had a working relationship with him, actually.

**JLR:** That is very interesting. Before the time gets away from us, what's next on your program?

**WJ:** Well, my wife and I have both announced that this is our last year at Moorhead State. We've had a very productive and interesting experience here, but we have simply decided that we would like, while we are still in good health and have a normal quotient of vigor, to pursue some other things. One of those things I pursued, of course, was to run for office this fall; and that was an unsuccessful run.

**JLR:** Tell us a little more about that and your experiences in that connection.

**WJ:** Well, we decided that it would be an interesting area of service to try for the Minnesota House and the seat was a vacant seat; and so I ran. It proved to be one of the most intense, most exhausting experiences that we've ever had. My wife and I spent five nights a week from June 15 until the first of November--every night--out knocking on

doors, visiting with people, and then lots of time with volunteers developing materials and ads and raising money, and so on. A very gratifying experience in many respects. It was disappointing; we did not win; but obviously there were some rather unusual circumstances in that a third candidate entered in--a candidate whom I had defeated for the Democratic endorsement and he chose to run as an Independent and thus the DFL vote was split in a way that made it very difficult for a Democrat--it's difficult for a Democrat, anyway, in Moorhead because this is essentially a Republican town. But it was a satisfying and interesting experience and it has sharpened--I've always had a keen interest in matters of public policy, both at the local, the regional, state, and national level. And that interest has been sharpened. Where it will take me in the future, I'm not sure. But I know that I do hope there will be some opportunities for public service, either on a volunteer or other level.

**JLR:** I think you should pursue that. Tell us something about professional organizations that are of special interest and what contact you've had with them and what writing or speaking or other creative work you've been engaged in?

**WJ:** Well, early in my career, I used to write a lot of music. And I've had performances of choral works and an orchestral suite that was part of the repertoire of an orchestra, and so on; but I abandoned that as I moved out of music and frankly as I look back on those efforts, it's no great loss that I abandoned them. I also did more performances, and I've been very interested in music even when I went into administration. One of my most satisfying activities has been to direct a church choir--a very good church choir at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd. I've done that for the last ten years. I have not been really active in organizations outside of the community and outside of the college. I've been very active in community organizations--the Fargo-Moorhead Symphony Board, for example, and I was President of that Board and I'm now in my third term with that Board and was very instrumental and one of the persons most active in establishing the Coordinated Arts Fund, for example, under the aegis of the Lake Agassiz Arts Council; so I've been very interested and active in that kind of community and very active in the church in which I hold membership. I've been Chairman of the Board of Trustees of First Congregational Church in Moorhead for many years and presently a member of the Board of Deacons, and so on. At the national level, somehow or other I have both moved at the wrong times, but also early in my career I didn't have enough money to go to any of these conferences and somehow or other I've not found that satisfying. I've been too heavily involved at the local scene, so that has not been an important part of my life.

**JLR:** What have been some of the more significant, or lasting, contributions to the educational program of the various colleges or various schools that you've been connected?

**WJ:** Well, at Beloit, I take great satisfaction in the fact that a Music Department, which was really the laughingstock of the school, became a very strong and very creditable operation with high student and faculty acceptance and an excellent faculty and an excellent program. And during the course of that time, I established a community-college choral organization which is still doing very well. Each year they did a choral work with the Beloit Symphony, and I had the pleasure of going back to the--and I've moved



incidentally gave a home to move the Symphony on campus which was a community organization--brought it on campus, brought the conductor into the staff and had the pleasure of going back to help them celebrate their 25th anniversary two years ago; and the conductor had written a major work for orchestra and narrator, and I did the narration. I'd done several narrations with them in previous years, and that was a real thrill and I really take a great deal of satisfaction in building there.

At Berea, I instituted a curriculum which is still alive and well--two required, year-long courses for the freshmen, a year-long course for the sophomore, and then a capstone course for the upper division students, a required course in either Appalachian or Afro-American studies. This was a curriculum that was really very, very innovative and it has stood the test of time. So it's with a great deal of satisfaction that I see that that curriculum is still alive and well. And that was a great satisfaction to see that happen at Berea.

