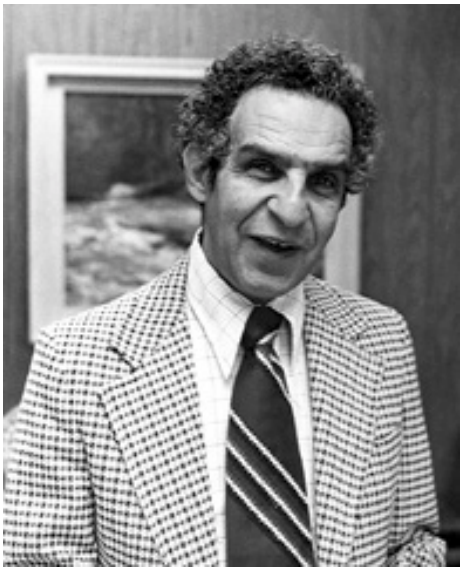


ORAL HISTORY—

Daniel B. Levine

This is an interview conducted on April 23, 1996 and October 1, 1996, with former Census Bureau Deputy Director Daniel B. Levine [May 1979-Jan. 1982]. The interviewers are David M. Pemberton and Ramal Basu of the History Staff and Nancy Tarry, Work Force and Organization Planning Office [observer and interviewer]; William F. Micarelli, Chief of the History Staff observed the interview.

Pemberton: **We normally start these interviews by asking general background questions such as: where and when were you born and what you did prior to coming to the Bureau.**

Levine: Basically not a lot before coming to the Census Bureau. I was born in California in 1925, and my family moved about a bit. At a very early age, I and my family moved to Canada because of the Great Depression. My mother's family was from Canada, so we went to Western Canada for a number of years. I came back to the United States in 1935 and went to high school in Washington, DC. Just as I was getting out of high school, World War II began, and I was still a little young at that point. I won a scholarship to a local technical school called Capitol Radio Engineering Institute, and I spent a year there learning about radio engineering. When I finished, the military offered me a job in Alaska tending to radio transmitters. Somehow or other, that didn't excite me very much, and much to my surprise (that's a long, long story of a different nature) I enlisted in the Naval Air Corps and became a Naval Aviation Cadet. After the war, in 1945, I got GI benefits, which to me was one of the most successful of the many programs which the Federal Government produced after World War II, since it enabled many people to go to college. I went to George Washington University in Washington, DC, and got my bachelor's degree. As part of my training, the Navy sent me to half a dozen universities and colleges because it decided that before you could be a pilot, you had to be a gentlemen; in order to be a gentlemen you had to go to school. So I wound up at some rather interesting schools like Hampden Sidney College in rural Virginia (in Farmville, of all places), then to the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Georgia, and eventually into flight training. When I finished at George Washington University in 1947, I applied to graduate school at a number of places. Again, serendipity; should mention that "serendipity" played a very important role in my life. I was accepted by the University of California for graduate school, but I didn't have the money to get there. I called Columbia University, to which I also had applied, as I was trying to figure out what I was going to do, and the application had gotten misplaced. Columbia said I would be accepted. So I wound up at Columbia University in New York. After I finished my master's degree in the summer of 1948, I came back to Washington, DC, with a friend of mine who also had been attending Columbia, and

we made the usual trek around Federal Government agencies looking for summer jobs. I wasn't sure whether I wanted to go back and get my Ph.D. or not. I had been accepted into Columbia's graduate school for the Ph.D. program.

Pemberton: **Was this in statistics or what was the major?**

Levine: My undergraduate degree and my graduate degree are in economics; my minor was in statistics. My friend's folks, who lived here in town as did mine, said we could use his father's car to go swimming if first we at least made a decent attempt to show that we were looking for a job. That morning in the *Washington Post*, there was an advertisement for summer interns at the Bureau of the Census. So we decided, in order to be honest with his father, we would drive out here to Suitland, MD, which I had visited before (I had a cousin that lived here). We came out to Suitland, and we were both hired as summer interns. It was a great shock; we had not planned on being hired. We had planned on having a wonderful summer off, except we needed the money. It was rather exciting in fact. I was interviewed by a whole raft of people starting with Dr. Paul Glick [Paul C. Glick, Senior Demographer, Population Division, from September 1972; Assistant Chief for Demographic and Social Statistics Programs, Population Division, from May 1962; Chief, Social Statistics Branch, Population Division to May 1962; Chief, Social Statistics Section, Population and Housing Division, 1950 census]. I had just finished and gotten my M.A. degree, and Paul Glick looked through my materials and applications and said he could probably give me a CAF 2 as a clerk because "you don't have your Ph.D." That was Paul Glick. Then I wandered up to the economic statistics area and was interviewed by David Kaplan [David L. Kaplan, Assistant Director for Demographic Censuses, November 1974 to January 1979; Assistant Division Chief for Methods Development, Population Division, to August 1968; Assistant Chief for Methods Development from May 1962; Decennial Census Planner to May 1962; Chief Occupation and Industry Statistics Section, Population and Housing Division, 1950 Census]; may he rest in peace. What an amazing individual; one of the smartest, brightest, and nicest people I have every met. David at that time was going with a young women who had relatives in Israel; I had written my thesis on the labor market in Israel. David read my thesis and must have put in a good word for me because I was offered a job in the economic statistics area; that's how I started in the Bureau. By the end of the summer, the Bureau said they would like to keep me, so I decided I would postpone going back to New York and stay here, but the Bureau was unable to reach me. Earlier, somewhere between getting out of the military and graduating college, I took what they called then the junior professional exam and did very well. But the Bureau was not able to reach me. At this time I got an offer from Air Force Intelligence. So I decided to earn some money and accepted the job with Air Force Intelligence. The Friday before I was to report to Air Force Intelligence, my last day at Census Bureau, about 10 a.m. that morning, I got a call from personnel, who asked me to stop in and see Gertrude Bancroft [Chief, Manpower Statistics, Population Division, to September 1959; Coordinator, Manpower Statistics, after May 1951; Chief, Economic Statistics Section, Population and Housing Division, to May 1951], who later became Gertrude McNalley, who was the head of that group. She said they had just been informed that they could hire me and would like me to stay. Here I was, having accepted a job at Air Force, I didn't know what to do. Well, one of my close friends had a brother who had just graduated from the University of Chicago as an economist and who was looking for a job. I rushed to a telephone and called Air Force Intelligence and told them a bald face lie that someone in my family had gotten very ill, and I had to decline their offer at this last moment and didn't know when I would be available to take the job; I thanked them very profusely. By the way, I added, I have a friend who also is an economist and who's even smarter than I am who is looking for a job. So that was his career; he went into the Air

Force and I stayed at the Bureau. It was one of the greatest things that ever happened to me. I came to work for the Bureau in the summer of 1948 and stayed on to 1954, when I left for 5 years. I came back in late 1959 and stayed until 1982.

Pemberton: **That's quite a story. From the summer of 1948 to 1954 you were employed here after being an intern as a junior level professional.**

Levine: Junior level professional. Mary Valentino [Placement, Personnel Utilization Section, Personnel Division, from May 1951] (may she exceed to the highest level of angeldom) was the person in personnel who was tremendously helpful to me.

She called me up and said: "you know we hired you as a professional P1" as it was called in those days. "Forget about Paul Glick, ignore him. I have been looking through your record; you have your masters; you're entitled to a P2." She was wonderful and she took very good care of me. So I became a junior professional in the Economic Statistics Branch headed by Mr. Welsh [Emmit Welsh, Chief, Economic Statistics Branch]. I worked with amazing people like Gertrude Bancroft who was head of the Labor Force Unit and Bob Pearl [Robert G. Pearl, Chief, Demographic Surveys Division; Statistician, Manpower Statistics, Population Division, to September 1959; Chief, Economic Statistics Section, Population and Housing Division, after May 1951]. Which leads to my first profound pomposity, namely, what made the Bureau, what makes the Bureau, and what will always make the Bureau—people. My career, my time at the Bureau is just one big remembrance of outstanding people who were extremely generous of their time, very giving of their expertise, always helpful, (with rare exceptions, there's always a SOB or two around, including me I guess). But the Bureau has had some outstandingly bright people. Beginning in 1940 and continuing after the war, the Bureau was just swarming with bright, alert, imaginative, inventive people who all were at a point in time where their careers were ahead of them. An explosion was about to take place in the Federal Government, number 1, and in the application and utility of statistical information, number 2; we all just rode that great big wave. It was a great experience. I know that a lot of people don't like to think about that golden class of 1940. I was not a member of that class of 1940, but the people who made up that class were exceptional individuals. I was very fortunate.

Pemberton: **Quite an extraordinary group of folks who arrived here 8 years before you did and had a chance...**

Levine: An honor roll of people of that sort, incredibly bright, imaginative, inventive, and most of all helpful. It's a rare experience when people are willing to stop and help you learn. I had 6 years of higher education, but the real education started here and it was magnificent.

Pemberton: **Were you on the economic side of the Bureau?**

Levine: Well, they called it economic statistics, but it dealt with unemployment data. In those days, the Bureau didn't do very much reimburseable work, very little in fact; so specifically we were working on the Labor Force Survey—the Current Population Survey as it was called starting in 1948. Before that, it was called Monthly Report on Unemployment. That was called economic statistics even though we always think of economics as the other side of the shop—the establishment type of activity. This was the demographic household side.

Pemberton: **What did you do after your stint as a clerk but arriving as a professional. Among what jobs did you have with regard to the Current Population Survey?**

Levine: I think the best thing that people did in those days was to make sure that you understood how the Bureau operated. The first assignment I was given, my summer assignment, a professional assignment, was to work in the clerical unit to code "occupation and industry." From there, I was sent to learn how the Bureau did weighting and estimation and editing; you learned the entire process; you just weren't cubby holed. You were exposed to what the group was doing in the demographic area especially; it was very exciting. Then in late 1948 or early 1949 again serendipity, the Bureau decided to revise the Current Population Survey and introduce a sample rotation design—people were in the survey for so many months, then out, and then back in again. Someone, I can't remember who, probably Bob Pearl or Gertrude Bancroft, had the brilliant idea that since you have 75 percent overlap from month 1 to month 2, you could match those people (not a net-change where you do a measure of unemployment today and unemployment tomorrow and the difference is net) and see how many were employed in month 1, unemployed in month 2, and develop a gross change or a gross flow analysis. All of a sudden, there I was assigned to do this job, to develop not only the gross flow analysis, but how to do the ratio estimation, the editing, and how to write a report. Before I knew it, I was writing something that became the P59 Series, "Gross Changes in Labor Force." It was a tremendous experience, and shortly after I was put in charge of writing the monthly report on the labor force, which in those days the Census Bureau issued, not the Labor Department. The Census Bureau took over responsibility for the Current Population Survey in 1942 or 1943, when it came here from the Works Projects Administration, including design, operation, analysis of results, and publication. In 1959, there was one of those National Football League trades where we got two draft choices and something else, and the Department of Labor took over analysis and publication. So I started writing the monthly report on the labor force, and that was an eye opener too because again of the people that I was working with. Remember, I was a very junior professional, and here I was writing this report which was waited for with bated breath by the chairman of a corporation or the chief economists of a Fortune 500 company, or what have you. The people who were on top of this thing did not hesitate to take me down each month to meet the Secretary, so I had a wonderful education. One could not have asked for a better education in the practicalities, the empirical aspects of what you were doing, not just the theoretical. Yes, they taught the theoretical, but they insisted that you understood the pragmatic and empirical aspects of what we were doing. It was a wonderful education for a very young man such as myself.

Pemberton: **Did you have an occasion to come across elements of the survey sampling by Hansen [Morris H. Hansen, Assistant, then Associate Director for Statistical Standards and Methodology, from 1949 to 1968], Hurwitz [William N. Hurwitz, Chief, Statistical Research Section, Office of the Assistant Director for Statistical Standards, to January 1969; Chief, Statistical Research Division in 1960 census; Chief, Statistical Research Section during 1950 census; co-authored Sample Survey Methods and Theory 1958, with William Madow] and Madow [William G. Madow, Statistician, Bureau of the Census; co-authored Sample Survey Methods and Theory, 1958, with William Hurwitz]?**

Levine: Slightly, I also had the pleasure of sitting in some of those meetings like the fly on the wall. You can so easily be intimidated by knowing that was Morris Hansen, that's Joe Steinberg [Joseph Steinberg, Chief, Statistical Methods Division, 1960 Census; Chief, Statistical Sampling Section, Population Division during the 1950 Census of Population and Housing], and

Waksberg [Joseph Waksberg, Associate Director for Statistical Standards and Methodology, from June 1972 to June 1973]. Your eyes were like saucers every time you were taken to one of those meetings. There was a monthly meeting called the Labor Force Meeting, where all of the participants got together to discuss various aspects of the survey problems, making sure they were communicating, consisting of Gertrude Bancroft, who at that time had moved up to be head of the Labor Force Section, and Joe Steinberg who was head of the statistics group, and it got rather acrimonious. One of the traits that I remember from the early days is that if you were walking down the hall and someone starting speaking, you might jump 5 feet sideways by the force of the voice blowing you sideways. These were not bashful people, and they let their emotions come to the surface very quickly. Some of these meetings were frightening for a junior professional; you were afraid they were going to come to blows. They finally passed a rule that if you said anything nasty about somebody you had to take money and put it in the pot, which would be used later for coffee or cake or something like that. I remember to this day a meeting where Joe Steinberg and Bob Pearl got into it hot and heavy and Bob finally leaped up from his chair and jammed his hand in his pocket and pulled out a handful of change and said "GD it's worth every penny to tell you what a SOB I think you are," and slammed the money down on the table. People took these things rather strongly, but the strength of it was when you walked out of the room the acrimony was gone. The argument was on the issue, not on the personalities; they were loud and long, but once they were decided it was finished. Again, that was a strength here, and I guess I would say to you very quickly that this was probably not only a tradition with most of the people I worked with, but I think it's something that Morris Hansen set as a standard for this Bureau which lasted a long time. I don't know if it still exists. Morris, in all the time I knew him, had the least ego of any individual I've ever met. Truly, in his eyes, everyone was created equal. When he had a meeting, whether you were a grade 1 and he was grade 101, if he thought you had something to say or you thought you had something to say you got the opportunity to say it. You were treated with respect and dignity, and your argument was heard and answered. If you said something stupid, they passed it off once and treated you that way. If you kept saying stupid things, you didn't get invited back. But it was a way of trying to bring you in because Morris recognized very quickly that the fountain of all knowledge did not reside in Morris Hansen and Bill Hurwitz; it was spread through this wonderful organization. It's a wonderful tribute to people like Morris and Bill, who was a character if there every was one. I'm getting off the subject, I'm sorry.

