SMJ: Dr. Stanley Czurles, Professor of Art Education on campus, will introduce Dr. Allen P. Bradley a guest on campus, also a former professor of education here on campus from 1947 until 1956. Dr. Czurles!

Czurles: I am sort of an opportunist and when I was talking with Sister about what records we should have about this college, I felt that it was important that we get you here because you played a big role in several changes. The one that I would like to have you talk about first, is the assignment that you came here to carry out which was that of really moving this college from being on a high school schedule to making the educational facility available for education at all hours. The important thing Al, in these records that we are making this is personalized. I want records to show that anything that has happened is not a mechanical event but it is the result of someone's personal commitment to something. Then a perception or an insight and then that drive of trial and error, success and failure, sweat and blood until finally the system evolves. This is a rather lengthy introduction, but I hope that you will personalize this because following this there many other things that you did and they all stem from personal commitment that you picked up somewhere along the line.

BRADLEY: Then in the interest of accuracy let me back up...
and say when I was invited to come here in 1947 it was more expressly to pick up on and carry ahead the work that had been done in rural education by Dr. Kate Wofford. The first two years that I was here my principle concentration was on developing and extending relationships that this campus had with the so called rural area. The rural areas would be in a little difficult to locate these days!! It still is an extension from what you might call course work and classes going out and serving a bigger purpose, trying to develop that function in the rural area into the student teaching program of the college and visa versa. In 1949, President Harry Rockwell, who was a monumental figure, got the word one day from another monumental figure by the name of Hermann Cooper, that this college should be getting more milage and more utilization of the fine campus which Mr. Rockwell with Hermann Cooper's assistance had put together up here on Elmwood Avenue. Dr. Rockwell came back from one of his periodic trips to Albany somewhat upset and frustrated because he had been mandated to number one: to announce that this college would develop an evening session program and number two: it would start off with not less than 100 students and number three: it would increase its output of students. I think this was directly after the war when there were tremendous demands upon educational institutions to find new ways to serve more people with the same facilities and the same amount of resources.

CZURLES: Things have not changed much because we also are told within 24 hours or yesterday, to throw together a program. So
you had from August until September? All of that time!!

BRADLEY: Yes, it was from 25th of August until Labor Day. As an aside, I had taken the first vacation that I had undertaken in about 10 years. I took my wife and my growing family to the Eastern end of Lake Ontario, and I thought that I was safely tucked away. Three days into the vacation, a man came in with a message to advise me that I was to call back to Rockwell immediately upon receiving the message, regardless of where I got it. Knowing the signal pretty well, I got into the car and got on the telephone, and Dr. Rockwell said he would expect me in the office tomorrow morning.

CZURLES: That is the way he was, but he got the point across!

BRADLEY: We did meet the next morning at 9:00. He said certain changes are going to take place around here, and I was to the director of the newly established, reorganized elementary education division. In those days it was called the General Elementary Division.

SMJ: Dr. Bradley, I know this is quite different in that today when you have to go through six committees to get... what was required.

BRADLEY: Decisions were made quickly, irrevocably, and in very understandable language. In any event, the college was suddenly reorganized with absolute total assistance of Dr. George Sherrie, who occupied the new position of Coordinator of Field Services. We undertook to establish an evening session, and to try and have it under way in about ten days. Working through the
waiting lists of each of the divisions which had completed its admissions for the year and the many fine, worthy, capable young people for whom there was no place at the college, but who had been assigned to these waiting lists, Dr. Sherrie and I, with some very unique statistical procedures, selected 105 students. We notified them that they were to be admitted if they could accept admission into the evening program which was to begin at 5pm and continue through until 10pm. It was a full college program, full college schedule, somewhat concentrated in contrast to the day program. There were no corners to be cut. Then we had to employ as I recall 6 new people to be added to the principle department, social, mathematics, and art departments. That is where I returned for another period of extended service.

CZURLES: Was Dr. Peterson the man who came for History of Social Studies?

BRADLEY: No, the man who came at the time was Dr. Huston T. Robison, who later became a well known figure on this campus. Another one who came at that time was William Talmadge, also, Dr. Richard T. Lampkin. Talmadge was a very talented musician, and we picked him up like that in a hurry. Keep in mind this was 1947, and the Graduate Division was turning these people out in great numbers immediately after the war so there were some people available. There was one other, Cecil T. Rodney who brought in for the math department. Then there were some departmental reorganizations. Some people, who were already on the staff, were assigned into the program so we had a staff in almost a week. Then
we went to the business of selecting students from the pool I mentioned earlier. With Dr. Sherrie's help we came up with the list of 105 people who met all of the qualifications for admission. Of the 105 who were invited to enter that group, 103 accepted.

