

William Jefferson Clinton History Project

Interview with

Paul David Leopoulos

Little Rock, Arkansas

3 April 2002

[Session I]

Interviewer: Michael Pierce

Michael Pierce: This is Michael Pierce with the Clinton History Project. I'm here in Little Rock, Arkansas. It's April 3, 2002. I'm with Paul Leopoulos. One thing I want to ask you, Mr. Leopoulos, is about yourself. Where you were born, your education, where you've lived all of your life.

Paul Leopoulos: I was born in Hot Springs in 1946. I really lived there my whole life. I was raised in Hot Springs up on Park Avenue, which is about a block and a half from where President Clinton moved to. I went to grade school at a school called Randall School, then Hot Springs Junior High School and Hot Springs Senior High School. I went to a local university in Arkadelphia, Henderson University. Then, I went into the service. After the service, I went back to graduate school and so on and so forth.

MP: What did your father do?

PL: My father was a restaurant owner. Most Greeks in that town either had a restaurant or had something to do with a restaurant. He had a little restaurant on this little street—really they say it's the shortest street in America—called Bridge

Street. He had, in the early 1950s, a little donut shop. Later on, he had a theme type of restaurant and it was very, very popular.

MP: What type of food was it?

PL: Actually, a lot of it was Greek gourmet kind of food that you'd buy in a real fancy place, but it was a little, everyday sort of restaurant. So, for a \$1.65, you'd go in and get a wonderful meal. He had Greek dishes, and then some southern dishes like country fried steak.

MP: There's not a large indigenous population of Greeks in Arkansas. How did he get down to Hot Springs?

PL: Actually, there was a rather large population of Greeks. A certain number of the Greeks were into the gambling, and owned some of the casinos and all that. In fact, my father's brother was part owner of "The Breakers". But my father wasn't. We didn't believe in gambling, so we weren't a part of any of that. There were a lot of Greeks at the Greek parties on all the Greek holidays out at the lake, at the Pappas' home out at the lake. I'm not saying it was thousands of Greeks, but there was probably one hundred or so families.

MP: What was Hot Springs like in the early 1950s?

PL: I've been out there a million times. It was a very pleasant place to grow up. I lived up on Park Avenue. It was very hilly. You could look out your door and see the mountains and the trees. We'd go hiking all the time. I know President Clinton and I and another friend, Ronnie Cecil, would go hiking over the mountains. We'd go from our house over the mountains and go downtown from the back. It was a wonderful place to grow up. It was a very simple life. I guess

you'd say we were lower middle class, what you'd call, as far as money was concerned. I have nothing but positive memories about it.

MP: There's this image of Hot Springs as a wide open town—the gambling, the racehorses. Was that remote from you growing up?

PL: Well, yes. To a six, eight, ten year old kid, it was there as far as the nightlife. But in terms of crime, as far as being afraid to walk down the street at night, there was nothing like that. “The Breakers” and “The Belvedere” and those clubs would have really good shows, and my dad would take us there. We'd watch Tony Bennett, Liberace, and all these old entertainers.

MP: One of the things people remark upon was the racial situation in Hot Springs. What was it like in the early 1960s? Did black and white people mingle then?

PL: We certainly didn't go to school together. I don't remember it as an issue until the Faubus Central High incident. [The 1957 Little Rock Central High School integration crisis] I just really don't remember it. I would wonder at times why there were no black people around at school and stuff like that. But, it seemed normal almost. My dad hired black people in the restaurant. My parents taught us against racial prejudice. My mom was very strongly opinionated about that. In fact, the day that we left for his inauguration, we were having lunch at a Mexican restaurant here in Little Rock. We had just been to see the Ernest Green/Disney film that was made, and they had it at Central High and had a big reception for that and everything. He was still a little high from that when we had lunch the next day. He said, “You know, your mom is the one who sat me down and said ‘There's no room for prejudice, no room for that kind of behavior, that kind of

thought process.” He said, “She was one of the main cogs that led to that for me.”

MP: Was there an incident that led your mom to sit Bill Clinton down?

