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Interview with
Dr. Paul Smith
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Place of Interview: Denton, Texas

Interviewer: Dr. E. Dale Odom

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(Signature)

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Oral History Collection

Dr. Paul Smith

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Dr. Odom: This is E. Dale Odom on August 1, 1968, interviewing Dr. Paul Smith on the search for a new president for North Texas State University in the year 1968. For the record . . . for this record, Dr. Smith, would you briefly state the events when President Matthews announced that he was retiring and announced that we were going to have a mixed elective and appointive committee to assist the Regents in the process of selecting a new president. Begin wherever you would like to there.

Dr. Smith: Well, I guess we all read the announcement in the newspaper after which we were told that the Regents had requested that a committee be appointed and elected to represent the faculty and the administration in doing precisely two things: to determine the functions that the president of the University should perform as well as to stipulate his qualifications. After some time passed, the schools

of the University elected representatives. I was elected by the School of Education, which includes the Department of Education, the Physical Education Department and the Industrial Arts Department, representing about 120 faculty members for this project.

Odom: Could I interject a question here? Would you like to comment on the process of that election in your particular school?

Smith: Well, I . . .

Odom: Did you do any politicking?

Smith: I absolutely didn't but it is natural that people will talk to one another and say, "Who would be a good representative?" I suggested the name of a colleague, feeling that this could be quite a controversial thing, requiring many, many hours of effort. It happened that the election took place while I was off the campus attending a convention in Austin. When I arrived home, someone called me at nine o'clock that evening and said that I was elected to represent the School of Education. This was the first I knew about it.

Odom: Were you given any kind of charge or any kind of directions or instructions or any of this sort by the . . . the faculty of the School of Education or by the dean or anybody there?

Smith: I received no directions from my dean. When we began to proceed in the deliberations of the committee, I organized a committee composed of a representative from each of the various areas or departments of the School of Education. I called it my "Executive Committee," and I wanted to use these people as a sounding board in order to get more nearly the true sentiment of the people whom I represented. From time to time I used this committee throughout the many months of the deliberations.

Odom: Were they helpful?

Smith: They were most helpful. As a matter of fact, one of the first things that we did in the Faculty Advisory Committee was to write a statement . . . that is, each of the eleven members was asked to write the functions and qualifications of the president as though he were doing the final report himself. We were given but three days to do this, which is quite a task. In drafting my statement, I had rather close cooperation with the members of the so-called Executive Committee.

Odom: Would you name the members of the . . . the Executive Committee you had over there, if you can recall them?

Smith: As I recall, Dr. Charles Clarke, represented the Department of Education; Dr. John Bouthitt, Health

and Physical Education, men's division; Dr. Irma Caton, Health and Physical Education, women's division; and Dr. Jerry McCain, Industrial Arts.

Odom: Let me call your attention to the first meeting of the full committee, eleven members, and would you state, if you can recall, what took place there and who was there other than the members of the committee and so on?

Smith: Well, the first meeting, as I recall, was a tense meeting. Naturally, this was the organizational meeting. Since four members were representing the administration and appointed by President Matthews, the elected members wondered what influence this would have on the selection of the chairman. We really went into this meeting without organization or pre-planning, but I still recall the tenseness of the moment. You could almost cut the air with a knife. One name was proposed, and another name was proposed--neither of whom received a majority. Then a counter-proposal was made, and actually there was a tie, and finally I got . . .

Odom: A tie with eleven?

Smith: Well, I must clarify this because Mr. John Carter, vice president, was at an official meeting and was

not present. So, therefore, it was possible for a tie. We deliberated for some time wondering what to do. And finally we decided we would take another vote.

Odom: On the same two people?

Smith: On the same two people. And after the second vote, Dr. Miles Anderson of the Physics Department was elected chairman.

Odom: What then did you further do at that first meeting?

Smith: Well, we did very little else during the first meeting other than to set a date when we would come together and attempt to do some thinking as to the procedures that should be followed in moving forward, sort of setting the ground rules. It was an organizational meeting.

Odom: Did it appear at that first meeting that there would be any very important conflicts among the members of the committee about what you wanted to do with this group of diverse people within the University anyway?

Smith: I wouldn't say that there were any apparent conflicts at this particular moment. We were seeking direction, and we . . . we hadn't arrived at any degree of . . . organization whereby conflicts could arise.

Odom: Were you very much aware at the time of what role or how much influence or how much power you were going to have in . . . in this process of selection of the new president?

Smith: We were not at all sure of what our place would be. Going on past history many committees had been named and some elected, and we were naturally a little skeptical as to whether this was window dressing, just a mere surface manifestation or whether we actually would play a vital role in the selection of the president. We weren't at all sure. As a matter of fact, most of the committee members were quite skeptical.

Odom: I see. Did Dr. Matthews appear at that first meeting to tell you anything about what you were to do or anything?

Smith: Actually, our first meeting, as I recall, was an organizational meeting, and Dr. Matthews played no part in this. But when we held the second regular meeting we requested him to be there, and he volunteered to come during which time he went over as best he could his interpretation of the role of a president, giving us sort of a historical perspective of this office. And this was very

helpful to the committee in beginning its function. He, as best he could, outlined our charge as was given to him by the Board of Regents.

Odom: Did this do any more to satisfy you or to inform you as to what your role in this was going to be?

Smith: Well, it certainly was most helpful, and he was very frank and candid and open in his assessment of what our task would be as well as what he felt the function of the president should be. For instance, he rather explicitly said that it's going to be necessary to pay him more money in this day and age in order to get the kind of leadership we need. Then when we asked for something more specific . . . for a figure on this, he actually came out and said, "We might have to pay as much as \$35,000."

Odom: At this second meeting, then, am I correct, this is where you sent off everybody to write up a . . . his idea of what the role and qualifications of the president ought to be?

Smith: As I recall, the second meeting was largely a meeting with Dr. Matthews. We didn't determine that this would be the way we would begin our work. But we met on Sunday. We met in the office next to the Dean of . . . of the School of Education, and it was during this meeting that we decided that

each of us should perform this task individually and then we would work the process of combining the individual reports.

Odom: Well, when you got back the individual reports, then what did you do with them?

Smith: Well, actually, when the individual reports were requested we only had just about two and a half days to complete them. This took a lot of midnight oil, particularly when I needed to get some help from my executive committee. We had originally planned to work in two groups of three and one of four. No, actually two groups of four and one group of three. And then the sub-groups went to work to combine each of the individual groups into one group so that ultimately we came out with three full reports.

Odom: So you worked on these individual reports, then you worked on, say, three, three, and four, or you did go about it individually first. And then . . .

Smith: Individually and then we combined them so that ultimately we came out with four . . . with three groups with three reports.

Odom: Was there . . . were there any notable differences in the kinds of type and quality of . . . of these different . . .

Smith: They certainly were quite different. As a matter of fact, three members . . . two rather powerful members who represented the president were in one group, and this report was very general--not at all specific. However, it was very well done. But some of the other groups, particularly the one I worked on, spent ten hours working preparing our final report. And we had many penetrating discussions on philosophy and belief and . . .

Odom: Within your three.

Smith: Within . . . there were four. And I think this was most helpful. We had some bitter disagreements here, but it was all academic. No personal clashes whatsoever in the philosophy of what a leader should be. I distinctly recall that we got into a discussion of whether a leader is made or a leader is born. A good colleague from the English Department had the feeling that a leader is born. Well, some of us who were in other areas and other disciplines felt that much needs to be done to develop leadership characteristics in a person.