Pemberton: **No, some of these things are very interesting and useful.**

Levine: It's sort of a history of the climate within which the Bureau operated which led to many of the crazy ideas that later turned out to be not so crazy.

Pemberton: **Actually trying to get a hold, if you will, of the corporate culture is one of the things we try to do in these interviews because once established, it takes a long time to change because you have people here 20 or 30 years that have cultivated it and then pass it on.**

Levine: We hope so—the good, not the bad.

Pemberton: **You mentioned that you would get together with a number of the folks involved in various aspects of the CPS. Did you get together with the field folks, the data collection people?**

Levine: Oh yes, this Labor Force Committee as it was called was made up of representatives of every unit in the Bureau that had anything to do with the survey, including the Field Division. The meeting represented the total panoply of people involved in the activity. It was hot and heavy, no doubt about it, a full agenda, and handled very nicely.

Pemberton: **Were you involved in the redesign of the CPS after the 1950 census? Or was there a redesign?**

Levine: There was a redesign after the 1950 Census of Population and Housing, which turned out to be partially a disaster, but that is a different story. I was too much a junior to be included in that. Instead, at that time, I suddenly found myself involved with UNIVAC. The decennial census was grinding to a halt in 1952 or so, and here was this big piece of equipment clunking away in Philadelphia and what should we do with it. They decided to bring it to Bureau headquarters and took all the people out of the first wing on the third floor and dumped this huge machine up there. The only thing that was air conditioned in the entire building was that particular wing. You have no idea what it's like to work in a building like this when it's not air conditioned and try to write something with the perspiration dripping off your hand. That's another story of how they would allow us occasionally to buy a fan. We got together and bought a window air conditioner, and we had to stand in line before they could authorize the electricity and all that nonsense. One day, Bob Pearl called a couple of us on a Friday and said:"the powers that be have decided that we're going to put the CPS on the computer; it will be one of the first activities. Effective immediately you are a computer programmer/systems analyst. Here is a mimeograph, that probably neither of you has ever seen. Here are the mimeographed notes on how to learn to be a programmer (it was a Friday afternoon); we'll meet Monday morning on assignments on how you program, study this over the weekend. Come in prepared to program on Monday." And I became a UNIVAC programmer at that point. It was a rather fascinating experience. We did indeed put the CPS on the UNIVAC; Bob Pearl was our lead programmer: there were about six of us. Eventually we were moved into a unit headed up by Mort Myer, and we programed UNIVAC I. My wife had that very perplexed look when I would get these telephone calls at 3:00 a.m. telling me—"you got 40 minutes on the computer—get here in 5 minutes." You would stop by the White Tower or one of those hamburger joints and pick up doughnuts and a pot of coffee and bring it in here, and then we would grind away. A "sort" would take about 45 minutes and then the typewriter would go clink, clink, clink—we would be playing bridge most of the night waiting for the computer to come up. Libby North [probably Elizabeth T. North, Supervisory Computer Processing Specialist, Programing Branch, Electronic Systems Division, 1960 census] and Dorothy Armstrong [Dorothy P. Armstrong, Assistant Division Chief, Research and Development, Systems Division (later Computer Science Division)] in the 1970 census taught us how to use UNIVAC I and clear the machine, put the old tapes on, and all the rest of it. I was a computer programmer until 1954.

Pemberton: **So did you actually write machine language code?**

Levine: Yes, we wrote machine language code and put the converted CPS on. In fact, I have at home, maybe I gave it back to the Bureau recently, the reel of tape with all the original CPS programs on it including the ones I wrote. I had some notes, which I have given to the Bureau, of my early programming attempts.

Somewhere in there, the Bureau announced a program called "junior professional intern program management," and I applied for it. What I said I wanted to do was observe a manager in action; this is where you were going to learn something and come back and be more of a benefit to the Bureau. I picked Seymour Wolfbein who was my idol. Seymour at that time was probably an Associate Commissioner at the Bureau of Labor Statistics and later became Assistant Secretary of the Department of Labor. He was one of the giants of the labor force analysis at the Labor Department. I had a lot of respect for Seymour; he was quite an operator politically and otherwise. They had a competition here, and we gradually got whittled down from 20 to 10 to 5 to 2 people. Orvin Wilhite [Orvin L. Wilhite, Chief, Operations Section, Agriculture Division for the 1950 census] and I won the competition. Orville later became head of the Agriculture Division. I was about to go off—they were going to arrange with the Labor Department for me to go down and became Special Assistant to Seymour. I wanted to see how you managed a statistical operation. I was always interested in that aspect of it. Most of the time people brought to the Bureau are professionals in the sense that they are statisticians, social science analysts, demographers. Unfortunately the way the Bureau was structured, (I don't know the way it is today), you got up to a certain grade level and beyond that you had to have people beneath you to step on or otherwise you couldn't achieve that grade level. So suddenly they said, "Kneel down and I'll anoint you manager." That attitude didn't make for very good managers, I found out in my life time. I had a little problem with that approach; I wanted to see how people became managers. I was about to go to the Department of Labor when Bob Pearl called me in, I won't say with a twinkle in his eye, and said: "we have a real problem. If you go, we can't fill that job because of the detail. On the other hand, if you go, we can't give you a raise. If you stay we will give you a raise." I was very poor in those days, even poorer then I am now. So I chose that. Conrad Taeuber, another great mentor [Conrad Taeuber, Associate Director for Demographic Fields, March 1968 to January 1973; Assistant Director for Demographic Fields, April 1951 to 1968], may he last for a hundred years, was the one who made the choices. They put me in a unit with Mort Myer. Mort is a very bright guy, but his style and mine don't always agree. I went to ask Mort for a raise at one point, and he said he didn't think I deserved it, and he was probably right. But it didn't please me. So I went up to Gertrude Bancroft and this was probably late 1953. Gertrude said: "Oh wow, Mort won't give you a raise; I'd love to hire you. But we don't have any position open, and we can't bring you back right now. But I have a friend who once was my roommate who is in charge of the consumer satisfaction survey work in Agriculture. Why don't you go down and see her. I'll call her up and tell her you're coming down." So I went down, and I was offered a job and a raise. I went to Agriculture in 1954 to do consumer survey research on Agriculture products. The first job I was given was to work on a joint project with the Census Bureau with Herman Miller [Herman P. Miller, Chief, Population Division, 1966 to 1972; Special Assistant, Office of the Associate Director for Demographic Fields, to July 1964; Special Assistant to the Deputy Director, from January, 1960; Consumer Income Statistics, Economic Statistics Section, Population and Housing Division, 1950 census], another genius and close friend. It was on the probabilities of measuring the stock of orange juice and other products, the aggregate stocks available; this operation was run out of Bill Huriwitz's shop. The first organizational meeting, Trienah Meyers, a

wonderful person who did a great deal for me, came over here to meet with Herman and Bill in his office. I walked in and sat down. I must have seen Bill 20 times in my life time; he was "god," and I was a peasant. We're sitting at the same table and she says, "You know Dan Levine don't you?" and he said, "Oh, yes he's a traitor." I wanted to crawl underneath the table. He then proceeded to tell Trienah that the Bureau had invested all this time in me and at first opportunity I left the Bureau; I flew the coop, a real traitor. Here I am, I don't know this lady, that's my new boss and had only met her about 2 weeks earlier. We went through an argument at that point as to what were our respective responsibilities and how to do the project. Trienah was trying to get a word in edgewise, and Bill wouldn't let her. Finally Bill turned to her and said, "the trouble with you Trienah is you don't let anybody else talk." She exploded! Bill said: "I'll tell you a story; you should take this story to heart. I was in Cuba; I studied Spanish real hard; I was there trying to give them advice on statistics, and I realized that I didn't understand what they were talking about. I couldn't understand them at all. So I went back to my room and closed the door and tried to analyze this problem. It took me half the night, and I finally figured it out. I was talking so much I didn't give them a chance to say anything. That's what's wrong with you Trienah." He was incredible.

In 1959, Bob Pearl called me up and asked me to come to lunch with him. What had happened was that the Bureau at that time was about to make this grand switch, where half of the labor force—the analysts responsible for the analytic function, release of the data—would be shifted down to the Department of Labor and the Bureau, in return, was getting the Construction Statistics Program. The question was who would go from here to the Labor Department, and what would happen to the group here. One of the immutable pressures during that whole period, with all of these bright people, was how to retain them. You couldn't retain them by merely giving them pay raises because personnel wouldn't let you. You had to give them responsibility in management. So what was happening was the Population Division was being exploded, cast aside, basically losing functions right and left. What fell out of it became the Housing Division, a machine-tabulation division, and the Statistical Methods Division; all of these had been part of the Population Division. Now with these activities going to the Labor Department, Bob Pearl and Gertrude McNalley (Bancroft) were arguing about what to do, and Gertrude decided to go to the Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS] and become an Assistant Commissioner. Bob decided to stay here but only with the understanding that he would get a promotion, and the Demographic Surveys Division would be established. In other words, this Economic Statistics Section in the Population Division was about to become its own division. At that time, the Bureau had picked up some health statistics—it was just beginning to do the Health Interview Survey; it was doing the labor force survey, as well as a few supplements to Current Population Survey. There was a chap working here in the income branch, by the name of Lee Paley. He came after I did, very bright. He went to work for Herman Miller. He was a good operations type. About a couple of months before, in the fall of 1958, Lee had a heart attack and died; a very young man, he left a wife and two very young children. The night that Lee died, we were all called and we rushed over to Lee's house. I will never forget the sight of Conrad Taeuber, then the Associate Director for Demographic Fields, sitting on a couch with two little children reading to them and calming them down. Ed Goldfield [Edwin D. Goldfield, Assistant Director for Program Development, December 1969 to August 1971] went over to do whatever he could to help; it was just an incredible experience—people coming together. Bob Pearl was in the throes of establishing the Demographic Surveys Division. As I understand it, Lee Paley had agreed to be one of his key people. I had kept in touch with my friends in the Census Bureau because I liked the Bureau—I was very happy here. I had not sought a job, though. I was very happy with Trienah. Bob called me up and asked if we could have lunch. We drove out to a delicatessen in Virginia, and he asked

me to come back to the Census Bureau. About 3 days before, Conrad Taeuber had called me and asked me to come out for an interview. I thought it was the same thing, but it wasn't. Conrad asked me to become an Assistant Division Chief in the Population Division and take responsibility for the income area and things of that nature. I turned the offer down. Probably a very wise decision, I'm not a great analyst, that's not my strength. But it was nice to be wanted, a very lovely position to be in. Bob asked me to come back as a Branch Chief, and I told him since I had left the Bureau 5 years ago, I had learned a great deal and had grown and understood a good deal. Working for Bob Pearl prior to the time I left was a fascinating experience—he was one of the brightest, smartest people I had ever met in my life. He had a talent for analyzing data that few people I know since or before had demonstrated. Bob was one of my first supervisors. When I started writing these reports (P59, P50, P52, P57) I would labor long and hard to get it out. Bob would review it and very kindly pick it up and say, "that's not bad, but it needs a few changes, let me suggest a few things," and he would start writing. He had that unique talent; he could start at the first line and write 25 pages. He might have erased a word now and then, but he never crossed out. He would write 25 pages and say, "I didn't mean to do this, but this is the general idea. Why don't you look at it." You would be mad as hell at that point and red in the face, and you felt like you weren't worth a plug nickel. Then you would go back and read what Bob wrote, and the worst part was that it was so much better then anything you'd done. I didn't realize until long after that he rubbed a lot of people the wrong way because he was quite arrogant. He got along well with Joe Waksberg. They worked beautifully together, they really did wonderful things.