CZURLES: That must of been a record!

BRADLEY: Incidentally, many of them today are occupying key positions in NYS education. I run into them all of the time in my travels. It is nice to meet a young person that you had in class 25 years earlier. One of the marks of success is not what happens today but what happens 5 to 10 more years down the road. Sometimes you have to wait that long to see if you had any impact on that persons life.

SMJ: And do they mention this?

BRADLEY: Oh yes.

CZURLES: George Sherrie refers to it as being a member of the first guinea pig class!

BRADLEY: In any event, at that point, the college took on a new dimension. The program was a mixed bag, popular in the sense that it provided for a number of divisional opportunities. There was always a mixed feeling on the part of these people that they might have been second choices. It was sort of like a psychological thing that had to be dealt with. But they developed an identity of their own and we tried to encourage opportunities for this group. After a few years, we became quite proud to have an identity with this group. That program continued for three academic years and at that point, some additional resources made it
possible to intergrade them back into the program. And that is what was done. I think it may have been significant to show the community and the surrounding area, that going to college did not necessarily mean a schedule of 8am until 3pm. It showed all concerned that attending evening courses were just as effective in turning out good students. Now with respect to union division, the extension program, that was history! What the spin off effect may have been, only the Almighty knows!!

CZURLES: The first thing it did was to move us into the facility being opened nearly 24 hours a day. Over and beyond that, people who might have not entered into college for 2 or 3 years had a chance.

BRADLEY: In that span of time there would have been about 350 people for whom this provided an opportunity. There was no room for them in the WNY area schools either at that time. Wasn't there a Saturday program under another office at that time?

CZURLES: There was, but not at the undergraduate level.

BRADLEY: I think it may be well to point out that a year or two following this development the demand for access to relatively inexpensive college level undergraduate level opportunity continued. Once again the college, in my judgement, was very responsive when then under the leadership of Dean Horn. Under him, they developed what was called the "excellerated program." The "excellerated program" worked in this fashion. A student who elected to enter the college and followed that program, which was quite highly structured, was able to complete a total of 128
semester hour requirements and was awarded a BA degree within three calendar years instead of the four.

CZURLES: Were many of them Vets?

BRADLEY: Yes, a large number of them were. It also tapped into a new group of people who had not had a large number of people in school. That was, of course, middle aged women, who for any one of a 1,000 reasons became another large segment of the student body. Perhaps, earlier they had to give up the hopes of their college education, abruptly turn to something else, and many developed careers. Some of them by that time had high level careers.

SMJ: Well also the war! That was a contributing factor, along with early marriages.

BRADLEY: Now with this "excellerated program" this looked like the last chance for some of them. A large number of people entered the college over a period of the next 4 or 5 years on what was called the "Excellerated Plan." It worked in this fashion: A student would enter in the summer session, in those days it was a single 6 week summer session. For this group we extended it from 6 to 8 weeks. They completed 8 semester hours of credit. They continued on with the academic year, then continued on through a second summer session completing another 8 semester hours of credit. Then they went immediately into the 2nd academic year. Then the third summer session and also a third academic year and graduated with their peers at the end of the academic year with the traditional huge commencement. With three summers added and
carrying 2 or 3 extra hours in the semesters along the way they completed the full 128 hour program. Again this was done without any corner cutting. It was very demanding and strenuous, also very difficult and only those who perceived made it. Most of them did because they were very serious people who had been denied an opportunity, and set their directives in another route. Once they got into it, they tended to persist.

CZURLES: Al, you know this did another very important thing! See, I lived through this. Up to about that time, if you had not been educated formally, it was too bad if you only went through high school. The other idea was that- "Gee, I'm too old to learn as well as the youngsters could." This just broke that apart because the people who came with some "life experience" proved this is one of the greatest things that happened in the concept of who goes to college.

BRADLEY: There are many who come to mind. Let me mention one because this lady (and you can edit this) comes to mind immediately because she later became a substantial member of this college and the faculty. Her first name escapes me at the moment, but her last name was Goldberg.

ALL IN UNISON: Oh yes, Dr. Minerva Goldberg!

BRADLEY: Well, she was one of these people who came from a well established career with some trepidation and we discussed her career plan. I pointed out all of the reasons why she should not undertake it. She was still determined to undertake it, and she did, and did it with distinction. Then she went on to a second
career and a position of high importance.