Odom: Would you care to say who was on the committee . . . on the sub-committee with you?

Smith: On the sub-committee with me was Dr. Ellen Wright of the School of Home Economics, Dr. Littlefield,

a distinguished professor in the School of Business whose area was management, Silas Griggs, Dr. Silas Griggs of the English Department, and myself. Since Dr. Littlefield and I both worked in the field of leadership, we saw eye to eye in almost everything that we discussed, and we found ourselves sometimes having jovial arguments, particularly with Dr. Griggs. But it was all good-natured, and I think very helpful in raising our sights.

Odom: Did . . . what would you say . . . what's your estimation then of the final report which was really . . . taking a combination of the three sub-committees' reports? Did it reflect a good bit of the report that your group initiated?

Smith: Well, actually if one were to make an analysis of the three reports, the final . . . the first draft of the final report reflected very little of any of them. The committee, the sub-committee appointed by the chairman to do this task sort of went off on another tack and at first we were a little apprehensive as to the direction they had given the report. And after a number of meetings to analyze and criticize and make additions and deletions from the report, it was quite noticeable that it began

to take shape and form, but there were several things inbetween times that were happening that I think need to be brought to focus before we could discuss a final report.

Odom: I see. Okay. At what point did the controversial TACT and AAUP resolutions enter this thing where the . . . I believe, first the meeting of TACT passed by a fairly narrow margin a resolution which they would like to recommend to the faculty committee that the new president by a man with a Ph.D. in an academic subject and a . . . be outside . . . I believe, outside the campus or come from off this campus. And also I believe the AAUP passed a similar resolution.

Smith: Well, yes, I recall very distinctly. As a matter of fact, regarding the first point as to the nature or kind of degree he would have, we had discussed this rather in depth. We felt that we would go beyond the extend of our prerogatives in trying to spell out a specific kind of degree. We all agreed that the man should be scholarly. He should have leadership attributes. He should be recognized as a man of having done some research of recognition. He should be known on a national level, etc. But we

really felt this was not a matter of such grave importance, as emphasized in the TACT and AAUP resolutions; while we gave consideration to them, they in no sense upset the work of the committee. As a matter of fact, as I recall, I might make one correction. I think the resolutions were directed to the Regents, and then after we had discussed the precariousness of bypassing the committee simply because we might have more than one group from the campus going to the Regents. The campus groups then directed these resolutions to our committee, which we felt was proper.

Odom: Did you . . . I know that Dr. Anderson did oppose the making of these resolutions. Did you?

Smith: Yes. I did. As a matter of fact, each and every one of the eleven . . . eleven members opposed it. Most of us went to one of the meetings and voted together against them. Not that we weren't in sympathy with them, but it was the principle of the thing.

Odom: You said awhile ago that you didn't see in that initial meeting any evidence of any particular conflict. What about by the time you were getting down to . . . well, along toward the first draft at least of this report that you were going to

make to the Regents, had any tension or conflict here of a philosophical sort become more evident?

Smith: Well, not necessarily of the philosophical sort but to be more precisely, the matter of whether the new president should come within the University or outside of the University was always with us.

Odom: It was in the resolutions of TACT and AAUP that provided a little bit more of a charge or disruption.

Smith: Oh, they certainly did.

Odom: Already come into the open?

Smith: . . . this had come into the open or silently was there. It was underneath the surface constantly throughout all the deliberations of the committee.

Odom: Were there . . . you didn't actually, at this point up to the first draft of the report, you didn't actually bring this into the open or discuss it as a factor at all?

Smith: Well, it began to merge. It began to merge. Everyone knew that it was there, and the representatives, at least the three representatives of the administration . . . one representative was quite in sympathy with the faculty throughout most all of the process. At least some of us began to realize that we needed a broader base of sentiment. And so we proposed that we go to the entire faculty with a questionnaire

which would elicit more precisely the feelings and sentiments of the faculty on a whole range of things because we truly and sincerely wanted to turn out a report, which would be as nearly as possible an expression of faculty sentiment. It was quite an ordeal to develop an instrument that would do this and we had a good deal of controversy over the nature of the instrument.

Odom: I see. There were conflicts, then, over this.

Smith: Yes. . .

Odom: Not over doing it, but over the nature of the questionnaire?

Smith: Over the nature of the questionnaire. As a matter of fact, whether the questionnaire--the term was used--should be loaded. And "loaded" meant whether a faculty member would be permitted to express his opinion whether the new president should come from within the University or from the outside of the University. So a committee was . . . a subcommittee was appointed to draw up a questionnaire which would not be "loaded," (quotation marks). I happened to be chairman of this committee, and I felt at first that a rather objective type of questionnaire that could be reacted to quickly, like a polling device,

would be fitting. I received some help from people in the Psychology Department. One man had been with the Princeton Testing Bureau and actually we came out with what we thought was a fine instrument.

I took it to the other members of the committee, and they weren't at all sure that this was the kind of instrument that a faculty member would approve of. They wanted something more general in nature, a little bit more subjective where he could react open-endedly. So we spent eight or ten hours trying to reduce this process down to about six questions that could be reacted to on a 8 1/2 x 14 inch questionnaire. We felt that we were quite successful in doing this. We then distributed these questionnaires to the faculty and gave them a week to return them, we received a total of 242 from the faculty. Well, this was one of the finest things, I think that we did because for one time the faculty felt they were actually participating as individual faculty members in this entire process. We had proceeded in drawing up the final report at this time and we couldn't use many of our discoveries, but we used them as a check list. And we found

that we had included nearly everything in the report that the faculty called for, but it was interesting and this in particular . . . should be noted because this played a very vital part in the entire process.

We, of course, had difficulty in analyzing the faculty reports. We used eight faculty members, some of the finest . . . men in research that we could come up with from the various areas of the University, and we worked diligently for hours in attempting to analyze the feelings of the faculty. For example, we found that sixty-six per cent of those responding felt that the faculty had not been considered by the administration in the development of University policies. Perhaps another very significant point that needs to be brought out was the fact that fifty-seven per cent of all the faculty members stated that they felt the new president should come from outside the University, and this is particularly significant in that this question was not on the questionnaire. We also felt that it would be wise for each member of the committee to take these questionnaires home with him and spend at least two hours reading them.

This was just like reading a history book because faculty members gave vent to their feelings. There was no signature needed; however, some of the most important faculty members signed their names--one man as big as John Hancock on the Constitution, expressing his feeling about certain things pertaining to his experiences in the University.

Odom: This must've given all the members of the committee a . . . at least some of the members of the committee quite an education. In all were you aware of . . . were all of you, you think, aware of many of these sentiments?

Smith: Well, I think those of us who had been in the University for some time were quite aware of . . . the faculty sentiment. However, some individuals had their eyes opened. There was a little tactical thing that we did here that must be recognized. One member of the committee, who we knew regularly reported to the president, was used to carry a message. We arranged so that all the other members would receive the questionnaires first, and we gave the questionnaires to this man last and told him there was no need to turn them back immediately, that he could give them to the chairman in a week

or so. Well, we were quite sure that he passed them on to certain people. From this time on there was a change in sentiment. This was a very crucial . . . perhaps one of the most crucial things we did during the entire process of . . . of writing our report.

Odom: You say this was a crucial matter. Would . . . would you or could you elaborate on that just a bit?