PL: I can't recall an exact incident. He just told me about it. I do remember that my mom was a big, big, church-going woman in the Episcopal Church. She led prayer groups and so on in Hot Springs. This incident just happened after the Faubus thing and the world was in turmoil—or the state was. I remember she came home one day, and we went to church every Sunday and she taught us everything she could about God and all the beliefs. She came home and said, “I've quit the church.” I was absolutely—I was real young. A young kid. Here I'd been going to church and she'd been a leader in that aspect of my life, and I was blown away. I said, “What happened?” She said they were having a church meeting and they were discussing how they would react if a black person came into the church. She stood up and said, “If we have to discuss this, then I don't need to be going to this church.” So, I was real proud of her. That's just who she was.

MP: The summer of 1963, the Clinton family moved to Park Avenue. Do you remember the first time you met Bill Clinton?

PL: I didn't meet him that summer. I met him the next fall at Randall School. I'll never forget this. I met him on the playground. I was a real unhappy first grader. I wasn't a good student and my parents had never taught me to read much before going to school. I was real scared about going to class. I was out in the playground and I just knew that I was in a bad situation. I just wasn't feeling

confident. I'll never forget this. He walked up to me and said, "Hi. I'm Bill Clinton. What's your name?" I didn't really have any friends and we established our friendship right there. Then I learned that he just lived down the street from me.

MP: How many houses down?

PL: I lived on a street called Edgewood. Edgewood was about four houses from Park Avenue. Then there was another five houses to Bill's house. I spent a lot of time over there. I'd walk down there every day in the summer.

MP: What would you do during the summer?

PL: Man, that was the good life. I could go back to that. His mom worked, so we'd be there by ourselves a lot in the summers. We'd go in the backyard and play touch football and argue all the time about—it was always wrong or right arguments. Then we'd go in and get something to eat. Mrs. Clinton—Virginia—she was like my second mom. She'd always have the refrigerator stocked with peach and vanilla ice cream. I remember this big freezer was on the bottom, which was weird, because ours was this little tiny thing on the top. He'd make peanut butter and banana sandwiches for us, so we'd eat. In fact we made peanut butter and banana sandwiches in the White House one night. He's not too good to take care of you. He's always a humble guy. As governor, in the mansion, he'd make sandwiches for you. We played Monopoly a lot. Canasta. We loved playing Canasta. Those are my memories.

MP: Who would play touch football with you?

PL: It was typically he and I just passing the ball. Ronnie Cecil was another good friend. He'd come up and he'd spend the afternoon, or whatever. Rose Crane lived behind Bill with her brother Larry. They both live in Little Rock now. We'd get together, little kids, big kids.

MP: What was the house like on Park?

PL: It seemed really big to me. We stayed downstairs most of the time. I remember that when you came in the back door, there was a kitchen to the left and the dining room to the right. You went down this little hall way to somebody's bedroom. On the right side, further down the hall was the living room. Upstairs, it was sort of neat. They had some more rooms, bedrooms and things. Then there was this room that had the little wet bar in there, and this gold, Indian style table and chairs of leather. We'd go up there and play cards at the card table. We'd have dances up there at birthday parties and stuff.

MP: You mentioned Virginia. Do you remember his stepfather, Roger Clinton?

PL: I do. And you know, I knew nothing about all of the trouble that was going on in that house. Bill never mentioned it. He never cried about it or complained about it. I never heard a word about it. The first thing that I learned about it was in that *New Yorker* article that came out in very early 1991. But I do remember him being around. He was very thoughtful. Sort of laying around if he was there. He was just very quiet.

MP: Looking back, do you remember any signs in hindsight?

PL: I don't remember anything except that he just wasn't there much. When he was there, he really didn't take part in anything—you know, play ball or anything. I

do remember one thing that Bill did, and he probably still does this. If we'd be playing a game, the next thing I knew he was kind of locked in a thought and just unavailable. It was just the two of us. I'd be talking to him and all of a sudden I'd not get an answer, and he'd be just kind of gone. Thinking now, maybe something had happened and he was focusing on it or worried about it. I don't know.

MP: You know—people talk about even at the elementary school—he had such a need to be liked at the elementary school. Do you think that's a fair statement?