Anyway, Bob asked me to come back. When I went to Agriculture, I found that the experience I had in the Census Bureau, the training and knowledge of data sources, and how to use data was invaluable—I wasn't that good, but I was a paragon compared to what they had down there in those days. Trienah was very appreciative of what I could bring to her organization. We did a lot of consumer-acceptance research, and I understood sampling and estimation, and I could write reasonably well, and I could talk to people, so she wasn't afraid to send me out. I grew considerably under her tutelage because she gave me a great deal of freedom. So I told Bob I wasn't sure I wanted to come back unless he was willing to meet some of my conditions. My conditions were that, given that the Bureau really had a tremendous resource here, capable people, a large investment in technology, computers by then, sampling, and the census as a resource from which to draw samples, I wanted the Bureau to move more aggressively into conducting special surveys. It just so happened at that point that there was a survey that was being done quinquennially by the Interior Department called the Fishing and Hunting Survey. It was about to come out for bid—it had always been bid by the Interior Department with OMB approval and done by private industry. In fact, that was one of the things I learned in Agriculture. Most of the large national surveys we did, we contracted out. So I suddenly became aware of that budding area in the private sector, Gallop, Audits and Surveys, National Analysts. I became the liaison and the contracting agent to many of these large national surveys which Agriculture did. I learned what could and what couldn't be done and also felt the Bureau could do it a lot better, a lot faster, and a lot cheaper. I felt that it was important. So I told Bob that unless I could get that guarantee I wasn't sure I wanted to come back. He went to Ross Eckler [A. Ross Eckler, Director, 1965 to 1969; Acting Director, January 1965 to July 1965; Deputy Director, 1949 to 1965], who by that time was Deputy Director. I think Ross was a very conservative man and didn't like the idea, but Bob convinced him that he would like me back. I don't know why Ross ever agreed. Anyway, Bob said we would do it. We found that we didn't have to bid against the private sector. We were

supposedly in a unique position, which the Bureau still is. We don't bid against the private sector. If we want to do it, the Office of Management and Budget decides if we have a competitive advantage and if we do, we get the project.

Pemberton: **As far as I know, we still have. We have been losing things to the Department of Agriculture recently.**

Levine: Well, you're losing at lot of thing to people for a lot of reasons, but we can discuss that later. But we grew very rapidly. At that point, I would guess that the Bureau had a couple hundred thousand dollars in supplements. By the time I left, the Bureau had close to a hundred million dollars in outside work. I still think in retrospect it was the right thing, a good thing for the Bureau. It was good for the government, and I think we did good things for good people. We moved very rapidly. We hit the tide again. Shortly thereafter, Mr. Johnson became President and began the war on poverty, so we did the Survey on Economic Opportunity, followed by the Survey on Income and Education, and some large surveys on disability. So I had a wonderful opportunity. I was given the opportunity of building a staff and given the opportunity of freedom.

Pemberton: **Were you a Branch Chief at that point?**

Levine: I was a Branch Chief at that point, in charge of special surveys.

Pemberton: **You knew of the Fish and Hunt Survey at that time. Did you actually have a signal role in bringing in other special surveys?**

Levine: Oh, yes, I became a huckster, which you weren't suppose to do. I spent a lot of time huckstering the agencies, telling them what we could do, and how we could do it. Later on, a lot of people thought we had a monopoly, which we did. But I thought it was wonderful since I was the monopolist. It took a while. When Julie Shiskin [Julius Shiskin, Assistant Director for Program Development, July 1968 to June 1969; Acting Assistant Director for Program Development, March 1968 to July 1968] became Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, he used to object strenuously about our monopoly.

Pemberton: **You learned to do this. In a sense, you got what some of the agencies wanted when you worked at Agriculture. You already had sense of what the Bureau was capable of. You came back and kind of proved what the Bureau was capable of with the Fish and Hunt Survey.**

Levine: Once you showed people like Bob Pearl and Joe Waksberg what was potentially out there in the way of a banquet table, you couldn't contain their appetite. They could come up with the most imaginative things in the world. It was fantastic; it really was. You have to remember that we had a resource that nobody else has had called the decennial census. Let me give you an example of what a resource that is. In 1961 or 1962, the National Cancer Institute and the National Heart Institute were trying to figure out how they could do a study to see what the impact of smoking was on death rates because of heart disease and cancer. They come up with a very ingenious idea. They proposed to take a sample of people who immigrated from countries that had high death rates from those two causes and see if the death rates in this country for their siblings or the immigrants here were different from what was taking place there. We had the 1960 census which had a question on "where were you born," so we could take a nice big sample of people born in the U.K. and people born in Norway right out of the census. Nobody else could do that, otherwise you would have to take a huge screening

operation at an immense cost. We could identify those people; we could interview them. We could find out if they had siblings still living there; we could go interview their siblings. We could set a control sample here and get a range for a control sample there. That became our first international venture. Bob Pearl and I wound up in Europe. It was my first trip to Europe.

We also became involved in conducting surveys for the National Center for Health Statistics and established a special branch for those studies. This branch was headed up by the amazing, incomparable, unbelievable Katherine Capt [Katherine G. Capt, Post-Enumeration Survey, Statistical Research Section, Statistical Standards, for 1950 census]. I don't know where she is or if she is alive today. She was the widow of the Director of the Census in 1940, J. C. Capt [James Clyde Capt, Director, 1965 to 1969]. Katy was an amazing women, southern lady, genteel, always soft spoken, like steel. But we had a great resource and so pretty soon we didn't have to huckster anymore. It didn't take long for OMB to listen to what people were proposing in their budgets and would say, "fine if you want to do that, here's a cheaper way, go see the Census Bureau. Or even if it isn't cheaper the Census Bureau can do it." Also people heard us talk about our successes and our failures, because one of the big strengths of the Census Bureau is we always talk about our failures and our problems. The undercount is the Bureau's problem, nobody else's. The Bureau first publicized the undercount—we would go to ASA [American Statistical Association] Committee, to PAA [Population Association of America] Committee, to all of these things and talk about the strengths of what we did and here is the evaluation. We always saved money or found money for evaluation. So people heard about us so they came to us. We had people from universities coming to us who were getting grants—I did a study with the University of Chicago, The National Opinion Research Center, on widows of veterans and things of that sort, which we could have identified through the Current Population Survey. I met a lot of the bright people around the world.

Tarry: **What was your relationship with the Office of Management and Budget did you have any problems with clearance?**

Levine: Of course, you always have problems with the Office of Management and Budget, there are legitimate problems. They have one job to do, and you have a different job. Unfortunately, as much as one would complain about the Office of Management and Budget, I think it is a very essential function. The problem with it now is that there are not enough people to do the job. We were very fortunate. The lady who stood between us and what we wanted to do was Margaret Martin [Margaret E. Martin, Bureau of the Budget, later Office of Management and Budget], there is none better. There is a lady who had great depth of knowledge, experience, and, most of all, understanding. She had a way about her. She had very little in the way of a big stick. But one had such respect for her judgement. When Margaret said, "no, I don't think you ought to" very seldom did you try to figure how to get over or through or around Margaret. Generally you went back and tried to figure out "how do we satisfy Margaret." It was a delight to be in the room with her. There is a lady who would be worth interviewing. Now close to 80, her memory is clear as a bell and deep as a pool. She's incredible.

Pemberton: **We're more or less following that.**

Levine: I think we have gotten into 3 days of my being in the Census Bureau.

Pemberton: **Actually, Margaret Martin would be a tremendous idea.**

Levine: She's tremendous, she's been interviewed by ASA [American Statistical Association Committee] and a number of other people. She brings a perspective to the Bureau, which is quite different from what you get by talking to us. She saw us, as did many people, as arrogant, as monopolistic, as self serving, as parochial, and very often when she said those things to us we learned a great deal. So to talk to someone like Margaret, you see the Bureau from the outside prospective. She knew the Bureau well. She took care of the Bureau probably from the Palmer Committee in 1942-43 all the way up to the time she retired in the 1970s. She's an incredible lady.

Pemberton: **She would be an excellent subject for one of these interviews. Among other things she was a member of the American Statistical Association Committee for sometime.**

Levine: She was also the President of the American Statistical Association; she's done everything. She also was the first Executive Director of the Committee on National Statistics at the National Academy of Science. Margaret is still consultant to them; she really has a memory that's unbelievable. But she would remind us that we were all too arrogant because we had this monopoly; she was probably right. She called it arrogance. Some might call it ego, on the other hand, some might call it virtuous correctness. I don't know. It's hard to say.

Pemberton: **Possibly different things at different times.**

Levine: Well, we did have a problem with being awfully smug at times. We had the monopoly, and a monopoly does tend to make you a little bit arrogant and a little bit smug. When things ran late, you justified them, but you didn't exactly get down and apologize like perhaps you should, with a little more understanding for some of the stuff that she was involved in. But she was instrumental in helping the Bureau tremendously, providing a perspective. She was an interface between many of the user groups—the Council of Economic Advisors, what she heard from Congressional hearings, what she was hearing from the head of the Budget Bureau, or the Office of Management and Budget, its successor. She could put things into perspective and try to bring us to an understanding that would protect us sometimes from stumbling over our own big tongues or our own big egos.

Pemberton: **Now by the late 1960s you had moved up to become Chief of the Demographic Surveys Division.**

Levine: You move up until your point of obsolescence or something—isn't that the way it goes. They can't do anymore more than make you the head of something.

Pemberton: **Last we heard you were Branch Chief. Could you take us up to becoming Branch Chief to becoming Chief of the Demographic Survey Division.**

Levine: Yes, somewhere in the early 1960s I guess it was, Bob decided that he would like to promote me. I had brought a lot of money into the Bureau at that point, and the division was expanding very rapidly so he got approval to set up an Assistant Division Chief's office and I became the Assistant Division Chief of Demographic Surveys Division. I remember that Katie Capt was sitting in the supposed Assistant Division Chief's office, and I think it took $3^1/_2$ years to get her out of there. We expanded further. We had some great people, a wonderful staff in those days, for example, George Hall [George E. Hall, Deputy Director, Department of

Commerce, Office of Federal Statistical Policy and Standards; Associate Director for Demographic Fields, July 1979 to May 1981]. We really developed a great group, and the programs grew rather rapidly. We established a Longitudinal Studies Branch, expanded the Special Surveys Staff, and we started the Consumer Expenditure Survey and that really became an entity unto itself. We did some great research because CPS was expanding rapidly.

I don't know if you remember, but in the mid-1960s, actually 1961, Mr. Kennedy during his campaign had been faced with the attack from the *Reader's Digest* and the conservative or right wing side, that the Current Population Survey was full of baloney to put it bluntly. If you don't like the numbers, blame the messenger. And so one of the first things Kennedy did when he became President was to establish a review committee, that was the Gordon Committee. The Gordon Committee spent about 2 years. Margaret Martin was the Executive Director of the Gordon Committee. Stewart Garfinkle [Chief, Economic Statistics Branch, Population Division, to October 1961] was her number one honcho. Excellent committee and all of us worked very hard on it. Then it completed its work and it put out, as most of these committees do, recommendations that filled three volumes. Congress decided through the Labor Department—Gertrude McNalley was down there—that was one of the problems the Bureau ran into, the digress. Margaret Martin was essentially the key player in splitting up the Current Population Survey of 1959. She actually wrote the agreement. A very smart lady, so smart that she refused to give all the funding to the Labor Department. She left split funding so that it would be clear that there was indeed a unique and important responsibility for the Census Bureau in operating the Current Population Survey. And there was also a responsibility of Labor—therefore she wanted it fully and clearly understood that this was a shared responsibility, not client and contractor, but shared responsibility. When she broke it up in 1959, the budget of the Current Population Survey was something in the order of $3^1/_2$ or 4 million dollars—my memory is pretty bad you can check that out. We had 1.5 maybe $1.75 million; they had the remaining $2.5 million.

By the late 1960s when the Gordon Committee recommendations came out, we tried to go through Representative Rooney to get some money. I don't know if you ever knew Mr. Rooney. Rooney was quite difficult and often a very unpleasant person—he was head of our appropriations subcommittee, from New York. When Dr. Eckler would testify, he thought it was amusing, somewhere in the middle of Dr. Eckler's testimony to put something on top of the dais. He sat up there of course, and you'd sit down below—he was very decent. He didn't make you lie down supinely in front. He'd let you sit at least. He'd open up this box and there would be a set of false teeth clacking while you were talking. He was a real nasty character. I met many like that on the hill. Anyway he wouldn't give us any money for the redesign and for the overlap and things like that. Gertrude went through the Labor Department and her committees; Labor Committees were much more responsive and understanding. So very quickly this 50/50 split began to change. Today, the Current Population Survey budget probably runs somewhere in the neighborhood of $20 million, and I wouldn't be surprised if the Census contribution was about 3 or 4 million and theirs is about 16 or 17. That was one of the things that Margaret couldn't control. When we couldn't get money from our committees, we went to the Bureau of Labor Statistics committees, and they would give us the money. But once the Bureau of Labor Statistics had the money, it couldn't transfer it to our budget; it was a reimbursable, but we couldn't get it into our S and E which is where we wanted it. In fact, I had plenty of fights with Bill Stiver [William E. Stiver, Chief, Budget and Finance Division during 1970 census; Chief of Budget Branch, Budget and Management Division from March 1960; Assistant Chief to March 1960] and Bob Drury [Robert F. Drury, Deputy Director, July 1967 to January 1971; Associate Director for Data Collection and

Statistical Processing, November 1966 to July 1967; Chief, Data Processing Systems Division (Created Sept. 1961) from 1961; Chief, Electronic Systems Division to 1961; special assistant, Office of the Director, November 1957 to July 1958] and others in those positions, trying to get approval even to go to Commerce and ask for more money. But you asked me about the 1954 redesign. I left in 1950; the 1954 redesign was done by the Bureau. I wasn't here but it was a disaster.