Smith: Well, more precisely the plan, of course, was quite evident that the president had wanted his assistant, the Vice President for Administration, to be his successor. This was quite natural for him. It was quite evident that the majority of the faculty members felt that for the best interest of the University, we ought to have a new man, one completely without previous experience in the University. This is quite a natural thing. And, I think, up until this time the "in" group as it were, had high hopes that this could be accomplished. This, sort of, was the straw that broke the camel's back.

Odom: I see. So was there any noticeable change then in the temper of the committee or in the process from that point on? You say you think it was a crucial thing.

Smith: I think it was crucial. It was to many of us. We could notice that the . . . those who had hoped for a perpetuation of the same administrative procedures sort of gave up.

Odom: I see.

Smith: They began to look with greater favor toward a wider range of search.

Odom: I see. Well, let's see if we can return to the chronological order you were following there. You finished the first draft, I believe, of this report. By this time had you been receiving any actual names or nominations from the faculty or from other sources in this thing or when did they start coming in? You did receive some, I believe.

Smith: Well, yes. Some names were handed to various members of the committee, actually, but we were not at all sure just to what extent the committee would play in the screening of candidates and the screening of all of the various vita that came in and so we more or less just waited for further clarification from the Regents themselves.

Odom: Now when . . . at what point did you have your first meeting with the Board of Regents in this thing?

Smith: It was--I'm just going from memory--it seems to me about the 5th of December--it was early in December,

maybe it was the 9th of December. And we met with the committee, the selection committee of the Regents--five members--and that was a rather memorable occasion.

Odom: Did . . . at that time you had your final report.

Smith: Our final report had been typed, and . . . and it was printed and had been disseminated, and the members of the Regents' selection committee had . . .

Odom: They had it ahead of time.

Smith: They had it ahead of time, and they made an assessment of the report.

Odom: At this meeting did you have sort of . . . any sort of formal organization or what did you do at that meeting?

Smith: It was very informal. They dispersed themselves alternately, as much as possible, with members of the committee. It was informal; it was cordial. And I distinctly recall that they asked each member of the eleven-man committee to speak, to tell what he felt were the strengths and the weaknesses. I didn't realize until later they were doing a little searching for people to represent the faculty along with them, and later on I think they worked with the chairman of the committee. I recall they

said they wanted three members, the chairman and two others of his choice, to serve with them throughout the entire process of selecting the new president.

Odom: Then what . . . how was the choice of the other two members handled?

Smith: I actually don't know. We left the meeting and for a week we heard nothing. And finally one day our chairman, Dr. Anderson, phoned me and said he wanted to see me in the office. He paid a visit to me and asked me if I would serve as one of the three members.

Odom: I might inform you that he was told . . . rather he got the impression at least that there were probably some members of the committee that the board probably felt that it couldn't work too well with and that he was rather at a loss as to how to select these other two members. Finally, I believe he did just appoint two other members. And that . . . that's correct, isn't it?

Smith: I really had no knowledge as to what premise he followed in making his selection. It just occurred to me that perhaps one person, which was myself, was selected to represent the area of the professional

schools. The other member would represent the liberal arts area of the University. It seemed that this was the approach followed.

Odom: Then after you met with the Regents and presented your report, did your full committee continue any meetings thereafter?

Smith: No, the full committee did not continue to meet for some time, but committee members were kept informed through circulars from the chairman so that they were generally aware of what was going on, but not, of course, of the details of the meeting with the Regents' committee.

Odom: What did you do thereafter then? You say you were informed that you'd been appointed to this committee, and I believe Dr. Kendall Cochran of the economics faculty along with Miles Anderson, the chairman. What was your . . . were your next steps then?

Smith: Well, actually the next step we responded to a request, a call by the chairman, Mr. Pannell, to have the first meeting at the Fort Worth Club in Fort Worth, Texas. And at this particular meeting we were given the applications, the vitae of those who had up to this time applied for the position.

Odom: To the Regents.

Smith: To the Regents, yes. And from this point on I want to make it clear we were given every consideration and every respect. We served and functioned on this committee almost in every way with equal responsibility, as though we were members of the Regents, and we appreciated this a great deal.

Odom: Did . . . let me ask you this . . . at the, say, at the first meeting or perhaps at subsequent meetings, did you see any evidence that there might be opposition from some of the members of the Regents committee to the kind of general ideas or general qualifications that you had reported from your committee for the presidency?

Smith: No, I couldn't say that there was any opposition that was evident or that manifested itself. Generally speaking, the Regents committee was quite complimentary, and I think they had read, studied, digested, and pondered many hours over the report from the faculty committee. And this served as a guide, although there were times when there was a tendency, as would be natural, to depart here and there. But we always came back and stayed with our guidelines.

Odom: After you got the vitae then, did you . . . you had them there. Were you able to take these home

with you and to look them over or what?

Smith: Yes. We took them home. And each of us was given access to each and every bit of information, both on paper and verbally.

Odom: Did you at that time do any systematic reporting of the nominations or names that you may've received from the faculty?

Smith: Yes, each time we received a nomination from a faculty member, we made copies of this, and we turned it in to each member of the committee.

Odom: Well, what about the problem of getting vitae and all that on these individuals that you received?

Smith: Well, this was a problem, naturally. From the standpoint of good procedure, it would have been better if the committee would have had a chairman who could double as the secretary; we, naturally, had a chairman who would handle the correspondence and so on. But the president had started the procedure at the request of the Regents, and we used the president's good office as a clearing house for countless hundreds of letters and communications throughout the entire process.

Odom: President Matthews' office.

Smith: President Matthews' office. And he served in a

sense as a secretary in absentia. He did not meet with the Regents and never met with them with our group, but he did perform this function.

Odom: Did Mr. Wooten ever meet with you? He was an ex officio member, wasn't he?

Smith: Yes, Mr. Wooten was an ex officio member, and he met regularly with us.

Odom: What about any other ex officio members?

Smith: There were no other ex officio members. This eight man committee--five from the Regents, three from the faculty--composed the committee from beginning to end.

Odom: Now I understand . . . I believe I'm going back some here, but it is true that the original faculty committee did call in some students, didn't you, as ex officio members?

Smith: Well, we certainly did. We proposed that the President of the Student Body serve as an ex officio member and also the head of the Alumnae Association, Mr. Wells, serve as representative of the Alumnae Association. Mr. Wells attended but one meeting, and this was quite a spirited meeting. He said, "We want you to come right out and lay things on the line. If the faculty wants the man . . . new

president from the outside, it should say so. Frankly, I feel he should come from the outside, but I'm just one member of the Alumnae Association." And he felt that we should be courageous and . . . and attack this in a frank and open manner from beginning to end.

Odom: What about the student member? Did he contribute very much?

Smith: The student member, Mr. Charles Dixon, made an excellent contribution. Mr. Dixon did not attend all of the meetings because he was a very busy young man, but he demonstrated a great deal of maturity and wisdom, and I think this reflected favorably on the student body. I think the students had a feeling that they and at least some representation in this very, very important process.

Odom: He generally was in sympathy with the majority of the committee in what you wanted.

Smith: He certainly was. He was very courageous, forthright, and he expressed himself very ably. As a matter of fact, I was proud of him as a product of the University. Having had him in class once, I knew the young man. He is a very able person.

Odom: Let's get back then to the, I guess, the chronological

order we were following here to the period where the members . . . faculty members of the committee had been given the vitae. You were using President Matthews' office as sort of a clearing house formation. You were taking names from the faculty. What was the next step then . . . the next major step you made?