PL: I don't know if it's a fair statement if it's made that he needed more of that than anyone else. I think everyone wants to be needed and needs to be needed. I think that he was very friendly and very personable. He naturally attracted people. He's a very loyal person. We've been friends now since then. We're still, as far as I'm concerned, the best friends we've ever been. Through thick and thin, I've not been able to donate millions of dollars to his campaigns or do anything, but we're friends. I think that possibly, though, because of the lack of a true father figure—a healthy father figure—that maybe he did need. That's okay. I don't see anything wrong with that.

MP: What was he like at school.

PL: He was neat, you know? He was real smart, but you didn't know it.

MP: How so?

PL: He just doesn't flaunt it. He doesn't flaunt his vocabulary. He doesn't flaunt his intelligence. He just tries to make people feel good and tries to give to other people. When you're giving to others, then you're taking the [unintelligible]

yourself. So people liked Bill. Now, he was very competitive, and some people don't like that. You can get in an argument. You can argue with Bill Clinton. He's strictly competitive like when you're playing sports, and you can get in a yelling match and stuff like that. However, never anything beyond that. He can never hold a grudge, it was just that moment. This wasn't fair, this was wrong. Then, boom, it's over. That's something I always appreciated because that's kind of like how life is. You get in a situation, then you move on.

MP: One of the big events in his life over on Park Avenue was the birth of his brother. Do you remember that?

PL: That was a big deal. He was so thrilled. He took care of that Roger! Of course, that changed everything, right? Now he had his obligations. He took them. He wanted those obligations.

MP: He took care of Roger?

PL: He was like a parent in many ways. Again, because Virginia would be working at the hospital operating. Not operating, but doing her anesthesiology job. I guess they called her away for emergencies and regular scheduled stuff. They were there quite a bit by themselves. He fed him and watched him and took care of him and protected him. He always had a wonderful attitude about it. Of course, I was just a young kid too, but I didn't have that kind of attitude about it.

[Laughter] But I should have, and everything was fine.

MP: You were in elementary school during the Little Rock crisis. Do you remember talking to Bill Clinton about it at all? Was it even on the radar screen at that time, for an eleven year old?

PL: I've tried to conjure that up for the past ten years, because everyone asks me that question. The only thing I've got a sense of was that there was a real worry. You were really worried. Here were the newspapers with these army men that you play with out in the dirt, and these army men are now in Little Rock. It looked pretty scary. From my perspective, I'm pretty sure that we were just concerned, but we didn't understand it. Now Virginia, during those years—every time she'd come home and we'd come running in the house to meet her, she always had some issue that she'd be talking about. Even from the time when we were little. About the sick. Public health care. People at the hospital who didn't have health insurance and they were real sick, maybe died because they couldn't get enough health care early enough. She'd be mad about that. Or poor people couldn't afford drugs. She just pounded on that stuff. I just know that's why he became a real issue person because he learned from his mom, who desperately cared about those situations.

MP: It was in the early 1960s that the Clinton family moved from Park Avenue to Sullivan. Not the Clinton family, but Virginia, Bill and Roger. Can you tell us if you talked to Bill Clinton about the move and what he said?

PL: Yes. I don't have any recollection about the reason. All I know is that my best friend was moving across town. I had to find a way. I never had a car until my senior year in college. How was I going to get out there? That was my issue. But no, I don't have recall.

MP: How far is it?

PL: Probably ten miles. You have to [go] all the way and down through Hot Springs. I'll have to measure that some day, because I made it out there!

MP: What was the new house like?

PL: Oh, man. It was day and night. It was one of those new, all electric homes. I remember that it had one of those new, fancy—I'm talking like an old person, but I am! [Laughs] I'm fifty-five. But it had everything electric. It was one story and sort of spread out. It had a nice family room in the middle of the house. It wasn't huge. In fact, it wasn't as large as their other house by any means. But it was very nice. The yard was kind of small and we had a harder time playing touch football because it wasn't quite as large. There was a big, big shrub right against Caroline's house—Caroline Slater who moved in next door. Make a touch down and run into a shrub in one direction. Make a touch down and run into a chain link fence in the other direction.

MP: By this time, you had to realize that there were problems between Virginia and Roger Clinton. Do you remember Bill dealing with those issues?