Pemberton: **What was wrong with it?**

Levine: It was really brilliantly planned. There was just one thing, the Bureau had never done this before. We had at that time (the Bureau had—I wasn't here—one of the problems with working in this place is no matter where you are, you keep saying "we," even after you're 104); the Bureau had at that point a 68-area sample design. One of the things that it had learned, to talk a bit technically, was that with more primary sampling units. You had more sampling points, a smaller between-primary sampling unit variance, a better estimate, and a lower variance; you've improved your estimate. So the Bureau decided in 1954 to go to a 230-area design. So one day they were in the 68 areas and then on Monday they closed the 68 and moved to 230 areas—well, the estimates just disappeared. You had one estimate here and another estimate up here. How do you explain this. We learned a great deal from it that we applied later. Inevitably, there are things you can't anticipate, and the Bureau did not conduct an overlap. What happened was that you had all these trained interviewers in 68 areas, and when you went to a 230-area design, you had all new interviewers who didn't quite know what they were doing. They weren't seasoned yet, so you got the problems of conditioning, lack of conditioning, new primary sample units, new respondents—later on whenever we did a redesign, we did was a long rolling overlap. We took the old and a twentieth of the new and second twentieth and a third twentieth. So you sort of merged these two, so if there was a discontinuity, it was merged over time. But in 1954, they didn't. So they had a long difficult time before Congress and everybody else. Eventually everything settled down, and the Bureau lived through it. After the Gordon Committee, we got all this money in the late 1960s, and we ran what they called the Monthly Labor Survey, which was half the size of the Current Population Survey, to do a lot of testing on new questionnaires and new sampling design and things like that. The Labor Department was able to convince the Congress to leave that money in the survey and expand the Current Population Survey, so now we had a survey that was no longer in 68 areas; we had a 330-area design. It was 50 percent larger then it had been before, no longer 35,000; it was over 50,000 households. You were able to produce state estimates and annual average estimates for large metro areas, and your capabilities expanded almost geometrically. It was amazing what you could do. So we grew very rapidly.

Pemberton: **When you started on the Current Population Survey, roughly how large a sample was it?**

Levine: Twenty-five thousand households in approximately 68 areas.

Pemberton: **Then it moved up to being 50,000 households.**

Levine: It moved up to 30,000 households, 32,000 households, and 230 areas. Then it moved up to 357 areas, about 60,000 households, and I don't know what it is now, but it must have about 600 primary sampling units right now.

Pemberton: **It's still roughly 60,000.**

Levine: It boils down to 50,000, it just took a cut from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Pemberton: **Yes.**

Levine: It is too bad it got cut. The 13 largest states for which monthly estimates were produced have been cut in sample size. When an administration starts new programs like the 1973 Comprehensive Employment and Training Act and the Counter Cyclical Revenue Sharing, the policy agencies find they need data and dump money like crazy into the Bureau—the Bureau opens its arms—just shove money in here. The problem was we couldn't produce as fast as they gave us money but we tried.

Pemberton: **It was a nice time to be here then.**

Levine: A great time to be here, you're riding the wave again. We were always on the edge of the big wave. It was a very exciting time, the beginning of the longitudinal surveys that the Manpower Administration, subsequently the Employment and Training Administration was funded. Those were really unique surveys, and we had a lot of fun doing them: large Disability Surveys, Post-Censal Surveys, surveys we did for NIH on the migrants and the native born on this cancer and heart thing which was an awful lot of fun. The Bureau you see is very funny. It is a very parochial agency. It lives out in something called downtown Suitland. Beautiful downtown Suitland, it was the most beautiful area out here, and this building that looked something like a mental institution. At least it didn't have a fence around it in those days, didn't have the flowers either. That's something Jack got for them. It was very parochial but it's funny, you are never satisfied—human nature is just so sad in a way. Dave Kaplan epitomized this beautifully. He was so proud of what we did; he wanted everybody to love us and to know how good we were. In 1950 and 1960, the Census Bureau conducted a census, and who used the numbers or even cared? Drive through the Midwest and you would enter a little town, and there would be a sign "Welcome to Beautiful Pleasantville, a town of 846 happy people—1950 census." Dave was miserable—couldn't understand why people didn't know how important we were. Then David learned the unfortunate truth, that when people learn how important you are, they also begin to look at you and complain about you, and that's what happened with the undercount. That's what happened with the social legislation of the 1960s—we got revenue sharing in 1971 under Nixon. With revenue sharing came a use for the census that nobody had ever dreamt about before and also for current estimates. You had a formula that distributed somewhere in the neighborhood of 50 billion dollars for 39,000 local governments. I remember Maynard Jackson [then Mayor of Atlanta, GA] saying, "the census isn't very important. All it affects are politics and money—money and politics, who cares." And then they started screaming at David Kaplan and the rest of us, and he was absolutely distraught. I remember one meeting where a Black group complained bitterly about what we were doing, and David was offended at the thought that anyone could think that he was so devious as to do the terrible things they were saying that we did. Shows you how naive we were. If you want to be loved, hide somewhere and be loved; if you want to be appreciated, shut-up and sit down. If you want to be seen as devious and be vilified, tell people how important you are and try to be useful to somebody, and right away the world collapses around you—it was a terrible time in the 1970s and 1980s.

Pemberton: **I was going to ask you a little bit about that but we haven't gotten you to that position yet in your career, you're still an Assistant Division Chief.**

Levine: Yes, and we were doing a Consumer Expenditure Survey, and we came up with a new design and a new approach. Helen Lamale of the Bureau of Labor Statistics said it would never work, she was in charge of the consumer expenditure work at the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Julius Shiskin at that time was head of Statistical Policy at the Office of Management and Budget; he'd left the Census Bureau, and he agreed with our approach.

Pemberton: **Meaning his leaving?**

Levine: Julius Shiskin left the Census Bureau because of Charles Schultz. Schultz became the head of the Office of Management and Budget. Julie had developed the leading indicators, and he had spent time briefing the Council of Economic Advisors which is where he met Schultz. So when Schultz became head of the Office of Management and Budget, he asked Julie to come head Statistical Policy. On the day it was announced that Julius was going down to head Statistical Policy, Cecil Matthews [Cecil B. Matthews, Chief, Administrative Services Division from 1971; Chief, Administrative and Publications Services Division, December 1961 to December 1971; Chief, Employee Relations Branch, Personnel Division, during 1960 Census; Chief Instructor, February to March, 1960] who was head of Administrative Services took away Julie's parking place. I don't know what possessed him. If there's one thing you could say about Julie, he had a mind like an elephant—he never forgot. Unlike many people who wished you well when you leave an organization, Julius thought you were a traitor if you left the organization. For a long time Julius blamed the whole organization around here for Cecil Matthews treating him poorly. Getting back to the Consumer Expenditure Survey, Julie decided that we were right and the Bureau of Labor Statistics was wrong, and it was time for Bureau of Labor Statistics to move into the 20th century. So we were given the job to do the 1960 Consumer Expenditure Survey and also the Point of Purchase Survey and what became the Consumer Expenditure Survey and things like that. Bob Pearl, who was the head of our division at that time, was fascinated by this work. We used to go down to meet with Gertrude McNalley and a lot of other people—we were always going downtown—and usually stopped for lunch on the water front—Hogates or one of those places. Sometime in early 1966 when we stopped for lunch, Bob said, "I think I ought to tell you something." I was eating my lunch very peacefully and he said "I'm leaving next month." I fell through the floor choking to death and all the rest of it. I just couldn't imagine this place without him. He left; he took a sabbatical to investigate the way European countries conducted consumer expenditure surveys and to write a rather lengthy report on it. Conrad Taeuber called me in and said he thought I should become the acting chief. Bob Pearl's office was vacant for a long time waiting for them to name a chief. Sometime, I don't remember when, towards the end of 1966, Conrad called me in and said "they weren't able to find a candidate" and would I take the job. He started that conversation with—"you know you have been attending my staff meetings, and you and I have gone to various meetings here and elsewhere, and I think it's about time since we have been doing this for 3 or 4 years that you start calling me Conrad. And by the way, I want you to be head of the Demographic Survey Division." So I became head of the Demographic Survey Division in late 1966. It was a fantastic experience. I will tell you without fear of contradiction, at least by you, maybe others will contradict me, that all the power in the Bureau resides in the division chiefs. They, no matter what anybody else thinks, actually are the power center of the Census Bureau because they do the work. They control the product. If they do a lousy job, I don't care how good you are as an Associate Director, Deputy Director, or Director. You can set a tone for them

but if you don't have the right people in the right job, they control what goes on in this world. They can waste money faster then anybody else. They can not tell you something, they can put you in jeopardy overnight. So to be a division chief in this particular organization is a tremendous blush of power. And Conrad was the type of Associate Director who didn't like controversy, who had a great respect for his division chiefs. We were fortunate to have some tremendous division chiefs: Joe Waksberg in the Statistical Methods Division, Herman Miller in the Population Division, Ed Goldfield in the International Statistical Program Center, Art Young in the Housing Division, a tremendous staff of people; I was very fortunate to get into that group. Conrad would pretty much allow you to get together with your division chiefs and decide what should be done and bring him the decision, rather than his handing the decision down. So Joe Waksberg, Herman Miller, and I had a wonderful time—we just ran roughshod over everybody. We had a great time!

Pemberton: **Well, any large organization to some degree has to work by consensus, you're suggesting under Conrad Taeuber's leadership, in fact, he depended on division chiefs working together.**

Levine: Whenever you brought problems to Conrad Taeuber he suggested that "you gentlemen get together and resolve this." On the economic side it was quite different. They had very powerful leadership in Grieves [Howard C. Grieves, Deputy Director, December 1965 to June 1967; Assistant Director for Economic Fields, 1947 to 1965] who then became the Deputy Director for a while; after that Max Conklin [Maxwell R. Conklin, Associate Director for Economic Fields, January 1966 to September 1968]. These were very powerful leaders who pretty much handed down dictum much more so. Anyway, we thought the economic side of the Bureau wasn't as interesting. It was really the demographic side that had all the exciting action. We had a grand time. We had tremendous personalities like Joe Waksberg who is a delight to work with, extremely imaginative—his goal is to improve the product. He is one of the rare events among mathematical statisticians. Most mathematical statisticians are extremely bright, and I'm not suggesting otherwise, very talented, but they deal in mathematical formulae and can fill a blackboard, faster then you can talk. Joe is, above all, the pragmatic empiricist,. He understands mathematical statistics better then anyone I ever met. But he can translate it into laymen's terms, in fact sub-layman's terms. He taught me virtually all the mathematical statistics that I ever learned. He put it into English so I could understand it. He was pragmatic too. He never took a position that said, "this is the mathematical statistical certainty, this is the only way it can be done, and that's the way it has to be." Joe Waksberg would say, "I understand the problems you're facing in the Demographic Surveys Division as the person that has to bring all this together and coordinate everything, that you don't have enough money, that you don't have the time, so we have to compromise, where can we compromise the best to do the least damage to our product." This is a talent which is very rare among mathematical statisticians. Their tendency is to sit up on cloud nine and hand down pronouncements—Joe worked with you and taught you and he helped you. You never felt like you were being led, but you were, and it was a delight to be led by Joe Waksberg.

Pemberton: **That's a heck of a management style.**

Levine: Terrific, you ought to see it. He is still doing it, he hasn't lost a step. He is tremendous, he is doing a tremendous job.

Pemberton: **You mentioned, interestingly, how mathematical statisticians would tend to work on some of these things, earlier you talked about the Census Bureau having been, at certain times, a parochial agency. Would you say that to some extent that it was related to the fact that many of the agency's functions were essentially mathematical statistical functions?**

Levine: No, no, parochialism came about because the Bureau was out here in Suitland. What it did in those early days, even though we thought it was important and tried to improve it, others didn't think was particularly important. The economic statistics we put out were used and they were important. But we were arrogant, we knew we were good. But we were hidden out here, we didn't have much competition. Remember from the 1940s probably to the mid 1970s we had very little competition.

Pemberton: **Until you folks founded Westat?**

Levine: Well, WESTAT came East in 1972, about when Morris retired. Edward C. Bryant, the founder of WESTAT, who had started the company in Wyoming, brought it East. The National Opinion Research Center was in existence but, at that time, it didn't do a lot of large studies. Census Bureau as I said, partially through my doing and others, was a monopoly. Nobody had the field staff or the sampling materials; computers made a huge difference. We could do things much more efficiently, clerically nobody else could compete. Once we produced Public Use Tapes, anybody could draw a sample as fast as we could. Then they could compete with us, and the competition started with the National Opinion Research Center, the Research Triangle Institute, the Survey Research Center in Michigan, and a million other groups. It really took off in the mid 1970s. So the Bureau was very parochial in terms of understanding; very naive about the Congress, very naive about the Office of Management and Budget. We were good, and we knew it.