Smith: Well, the next major step in the sequence was for us, rather early, to begin screening the names and to see if applicants met the criteria. We began this in our first meeting. Actually, Mr. Pannell felt that we could work a full day and maybe part of another day and . . . come from eighty or ninety names, which we had originally, down to possibly fifteen. We hadn't been in the process very long when he saw this would be impossible, that we would need more time so we were given homework, and we took the lists home and worked on them individually. Then we met the following week in Dallas in the penthouse of the Dallas Federal Savings and Loan where we held our meetings from that time on. And this was, I think, a very good procedure. We actually eliminated quite a number of names the first meeting, and then we came together

hopefully attempting to get the list to about fifteen the second time around.

Odom: About how . . . what point in time would this have been? Is this the latter part of December, first part of January, would you say?

Smith: It was in January. We came together after we had eliminated the list to fifteen. We entered into the process by grading the candidates, but at the same time it was necessary to do some preliminary screening before we began to go deeper into the process. And while we were doing some preliminary screening, we began the grading process. Actually, we assigned a letter grade. A man receives a "A" or a "B" or a "B+" or a "C," and we went around the table, and each man gave his marks, his evaluation of an individual. It was rather humorous sometimes. The chairman was last, and sometimes he played . . . that is, chairman of the faculty committee, Dr. Anderson, and we accused him of sometimes voting with the majority in order to be popular, (chuckle) but he had his own views, of course, and did a good job.

Odom: This then went on at, I guess, one meeting or . . .

Smith: No, actually the first . . . the grading process

took place the first meeting, and the next meeting we were doing preliminary screening. Some of the preliminary screening was by telephone.

Odom: Were there any noticeable disagreements or any pattern of difference of opinion on the type of candidates you were grading there in the beginning?

Smith: Not really. Not really. We had begun to formulate a concept of the type of leader we needed. But there's something else I might interject at this time. Not all of our deliberations were precisely directed toward the selection of the president. We spent a good deal of time in discussing the nature of the University because this was the first time that these Regents had had contact with faculty members. And they had . . . some of them, had formed various ideas about faculty members as being sort of fuzzy-thinking people and ivory tower specialists and so on, and I'd like to believe that they, rather early in . . . in our associations, developed the . . . impression that we were normal human beings, that we had the same feelings that other people had. Of course, I'm somewhat facetious in saying this, but they from time to time would kid us about this. But I distinctly recall that

about this time in the process, Mr. Wooten, the chairman of the board, one day excused himself after lunch, and we spent the entire afternoon with the remaining four members of the Regents in what might amount to an in-service education meeting. And we had numerous meetings of this type where we were reporting the feelings of faculty about various phases of the University, particularly how the administration operated and it was amazing to us--at least to me because administration is my area and my discipline . . . the lack of information that Regents had of the manner in which the University was administered. They were amazed and made various statements regarding their lack of information and their almost abysmal ignorance of the internal operation of the University.

Odom: They were greatly surprised.

Smith: They were greatly surprised. As a matter of fact, I told the Regents in one of the meetings, "The faculty feels that over the years you have let them down. You attend Regents' meetings, periodically, coming from distances, sometimes hundreds of miles, and then going directly home, and you don't know the faculty members. You don't know what faculty

members think about the normal functions of the University and the day-to-day operations of their jobs."

Odom: Was this reaction you speak of pretty well unanimous as far as the four members of the . . . regular members of the Regents' committee?

Smith: It certainly was. It was unanimous. And incidentally, I think that the three faculty representatives complemented one another. We had no plan; there was no plot other than just to, as conscientious as we could, report to them the precise status of the University.

Odom: And this was . . . I take it you believed that this was important in the process of selecting a new president.

Smith: This played perhaps a more important role than we'll ever think; only history will determine the importance of this.

Odom: Then, I believe, at about this point you must've started to interview some of the candidates, didn't you?

Smith: Well, from this point it was probably another couple of weeks before we began the interview process. We had begun to get our list down to five or six very

likely candidates, and I remember one man whom we had rather high on the list was from the west coast. We liked his credentials; we liked his background. And various ones of us were assigned to do some preliminary telephone screening on each one of these, and the chairman of the board, Mr. Wooten, had called the chairman of the board of the university where he had previously been employed. And we had learned, and as a matter of fact it was evident in his credentials, that he had resigned from the University, and there had been some altercation there over an academic freedom case. And this very fact that this had been a matter of concern at this university which ultimately led to his resignation was enough to eliminate him from consideration. This Regent with whom Mr. Wooten spoke, spoke disparagingly of the man as having been a person with liberal views and somewhat controversial. So one of the other Regents said, "Well, we might as well eliminate him because we'll lose one vote right here as it is, and we want it to be as unanimous as we can.

Odom: I see. Did you have any pressures brought to bear on you from outside as to who to consider and who not to consider on this thing, Dr. Smith?

Smith: Well, naturally in a process as important as this there were pressures from here and there. I'm sure the Regents felt some of these pressures more than the members of the faculty committee, but I will say at this point that the pressures, which were somewhat political in nature, were not adhered to. And I sincerely feel that the entire process was professional. It was professional from beginning to end. For example, one man had political connections--a former graduate of the University and a vice president of a big industry. He had been in Washington and had been a member of the staff of the president, and he had congressional connections. And actually each of us received a very thorough solicitation of sentiment for him, and we received telephone calls from a person who was considered to be the right person to contact each member. And he had made some inroad on some members of the Regents, but he did not have a doctor's degree. We did not consider him qualified for the role and so he ultimately was eliminated. He, as a matter of fact, withdrew himself.

Odom: He did? He was in the running though through the first part?

Smith: He was considered. And as a matter of fact, he was interviewed largely in deference to several politicians who called and said, "Well, interview him anywhere . . . anyway and get him off of our back." We did this out of courtesy.

Odom: Let me call your attention now to this process of interviewing. How did you go about that?

Smith: Well, this is rather interesting. After our in-service education meetings with the board, particularly pertaining to some of the precise problems here and how a new president might work to alleviate some of the problems of a more serious nature on the campus. We called and decided to interview a man high on our list, Dr. John Kamerick, who ultimately received the position. I distinctly recall that he had originally been assigned to me for preliminary screening. I have a friend at Kent State University who is in the same position that I am here as chairman of the Department of Educational Administration, Dr. Robert Wilson. I picked up the telephone and called Dr. Wilson and talked to him for about a half hour. I then made a complete report, and I wrote my conversation and distributed it to other members. I use this as an

example of the kind of preliminary screening we did. Well, precisely to your point, we called Dr. Kamerick--I don't recall the specific date-- to come for an interview, and this perhaps was the worst interview that we had. He was our very first interview, and we did the poorest job. But it was informal. We had no structure. Occasionally this is a good pattern to . . . follow . . . that is to ask a series of questions pertaining to different areas and follow this pattern so that there would be a basis for comparison. But it was very informal, and we usually started with the chairman, who described the University and gave a little historical perspective. Then . . .

Odom: And this is Mr. Pannell.

Smith: Mr. Pannell. And then we went round-robin, right around the room where we were sitting in lovely, comfortable chairs, overlooking affluent Dallas, very picturesque, and I would say a nice setting to interview a prospective president. And each person asked questions as he went along, whatever questions happened to be on his mind at the moment. But one of the interesting things that developed . . . which would pertain largely to leadership

and such things as his basic philosophy of education, how he would handle such matters as merit pay and tenure and faculty promotion and so on. And the Regents listened very carefully. In the succeeding interviews, the Regents began asking faculty questions, which was evident that the in-service work we did had actually struck its mark. We were very proud. As a matter of fact, they sounded exactly like faculty members after awhile.