PL: All I remember is just probably some moodiness and things. But he never talked about it. I'm not sure you'll find anyone he ever talked about it with. Maybe you will, but he doesn't talk about his problems.

MP: Why do you think that is?

PL: I wouldn't have known it then by any means. They take care of their problems. They deal with them. They attack them. Just like the one with Roger on drugs. They get him into counseling. They take it and they go on. I guess it's been

written a billion times that in the South, people just don't talk about their problems, and maybe that's got something to do with it.

MP: There was a time when you two went to Hot Springs High School together.

PL: Yes.

MP: Can you describe something about Hot Springs High School?

PL: If you take the movie "American Graffiti;" there you go. The school was just a gorgeous place. There's kind of a service for the arts center and museum stuff they have. It's really a neat place. You go in the front doors and it's got the brick and it's got these spiral things in the front and this spiral staircase going up to the other floors. It was very [much] a 1950s, "American Graffiti" feel to the place. It was a real central existence to be in school then. We had our football games on Friday night, which we hardly [ever] won because we were awful. Bill was in the band, and the band, as far as weight was concerned, should have been our linemen, and vice versa. Our football team was little, scrawny guys and our band was big guys like Bill who should have been our linemen. But it was fun. The stadium was packed every Friday. After the game you'd go to Flip's Ice Cream. That was car hops. It was heaven compared to today. I don't remember drugs at all. I'm sure it existed somehow in the waning moments somewhere, but they were not the predominant problem. Alcohol was the worst thing we did, that people typically did from 1962 to 1964. We didn't do any of that stuff. Typically after a game, we'd go to Flip's Ice Cream, then we'd go over to Bill's house to play Hearts—me and Bill, Rodney and Caroline and whomever. Caroline would

play the piano. We'd sit around and talk. It was just a real simple, uneventful, wonderful life.

MP: What was the mood like? Optimism?

PL: Oh, yes. We were happy kids. Even though he had a family that was disoriented, his mom was strong. She kept it as normal for him as possible. She welcomed us over all the time. I had a very strong family. We had good family. You know, it was a village. My parents would get after him. Virginia would get after me. It was wonderful. I wished we lived there again.

MP: I read once that Caroline Dale said that no one dated.

PL: Hardly at all. Even the big Bill Clinton. He was popular and everything. He dated at times, but he didn't have a girl going steady with him year in and year out. We just didn't do all that. I've taught my kids not to do all that. It locks you down and you can't live your life. I mean, you have this false sense of obligation.

MP: I've lost my place. Clinton was involved with music at the time.

PL: Yes.

MP: With the saxophone?

PL: Yes, with the saxophone. But I never saw him practice and I never saw him study. I thought, "How in the hell can he be so smart?" But, he did it late at night. He was a night owl all the time. He'd do his fun stuff with his, and then I guess in the middle of the night or early in the morning—I don't know. There would be times when he'd say, "No, I've got to practice." or "No, I've got to study." He was a hard worker.

MP: Did you ever spend the night over there?

PL: Now and then as young kids, but not very much. That was it. Maybe just two or three times. We just didn't do that a lot.

MP: I was going to ask if he stayed up until three because you were over there.

PL: My kids, all kids do that.

MP: Who were the teachers at Hot Springs High School that he was close to?

PL: A lot of them. I'm so bad at names now. I just cannot remember the names. Mrs. Memphis. I believe that she taught French. Mrs. Bell taught Biology, I believe. Mrs. Matthew we all loved, even though she was a tyrant.

MP: She was the principal?

PL: She was the assistant principal, then she became principal. Mr. Humble was principal when we first got there, then she took over after that. Mr. Spurling, the band guy. What a prince of a man! Everyone loved him. He's still alive and just a good guy. Mr. Wilson taught English.

MP: Did Bill have a close relationship with any of these?

PL: Well, there were a lot of them because he was so darned smart. He made a "B" in one class, and oh my gosh! the feathers flew. I think it was English. He was arguing and going on. In English, I think, he would debate. I'd just watch because I wasn't smart enough to talk.

MP: What about the "B"? Was he upset with the grade? the teacher? himself?