Pemberton: **My tendency is to want to ask, do you still think we are that way? But that is way ahead of the game.**

Levine: The world has changed, that's what I said—I don't know how good you are now. I have fears about it, I have questions about it.

Pemberton: **Let's go back and reestablish the chronology, we'll get there. You became Division Chief of the Demographic Surveys Division in 1966 and you remained in that position until 1972. Did you continue as head of the Demographic Surveys Division to solicit surveys from other agencies? Were we doing any work for non-Federal agencies at that time?**

Levine: Oh, yes. We did some work for universities, for private foundations, I don't know specifically what you have in mind. We didn't go compete in the private sector for General Motors or anything like that, no.

Pemberton: **No, what I meant, essentially was that the bulk of the reimbursables that the Census Bureau does are for other Federal agencies.**

Levine: That's right, we expanded that list immensely. We did work for almost every Federal agency that had a statistical interest: the Veterans Administration, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; the Office of Education was part of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in those days. You name it, everybody goes through our history at one time or

another, the Manpower Administration; when they established the Office of Revenue Sharing we became the key producers of their statistics. The military, well, less so for the military, but we did work for the military as well.

Pemberton: **One of the things would have been the post 1970 Redesign but that was probably a little after 1972. The Consumer Expenditure Survey is the one that when I came into the Census Bureau, they used as one of the examples of one of the longest interview forms that the Bureau had.**

Levine: The survey was done in 1960, 1961 as I remember it, and redesign took place in 1969 or 1970. Yes, the form took about 2 $^{1}/_{2}$ hours; I didn't think it could be done, but the staff proved me wrong. We had in the Demographic Surveys Division by then well over 150 and close to 200 people. That probably is one of the most frightening moments I ever had, when I moved into Bob Pearl's job as the Division Chief. You move into the Division Chief's job and you suddenly realize you're responsible for the well being of all these people. The Bureau got very little money for the Current Population Survey, at that point about 2 million dollars. I fought very hard to get it over 3, I really bled for it, but that didn't support very many people. With a staff of over 150 people, you can well appreciate the overhead you were talking about, probably close to well over 4 million dollars. Remember the money we brought in, we also had to share with the Field Division and with others, beyond those in my division. You wake up with cold morning sweats when you got to the end of the fiscal year and you are short of money. We used to beg and borrow, (but never steal).

Pemberton: **Yes, that's one of the things Government is now doing is trying to figure a way to regularize its accounting because shifting money at the end of a fiscal year or during the Census becomes very difficult to try to track. It's not anybodies fault in a sense--you run out of money in account "A" and you've got things you still have to do, so you find a way to do it.**

Levine: Sure it's somebody's fault. You take something like the Current Population Survey, you have a Current Population Survey supplement, what do you charge for a Current Population Survey supplement? Do you charge full share of the whole design of the Current Population Survey, maintenance and establishment of the field force, and the maintenance and establishment of the Demographic Surveys Division, Current Population Survey Branch, the programmers, the systems analysts—Bill Stiver and I were always fighting about that. He only wanted to charge the marginal cost. So I told Bill I took economics too, and marginal cost wouldn't cover it. I loved the theory of marginal cost, but it wouldn't cover my cost so I wanted to charge more. So finally, Bill and I agreed on a more equitable charging algorithm. We also found seed money for the research and established a tax on every project for research and evaluation, which enabled us to learn and progress. We started doing mail surveys, started doing telephone surveys; it's very difficult to do research. You can't go to Congress and talk about research—they just won't agree. First thing they are going to do is cut this obvious pot of money that doesn't have anything to do with producing anything. So Joe and I had to find it elsewhere, had to beg for it, had to borrow it, had to convert it, and we managed to stay alive for a couple of years.

Pemberton: **The evaluation was not actually, if you will, budgeted for these?**

Levine: The evaluation was never budgeted. You're sitting in a Federal agency and you want to find out how many widows of veterans are under the poverty line. You don't really care about evaluation, whether we do it good or bad, you want a number so you can go to Congress.

You're not going to spend a third of your budget or even 5 percent, so we had to find that money somewhere in order to support that research, so that we could tell you that you were getting a better number this year then last year. Or, to improve the efficiency of the sample design, somebody had to pay for it. Meanwhile, the Bureau of Labor Statistics kept getting money. They could go in and do research; we couldn't, it was amazing. Commerce appropriation subcommittees are not used to dealing with statistical agencies. For some reason the Labor Department is able to get research money, I don't know why; maybe because they do demonstration projects in general for education, employment training, and things of that nature. So they were getting more and more money, and consequently with money comes the realization that if I'm giving you all this money I'm going to tell you what to do. That became a problem for the Bureau. Some of the successors to Gertrude McNalley and some of the successors to other people here in the Bureau allowed a relationship which was supposedly equal to swing dramatically, to where unfortunately in my view (recognize this is my perception), the Bureau now reacts to the Labor Department. They're no longer "equals." In our day, we said, "let's sit down together and figure out the optimum way to do it, and if we don't agree with you, then we are responsible for it." If you look back on the charter for sample design, we are responsible for estimation, we're responsible for evaluation, we're responsible for processing and field. You're responsible for subject content and questionnaire design, but we also have a role in questionnaire design just as you have a role in sample design, so let's sit down as equals across this table. Not because you have 20 million dollars and we have a buck-and-a-half, or because you say "do it this way and get out of my way or I'll take it somewhere else." Which is what they threatened to do. But that's an aside issue.

Pemberton: **Negotiations I suspect with many agencies, in fact, wound up going the same way because he who had the money may have felt over time that they could call more of the shots.**

Levine: In the early days they tried, and that's why they called us arrogant—because we said if you don't like what we are doing, see who else you can get to do it; and they generally came back. We met some wonderful people, Lenore Bixbe, Office of Research and Statistics, Social Security Administration, who sponsored the Longitudinal Retirement History study and Mollie Orshansky, Social Security Administration, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, who worked with her. We learned from them. We learned to be a little less arrogant over time. There were a lot of other bright people out there. But the essential thing, I think, was that we always felt that we were not the equivalent of a contractor, that you came in the door and said here is my dollar-and-a-half, I'll tell you what to do. Generally we found out that you may know what you want to do, but then again you're not so sure about how you want to do it, and you're not so sure, really, of what you what to do. We started asking questions and so we always felt we could be rather pushy, and maybe we were a little too pushy but that's the way we were. We sat on one side of the table and really acted, you might say, as devil's advocates. We asked them an awful lot of questions, and we tried to take their objectives and develop a process which would provide them with the best data for the best cost. We were high cost because we were high quality—that's what we like to say anyway—they thought we were high cost because we wasted money. It's all a point of view.

Pemberton: **Wasting money like doing things like evaluations.**

Levine: Yes, quality, evaluation—most agencies didn't want to spend the money—or they thought we had too many people working on it, or we insisted on too much training, and we always took too long to process. If there was ever a problem and it still is, it takes too long to process. I don't think we completely solved that by a long shot—I don't think you have either.

Pemberton: **Even with first the introduction and then with the expansion of mainframe computers?**

Levine: It helped. You see peoples' expectations and demands multiplied at a much faster rate then your ability. When we produced the Current Population Survey precomputer, we produced maybe altogether a thousand cells of data. When we first got on UNIVAC I, each run produced a thousand cells. I think if you look back in P-23 number 2 and its successors, you'll find something I wrote that tried to present an historical perspective. We must produce now a million cells of data—nobody is even capable of looking at it, but they still ask for more. If you do it from right to left, they want it left to right, upside down, and you can do it. Now with personal computers, you download and do your own, which makes a big difference. The capacity to use and the capability to use has expanded tremendously. Remember, in those days, the early days, there were very few academicians who could do anything with a pile of punch cards. Very few people knew how to use the raw material, so to speak, and you had weights on them, very confusing. Now you can take a computer, take a disk, and you can produce anything you want in the way of a tabulation yourself. You can produce variances, and if you don't like those tabulations, you can turn them upside down and do them again on a Public Use Tape. So you have a lot more, critics and a lot more users, which is good, tremendously good. But they are asking for a lot more and they all want it faster, faster, faster. I don't know what would happen if they didn't get quite as much. I remember that I called Amatai Etzione, who at the time was at Columbia University, and asked him to come to the Bureau and give a lecture. We were chatting in my office, and he was concerned, not about the fact that there were too few facts around, but that there were huge amounts of paper sitting around and no one had time to analyze them; he was right, the more I thought about it. There is so much we produce here in the Bureau that no one ever looks at.

Pemberton: **You get a sense of it when people clean out their offices to move.**

Levine: That's true and they never throw anything out. But more and more the public, the user community, is expanding tremendously. People are looking at things and questioning things—that's very good for the Bureau. It's hard on people; they don't like to be questioned. We were questioned less because we had the monopoly.

Pemberton: **Shocking but useful. So in the late 1960s and early 1970s we had expanded the number and the range of surveys that we do for other agencies.**

Levine: Oh yes, in those days, the Demographic Surveys Division was the cash cow of the Bureau. The overhead that was raised was paying for everything and everybody in the Bureau. We were supporting the whole Housing Division. Because it didn't have two cents to its name, a good part of the International program originally, we were the cash cow.

Pemberton: **Things like the American Housing Survey came along, Housing Division was involved in developing the Housing questions for the decennial.**

Levine: Yes, but it didn't have much in the way of continuing programs, so how do you support it? In those days you didn't have continuing funding. It wasn't until the development of the 1980 census, which I guess I had something to do with, that we got decade-long funding. Before that, you got funding probably 3 years before the census, 3 years after the census, and then zero for the next 3 years, and then you started all over again. Starting in the 80s, we developed a system which Congress accepted; in fact we even went and established a Mid-decade Census Staff you may remember, which we abolished subsequently. We got decade long funding, which you now get for continuing decade-long activity. And now the Bureau has even established an Associate Director for the decennial censuses.

Pemberton: **This is actually very interesting. You are getting to one of the questions I wanted to get to, which is about the interaction between the associate directors and the division chiefs. Earlier on you said that the associate directors can set the tone but that the division chiefs are the ones who ran the Bureau. What kind of tone do you feel Conrad Taeuber set for you as a Division Chief and then what kind of tone did you set when you became Associate Director?**

Levine: I don't know, maybe you should talk to Conrad. I could draw an analogy and say that Conrad "let the inmates run the institution." He allowed his division chiefs to pretty much make all the decisions. Now Conrad knew what was going on most of the time, Conrad was very smart. He knew all of the players in Government. He had been around a long, long time. I will say that I don't think in all the years I've known Conrad Taeuber I every heard him say a single nasty thing about a single individual, never. I don't think I every heard him say something nasty about anybody which is more than I can say about present company and some others. He let Joe Waksberg and Herman Miller and myself and Art Young [Arthur F. Young, Chief, Housing Division, July, 1963 to December 1987; Acting Chief, Housing Division, September 1962 to July 1963; Director, New York Regional Office to February 1961] run pretty well the way we wanted to. He would meet with us individually and collectively, and you always thought that when he was sitting there with his eyes closed he was asleep, but I think he was listening rather carefully. He supported us and defended us rather well.

Pemberton: **Did he also share budget information in the way you were talking about?**

Levine: Conrad was not a big budget man—the only time he got involved with the budget was when someone screamed at him that his minions were about to bankrupt the organization, and then Conrad didn't know quite what to do. Again, I would like to think that he was fortunate in that Joe, Herman, and I took care of those matters without bothering Conrad. We generally made sure that there was money around. We had money in those years with which we took care of everybody, including Conrad's pet desires. Population Division never had any money because it was funded by a Bureau appropriation. So we would always make sure that in any cost estimate for the Demographic Surveys Division that there was something in there for the Population Division. In the intercensal years when the Population Division didn't have any money, we would support the staff through the Current Population Survey budget or some other activity. We put them on evaluation. We kept the group alive so that Herman had people, when it came time, who had expertise. We also felt being exposed to what we were

doing in Current Surveys was beneficial to the analyst in the Population Division in terms of trying to figure out how to do the census better. Conrad's love was the census. He wrote census monographs—he was concerned about the census.

Pemberton: **That makes sense to me—when you were head of Demographic Surveys Division did you have much involvement in decennial programs?**

Levine: Very little, very little to do with the decennial except when we got into arguments. The arguments generally came along towards the years ending 8,9,0,1,2. Because at that point, we had been supporting the Field Division for 7 years and all of a sudden came a census. And they were going to take half of each regional office, and they were going to take the better people and put them on the decennial. I used to holler my head off, because we needed them. I could understand it. But I wanted at least some lip service paid to the fact that the Current Population Survey had to continue to perform at a high level of accomplishment. Also, the senior interviewers were going to be moved out to be made crew leaders and all of that sort of thing. Herman's staff, the industry occupation experts, were going to be moved over to become the supervisors in the census with a grade raise. We couldn't afford to match the grade raise—didn't have the money. So we had our little differences, but I really wasn't involved directly with the census, no. I got involved in the Current Population Survey census—match check activity, that sort of activity.

Pemberton: **Research activity?**

Levine: Or Current Population Survey-Census-Internal Revenue Service match, things of that nature. No, I got my baptism in 1972 when I was made a Deputy Associate Director and dumped into the census activity.