Odom: Well, now, what kind of questions would they ask, though, that would be different from faculty questions about financial matters and administrative . . . particular administrative problems from the standpoint of the Board of Regents?

Smith: Well, they . . . the faculty members asked financial questions, too. We had schooled ourselves rather thoroughly on some of the more intricate details of the budget and so on, and they fairly frequently would turn to us and say, "Is this right? Now we think we spend about such and so or our budget is such and such." And we found that we had to do some digging to act as resource people. I would say that originally and perhaps the biggest faux pas that was made in the first interview was

in the general area of academic freedom, particularly with reference to, "What do you do if you have a communist on the staff?" And this was Mr. Wooten's deep and abiding concern throughout the entire process. He was always looking for a communist and this frightened some of the candidates. As a matter of fact, Dr. Kamerick was quite apprehensive. They got on this topic and . . . the tension began to grow a little bit. I know the Regents were sincere. As a matter of history, they were not out witch hunting, but they actually got into a little witch hunting, and he, Dr. Kamerick, was quite apprehensive at this moment.

Odom: Well, what did most of these candidates say to Mr. Wooten regarding this kind of a question? I mean, how did they handle themselves in . . . in replying to it, in trying to assure him on that point?

Smith: Well, each of these candidates with maybe one or two exceptions were skillful people, exceptionally well grounded in their understanding of academic freedom and, of course, one never knows whether they're giving the text book answers or speaking from their own experiences.

Odom: No (chuckle).

Smith: But usually they spoke from experience because each one was an experienced administrator. And actually, one soon began to develop a feeling that we had some outstanding people coming before us. And their answers were amazingly similar on most of the major issues.

Odom: They generally . . . did they generally reassure Mr. Wooten or did they cause him to be more apprehensive?

Smith: Well, I . . . I think they reassured him with maybe one exception. One man we interviewed was quite outspoken, and particularly on the issue of Students for a Democratic Society action. The assertion was made by one of the Regents--I don't just recall who--that this was rather Communist infested, and he turned with amazement and said, "Well, I never heard of that. I don't think there's any connection here," and immediately this was the wrong statement. This man was virtually finished from that moment on.

Odom: After you would question these people, then on each interview generally what did you do?

Smith: Well, after the interview, we went to lunch. I remember Dr. Kamerick being our first candidate, we went to the Petroleum Club in the forty-eight floor

of the First National Bank which, I think, was quite an amazing thing to him to sit up forty-eight stories, and we had a private room during which time some members of the legislature came by. The new Speaker of the House was introduced, and one of our alumni was influential in doing this to try to make a few . . .

Odom: Joe Ratcliff?

Smith: Joe Ratcliff, connections here, which I thought were proper and very good. At least I observed Dr. Kamerick looking with some amazement at this process, and I think he was wondering if this is the Texas that you read about.

Odom: (Chuckle) Then after lunch what . . .

Smith: After lunch with each of the candidates. . . they assigned the candidate to one, two or sometimes three of the faculty members to conduct a tour of Denton and its environs as well as the University. At no time did we take them out of the car to introduce them, but we wanted to show them the University, what it looked like, and what Denton was like. This gave us an opportunity to talk individually and answer their questions . . . many questions that they would not want to ask the Regents.

Odom: What did you usually . . . what sort of route did you usually follow in . . . in coming to Denton?

Smith: Well, different ones. I think I took three of them individually, and I usually showed them the outer perimeter of the campus first, described it to them, told them about the master plan--most of them had all this information before they came, however--and then drove through the campus at different angles and showed them the new buildings, the proposed buildings, and where the administration building was located. And then showed them downtown Denton, the new shopping center, the residential regions, and answered their questions in general.

Odom: What kind of questions did they ask?

Smith: Oh, they asked about the cost of homes and the cost of living, and they wanted to know, in a few instances, about the public schools because some of them had children. They constantly asked questions . . . they'd come back and periodically during these visits about faculty, where faculty lived, how they lived, and then they would get back to the administration of the University. This was constantly on their mind, and they . . . they wanted to know just how we viewed the administration. And they

were . . . most of them were quite concerned about the fact that the . . . the president . . . that President Matthews would remain on the staff. This was very evident in . . . in each and every person. It was a matter of great concern to them because they felt this would make the role of the new man very difficult.

Odom: Did . . . I suppose in your questioning . . . the questioning by the faculty and the Regents' Committee, you would try to ascertain the . . . the attitude of . . . of these candidates toward . . . well, toward teaching and research and the relative weight and so forth like that . . .

Smith: Well, we certainly did.

Odom: . . . they would assign to these matters. And how . . . how did they respond to . . . generally to these kind of questions would . . . about the way you would expect or . . . ?

Smith: Well, naturally when . . . a man is being questioned he has to hit toward the middle.

Odom: Middle, yes.

Smith: Just for example on the question of athletics. They always gave a standard answer--"Well, an athletic program should certainly never be out of

bounds. I believe in an athletic program in its proper perspective." That's a very safe answer.

Odom: That's just about the way I would . . .

Smith: Of course, when we got them to one side and we'd talk with them a little bit, we could get a more honest answer from them, as for example Dr. Kamerick. I happened to know that he gave this answer, but he likes a strong athletic program. He was a basketball player himself. He coached and played on one of the champion destroyer teams in the Pacific when he was in the service. However, he's a very scholarly, academic individual, but he believes in physical fitness. He plays handball every day. Consequently, I think secretly he'd like to build up a strong athletic program, but he . . .

Odom: Do you think that he'll have more interest in the athletic program than President Matthews?

Smith: There is no question but what he'll have more interest than President Matthews.

Odom: What about the . . . say, an example of the other type of question that I was talking about here? As . . . I can see, of course, that you, and I would guess that it would be that way, that you would get a sort of standard, safe answer on relative position

of teaching and research, and how much emphasis is to be put on this matter, that they wouldn't go so far as to take a publish or perish position or go so far to the other direction. But were generally the candidates in that sort of middle ground there?

Smith: Well, most of them were. However, we had the feeling that . . . that they were . . . each and every person believed in a good solid academic program because they felt, as the faculty and the Regents, that this is the basis of a good university. We must have a degree of academic excellence. But there's one other matter that I ought to interject here, and this is student life . . . dealing with students. This was a matter that was given a good deal of attention, particularly in these days of student riots. They asked each faculty . . . each candidate how he would handle riots, and they had amazingly similar answers. And it was, of course, a great deal more liberal than . . . than the method of dealing with students in the past at the university. This was interesting to us.

Odom: How did the Regents react to that?

Smith: Very, very well. I think the Regents had felt that our student body had been shackled a little bit,

and they were amazed. The Regents were amazed as well as the candidates that the students had not rebelled to the tight reign policy of the administration. As a matter of fact, one Regent said, "You know one thing?" he said. And someone said, "What?" He said, "We've been sitting on a damn powder keg."

Odom: And hadn't blown. Let's see. While you were along interviewing these candidates, when you had interviewed all of those you intended to, then what?