PL: Probably all three. I'm sure that she was being a little over-tenacious with him. I seem to remember that he thought it was unfair for some reason. I don't remember the specifics. I remember that. I don't think he won, but he fought for his rights.

MP: How much thought did Bill Clinton put into being a student leader?

PL: Oh, that's all he ever did! But not from the perspective of, "I'm going to be class president every year," or "I'll be the leader of every group." He just did stuff. You'd see a kid wandering in the front door and it would be obvious he was a new student. He'd go right over to him and take him into the office and show him around. He was just so gracious and caring. He was noted for that—that kind of leadership. He did run for stuff. He did lose an election. I can't remember to whom, but he was upset about that.

MP: To Caroline Kelly [unintelligible]. . .

PL: Was it to Staley, I mean Kelly [unintelligible]? She keeps saying he never forgave her for that, but I'm sure he did. He was just mad. He's just a competitor. If he goes through something, he just goes through something.

MP: Much of the [unintelligible] thought of Clinton going to meet President Kennedy. Did Clinton really talk that much about politics?

PL: I am so glad to tell the truth about this, because I'm sick of reading the news accounts that he has always been running for president. Well, he probably always has since he got to Georgetown or something, but when he was in junior high and high school and things, we all loved Kennedy. He was someone we could love. Here was the big, rich guy, who loved to help poor people. Wow! What a concept! And we haven't had anyone like that since. We admired politics because he was a head politician, and we liked him. I never heard Bill say—and in fact Caroline and I would tease him. Caroline and I have known that he was going to president since we were fourteen or fifteen years old. He's such an

exceptional, intellectual people person—communicator—and he's brilliant. How can you be anything but president when you have all that? We would tease him about that.

MP: In high school?

PL: No, in junior high. He would get so mad at us. He just didn't believe that, number one. Number two, that was an egotistical kind of thing, and he's just not an egotistical guy. When we got into high school, politics became very serious during the Russians incident. You're getting older. You're thinking back to the Faubus thing, and you're taking things more seriously. So, issues became very important to him at a very early age—fifteen, sixteen, seventeen years old.

MP: He talked about the Cold War?

PL: Oh, yes. And Virginia? My God, she never stopped that. In the kitchen, of course when he was that age, he'd debate her. So, they got into some heated stuff about the death penalty and all kinds of things.

MP: How did he feel about the death penalty?

PL: Oh, gosh. I'm not sure if he understood it. But I know when he was governor, he did a lot of research on it. However, in high school, I'm not sure that he understood it enough to be against it. I'm for it, and I've always [unintelligible] tragedy in my life [unintelligible] president made. But he's always tried to be fair. He always tried to do the right thing. Anyhow, we had this love affair with Kennedy, and all these issues cropping up. We almost go to war, and all these major issues are cropping up. Then, Kennedy gets killed. Of course, he'd met Kennedy. When he came back from them, I don't think he was far into that, but

he was excited. To meet the President of the United States! I think what was residual excitement about politics certainly turned into something where he said, “Wow! This is something I could do.” But he never said, “I’m going to be president some day!” He may have been thinking it—now I can’t say that he wasn’t thinking it, but everybody thinks that at one time.

MP: One thing you mentioned earlier was alcohol, and that it doesn’t have a big role in his life. It seems odd for someone growing up in an alcoholic household.

PL: That is odd when they don’t do the same thing.

MP: But did he go the other way? Like, “I’ll never touch the stuff.”? A teetotaler kind of thing?

PL: Oh, no. He’s been very practical about it. Now and then he’ll drink something. When we get together—we’ll probably get together when he comes to town in a couple of weeks. We’ll get together and play “Hearts” all night long, and there’s no wine. There’s nothing there. We have Cokes or water, and it’s always been that way. He’s never been judgmental about it, like, “You’re going to hell and you’ll be an alcoholic.” He’s got a very healthy attitude about it. His mom, again, was so strong. His father died of lung cancer because he smoked—that taught him that lesson. I think that thanks to his mother being so strong, and the other parents—see, my mom and dad smoked, but I never did smoke. I think it’s a healthy attitude.

MP: Do you remember his decision of where to go to college?