SMJ: Does she have her PhD now? She is the assistant to the Communications Center, and as of last year, she was working on another degree in Library Science. She is incredible.

CZURLES: That is more important, because it is much more than something in the calendar.

BRADLEY: I think the point we mean to make here is that the college became adaptive rather than rigid.

CZURLES: Do you realize that we are starting that again? I won’t go into details now. I was asked by a head of another department with a little to do in education that we find that 80% of the teachers now have permanent certification and the others do not have to start their masters, so we are trying to find out what they want something for their personal life.

BRADLEY: I am almost tempted to point out that institutions which are not able to adapt will soon join the mastodons.

SMJ and CZURLES: Only the adapters continue on.

CZURLES: Al and Sister, I think maybe we have covered this topic. Why don’t we turn the tape and go to what should have come first chronologically, and that is the rural education program. That is interesting to me because now you are not talking about rural education but inner-city education. Did you have something to add to this Al?

BRADLEY: It is not exhaustive but adequate, I guess.

CZURLES: Sister, I would like to have Dr. Bradley almost back up chronologically and talk about the rural education board that he
was asked to take on. Al, do we have any records on Kate Wofford?


CZURLES: So would you pick up??

BRADLEY: Let me pick up on this point. In October 1944, I was the supervising principal of Cobbleskill Central School, a job of which I was very proud. I was considered one of the best supervising principals in the State in the fairly new central district. One day, I was overwhelmed, perhaps, by a large gold embossed envelope, printed with the seal of the White House up in the left hand corner. When I got into it, there was a series of gold embossed invitations to attend what is historically the first White House Conference on Rural Education. This was put together by a distinguished lady by the name of Eleanor Roosevelt and a personal friend who was a top official in the National Education Association by the name of C. Ormond Williams. These two ladies put together the conference as you will note by the date of the conference was held during the middle of WWII. That is when access to the White House was not easily arranged. With Mrs. Roosevelt's ingenuity put to use, and despite many resistances of the security people at the White House, she was able to convince them to have a conference there. One hundred so-called rural educators were issued invitations. I recall very distinctly the security checks that were imposed, we were all visited around the country by Secret Service and the FBI people. Eventually 100 were invited. Early in October of 1944, we were at the White House and greeted in the main
Portico by then the First Lady, Eleanor Roosevelt. It was a very thrilling experience for a young kid. For the next three days we had a complete run of the East Room which was the base of operation. Mrs Roosevelt never missed a minute of any part of the receiving of this conference. It dealt with matters that you would not expect her to deal with... concerns of rural people for better educational services to rural communities in America. This list of people who appeared in this conference was rather impressive but as a matter of record, I will not get into that. I guess the thing that impressed me the most about it, and continued to remain upper most in my memory, is the commitment that the First Lady gave. Not only was she instrumental in bringing it about, but it was eminently clear that she placed a very high priority on it, giving a great deal of her own personal commitment to it. Another highlight was an event that took place toward the close of the conference on the fourth day, which happened to be a Thursday. We arrived in town late on a Sunday night and started in bright and early on Monday morning. These sessions continued daily until Thursday afternoon. Late Thursday afternoon there was a sudden break in the proceedings, and we suddenly became aware that the number of strangers had filtered into the audience almost unnoticed. They were large and imposing, younger men. When we began to examine closely they all seemed to have large shoulders, and under the arm holsters with guns. They were secret service men. It was announced that the president was coming in to greet the guests. Here these country boys, who have been behaving the
usually decorum of country boys began to perk up and show some interest in the proceedings. Suddenly, the doors at the East end opened and in came the president wheeling himself in his wheelchair. At his heels came another character, by the name of "Fella". He was quite a figure in his own right, like Amt Carter had Prince! So the President introduced "Fella" and put him through a few tricks for the country boys. The President, then addressed the group for 15 minutes. This was tape recorded somewhere in my belongings. I have a record of his 15 minute talk that I would not sell for anything.

CZURLES: Do you mean a mechanical record?