Smith: Well, we began in our discussions, which took place two or three times after an interview and sometimes preceding the interview, we began to exchange ideas. And normally some names began to come to the foreground, and then we had one or two withdraw for various reason. Largely, I think one withdrawal was on the basis that he was already receiving better than \$40,000, and he would have to undergo quite a financial sacrifice in order to come to the campus. As a matter of fact, three people were making over \$40,000, and this was a problem. And the matter, though, of salary, one of the paramount problems at this moment on, was to find the source of revenue to pay the salary supplement

over what the legislature pays and what we proposed to pay the new man.

Odom: Well, now how did you . . . you say that was the paramount matter. You mean for the committee to try to find the sources for this?

Smith: For the Regents. This is right. Those of us on the faculty worked diligently on this just as did the members of the committee. And we used the services of Mr. John Carter, Vice President for Business Affairs, who had connections in Austin, and who began to study the budget to learn what the University of Texas did as well as other institutions relative to supplementing the president's salary and to find a legal basis whereby this could be done above board. Some very serious problems developed here.

Odom: Do you want to go in . . . do you want to go into the serious problems there at this point?

Smith: Well, act . . .

Odom: Or do you want to wait, or did you not intend to discuss them?

Smith: I could just give you my evaluation of these, because I was a part of this. It appeared at this particular moment that President Matthews began to inject

himself into the picture. You must remember at this time we had already decided to pay a visit to the campus of Dr. Kamerick--Kent State University. Two members of the Regents and our chairman, Dr. Anderson, were selected to make this visitation. While on this visitation one of the Regents called Mr. Carter one morning. Previous to this visit, we had actually decided that Kamerick was our man. In the last meeting previous to this visit, we had a kind of round-robin where each person spoke about as long as he wished. It took about an hour and a half to evaluate the whole process. We finally decided that he, more nearly, met our specifications than any other person.

And so while they were on the visitation at Kent, they knew sooner or later they'd have to get to the matter of salary. And sometime along about eight or nine o'clock in the morning, Mr. David Kimbell called Mr. Carter, and asked, "Can we pay the \$35,000 that we had proposed?" And Mr. Carter just couldn't put it on the line, so to speak, and objectively say, "Here I found so many dollars and so many dollars there which add up to 35,000." He said he'd need to think about it, but he thought

we could. Mr. Kimbell called him again at ten o'clock and wanted another answer, after which Mr. Carter got hold of me. And so we spent nearly two hours in the office during which two or three telephone calls were made to Austin to talk to the legislative budget director and various other people. They gave various proposals concerning how they felt the funds could be raised. And interestingly enough, at this time the people in Austin were most cooperative. They said, "If you need this to get a good man, we'll go with you all the way. We'll work with you, and you need not have any fear . . . "

Well, we needed to relay this information to Mr. Kimbell and Mr. Carter felt that the word needed to be gotten to him in Kent immediately saying, "We have the money. Lay it on the line." And so he decided that I should make the telephone call. They were in their final meeting in President Kamerick's office. I telephoned and got Mr. Kimbell on the telephone. And he still was wavering at this moment whether or not we could pay \$35,000. The evidence was there that he, Mr. Kimbell, had been contacted by the Matthews group and that he

was not only wavering about the money; he was wavering about the process.

Odom: I see. This is Mr. Kimbell you're talking about?

Smith: Yes, the Regent from Wichita Falls. So we talked on the phone, and I suppose I almost over-extended myself as a faculty member in attempting to influence him. But I knew him quite well. It was on a first name basis, and I actually said, "Dave, don't make a good man such as Mr. Carter commit himself at this particular moment. After September 1, he'll deliver the \$35,000 but he has a man upstairs to contend with until that time comes." Now I said, "If you want to be a part of the forward movement of this university, you go in there and say, 'We'll give you \$35,000,' and look him straight in the eye." And that ended that conversation.

Odom: But this could've been a rock on which the whole thing foundered then.

Smith: It was nearly the rock upon which it foundered because the story goes . . . and this perhaps is one of the turning points, a very important point. This was on Thursday it seems to me--if my memory serves me correct. And on the following

Wednesday there was a meeting, perhaps the most important meeting of the entire process. It was held in Mr. Wooten's office in Dallas. It was called by Mr. Wooten. President Matthews was asked to be there, along with Mr. Carter and Mr. Pannell. Precisely, this meeting was called . . . to discuss just how and where this money is coming from, how it would be raised, and it was a rather explosive affair. And historically it was very significant. I'm only repeating what has been told to me. But on the way to . . . Dallas, President Matthews told Mr. Carter that he had no right to reveal the source of where the money could come from, that he should not answer questions regarding salary supplements and that it was illegal to raise the additional funds. And he coached him as they drove to Dallas. Well, during the meeting in Dallas, when they asked questions of Mr. Carter, President Matthews would answer. This irritated the members of the board, primarily Mr. Pannell, and Mr. Pannell blew up, and he went sky high and said, "I didn't ask you. I've asked Mr. Carter. Now can you raise the money? And do you reasonably think that money can be raised so that we can pay

the \$35,000?" And Mr. Carter said, "Yes." And even Mr. Wooten was mildly upset with his long-time friend, President Matthews.

Odom: Oh, really?

Smith: So this settled . . . settled the question. The next time we came together the meeting discussed and reported, and Mr. Pannel said--and he used these terms--he said, "I threw a controlled fit." This was the term that he used in this meeting at which time Mr. Wooten said, "Yes, I'm sick and tired of getting the answers before the question was stated." And so I think this was a very significant . . . the last minute attempt to wipe out a man from the outside was made and the effort was not successful.

Odom: I see. Dr. Smith, I'd like to ask to comment a bit more about the question I asked partly, I think, earlier. Comment again about the . . . whether there were any patterns of difference indicated by the type of questions and interests that the members of the Regents had as they contrasted to the members of the faculty on the committee. Could you see any apparent differences of interest there, and what were the major points of interest again?

Smith: Possibly I should begin by going back to a statement I made previously; that is the "in-service" effect of the Regents and the faculty committee members and some of the outstanding concerns that developed from this. Number one--and I think possibly the most over-riding problem or concern expressed here was the lack of faculty participation in the real affairs of the university. We discussed what it takes to make a dynamic university. In this sense, the term, a great university was used many times. This had become a rather trite expression with some of the members of the board. And it was soon determined by all people that no university will be able to reach greatness without the real participation of the faculty in the . . . the affairs of the university. It was recognized that the faculty had not been full fledged members of the university community. The faculty potential had never been developed to its fullest extent and for years this was one of the over-riding problems of the university.

As a matter of fact, board members in introducing the new . . . candidates who were interviewed usually expressed to the candidate while giving a brief historical review--that the university had been

administered more or less like a . . . a teacher's college or even a normal school and that unilateral decisions had been made by the president and that some of them, were arbitrary and capricious and that faculty members were completely on the outside of the real life stream of the university. So this became a paramount issue throughout the entire process and it was interesting to see the members of the board acquire a change in attitude as the process developed. Actually it almost seemed as though they were colleagues of ours. They understood the real problems, and they began to have empathy for the problems that existed on the campus relative to faculty participation in the affairs of the University.

Odom: Let me ask you. Could you come to any conclusion about the most important factors in their arriving at this paramount interest, you call it, in faculty participation because then you think it was the association with you or that is with the faculty members of the committee . . . was the main fact or association with the members here over this period, in-service training as you call it. You think this was . . . I know it was a factor, but

did they do reading about the way a university operates? Did they talk to other people? What do you think were the most important things in that regard?