Pemberton: **How did that promotion take place?**

Levine: Well it's rather hard to say. Mr. Nixon became President in 1968 and Joe Wright [Joseph R. Wright, Deputy Director, 1971 to 1972, Acting Director, January 1973 to March 1973] became the Deputy Director. Before that happened, Bob Drury was the Deputy Director, and we were processing the 1970 census. I didn't have anything to do with the census in those days, but the Bureau had its own way of processing states. Obviously the smaller states like Rhode Island, Montana, Kansas finished the census first and the Bureau, being naive about these things, put out a memo on how it was going to process the states. About that time, Lance Tarrance [Vernon Lance Tarrance, Special Assistant to the Director, from November 1969 to August 1973] came to the Census Bureau, and he felt that all of these Democrats that were entrenched in the bureaucracy weren't giving "equal time" to Republican states—he wasn't going to have any part of it. By then, the Director was George Hay Brown [George Hay Brown, Director, from September 1969 to January, 1973]—a very interesting individual. Talk about differences in Directors, I tell you. Lance basically ran this new office which was the one to distribute the products from the Census to the Congress and to the Republicans and what have you. I don't really know what happened, but one day Bob Drury announced that he was essentially needed downtown or something because he had chosen the wrong states for processing. The next day, Bob Drury retired. Bill Mercken [William I. Mercken, Associate Director for Administration, to January 1972; Assistant Chief, Budget and Management Division, to October, 1960; Assistant Chief for Current and Defense Activities, Machine Tabulation Division, 1950 Census, Chief, Operations Section, Personnel Division, August 1948 to September 1951], head of Administrative Services, ended up being shipped off to the Patent Office. We were gathered together and were told this great story by George Hay

Brown that the Commerce Secretary decided that Bob Drury was very much needed somewhere and Bill Merkin was essential somewhere else. And we were naive enough to believe that story until we heard that Bob Drury resigned or retired. Then suddenly, we realized what was going on. Anyway, Joe Wright showed up.

Pemberton: **I was going to ask if you thought Mr. Tarrance had a central roll in some of these reassignments or do you have a sense of what the administration was trying to...?**

Levine: I think Tarrance had a central, very large role. The first person to realize, from my perspective, the value of Census as an agency was a gentlemen by the name of Ben Wattenberg [Sociologist and Writer; Senior Fellow, American Enterprise Institute, from 1977]. Ben was working for the Johnson White House. He previously had written a book with Scammon [Richard Scammon, Director, May 1961 to January 1965] on the Census. Scammon, as you know, became the Director under Kennedy. Scammon probably was a political Director, but he was not a statistician. That was frequently the case. I recall a political scientist from the University of Indiana—Roy Peel [Roy Victor Peel, Director, 1950 to 1953]. Roy Peel's motto, according to the Field Division, and everybody else, was "have TR book, will travel." Roy Peel spent more time away from this place then he did in it. It was not until years later that I learned all of the little stories that were withheld from the naive statisticians and analysts. I was told that Dr. Peel would show up at a regional office, would want to be met at the plane by the regional Director with a chauffeured car, driven to a fancy hotel with a fancy suite and run up a big bill and then leave, and they had to pay it. I found this unconscionable. I didn't find this out till years later when I was an Associate Director probably—it never occurred to me that anybody would do things like that. There were other Directors who were not well thought of. Getting back to Joe Wright, he came from Booz, Allen & Hamilton and became the Deputy Director after Bob Drury. I really felt badly for Bob and the way he was treated. I had my differences with Bob too. I thought he was much too secretive. He and Bill Stiver would make all the budget decisions in the back room and then hand down dicta. When I was in Brazil with Joe Waksberg at a conference and the Brazilian Government asked us to stay three extra days, we called up asking for permission. Bob Drury informed us if we didn't get back we would be put on leave without pay and docked and everything else. I'll never forget that. I never could figure out what was bothering Bob Drury, and he never told me. We came back, we did indeed. Somewhere in that period after Joe Wright came in 1972, a number of things happened. We were doing a large post-censal study in the Demographic Surveys Division on equal employment opportunities. That was the beginning of the fall out, if you will, of what had transpired during the Johnson administration, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission stuff. I guess the Republicans were not exactly thrilled with it, but they were faced with the fact that it was being paid for by the Labor Department. The Labor Department wanted it, and we were under the gun to get it done. It was really a very high priority program. I was head of Demographic Surveys Division at the time. Joe Wright called us all together and said that, given his experience, he thought what the Bureau was lacking was a MIS, so we all wanted to know what a MIS was. "Month in samples" was what it meant to me of course, doing the Current Population Survey and all. But no, that stood for Management Information Systems, and Joe Wright proceeded to set up a rather large group of people. Your current Deputy Director was one of Joe's early recruits. Anyway, Joe Wright set up a Management Information System where you filled out all sorts of forms, somebody somewhere did something to it, and then Joe had his office papered with these tabulations that showed "began here," "deadline was here," "you missed it," and "you made it." Anyway, I was sitting in my office one day and someone came in and told me that one of my branch

chiefs, Earle Gerson [Earle J. Gerson, Chief, Demographic Surveys Division, from August 1972; Acting Chief, Demographic Surveys Division, January to July 1972] who was in charge of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission project which was under the gun, had just been summoned to Joe Wright's office because one of these sheets of papers didn't seem to match up. I don't know what happened. I lost my cool, stomping down to Joe Wright's office and asking his secretary where he was. She said he was in conference, and so I busted through her office and went into Joe Wright's office and there was my Branch Chief in his chair being drilled by Joe Wright and half a dozen of his staff. I walked in there and told Earle Gerson to get up and leave. He left; Joe Wright just looked at me, and I said, "if you want to ask anybody about what's going on in my division you ask me." He pointed to the chart, and I said, "Joe, you must have better sense then that. I have no objection to all the charts in the world, and they are helpful. But if you wait for a chart to tell you you're in trouble, you will be so far up the creek without the paddle it will be too late to do anything." First of all they were not in real time, they were weeks late by that time—in those days you couldn't just punch them in and get it out. It wasn't like Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing or Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing or anything like that. By the time they punched that stuff up, we'd wasted another 7 million dollars somewhere down the pike. I told him what was wrong with the study and that we would make it up. I walked out of there and said, "if you have any other question you call me." I went back to my office and figured I better write my resignation. Anyway, about 2 months later Joe called me in. I don't know if it was Joe Wright, but somebody was after Conrad Taeuber and after Walt Ryan [Walter F. Ryan, Associate Director for Economic Fields, 1968 to 1973]. Joe told me that they had decided that Walt Ryan and Conrad Taeuber were fine gentlemen, but that the world had gotten too big and too fast for them and had by-passed them a little bit and they needed some help on the operations side. So they were bringing Jim Turbitt [James W. Turbitt, Direcor, Boston Regional Office, during 1960 census; Associate Director for Administrative Services] in from Boston. He was Regional Director in Boston at that time, and he was going to become the Deputy Associate Director to Walt Ryan, and they needed somebody to help Conrad Taeuber, and he thought I was the person. Of course, I had my retirement letter in my hand at that point. I don't know if busting into his office had anything to do with it or not. I never asked Joe; I let that subject drop. So in 1972 I became the Deputy Associate Director for Demographic Operations, and Jim became the Deputy Associate Director for Economic Operations. And they cleared some unfortunate soul out of their office and moved Jim and me in there, and that was my introduction to the census. I went to Conrad and said, "what do you want me to do?" He said, "I don't know." And I said, "if you don't tell me what to do I'm going to do something," I don't believe in vacuums. So he said, "why don't you talk to Herman Miller and Joe Waksberg about how the census is doing." So I got involved in the census. Shortly thereafter, it wasn't very long—a couple of months—Conrad Taeuber was accused of passing census secrets, if you assume there are any, to the Humphrey campaign. I don't know what Walt Ryan was accused of, but they both announced their retirement. At a staff meeting where Conrad announced it to his division chiefs and to his Deputy Associate Director, we all got up and said," if you want, we will submit our resignation at the same time you do." Conrad said, "I'm sure you have seen the pool where you drop the pebble in—little ripples go out but inevitably the pebble drops to the bottom of the pool," he said "I think you will do the Bureau much more good and you will do my memory much better if you stay and fight for what you think is right. Don't worry about me." Conrad then went over and joined the staff of Georgetown and became the head of a new center there, the Robert F. Kennedy Center, and had a distinguished career as the first chair of the Committee on National Statistics and many other things. Shortly thereafter, I was made the Associate Director.

Pemberton: **Is this where you began to work more closely with David Kaplan?**

Levine: Yes, I really did not know David Kaplan until then, except for my early experience when he was in charge of the "occupation industry coding" activity that I considered the dullest and most boring thing I had ever engaged in my life. I was so grateful that he had a staff of ladies that loved to do that sort of thing. That's another thing I would say about the Bureau which I think is very important as I looked around Government. Census was one of the unique agencies in the sense that women had responsible positions, far before women's liberation came to the fore. Shirley Kallek [Shirley Kallek, Associate Director for Economic Fields, 1974 to 1983] rose very rapidly through the economic side. When I came to the Bureau, as I said, Gertrude McNalley was head of the Labor Force Reports Unit, then shortly thereafter the section, and subsequently an Assistant Division Chief in the Population Division. Vivian Spencer was a Division Chief in the Economic area. She was a Division Chief long before any women were around. Margaret Martin was the exception in the Office of Management and Budget, and there was Margaret Hagood [Margaret Hagood, U. S. Department of Agriculture; Technical Advisory Committee on Population for 1950 Census] at Agriculture. But the Bureau was full of competent women at all levels of the Population Division—Tobia Bressler [Tobia Bressler, Chief, Ethnic Origins Statistics Branch, Population Division, to March 1972; Chief Instructor, Field Division (assigned from Population Division), Feb.-March, 1960; Population Characteristics and Composition to September 1962; Chief, Outlying Areas Statistics Branch, Population Division, from September 1962; Characteristics and Composition, Demographic Statistics Section, Population and Housing Division, 1950 Census], Elizabeth Larmon [Elizabeth A. Larmon, Staff Assistant, Population Division, December 1962 to June 1972; Decennial Operations Liaison, Demographic Statistics Branch, Population Division, June 1960 to Dec. 1962; Assistant Division Chief for Program Development during 1960 Census], I worked for Ruth Boswell for a number of years. Women were very, very well received in the Bureau and well respected for their capabilities. A really very fine thing to see.

Pemberton: **Do you have any sense of why the Bureau was different in that sense than other Government agencies?**

Levine: Located out in the "boon docks?" I don't know. Interested in product more than being macho? I don't know what caused it, because when I came, they were here. You would have to ask Gertrude where she came from. I don't remember any more. The Bureau had a lot of women, it really did, and women have moved steadily upward and onward. I remember Paula Schneider [Paula J. Schneider, Principal Associate Director for Programs, from July 1994 to the present] coming in and I couldn't wait to promote her. I thought she was one of the most outstanding people I had ever met. Quite a number of others like Sherry Courtland [Sherry L. Courtland, Chief, Program and Policy Development Office, 1980 to 1990; Special Assistant, Demographic Census Staff, from August, 1971]—I understand she just retired—outstanding woman. Dave hired Sherry I remember.

Pemberton: **She became a successor of yours with intermediaries in the Demographic Surveys Division.**

Levine: So I became an Associate Director—that was quite a culture shock too. First of all, I was quite different from Conrad Taeuber—he's cerebral, analytical, and I am operationally oriented, so I'm sure it was a shock to a lot of people.

Pemberton: **Did you want to get more involved, if not in implementing day-to-day activities, in at least knowing about them? When you say operationally oriented what did you mean?**

Levine: I remember going to a meeting at the Office of Management and Budget and Phil Lawrence was there; at the time he was Deputy Director of the National Center for Health Statistics. The head of the statistics area from the United Kingdom was here, and he was talking about the United Kingdom system where you couldn't even buy a piece of paper unless he signed off on it. Phil leaned over to me and said: "You know I have my own management style, I believe highly decentralized above me and highly centralized below me." I don't know if that was my style. I was a great believer in picking good people and letting them do the job. But I also was fanatical about knowing; I didn't want to be surprised; the last thing I wanted to do was go into the Director's office and have him telling me something that somebody on my staff should have told me. So as long as my people kept me informed I gave them a great deal of freedom. As I said earlier, the Division Chiefs run this place. I felt the Associate Director's job and the Deputy Director's job were to get the resources for the people beneath them, to make sure that they understood what they had to do, and to make work a positive climate. To set a climate that made it possible for them to do the best possible job; to make sure my door was open so that whenever they had a problem, they knew and would come to talk to me; and to see how I could help them and if I could help them. They did the work. My job was to see that their situation was improved. That's how I ran the Deputy Director's job and also the Associate Director's office.