BRADLEY: I do recall, among other things, his pointing out that he, too, placed a high priority of improving educational opportunities for all youngsters in this country. It did not matter where they lived and what kind of setting, nor how far they might be back in the rural area, away from the established educational center. He was committed to do any thing that he could do, to extend opportunity for higher quality educational opportunities. He wanted it for all of the young people of this country, regardless of the diverse factors. He then pointed out, in an aside, that he placed such a high priority on the opportunity to meet with these people in the East Room, he had left a meeting of the Chiefs of Staff of the Security Council in order to come and address this meeting. The next day, the Washington media made a great deal of this episode. They likened it to the Inauguration of Andrew Jackson, at which time country cousins came flocking into
the East Room and climbed over the piano, hung from the chandeliers, brought their jugs of corn whiskey and nearly destroyed the place!! All of which we thought was over doing it a bit, but that was the media treatment of the affair at the time. In any event, it proved to be a high point in that conference concerning Rural Education. The conference did produce a report which is part of the literature, and I am sure that you have it in your library. That is the long way of getting from where we started! That is important enough though. The pick-up point is that it was there that I met for the first time Kate B. Wofford, who was leading rural educator with a leading part to play both in the development of this conference and in the proceedings as they developed. Kate was a good friend of Cheryl Williams. Williams turned to her on a number of instances to pick up on things to lead the deliberations of the conference. When the opportunity developed in 1947 to succeed her at this college I accepted it with great deal of pride and a great deal of humility! She was an established figure in rural education, and I was just a young fellow getting started. The opportunity was very attractive and was one of the overriding reasons why I left the job I greatly enjoyed. I left with a great deal of reluctance.

CZURLES: But you also had the experience there, you know?

BRADLEY: It is what we call moving from the trenches to a rear position in terms of day to day dynamics. It was an opportunity to operate in a different arena, deal with some of the same problems, but in a different perspective. I never regretted
it; as a matter of fact, I greatly enjoyed it.

CZURLES: What were some of the programs uniqueness, either in content or practice teaching, the differentiated it from what was in just the regular education program? Did they give you courses on...

BRADLEY: It would be difficult to differentiate much because philosophically, teacher preparation, which is well done, is not vastly different regardless of the area in which you are preparing the teacher. In some aspects of the clinical points of teacher education, obviously you do differentiate between kindergarten and teaching high school classes of students artists. The methodology is different, so is the technology. But the basic concept of teaching, I don’t think varies whether it be in rural America or downtown Buffalo. But none the less, there were many so called rural schools still operating in Western New York. In earlier days a rural school was conceived to be something pretty close to the old time honored traditional American one room rural school house, and at that time there were a number of them still operating. You were teaching in a rural school which was perhaps anywhere from 25 to 40 miles away from this campus. Dr. Wofford had developed an extensive relationship with many of these so called rural schools, with what for the most part was a core of older teachers many given their entire lives to this kind of teaching. Some of them were master teachers. The times were changing rapidly and NYS had been actively pushing and encouraging to stimulate the consolation of many of these smaller rural situations, into... not bigger schools
but into larger administrative units. Then it would be more competent to cope with the increasingly difficult educational demands that the society was imposing upon the educational system. As the urbanization of America began to accelerate as it did at a rapid pace after WWII, we began to suburbanize these relatively small administrative units. They were simply not able to cope with the increasingly complex demands that were placed upon them. While traditionally, we have (and historically) placed great stress on small, local, very responsive educational units. As the complexities of society went out of pace, the fact of the matter was that these once effective small local units simply could not cope with the problems of urbanization. So it became official State policy to encourage and induce, where possible, and sometimes to lean a little, bring about the development of larger administration units which in New York State we call it: Central Rural School Districts. Having come out of that movement myself and having been brought up in it I did some expertise in both the philosophical backgrounds of the movement and also having put two of these districts together some experience in the procedures by which it is accomplished. In the years from the mid-forties on into 1960, this movement which had a heavy spirit back in the 30's was cut off by the war until the early 40's when it started to pick up again. One of my responsibilities was to try to utilize the resources of this institution through the network of relationships which had been developed over a period of time. The period of transition for some of them in the network was very difficult. In
many instances, it meant the last institution. For example, in Jerusalem Corners the one room school house was closed up. What had once been very active small rural church and active rural school and probably a small post office were no longer there. They became a part of a larger concept, larger geographical restructure and this kind of change can be difficult the people who have grown up with just one kind of change can be difficult. The people who have grown up with just one kind of institutional pattern and now are suddenly forced to accept and adapt to another one. One of my functions, which never was defined in the college catalog, was to bring to bear the educational and consultative and other kinds of resources of which the campus had an abundance, to help the communities that went through this process.

SMJ: Would you suggest the places for consolidated schools? Or did the people of the county make that decision?

BRADLEY: No, there was a process by which this was accomplished which was standard and came out of the state education department.

SMJ: Are there any one room school houses left now? Or have they all been closed?