Smith: Well, I think first of all that they did a considerable amount of research. They talked to other board members of other universities. They sent one member, Mr. Willis, to Washington, D.C., to talk to Dr. Logan Wilson who occupies the position of executive officer of the Council of Higher Education in the United States. Dr. Wilson gave Mr. Willis a copy of a bulletin that had been developed on the selection of a president of a university. As I recall, there were eighteen steps in this bulletin recommending the precise procedures to be followed, and our board members were intrigued with this. They read these at great length. They ordered copies and even gave a copy to each of the eleven members of the faculty committee. And as I recall--and I've reviewed this a number of times--the board followed each of these eighteen steps as nearly as it was possible. This set a pattern. It set a professional pattern for the procedures that followed. And I think this was

a real eye-opener to the board. Actually, they seemed to be almost ashamed of themselves because they had been so ignorant of the truth of the real conditions that existed in the university and the rightful role that a board member should play in the execution of his duties. I think they were arriving at full responsible membership, which was theirs under the law as a member of the Board of Regents.

Odom: Did . . . of these eighteen steps, were the faculty members aware of these?

Smith: We certainly were. We studied these bulletins, and we were in full accord with them.

Odom: I'm very interested, almost intrigued, by the sort of implications I got here about one particular member of the board, Mr. Wooten. It seems that in this process he played a very interesting part, and you seem to indicate that he even seemed to have . . . after so many years of associating with the university to have some change of attitudes and so on. And I also wanted you to comment on another interviewee's statement that he believed that throughout the process, the . . . selection process, that Mr. Wooten consulted often with . . . with President Matthews on the matters that they took up.

Smith: I think one must go back to a little historical development here for I think it is generally known that Mr. Wooten had been on the board throughout the entire tenure of . . . of President Matthews' administration. And since he lived relatively close to the university, there developed a very close friendship between the chairman of the board and the president. This friendship also, I think, went just beyond mere camaraderie to the extent that it was almost a two-man show. And President Matthews would consult frequently, and some decisions would be made and brought out in board meetings-- from what we gathered--which were almost arrived at by these two men, alone. And we sensed a concern on the part of the other board members because they indicated several times that they felt left out. Of course, they realized that Mr. Wooten had but one more year to serve until his tenure would be completed, and they felt that it was for the best interest of the university that the board ought to be a full nine-man participating group.

Now in regard to the second part of your question, Mr. Wooten also, I believe, felt as he became more

aware of the real problems of the university and the real truth of some of the conditions that existed that he had been slightly led astray from time to time. His attitude began to change, and it was to some degree a source of disappointment to him when he realized that some of the conditions existed which he previously had not been aware of.

Odom: In the beginning did you see any evidence that Mr. Wooten favored getting a man from inside the university as opposed to perhaps searching widely outside? Was there any evidence of this in the beginning?

Smith: There was no real evidence in the beginning. Mr. Wooten was conscientious. He had a good concept of leadership which was not exactly the same as the president of the university, but he in fact felt that good leadership principles had been followed over the years. As for example, he felt that duties should be delegated. He used numerous examples in his leadership as a former bank president. This was the only way that a good organization could function effectively, he would say. And I would say throughout the entire process Mr. Wooten was a very good contributing member. He in no way attempted to dominate the . . . selection process.

Odom: Do you think that throughout your deliberations and your search here and your interviewing that President Matthews remained informed of what the board was doing?

Smith: Yes, we were quite sure that he knew what the procedures were. As a matter of fact, he telephoned Mr. Wooten frequently as had been the pattern over the years and was given first-hand information as to the feelings and the various procedures that were taking place.

Odom: Do you think that anyone else outside perhaps the immediate family of the members of the committee was informed of what . . . you know, the steps that you were taking as you went along as present?

Smith: Perhaps there's no way of knowing this, but I think the evidence that this was quite professional. I would say that very few people knew and that there were few leaks. We had decided that in order to make this professional, we would not be able to discuss our deliberations and that the names of the various applicants be kept confidential to protect their positions in their various universities. This proceeded right up until the very end, and people were amazed that so many transactions had

taken place with so few discussions having reached the public form.

Odom: Let's see. Once you had, I believe, chronologically . . . we had reached the point where the board met on the Wednesday, I believe, following the trip to . . . I think it was Wednesday, following the trip to Ohio made by Dr. Anderson and Mr. Kimball . . .

Smith: And Mr. Pannell.

Odom: And Mr. Pannell. Did you resolve the question of the salary at that meeting. What other steps were taken there, and what were the next steps in this story?

Smith: Well, the next step as I recall occurred on the following Friday. And at which time we interviewed our final candidate. After this interview, we had lunch, and we came back for the final meeting. At this meeting each person was given an opportunity to express his feelings, and one person after another spoke freely, gave the pros and cons and expressed his feeling that Dr. John Kamerick, who was then vice . . . vice president and provost of Kent State University, was our man. This was a unanimous decision, and . . . there was not a single dissenter.

Odom: What did you do next then officially, or what steps did you take?

Smith: Well, the . . . the next step as I recall, we discussed the time that Dr. Kamerick would be invited to come to the university for a visit. Well, actually, there was one immediate step that took place. Shortly after this meeting, we went then to Mr. Wooten's office, and Mr. Wooten provided the use of his telephone to Mr. Pannell, the chairman, and he called Kent State University. He was able to get Dr. Kamerick on the telephone, and I shall never forget this conversation. He said, "Well, we have met. We've come to a decision, Dr. Kamerick." And he said, "You're our man. We need you, John Kamerick in Texas, and we hope that your answer will be favorable." He said, "The decision was unanimous. We think there's a great future here for you. We think that we're going to like you and we think you're going to like us." And then he repeated, "John Kamerick, we need you."

Odom: (Chuckle) Then you arranged, I suppose, for Dr. Kamerick to visit North Texas. What . . . do you have the details of that, and would you relate those for us?

Smith: As I recall, during this conversation Mr. Pannell had said, "When you can decide at what time you can

come here, we hope you can telephone me just as soon as possible, and we'll be glad to pay your expenses again and the expenses of your wife. We'd like Mrs. Kamerick to come along." This just about ended that particular meeting until the negotiations could be made between Mr. Pannell and Dr. Kamerick for the visitation to Texas.

Odom: And when they came down, do you know the details of that? Were you in contact with them at that time?

Smith: Well, on the date of the visit I was engaged in directing a workshop, and I was unavailable at that time to have any part of this process. However, I did talk with Dr. Kamerick about twenty minutes on the telephone before he departed the city, but he came to Denton along with Mrs. Kamerick, and he accepted the invitation of President and Mrs. Matthews to be guests in the president's home. They arrived on Wednesday, I think, the 26th of May, and they stayed . . .

Odom: It would be April, wouldn't it?

Smith: I . . . I'm sorry, the 26th of April, correction. And they were guests of the president. During this time they looked the home situation over. They were concerned because they had six children, and

they wondered if there were enough bedrooms to take care of their large family. During this time Dr. Kamerick was introduced to some of the top administrative staff of the university, and a number of things happened. One of which I should . . . would like to relate, which indicates the type of administrator I think he is. He'd ask previously to have a full professorship as a faculty member in his . . . his discipline with a tenured appointment in history. The board was a little apprehensive about this but we assured them we, the faculty representatives, the three of us-- that this was a rather usual process. There was the concern on his part, "Should his administration not succeed, he would always have a teaching position to rely on." I don't think this was the reason back of this. Dr. Kamerick has a reputation of being an outstanding leader of people, and his faculty at Kent State University has great admiration for him. I think he also was aware that this was one of the basic problems that existed in our university. So he insisted that he be interviewed by the head of the History Department, the chairman of social science areas, as well as the dean of the

College of Arts and Sciences, just the same as they would interview an assistant professor fresh out of graduate school. This meeting was arranged, and he was interviewed, and questioned at length, and apparently, according to the chairman of the History Department, came through with flying colors.