Here, I think I've talked about the work I've done as far as relating to faculty within that new structure, the kind of new programs, and my ability to work with the deans and also work with the State University System and State University Board staff in a kind of catalytic way, I think, has been a great satisfaction. I think we have an extra-ordinarily healthy organism in this institution, and I think I've had a role in making it that.

**JLR:** What have you found most fulfilling of all the activities that you've been engaged in?

**WJ:** Oh, that's a hard question. [Laughter from JLR] I guess the thing I enjoyed most, to be honest with you, something that I had not expected to enjoy at all and that is my six months as Acting President. I had had several opportunities to be a President, had been encouraged to apply for many presidencies, I'd been sought after by headhunters even while I was at Beloit to become a candidate; and I always said "No, I'm really not interested. I get too far removed." And here the opportunity was thrust on me, you might say. I genuinely enjoyed it and I was surprised.

**JLR:** That was where?

**WJ:** That was at Moorhead State when President Dille took the position as Acting Chancellor of the State University System; and during those six months, I ended up Acting President here and I found that very enjoyable. Roland Dille is a formidable person; and when one lives in his shadow, it's a very large shadow. So I'd have to say my opportunities to speak, for example, are somewhat limited simply by the fact that when people think of, well, get a speaker from Moorhead State, they think of Roland Dille, and rightfully so--he's one of the finest speakers I know. But he was off the scene, so I got to assume some of those symbolic opportunities and roles and I found I genuinely enjoyed it.

**JLR:** Now, about changes in education. What are some of the changes that you have in mind that you would have applied or would apply now if you had a chance at the various schools that you've been; and particularly what changes do you see coming up for Moorhead State?

**WJ:** Well, I'm very concerned about Moorhead State and about students because I think students right now are so concerned about a job and job security that it gets in the way of their education. Because I look on education as an opportunity to grow and to grow in a lot of different ways but certainly to grow in some kind of understanding of themselves and some kind of opportunity to know what their values are, to examine those values and to come up with a kind of value stance that will see them in good stead as they move on into citizenship, to have a real encounter with some of the truly catalytic ideas of our civilization. And I think too many of them are so pre-occupied with career and getting the tools that will enable them to succeed in that career that they rob themselves of that other dimension. We've tried to protect them from this, but it's very hard to deal with that attitude. And I think I'm very concerned about that--I'm very concerned moreover about students who by and large have very little social consciousness--much less than during those terrible years of the late '60s and early '70s. Those were terrible years to some extent, but they also had their very positive aspects. These were people who cared; they didn't know how to express their care and sometimes expressed it in very destructive ways; but nevertheless they cared about something other than just themselves. And I see less altruism right now than I would like to see, and I'm really concerned. They are obviously reflective of our own society, I think, but we have a responsibility not to simply be reflective.

**JLR:** Now we have only a few minutes left. Would you like to make some comparisons or choose your own topic?

**WJ:** Well, as I think about the whole panorama of high school, small denominational school, and then a first-rate liberal arts school in Beloit, and Berea--a very distinctive school, and then Moorhead State--a considerably better-than-average state school, I think I've been very, very fortunate to have that breadth of experience. I think each one of those schools has had something very distinctive to offer. I'm very proud, however, of Moorhead State. By and large, it seems to me that this institution has achieved a level of maturity, a level of community acceptance that is high, that is an extra-ordinarily well administered institution, and I'm very proud that I've had a part in that whole period of growth, and I think I've made a contribution towards that. So I'll look at that as an accomplishment that gives me a great deal of satisfaction.

**JLR:** I want to congratulate you on your entire career and most specifically for the years that you've been at Moorhead State University because I can sort of represent the public and the grapevine knowledge of what goes on here that you've done a great job; and I think the time is just about up, Lee, so you can cut it off.