BRADLEY: Oh yes, there still are, some, I can't recall just how many, although I did at one time. When I left the Education Department 18 months ago there still was roughly 175 common school districts. Many of them did operate schools, they had long since closed the school aid and transferred the children.

CZURLES: In 1947 was there the need to prepare people to have
various age groups in the same one room school? You see, by centralization a teacher becomes responsible for limited age groups. By 1947 had that disappeared?

BRADLEY: No, there was still a sizable component of one room schools. The one room rural school provided the rather unique clinical setting for intending teachers because a young person who was an intending teacher had an experience in a one room rural setting which is completely distinctive in contrast to anything else he/she might get during the course of his/her undergraduate teacher preparation. Let me see if I can point out one or two of the characteristics: In the first place, when that young person assumed control of the school he/she was dealing with a range of youngsters from kindergarten age to what was called Jr. high school. She had to learn to be responsive to the youngest child and the oldest child all at the same minute. She also had to become proficient in technology, methodology and the approach of working with the early adolescents, and the very young. She also had to inform and equip herself with a variety of teaching aids, materials, curriculum, instructional strategies, etc. She tended to have what, I would call, a comprehensive experience. It was concentrated into what I believe was an eight week span of time, during which he/she served in one of these rural settings. It was my responsibility at that time, in conjunction with other colleagues in the elementary aspect of the program, where we continued to require that every student have one of these rural experiences. Up until the time I left here, that was still one of
the requirements. The man who succeeded me Dr. Anthony Millanovich continued to carry on this rural experience. I think the point is that even though we were moving quite rapidly into a suburban/urban culture, we still continued that experience because it did offer, we thought, a fairly distinctive and unique opportunities for this comprehensive experience. I took great pride in later years as I went around the state having a superintendent from a Long Island school system which had become quite sophisticated. I could always tell a young person who had been educated at Buffalo State!

SMJ: Buffalo did and still does have a very good reputation.

BRADLEY: I might add Sister, gradually, but not without enthusiasm, that having traveled around, I used to hear over, and over that no institution in the United States prepared Art Teachers compared with the Art Teachers at Buffalo State.

CZURLES: Well, you know you are talking about this comprehensiveness, we will toss it. I just had a man from Australia, and he had student teachers all the time for the a semester, and they covered from kindergarten through high school. You understand one by having contrast with the other.

BRADLEY: I believe I referred to an 8 week program, I should correct that in the interest of accuracy, it was a 6 week program and I believe we used to set our student teaching semester up in three, 6 week blocks.

CZURLES: Did you have a week in between?

BRADLEY; No, we did not. We just had the break. I think that is something we might well have considered.
CZURLES: This is jumping a bit, in the State Education Department now is there an office that deals with what you might call rural education?

BRADLEY: No, there is not. The differentiation is between rural and any other kind of concentration.

CZURLES: Let me ask you this: go to the other because I always think it is rather strange. We were all urban people so we have talked about rural education; now the reverse-inner-city. Is there the State Education Department any office or concern as a differentiation?

BRADLEY: Yes there is. As a matter of fact, it starts off being a priority. In order to give substance to priority, yes, there is structure. The department then concerns itself, if not entirely, in a very substantial fashion with regard for inner-city education in its broadest aspect.

CZURLES: I brought that out Sister, because here we are talking about 25 year span.

BRADLEY: Perhaps, nowhere else in the State is there more evidence of that, than right here in Buffalo. You know it goes back a long time before that. If my memory serves me right, it goes all the way back to the original litigation which was entered through due process before the commissioner in 1964. Now let me just say that the original litigation is still before commission, it has been all the way up through the courts and the Supreme Court which refused to take it and returned it to the Federal District Court. That's where it is right now before Judge Curtin. The
original litigation is still pending, and 13 years has gone by. As the times and conditions change we preceded pretty rapidly to move away from the final vestiges of a rural society in New York State. The next logical development in New York State education, the next innovative forward moving development was the establishment of the Boards of Co-operative Educational Services. It is commonly referred to these days as BOCES. The BOCES were a natural outgrowth and a sequential extension of what had formally been the Rural Education Emphasis which led to the development of the rural school district and now we see the movement going one step further into the development of even larger administrative units, not designed to primarily teaching units but as service units, supporting and supplementing the educational offerings to the primary school district.

CZURLES: Well, we should do a separate tape on that, Sister.

SMJ: Alright! Dr. Bradley will continue his discussion on the origin of the BOCES program. Dr. Bradley....