Odom: Let's focus just a little bit more on the man who was finally chosen. I have another question or two to ask you about him and the relations with committee. Did the fact that Dr. Kamerick is a Roman Catholic arise and . . . in the committee discussion of him and interviewing of him? How was that handled?

Smith: Well, this naturally came up. Of course, here again I want to give credit to the members of the board and their statesmanship. Here was a board composed primarily . . . largely of Baptists, some had been deacons and active, outstanding church members over the years. But they rose above any particular feelings that any member might have and said, "We're out for the man. This is a state university. We want the very best man we can find, and we cannot allow religion to stand in our way. This will make no difference." And it didn't, and it hasn't.

Odom: Did Dr. Kamerick have any questions about it or any reservations about this or did he ever say?

Smith: No, it was discussed candidly with him. He knew that this was a problem. As a matter of fact, we had some information that this stood in the way of his being employed in another situation at an earlier date. And I think he felt good that the board and faculty had risen above any pettiness in regard to religion.

Odom: Of course, I realize that you perhaps didn't talk with Dr. Kamerick as much, or not as much . . . with him as much as . . . as Miles Anderson, for example. But, nevertheless, what kind of reservations did he have about coming? What kind of things worried him most about coming, and played a part in his decision finally to accept the position?

Smith: Well, from the administrative standpoint I know that he was concerned that the university has very few written policies and that the university had been administered almost unilaterally by the president. This is not in accordance with his administrative belief, and he knows that a university of this size would need an organizational structure which would permit the free flow of ideas

from one area to another and primarily that people could be assigned functions which would be described in writing and then given the responsibilities commensurate to these functions for carrying out their duties.

Odom: You say that this was perhaps his one reservation or concern he had administratively. What about any others? Are you aware of any other concern that he may have had?

Smith: Well, as I had previously mentioned, he had expressed some concern about the board's attitude relative to . . .

Odom: Hunting Communists?

Smith: . . . to . . . the board's attitude in its concern about various political beliefs, and academic freedom in general.

Odom: Then chronologically I suppose we should wind up this thing here before I ask you some general questions about the whole process. As I was saying, I suppose we should finish the chronological story here. After the visit of Dr. Kamerick on the 26th of April, I believe, what came next?

Smith: Well, after his visit, as I understand, he went back home to think it over and to make up his mind. I actually feel that his mind was made up to accept

the position when he was here, and possibly even before he came. But being a very intelligent man and aware of tactical situations, I think he allowed the board to wait a few days and wonder whether or not he would accept it, because this is a smart thing to do. One should not be too eager to accept a role. And we waited for a period of a number of days. As a matter of fact, when he left here on Friday, April 28, he told Mr. Pannell that he would give him some reply as early as he could the following week. And so he telephoned, according to the information I have, to Mr. Pannell on Monday . . . the following Monday, and some of us didn't know about this telephone call until about Friday of that week. And I might say I was more than a little apprehensive during this time.

Odom: But he did call on Monday to say that he would accept.

Smith: He called on Monday, and, of course, there was still some negotiating going on here relative to moving expenses and a number of other things such as the legality of the contract, and so on which took time to work out.

Odom: Then after he had accepted or indicated that he would accept the position, the next process, I suppose, was for the full board of Regents to accept

the commitment.

Smith: This is true. We had discussed this procedure, what the . . . the correct procedure would be, and the board . . . the five committee members of the Regents who were responsible for the selection process wanted to relay the information to the full membership. A meeting was arranged at which time President Kamerick could be present and meet the entire board. The date chosen for this meeting was the night before University Day, May 8, the date of our traditional exercises on University Day. We had talked about how nice it would be if he could be introduced on this particular day. So this meeting with the full membership of the board was held in Dallas on the evening of May 7, on Tuesday evening. And he met the members of the board according to the way it has been reported and . . .

Odom: Your committee . . . faculty members did not meet with them?

Smith: No, the faculty had fulfilled its obligation, and we felt this was a board responsibility. As a matter of fact, we weren't invited to the meeting, and we felt it was proper that we should not be

invited. Our mission had been completed. But according to the reports of the board members present, this was a very pleasant affair and each and every member of the board--all nine members--were very pleased with the selection. They had reviewed the credentials, and they met Dr. Kamerick, and it was a very affable affair.

Odom: Had . . . I know you said that you didn't think anyone else had been really informed of the steps that you were taking. But were the other members of the Board of Regents informed anywhere along the line or periodically of the actions you were taking and the direction you were going?

Smith: This is an answer I'm unable to give. I am sure this took place. There is no question. I've had various reports that certain pressures were brought to bear and that the board did not completely see eye to eye all the way along and that two or three of the board members felt that we should remain on the inside, but this is only heresay.

Odom: How were the members of the Board of Regents who served on this selection committee chosen?

Smith: I really cannot say. I believe they were appointed by the chairman of the board, Mr. Wooten.

Odom: Well, this just about finishes the story from a chronological standpoint. Let me ask you . . . well, I have about . . . at least two general questions and then I'll invite you to make whatever contributions and additions you might want to make. First, what do you think that all this means in . . . in . . . in a general way for this university and . . . ?

Smith: Of course, there . . . one does not possess the wisdom of a sage, nor do I have a crystal ball; but if I were to project my own feelings and after having given a number of months out of my life to this process almost day and night, it seems to me that we are at a very important turning place in the life of the university. There is a renaissance, as it were, and from this time on it seems that the university will have a golden opportunity to become a real university.

Odom: The other general question that I had was do you see any ways--either general or specific, major or minor ways--that this process could have been improved as you reflect back on it?

Smith: Oh, as I reflect back on it I would possibly say that any process of this nature should not have

included the services of the present executive officer--the present president. I feel that a board . . . any board of Regents would be wise in selecting a person who would serve as a professional consultant. One individual who would handle all of the communication, who was completely objective in carrying out his duties, and he would serve on the board for the length of time that this process was taking place--I think this would be a very desirable change.

Odom: Anything else that you can think of?

Smith: I also feel that the process possibly could be expedited. We met on a weekly basis, and I think there were times when we might've expedited things to some degree. We were criticized because the process was so slow; but when I look back, I think that this had its beneficial effects, primarily in the in-service education functions.

Odom: That just about exhausts the questions that I have, Dr. Smith. I would like to ask you or invite you to contribute anything else that we . . . I have not touched on or we've not dealt with or not dealt with sufficiently that you'd like to add.

Smith: As a final statement, I might, without reiterating some of the things that I said previously, that I

have a good feeling about the entire process that took place. It was professional from one end to another. There were no political involvements that muddied the waters to any great degree, and I think it brought the faculty and the Board of Regents closer together. As a matter of fact, many of the Board of Regents hope that some process can be developed whereby a continuing line of board-faculty communications can be maintained throughout the year. It seems that a new day is approaching for the university, particularly along the lines of cooperation and association together. We can only hope that as the university becomes a more dynamic factor in the process of social involvement in the State of Texas and in educational involvement in this particular region, that it will rise to heights never before attained.