Pemberton: **I believe the Social and Economic Statistics Administration was formed around the time you became the Associate Director, approximately 1971 to 1975, I think. That seems to be a not uncommon response.**

Levine: Not because of what it was but because of who they were. Ben Wattenberg was the first to see the value of the Bureau in terms of his job as a Policy Analyst for the President; that was in the Johnson administration. He was the first to use the Bureau routinely as a resource. He had Herman Miller down at the White House night and day. We were doing tabulations all the time that we had never dreamed of before. Ben was extremely imaginative, and when policy issues came up he wanted the best data, and he wanted it fast; we were on a "war time footing." So he really brought the Bureau into the 20th century of policymaking as a resource. When the Republicans came in, they very quickly realized that if the Democrats thought this was a resource (because they weren't stupid) then they ought to use it too. That's where Lance came from—to make the Bureau a resource. They decided that they had to control it and coordinate it. The way they decided to control and coordinate it was to set up the Social and Economic Statistics Administration (SESA), which would bring the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) and Census together and allow them control. Ed Failor [Edward Failor, SESA Administrator]—I could use a lot of words, but there is a lady present—so I'll use a 19th century word and say he was a first class blackguard. He was a small town politician who became a small town judge who couldn't see beyond the end of his nose in terms of the aims we would set up. A digression, if I may—there's nothing wrong with politics—I think there is a perception among Government workers that politics are evil and unpleasant; actually Vince Barabba [Vincent P. Barabba, Director, 1973 to 1976 and 1979 to 1981] taught me that politics come in many shapes and sizes. In essence, politics with a capital "P" is really the essence of democracy. If you win an election, then you have won the right to set the Government on a path that you want it to go on. If you are working in the Government, you don't have to agree with that path, but you sure as hell better not be one that is going to sabo-

tage it. And put it in perspective, at the same time that people are the victors, they are not dictators and desk bosses. They understand the difference between running something and destroying something and the independence of the civil service. That was the strength of Vince Barabba. It was the weakness of Ed Failor. Ed brought in Skip [Watts] from California; he surfaced several times, and he was really a very difficult person to work with. Skip was the epitome of a gauleiter, and Failor didn't know what he was doing, and he didn't know what he wanted to do. The first thing he did was throw everybody off the third floor, move his executive suite up there, and install, of all things, a private shower!

Pemberton: **There is a story in Vince Barabba's interview, which you may have read—which was when SESA was abolished. One of the first things, I think it was Jim Turbitt who ripped the SESA conference sign off and put it over Vince's bathroom.**

Levine: Yes, they built the bathroom for the Director at that point too, but upstairs they built a shower. They deliberately put themselves a floor higher so they could request that the Director come up. I will never forget—"your presence is desired up in the SESA suite." They didn't know what they were talking about; they didn't know what they wanted; they just knew that they couldn't trust us. That doesn't set well for give-and-take nor for demanding what they wanted. They also brought somebody in and put him next to the office of the chief of the Population Division, and I was livid; I was so angry. The purpose of the person they brought in was to review the reports that were prepared by the Population Division.

Pemberton: **Do you remember who that was?**

Levine: No, he actually was at a relatively low level; I can't remember his name. Some character who came from the Republican National Committee. Now let me put it in perspective in a different way. I got to know Lance Tarrance, and he is an extremely able, capable, talented individual. After some false starts, I think he learned what we had to offer him, what our strengths were, and what our concerns were. So I think there was a peace made, but never with Failor; I don't think that Lance ever really supported Failor. Of course George Hay Brown never quite understood what Failor was all about. When George Hay (you've got to put him in perspective against someone like Vince Barabba) came in, the first thing he did was close his door—the Director's door was always closed when George Hay was here. When George Hay summoned you and you knocked on his door, if you happened to open it too quickly, George Hay was scrambling mightily to get back to his desk to get his coat to put it on—you never saw George Hay with his coat off or his tie loose. He was an extremely nice person who came to the Bureau from the Ford Motor Corporation. He had been head of market research, and he loved to tell us how one of his retirement benefits was a new Ford each model year. But he never took his coat off, and he never was anything but formal. George Hay had an expression which became the lampoon expression of the Bureau in his day; George Hay was always "digging trenches." If you had to fall back from your first line of defense, to your second line, and then your third if necessary. George also was worried about the image of the Bureau; so, if we would ask questions about abortions, George got very antsy. If we asked about the use of contraceptives, George decided that that was not something the Bureau should do. Before the George Hay days, the Bureau had taken on the Family Growth Survey for the National Center for Health Statistics, which we gave up under George Hay very quickly. We went back to tried and true Republican types of questions. George was worried about "sensitivity." When he went before the congressional committee, he was always cautious, concerned, and very reserved. He was not the one you wanted to

learn politics from; he never understood politics; he never understood what they were doing up on the third floor; he never understood what Lance Tarrance was doing. When Nixon was reelected in 1972 and they asked for everybody's resignation, George said he didn't have to offer it because, after all, he was a Nixon appointee. When they told him they really wanted his resignation, he was absolutely distraught, and when they accepted it, he just couldn't and wouldn't believe it.

Pemberton: **Why would they have wanted his retirement when he was so accommodating?**

Levine: I don't know. That you would have to ask Vince Barabba; that part of politics I never got into; I never understood that. Anyway, they brought in Skip Watts who was the real enforcer for Failor. When Vince came to the Bureau in 1973, after they accepted George Hay's resignation, Vince was the last appointment by Richard Nixon. The first time I guess I met Vince was at the Office of Management and Budget. The next time was as Director of the Bureau. George Brown wore blue suits, coats, and vests—white shirt, dark tie, very formal—Vince was the California epitome. You walked into Barabba's office the first time, his door was wide open. He was sitting at a round coffee table, feet were up on the table, his coat was thrown over the back of his chair. His shirt was unbuttoned, and his tie was pulled down, and he had on a green plaid suit that lit up the whole office. I would suspect that George Hay didn't know two people outside that office. Vince had no such compunction whatsoever. It didn't take him 30 seconds before he knew everybody and anybody, which was more my style. My style was to walk down the hall and stick my head in and say "hi, what's new." I understand it disconcerted some people but that didn't really bother me very much. Getting back to me, I guess the greatest disconcerting moment that I gave my staff, I must tell you, was when I was chief of Demographic Surveys Division. I used to have Monday morning staff meetings, and I had decided that my staff was getting stale. I really didn't think they were doing what I wanted them to do; they didn't show results. So, at the Monday morning staff meeting I announced that I was rotating all of the branch chiefs. I told them I would give them their new assignments by the close of the business day. It was fun! It really worked out very well. I learned a great deal about the people by doing that.

Tarry: **Sherry Courtland did the same thing when she became Chief of the Demographic Survey Division. She rotated the branch chiefs, and it caused pandemonium. I wonder if she might have been copying your example?**

Levine: Oh, I think Sherry is much smarter than to copy anything I did. She is a very competent individual; she did a good job. She did call me at one point and ask me if I thought she should take the job or apply for it. I urged her strenuously to take the job and apply for it. She had a lot to bring to it with a wide range of experience, and I thought she was very good for it; I thought she did a nice thing there.

The guy that sat in on Population Division was a real pain, and he caused the retirement of the Chief of the Division. Herman Miller just went ballistic. I don't know exactly what transpired, but Herman decided that he wanted to go overseas, and he'd had enough of this. Well, I guess part of it was that Herman was very happy and is happy working alone. Herman was a quintessential analyst. He took that income area from the time he came back from World War II and built it into a power house organization. He didn't particularly like being an administrator, but he was good because he is a people person. He had certain areas of weakness, but basically he was good. However, he really decided he had had enough of this nonsense. So he arranged to go to Brazil for the International Statistical Programs Center and it

fell through for a lot of reasons that I could get into, but they are not germane. So Herman retired. He wondered what he was going to do, and he figured he would do nothing. He took a job for a while—just before, he retired he took a sabbatical and went to California and taught at U.S.C. or UCLA. But he didn't know what he was going to do; he got some contracts doing poverty analysis, and he was teaching for a while. Seymour Wolfbein (Department of Labor) had retired and gone off to Temple University and became Dean. He called Herman, and Herman went up once a week. Herman also was teaching locally at American University. And then he got into a new field. I don't know exactly how it happened. Somebody called Herman and asked him to work up some statistics. Someone had been hit by a car or something like that; there was a law suit going on, and they needed somebody to tell them how much this chap would have earned in a lifetime—would Herman be the expert witness? And that's how Herman Miller began a new career; to this very day, Herman is an outstanding—and very much in demand—expert witness. He works for the Justice Department as well as for the best legal partnerships in this city. Herman was going to ask Roger Herriot [Roger A. Herriot, Chief, Population Division, to October 1985; Acting Chief, Population Division, to January 1986] to join him at one time, but it never quite worked out. Herman was a rock for me. He also taught me something—I remember at some point where I was very unsure as to whether I should take the job as Deputy Associate Director, whether I could do it. Herman took me aside and said, "look, you have been doing this work for 15 years; you have a reputation; you don't have to prove yourself to anybody. If somebody doesn't think you're good enough, tell them to go to hell and to read your resume." He was always there with support. He is the most upbeat person I have ever met in my life. The cup of Herman is never half empty; it is always half full. I have been surrounded by good people. That was a very difficult time when I became the Deputy Associate Director and suddenly I was asking Herman Miller and Joe Waksberg—people I admired and respected what should I do. You learn and you move on.

Pemberton: **Was Joe Waksberg at that point a division chief?**

Levine: Herman was a Division Chief. Joe became the Associate Director for Statistical Standards before Vince came in, somewhere under George Hay Brown, and then he announced his retirement to join Morris Hansen. He succeeded Morris.

Pemberton: **1968 or 1969 I believe.**

Levine: I think Joe became Associate Director at that point. Joe retired along with Ben Tepping and Tom Jabine. They retired together, a big loss.

Pemberton: **That was one of Mr. Barabba's first social affairs. He said he hoped things worked out well and that there wouldn't be so many more of these. Given what you said about Mr. Brown, the change over to Mr. Barabba must have been quite startling. You seemed to find Mr. Barabba quite refreshing, stimulating—would you say that was a fairly general response?**

Levine: Yes, here at the Bureau. Very quickly, I don't think there was a single person on the Executive Staff who didn't enjoy working with Vince. Within a very short time, we would have been glad to kill ourselves for him and did—no question about it. It was funny; he brought a degree of naivete at the same time he brought a great deal of sophistication. I remember one of the first things I had to do was get Vince to sign a contract for the Current Population Survey for a joint activity. I brought it to Vince and he said, "O.K., where do I sign?" Then he said, "what is it?" I said, "it's a contract for the joint work the Bureau does with the Labor Depart-

ment; this is our bill to them for $20 million." He said, "what! You have to be kidding; you mean I'm signing a $20 million dollar agreement?" I said "yes." He said, "you know, I haven't signed anything more than about $20,000 thousand in my life; what happens to me?" I said "nothing Vince; we take care of that stuff." These were very large numbers to Vince—you have to realize that Vince was coming from the private sector where he ran a very small market research firm with Dick Werthlin. But he took to it like a fish to water. Vince was very open, very warm, very supportive. He was a very sharp guy, and I'm sure he was taking our temperature; if we had not measured up, he would have sent us off to Timbuktu. Very quickly he decided what he wanted and the way he wanted it. He was very refreshing, very outgoing.

Pemberton: **It seems to be the general view at the Bureau, one does not meet very many people who do not feel that he was one of the . . .**

Levine: Sensational Director. You have to remember something; first of all Barabba followed George Hay Brown, who was a very reserved individual. Secondly, we were very worried. As Nixon's last appointment, he came as a representative of an administration that had been nothing but difficult for us. Ed Failor, Skip Watts, Tarrance, this character in Population Division, the Department of Commerce looking at us as though we were some sort of slimy green thing that lived out there, and they weren't sure that they wanted us.

Pemberton: **Do you feel that relations between the Census Bureau and the Department of Commerce notably worsened after the 1968 election?**