BRADLEY: The concept of the BOCES was a natural outgrowth of the central rural school movement. The Central Rural School movement was designed to produce larger administrative units that could be provide more and better services than the smaller one room rural school which has served the rural parts of America for a century and a half. The BOCES services were designed to be an administrative device which enabled central/rural school districts to combine their resources and to share them over a broader area, sometimes encompassing five, six, and even a dozen central rural
school districts. By combining the resources, they were able to develop programs on a shared basis among the members of the cooperative board district, which no individual district could ever hope to provide for itself for two or three reasons: 1. The economics of the situation meant that some of the fairly sophisticated services that we will identify later that came into common use through the medium of the BOCES were far too expensive for any one district to support by itself. When you took 8 or 10 districts, combined their resources, shared them, then they were cost effective and economically feasible. For example: Psychiatric Consulting Service come very expensive. As far back as 1950 psychiatric service would come with a rate of about $200 to $300 a day. There were not many small school districts that could afford that. When you put ten of them together, combining resources, they may then employ a qualified school psychiatrist on a consulting basis. Whereas one district could not afford him or even need him for that matter, they can buy this services at a rate with which they can afford to buy it, in the amounts in which they need it. They might need one day of consulting service a month. Where you have a cooperative board sharing this type of service among a dozen or more districts, each one buys the service in the amount it needs and can afford to pay for it at that rate. We are precisely in the first board in which I had some responsibilities. We employed a consulting psychiatrist for two days a week; we paid him $20,000 a year to be available to us, now that was way back when... so you can imagine the cost of today’s rate. Employing him
through the cooperative board, (this contract of employment was with the cooperative board) then school district A over here would say that we would like to buy one half a month of his time to come to our school system to work with the teachers and perhaps to consult with parents or to deal with diagnostic relationships with a given child with a psychiatric difficulty. They would then buy one half day, once a month at a time and that would cost them, well I don't know what the arithmetic is, we could figure it out. An the same was true with a whole host of other services. For example, 25 years ago dental hygienists were not commonly employed by individual school districts, the cooperative board might employ two or three of them and sell their services off to the individual districts at the amount which they needed to have. Another aspect of the economy or the economics of this which is important to point out is that while these sophisticated services come at kind of a high cost no self respecting professional person can afford to get involved restricting his services to one tiny little operation even though they can afford to pay for them. The economics there do not work out either because these services are too valuable to limit them to a very small area even though you have a very wealthy district. So the economics of this works two ways. I am getting ahead of myself now. I believe it was in 1949 that the State Legislature acted section 1956 of the State Education Law which provided in effect that a supervisory district headed by the superintendent of schools acting on the authority delegated by the component of individual school districts making up a supervisory
district could on a permissive basis under this law if they chose to vote to establish Board of Cooperative Educational Services. So it was not something imposed from the top down, it emerged from the individual (Primary) school district, the one that provides educational services. Buffalo is a primary school district. A supervisory district is an administrative unit which has administrative and supervisory responsibilities in a geographic area quite often including a county but not exclusively limited to a county, but very often it would include the parts of two, three, or four counties. This is a legal entity, too, which historically and traditionally, has been, for a long time, a part of the educational structure going all the way back to 1912. At one time, there were 190, but they have now been whittled down to 45 or 46, so actually they are larger and much more carefully defined and much more indigenous to the regions it serves, than what was formally true. Formerly they were created because of some political consideration.

SMJ: Is their headquarters in Albany? And are they responsible to the headquarters?

BRADLEY: The supervisory district is part of the administrative structure. It is an intermediate district that exists between the level of State the level of local school district, and it has both supervisory and administrative responsibilities. Under the terms, of the neighborhood, which provides you with this intermediate or the supervisory district was headed up by an official notice of districts of the superintendents
of the schools. So that too was a legal title. It was to that kind of an office that I went to when I left this college. The first supervisor not audible on tape. Very early after the passage of the section no. 1956 (in 1949 I think) elected to establish one of the very early BOCES. It was to that rather interesting prospect that I left this campus to get it off the runway.

SMJ: You came in at the beginning of the BOCES project?

BRADLEY: Yes, and there was no textbook to find out what you did. All interpreted the law as best as they could.

SMJ: Did you have cooperation with the school district that was there?

BRADLEY: I would have to say, yes, we did. Of course, there were a few notable exceptions! But, here again, you faced the same psychological set of consequences that always seems to occur in America. When a new political or geographical entity comes into the existing structure the older structure tends to resist the truth of the new. Local school districts look upon this with mixed feelings. On the one hand, they could understand that the cooperative work could provide services which no one acting alone could provide. None the less, they looked upon it as a kind of intrusion.