PL: Ha! Well, he never said, “I’m going to go to Georgetown and here’s why.” It just happened. Mrs. Imes was our counselor at the high school. We used to joke about

this, because I was an awful student. I never studied. All my friends were brilliant and smart. She worked a lot with all the smart people, and I [laughs] never talked to her at all. God rest her soul, she's dead now. We'd joke to her about that, so I'm not saying anything that I'd never have said to her. But, there's no doubt that I think he was interested in politics, and foreign affairs was mentioned by the time he got to his senior year. So, where else do you go? He had the brains to do it. They didn't have the money to do it, but he got there.

MP: That's one of the things I wanted to ask you about. They didn't have the money?

PL: He worked his butt off the whole time. I don't know how many jobs he had at Georgetown, but I know he had two at least.

MP: Did he ever work in high school?

PL: In the summers. But during the school year, I don't think so.

MP: What is a [unintelligible]?

PL: Oh! I still don't know what one is. I rode in one. It's a little sports car that's yellow, I guess.

MP: And Clinton rode that on weekends?

PL: I guess. I don't remember the rules. I remember being in it one day, and this is so funny. We were going out toward the park, and there was this big light over the trees at Grand and Ouachita. This lady, I'll never forget this, was crossing the street with these grocery bags. Bill slowed down and his hubcaps came off and started rolling toward this lady. She panicked and started running across the street. I guess you had to be there. Yes, he didn't drive fast in this little huffy car.

I don't even know how to describe it. It was this little convertible, yellow and I have no idea . . .

MP: It was a sports car?

PL: Yes. It was a sports kind of car.

MP: I've never heard of one.

PL: I don't know. Get on the internet and check it out.

MP: I think I'll have to. So, he went off to Georgetown and you went off to Henderson. You stayed in touch?

PL: Oh, yes. We wrote letters quite a bit. Like everyone, I didn't save the letters, even though he was going to be president. We'd see each other on holidays, some.

MP: Did you see any changes in him when he came from Georgetown?

PL: I didn't see any change. He was the same guy he was in grade school. He doesn't change. He becomes more thorough, more comprehensive because he knows more and does more, but he's got the same basics that he had.

MP: What would you do when you saw him on the breaks?

PL: Touch football.

MP: Touch football?

PL: In fact, when we lived out on Scully, the only place with enough room was the graveyard out there where my mom is buried. We used to go out and go to the part of the graveyard that didn't have a lot of tombstones [laughter] and play touch football. Freezing cold, and we'd be wearing t-shirts. You know how teenagers are.

MP: Yes. Where did Caroline Yell Bell go?

PL: She went to Ouachita Baptist.

MP: Down there in Arkadelphia with you?

PL: Yes. I didn't see her much. We just, you know . . .

MP: The campuses are so far away.

PL: [Laughs] Yes! I used to deliver pizzas to the dorms at Ouachita. My dad had a little restaurant that burned down when I was in college down there. I'd go over there. Bill would come home. We'd play "Hearts," football, and talk. We did a lot of talking.

MP: What would you talk about?

PL: Everything. I mean, certainly politics and things a lot. Issues. The same stuff. It hasn't changed. We still do it. Hopefully this Friday, on the sixteenth of this month, and all night long—oh, the nineteenth.

MP: Do you remember on these breaks from college ever talking about Vietnam? Was that on the radar screen?

PL: Well, when we were that far along in college—when did that war start?

MP: Really 1964, 1965 with the Gulf of Tonkin.

PL: I graduated from high school in 1964. Then, 1964 to 1968 was college. Not really. I was in ROTC [Reserve Officers' Training Corps], and he was [unintelligible] we know where he was. I assumed that I was going to go to Vietnam. I didn't want to go. I was scared to death, like everyone else. If you weren't, you were an idiot. I don't mean that. I mean that if you're not scared, that's strange and there's something wrong. No, we'd just have fun because we

were never together that long. I think, I know we must have talked about the war, and must have talked about the obvious things. You know, “It’s wrong.” and “We shouldn’t be there.” Not fighting it there, but just talking. But we didn’t talk, we seldom talk about anything controversial, not anything that people might want to hear.

MP: He had his first serious girlfriend in college, Denise Highland.

PL: Denise!

MP: Did you ever meet her?

PL: Yes. I didn’t meet her then. I met her years later. I probably met her the first time in 1992, when he ran for president.

MP: Did you hear about her back then?

PL: No.

MP: He kept that kind of shut off. It wasn’t important enough?

PL: Well, yes, he never came over and said, “I’ve got this girlfriend,” or “I’m in love,” or “I’m dating this girl.” In my mind, Bill Clinton dating someone and getting married just didn’t seem like a possibility in those years. Then, I got curious. You know, “Who is he going to end up with? What kind of person is she going to be?”

[End of Tape 1, Side 1]

[Beginning of Tape 1, Side 2]

MP: Did you ever visit him in Georgetown?

PL: No. I never got up there. Are you kidding me? I was working my way through college, and just barely. It was funny. I’d get my ROTC check and my check for

working in the union from this window for each month, and I'd turn around and give the check to that window, and I'd have \$20.00 for the month. So, no, I never made it Georgetown.

MP: At the end of college, you went to Italy in the army?

PL: Yes. I went into the army and went to a couple of schools. Then, to get out of going to Vietnam, I enlisted an extra year and they gave me a choice about where I would be stationed. I said, "On the other side of the world from Vietnam!" and they sent me to Italy.

MP: What did you do?

PL: I was in communications. I was an officer. I'd been in ROTC in college and I was an officer and I managed what was called an [unintelligible] system, a large communication system. We sent messages around the world. It was a big challenge. It was fun over there.

MP: What was Italy like?

PL: It was wonderful. I'd like to go back. I haven't been back, but it was a very friendly, beautiful place. My job took up a lot of time, but I did live in a nice place out in the community, in a town called Turin, Italy. I went on a couple of vacations. I had a tragedy in that my mom was killed in 1969—no, 1970. I didn't do anything after that, not much that was fun. When she was killed, my first phone call, I'll never forget, came to my job out in Italy and my dad had called to tell me my mom had been called. I hung up and the phone rang. It was Bill. How he got that phone number, I don't know. Then, my daughter was killed nine months ago, and Bill called. But, it was a wonderful, wonderful experience over

there. In fact, he made me come up to Oxford to try to help me get through my tragedy. I took the train up there.

MP: Did you travel with an army [unintelligible]?

PL: Yes. I traveled with Steve Gorman, a friend of mine who lives in Philadelphia, and he's a fine fellow. I was an officer and he was an enlisted man. We weren't supposed to do that, but I don't believe in those rules. So, we went to England together. We got off the train and Bill met us with a girlfriend that he had, I can't remember her name. Freckle-faced, beautiful, wonderful girl. He met us in London. We got off the train and he had this big beard and his hair was long. We walked down and he said, "Let's go to the Tate Museum." We went in there and he was telling us all this stuff about paintings. I said, "When did you learn all this stuff about art?" He said, "Oh, I just read a few books." He was just gorged with knowledge. That was a hoot. Then, I remember him taking Steve and I punting on the Thames.

MP: What's punting?

PL: You get in a flat bottomed boat, and you have a big pole. One person stands up and they push you down the river. I used to have a picture of that, but now I can't find it. I stayed in his house in Oxford. He took me through all the colleges, and he explained all this stuff to me. It was a real education. He was trying to keep my mind busy. I remember having Indian food one night, and it was so hot I could barely breathe. His house was so nice. It was well kept. Everyone wants to say, "Oh, he was on drugs." None of that. All these guys were really friendly, really working hard in education and having fun too. It was good for him.

MP: Did you talk to him about the draft or Vietnam?

PL: You know, I don't ever remember that topic, a serious, "I don't believe in this Paul, or David." I don't remember any of that. I do remember talking about the war, but it wasn't this—I mean, nobody liked the war, but it wasn't this kind of drum he was beating every single second.

MP: Did he ever come to Italy? I know he traveled some.

PL: No, he didn't. Ronnie did though. He was stationed in Germany and drove down to see me. I wish he had. He loves pizza, you know.

MP: Don't we all. Is it about time?

PL: Yes, I'd better.

[End of Session I Interview]