SMJ: What suspicion would it pose at first?

BRADLEY: Sometimes caution, skepticism, and just plain negativism. Also, don't bother us; it is no time for a new idea. Part of the job, of course, was to win the confidence of the local
school district leadership, both the lay and professional leaders. At the same time use a variety of methods to induce them to move out and a stick to prod them along as you develop it. I might add that the original law was not very precise and explicit in the definition of authority or the powers of the executive office, who by law is the district superintendent of the schools.

SMJ: Was it any good, or not?

BRADLEY: It was a mixed bag. As a consequence, a district superintendent had two or three options: he/she could sit back and do nothing and just kind of see what happens or he/she could exert a strong leadership and rely more on him/herself and try to ram things down the throats of people, the way some did. He/she could adopt kind of a combination of the two and use them alternately with some discretion.

CZURLES: Did you say earlier that in developing this, there was intentional avoidance of locking it into present political designations of the area?

BRADLEY: Very deliberate! I have to get into a little background first. The constitution of the State of New York has in it a basic tenet which has been there from 1784 which is three years before the Federal Constitution, that tenet in incorporated in article 11 of the NYS Constitution. I can almost quote it "The Legislature shall establish and maintain a system of three common schools", that I am sure is an exact quote. It has been amended some, but it has never changed the basic tenet. This is a mandate on the legislature to see to it, that there is a system of free
common school, open to all throughout the State. Now it is in that
tenet and from that tenet that the powers of the commission moved
to the areas of integration as they arrived. This is understood
very little. People say you know "What is the son of a b---- doing
down there?" It has been said many times in New York and along
with a lot of other places. The fact of the matter is that if the
commissioner did not respond to this social need of our times, he
would be very much in default of his duties in responding to that
constitutional mandate. The courts have never failed to uphold
that one tenet. The point being that the basic construction of
the state mandates a responsibility to see that there is provided
education on an equal basis for all the children of the state,
whether they live in the most rural areas or whether they live over
here on Delaware Avenue. That is basic.

CZURLES: My main question, was this idea "How do you keep
these groupings to avoid political system?"

BRADLEY: Oh, all right! Now we get back a little into
tradition. The tradition in the northeast has derived right out of
the New England concept of a little local town meeting. Those
early forbearers were so jealous of the prerogatives and the rights
of the individuals that they resisted at every turn, any attempt on
the part of government to intrude on those rights. Thus came the
concept of the small local one room school, close to the people,
very responsive to the people. We have already touched on how that
system tended to be no longer able to cope with an increasingly
complex society, which is one of the prices, that we quote "pay for
progress". Now, deep within our tradition is this concept of keeping education out of the day to day raw stream of partisan politics, and maintaining a strong barrier of protective influences which keep education independent of this raw partisan political stream as we call it. There is nothing in the law that says that education has to be kept relatively independent, but our traditions are sometimes stronger than the written statue. It is here that tradition plays its role. Now because of that commitment to this independence from the very early days of the republic when school governments began to grow and develop, this principle has been rooted deeply in the development of administrative... (someone dropped the microphone at this point!?) As we said earlier in many parts of the county, these kinds of units have been developed along the county lines. We have avoided them in NYS in order to maintain the concept of complete independence between the political and the educational structures. As a consequence, these supervisory districts which have been in business for well over 50 years were put together along education lines rather than political lines.

CZURLES: So you can cross county lines?

BRADLEY: Yes you can, and many of them do. In fact most of them do. Of the 46 or 47 that are now in business I think everyone of them crosses at least on county line and some of them cross as many as four counties. So again, they are structured along educational lines.

CZURLES: How do you finance the thing?
BRADLEY: BOCES are financed jointly by state, and the local area which it serves. In the cooperative board is not a primary school district, it is an intermediate, and it is made up of territory and the resources of those primary schools which are components, or individual parts of the district. So, the Board of Co-operative Education Services is financed by that formula which provides (it is a complicated formula) part of the support of the total Board program comes from the state directly, no wait a minute; the state aid goes to local school districts, but they, in turn, pay it over to the cooperative board. The funds can not be diverted for their own purposes. They go to the cooperative board for payment of the services which they have contracted that were provided by the local board in the local school district. For example: the school psychologist, psychiatric counseling, school social services and the others.

CZURLES: This could be like itinerant people moving around, or could it also be an actual physical structure or facility?

BRADLEY: Part of the concept of the cooperative board is that it is designed to provide services that no district can be expected to provide by itself. If a district is large enough to justify and is able to employ a psychologist, then it is expected that the district will provide its own psychological services. Now the rule sometimes stronger in the exception. A local district may well be large enough, but it need a psychologist and a half, really for serving the population. So, it will employ one of its own full time and then supplement the additional services by purchasing that
from the Cooperative Board. In that way, it will have the services of 1 1/2 psychologists by employing a full time one and contracting for the other one-half. Now let me come back to the fiances in a minute. The local school district, in formulating its budget and the budget that district submits to its voters, includes in that budget estimates of the funds that they will need to purchase a service or services from their Cooperative Board. The cooperative board then in formulating its budget, bases its estimates on these estimates from the people of the local districts. It is very complex and highly cooperative. It calls for I might say from the standpoint of a supervisor, a rather high degree of skill in working with group dynamics. Because the local school districts very properly jealously guard their own prerogative against encroachment and intrusion of this "johnny come lately outfit." They are always a bit suspicious, because it is primarily a State Agency. They feel there may be an encroachment upon their local prerogative. The district superintendent situation must either have, or very early on, come by a fairly degree of skill in relating too. The district superintendent is a state official, not elected. He is appointed by the Commission of Education. Let me back up. He is elected by the local board of cooperative educational services. His election is not official until it is confirmed by the Commission of Education. He is the representative of the Commission of Education, functioning and carrying on the state function in a local setting which he also is responsible to the local authorities.
SMJ: In a sense he is recommended by the local board? Could it be voted though?

BRADLEY: Yes, oh yes. The commissioner in a number of instances has refused to confirm the election. Then they have to start all over again. It is a combination. To get back to financing and tie that off if we can, the BOCES budget derives from two sources, the state and the component districts that make up the area served by the Board and those areas originally must recall created the Board of Cooperative Educational Services. The Board is a creature of the local districts which together comprise it, but it also has by statute a number of functions that are vested in it by the state. So it is sort of a strange creature. It takes a little while to (figure it out?)

CZURLES: Can a group pull out?

BRADLEY: There is no provision in the law for a group that has joined them, to un-join them.

CZURLES: Now, the other question asks about buildings, I was in Medina or someplace, and they told me to come to the BOCES place where they had special facilities either for Home Ec. or Industrial Arts or something.

BRADLEY: In the early days there was no provision in the statute for the BOCES to build anything. All it could do was rent space in a facility. Over a period of time the early BOCES and in my day that is the way we functioned. You functioned in terms of your ingenuity. And we got a building, one of the first in the state and here is the way it was done: I found what we called "A
local angel" and convinced this local business man that here was a good investment. If he would build a building to our specifications we would enter into a series of continuing contracts so he would always be assured of a three year period of occupancy and rent. Each year he tore up the three year contract and renewed it for three more years. This way we could legally get a building by paying rent for something what someone else built for us. Now, since that time the law had been revised to provide that BOCES may submit a proposition with the president of the supervisory district who just is in the primary school district and then go to the poles and vote on the proposition to build. Using that law, most of the BOCES buildings that you see around the state have been built within the last ten years. In order to finance the dormitory authority of which you are familiar, it is authorized by law to sell bonds. So that is the way it has been. So now they can own, and do own and build physical facilities to serve their needs to carry on their program. In my day, that was not possible, so you were always living on the edge of the law... I used to wake up sometimes at 2am wondering if the sheriff would be waiting outside the house for me! I always worried that he would announce to me that we had either been guilty of non, mal, misappropriation on something we had done days before. We were always just right on the edge on the law. There were two ways to operate: Unless the law says precisely that you can do it, you don’t touch it. The other was to say that if the law does not specifically deny you the right to do it, you do it anyway and wait until someone blows the
whistle on you. And that was the way you preceded. Many of the fine programs the BOCES developed in the early days were developed by guys who would initiate a program, demonstrate the value and the effectiveness of the program, sell it to the component districts, build a base of support for it and then go on to the legislature, utilizing that base support. Get it enacted into the statute so it was legal... then you could sleep again!!

CZURLES: Well, Allen, Thank you very much. This goes more comprehensively into the system itself which I am very glad to hear because you are recording not only something which is local and state but the entire continuity of concepts moving from the small unit which society has found could not economically operate to the larger and larger ones so we have here...

BRADLEY: Let me see if I can draw a generalization from all of this. This epitomizes the great (the tape ends in mid-sentence!)