Levine: Yes. Let me modify that; they didn't exactly worsen, they changed. They changed for the obvious reason that we mentioned already. When nobody gives a damn about you, nobody has to watch you. Ordinarily, we were just a small footnote in the Commerce Department budget; every 10 years, however, we became a nuisance. But Congress would give us a couple hundred million dollars, and we would go away and do a job. But suddenly, starting with President Johnson, we became important. One person one vote, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, revenue sharing, counter cyclical revenue sharing, you name it, Employment and Training Administration, evaluations, longitudinal studies; we became important in distributing money. Suddenly political power became important; minorities were asking for their "due day in the sun." Well, if people are complaining about you, somebody's paying attention over there. So it made a big difference and, therefore, the focus changed. Failor was not only dealing with us but he was dealing with Bureau of Economic Analysis, so he was in the department. It was a real nuisance for a couple of years, a real problem. Vince was a godsend. He won the Bureau by one very small act he took almost in his first week. At that time Bob Hagan [Robert L. Hagan, Deputy Director, 1972 to 1979; Acting Director, March 1973 to May 1973; Acting Deputy Director, February 1972 to June 1972] was the Deputy Director; Vince was the Director; and I was the Associate. Just prior to Vince's taking office, we were putting out the income and poverty reports for 1972 and Failor had added another level of review; he reviewed them and Skip Watts reviewed them. They'd torn our report to pieces, they didn't like the way we had written the headlines; they didn't like what we said; we said poverty had gone up, and they didn't want that. So we went to see Vince and said—"what do we do?" He said—"walk me through it." I walked him through it. I was arrogant and a little younger in those days, and I said "we are right." He said "are you right?" I said "yes, poverty went up, significantly. They want it hidden from the lead; they want it put on page 52; they wanted some other data featured." I said—"we have never done this Vince. We have always been professional in this, what do we do?" He said—"put it out the way it originally

was; I'll take care of it." I looked at him and he said—"go ahead, forget about what they told you; you put it out the way you want to; send it through to printing." Ed Failor never forgave him. I don't know whether Vince realized how bitter Skip Watts was, and Failor—they were out to kill him for that. I do believe all the difficulties that Vince had were caused by leaks that came from them. There was some guy at a small newspaper called the *Federal Times* who raised a commotion about our sending a truck to get a desk that Vince had at home, a roll top desk, that he wanted here, and some tools; you had no idea. This took place very soon after Vince came. We heard about it on a Friday, and Vince was saying, "what do I do?" By that Friday night everyone on the Executive Staff and everyone in the Bureau that was called on was willing to work all weekend to write a rebuttal and we did. He got 100-percent support from this Bureau. We also got someone to provide Vince with the list of "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not." Vince didn't know these things and unfortunately no one had taken the time to tell him. After that, we started briefing the Directors on their first day, "thou shalt not have a driver take thy wife to the beauty parlor, thou art not in the private sector anymore." Vince also, like Herman Miller, has a joie de vie—loves living; he is bigger then life. Being in a field organization, we're removed from downtown. We had cars that took you back and forth, and Vince had a phone put in—one of the first car phones, a big mountain thing in the back. He loved to get on that telephone going either way. Crossing the Anacostia, he would say, "Rosalie tell them I coming, tell them the charge is coming up the hill." Or he'd call downtown, "tell the Assistant Secretary, I'm coming, I'm coming!" I learned politics from Vince; he taught me a lot of things. It was a very important experience. I had not spent very much time on the hill up until then. I had gone up to talk to staff, but I had never faced the key people. With Vince I got much more involved, and I learned the essential ingredients of how to deal with Congress. I learned a very important lesson by watching Vince. There was one occasion, which actually took place later, but I learned the lesson before. Representative Bob Garcia (Democrat, New York) was chair of our congressional subcommittee. We went down to brief him; Vince, myself, and Mark Ferber [Mark F. Ferber, Congressional Affairs Advisor, Program and Policy Development Office, June 1978 to June 1983] who was our Congressional Liaison. We told our story, Vince told it, and Bob rejoined and Vince answered him and at some point, it wasn't very long, Garcia said, "I'm sorry but I've made up my mind and this is what I'm going to have do." And Mark Ferber leaned forward and said—"but Congressman" and Vince turned to Mark and very gently put his hand on his knee and said, "Mark, no more, the Congressman has made up his mind and we have said our piece." Then Barabba said,"Bob thank you for your time; sorry we couldn't change your mind. We appreciate it." Vince knew when to fold and when not to; that's very important because you win brownie points by knowing when to fold. That's something that stood me in very good stead. If you argue too long, you lose not only this fight but the next one as well. Vince took some very terrible hits from the Congress; he was really treated badly by the Democrats. One Representative from New York used to call him Mr. Barabas, really nasty, really some nasty guys.

Pemberton: **When you mentioned Mr. Garcia, was he the head of the U.S. House of Representatives subcommittee or the full committee at that time?**

Levine: Subcommittee. He was good for the Bureau; he helped the Bureau. He and Vince established a good rapport. Vince inevitably established a good rapport with a lot of Representatives, which helped the Bureau immeasurably. I loved to watch him work with those guys; I couldn't do it.

Pemberton: **Do you think that once you got to be an associate director you had a chance to see Mr. Barabba and others interact with Representatives. Do you feel that these personal interactions with Representatives improved in number and quality with the arrival of Mr. Barabba?**

Levine: Absolutely. Prior to Vince, the directors that I knew, going back to Roy Peel, Burgess [Robert W. Burgess, Director, 1953 to 1961], didn't know how to deal with Congress. J.C. Capt in the 1940s, I was told, was the epitome of a guy who could shmooze his way with a glass of bourbon. He was a Texas politician and that's when the Bureau really started. He was the one that said, "I run downtown." He brought in Ross Eckler, and many others, and said, "Ross, you run the Bureau; I'll run the outside." Directors did that, such as Scammon, and he could get to see President Kennedy anytime he wanted to. He said, "look, I'm going to have my office downtown; I don't have to waste my time. Eckler, you run the inside." Vince told me the same thing. When I became Deputy Director, Vince said when he came back, "you run inside, I'll run outside." Vince also ran inside, don't kid yourself—Vince ran everything, but he ran it his way. Dr.Eckler was strictly a statistician/economist and was very respected for his accomplishments, but he really didn't know how to deal with the hill. He was embarrassed by them, and when they told him they weren't going to support our requests, Eckler would politely thank them for their attention. I did somewhat better than that. I was able to because I learned from Vince how to approach the hill. When to fold them and when to keep going, when to bet, and also how to shmooze. Vince could shmooze—we used to go down after hours to Senator Moynihan's office [Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Senator (D-NY)], sit around the table and he would open that beautiful early American furniture credenza he had, offer a beverage, and tell stories. Moynihan understood statistics. Jim Leach (Congressman from Iowa) was another one that we talked to at great length. Vince at that time was commuting for a while back and forth, and during his second term he was commuting completely. He used to get on the airplane every Monday morning and made a point of getting on the same airplane as Mr. Horton (Republican from NY). Vince knew both sides of the aisle; he was known as "Mr. Square." Some were unpleasant, but if they were reasonable people, Vince was able to shmooze with them. We were out in California once, just after we'd had a hearing where Senator Feinstein (Senator from California) had given us a really tough time, really told us off under no uncertain terms. Vince knew of a restaurant out by the Golden Gate Bridge, a Chinese restaurant. We walked in, sat down, and Vince said "oh, there's Senator Feinstein." The master—he sends over a bottle of wine with a note on it. She came over, absolutely delighted and very friendly. Yes, they differed, but Vince understood the difference between arguing principle and getting nasty personally. That's a very important thing to learn. Argue the issue but don't lose sight of your civility. A very, very valuable lesson I learned from him. He taught me a lot of things like that, very nice. It was a delight to know him. When he left, the Bureau cried and cried and cried.

Pemberton: **First time and second time?**

Levine: Particularly the first time. When he came back the second time, my God, you could have blown this building apart because he was succeeded after his directorship by a gentlemen who had a lot of difficulty. The person that he recommended to be the next director did not turn out particularly well. He recommended Manny Plotkin [Manuel D. Plotkin, Director, April 1977 to March 1979]. Manny did not fare well and neither did the Bureau.

Pemberton: **In what sense?**

Levine: Manny made George Hay Brown look like the world's greatest manager. Manny would get a telephone call, and you would get a telephone call from his secretary saying, "The Director needs you right away." You would come in and perspiration would be evident on Manny's face. He would write you a note, or he would give you the question, and you would have to write the answer. We had a Mike Wallace interview for CBS television. Shirley Kallek almost died watching Manny. When you saw him on camera, he was so unsure of himself that it showed on camera. He built a war room—that was one of his main contributions. I guess he had three contributions—(1) the war room, (2) motorized drapes which covered the charts on the wall, and (3) he brought in outside people to look at our questionnaires and redesign them; I think he did a good job there. Unfortunately, he wasn't accepted, either by the Department of Commerce or the Congress. The Secretary at that time was Juanita Kreps [Juanita Kreps, Secretary of Commerce, January 1977 to October 1979], and I don't know the true story or the whole story. But, as I recall it, Dr. Kreps and the Director did not get along. When he went in to talk to her, Manny sat far away; it was like he was taking his orals. When Vince came back, by the way, and Juanita Kreps was still there, he met her for the first time; it was like a hot knife through soft butter. They just took to each other immediately. It was wonderful to observe; Vince could do no wrong in her eyes. It was one of these things like, "don't worry about it, I'm going to take care of everything." He didn't put it that way, there was a real sense of security, when he talked about problems. It was incredible; they got along famously.

Pemberton: **Were you in on some of those discussions?**

Levine: Oh, yes! I remember a discussion after she left and Mr. Klutznik [Philip M. Klutznik, Secretary of Commerce, January 1980 to January 1981] succeeded her. We were involved in all the law suits and one thing and another; so Courtenay Slater [Courtenay Slater, Chief Economist, Department of Commerce] who was the Assistant Secretary in charge of the Census Bureau, called up and said "the Secretary thought we ought to have a meeting." Vince said why don't you come along; I said "I would love to; it's a great idea." Well, Vince and Mr. Klutznik started kibitzing—that's the only term you could use, Vince telling him what the problems are; Secretary Klutznik replying, "I understand you go to jail before I do," (somebody wanted to get the address registers, which we felt were covered by title 13 confidentiality). Mr. Klutznik is a tiny man, and Vince is fairly tall. We got up from the table and started to walk out and the Secretary puts his arm around Vince like a grandfather and says—"don't worry, every thing is going to be alright; I'm going to take good care of it for you. If you go to jail, Danny will take care of it." It was wonderful; I'll never forget it! Vince just had that ability, he exudes confidence—but not egocentric confidence—it's "I'm here, every thing's alright, and yet with proper respect for the Secretary. As for the politics which surround the decennial census, Vince dealt directly with the White House and, if necessary, the department, and I got involved only to the extent that those activities affected the operations of the Bureau. But the experience of watching Vince stood me in good stead when he left and I became Acting Director for over a year.

Vince had an easy way about him, I'll never forget the computer disaster. Vince was on holiday at the beach. I called him up and said—"I thought you ought to know" and he said, "well do you want me to come back"; I said, "that's up to you." He said, "do you need me?" I said,

"I can always use you Vince." He said, "you know there is nothing more I can do that you aren't doing, and I'm enjoying the sun. I'll see you next week, take care of everything," and he hung up. He had a way of instilling you with the ability to do what you had to do.

Pemberton: **In that particular circumstance you, the Bureau, managed to use the relationship that it had had with what is now UNISYS over a long period of time in order to get them to build a replacement computer.**

Levine: They had a replacement scheduled for somebody else, and Vince was able through his contacts and the Secretary, of course, to get UNISYS to jump us to the head of the line; we got a UNIVAC 1108B almost immediately. So I was accused of putting the pole in the lady's hands to pull the alarm. It was a very exciting time.

Pemberton: **Earlier you said that you were named Deputy Associate Director to Conrad Taeuber; he retired and several months after that. You were initially named acting and then named Associate Director. What was the purpose of the notion of the Deputy Associate Director? Once you got to be the Associate Director, how did that vary from your jobs or responsibilities as Deputy Associate Director?**

Levine: Well, Joe Wright [Joseph R. Wright, Jr., Deputy Director, 1971-1972] had made a determination that the people who were the associate directors were not the people he wanted as the associate directors. Part of that was politics. In Conrad Taeuber's case, my recollection is that they felt he was "too liberal," and secondly Taeuber had, in their judgment, provided information to help Hubert Humphrey. At least that was the rumor that seemed to be floating around in those days.

Pemberton: **Do you remember anything about the nature of the accusation or just that there was an accusation?**

Levine: I don't remember anything specific anymore, I just don't know. I would assume, knowing Conrad, that he probably would have never referred to it in his interview. He's too much of a gentleman for that sort of thing. I do recall interesting conversations among a number of people at that point. In Conrad's case, when he announced his retirement it was quite clear to a number of us that it was not necessarily voluntary; it was forced on him. And a number of us got together to talk to Conrad, I can't remember whether it was lunch or just a staff meeting or what. And we all said we would offer our resignations, and Conrad with his usual enigmatic little smile pointed out to us the analogy of, the rock thrown in the water that makes a big circle and then suddenly the ripples disappear and the rock sinks and there is nothing left. He pointed out that occasionally it was good to make a fuss but other times it would hurt the Bureau, and he would be much more unhappy were that to come to pass and he strongly urged us not to do anything foolish, foolhardy, or precipitous. So we all stayed.

Pemberton: **Would Herman Miller and Art Young have been among those?**

Levine: I think it was myself, Herman, and possibly Waksberg and a number of other people. Dave Kaplan at that point really was quite upset by that activity. In fact, I had a private conversation with Conrad after Joe Wright had called me in his office and offered me the job. I told Conrad that I wouldn't accept it—wouldn't consider it. He told me I was being very foolish. On the basis of my great respect for Conrad and listening very seriously to what he said, I went ahead and took the job. In Walt Ryan's (Associate Director Economic/Field) case, I

don't know quite what the argument was. I knew Walt a little bit, he was the Associate Director for the economic area at that point. I think it was the feeling that he wasn't pushing the economic area enough. That's when Jim Turbitt [James W. Turbitt, who in the 1970s served in two different positions—first as Associate Director for Data Collection and Processing and later as Assistant Director for Administration] was brought in. He and I were asked to be deputy associates—it was for operations. They made the point that the two associate directors would be responsible for operational problems, and the Bureau was having real operational problems, according to Joe Wright, and to some extent that was true. So our immediate focus as deputies was on the operational aspects. I must tell you in all honesty that was probably one of the most difficult periods of my entire career in the sense of feeling that I was basically pushing Conrad out of the way on a number of things. But Conrad made that a very easy transition and very much supported me and pushed me to do the things that I thought ought to be done, rightly or wrongly. And I think Jim Turbitt also had the same problem. We both had great respect for both Walt Ryan and Conrad Taeuber. Then when their resignations or retirements were announced, we were put into the jobs, and we looked at each other and said "what do we do now; to whom do we turn to for help, for guidance." Unfortunately there wasn't anybody, so we turned to each other. Working with Jim Turbitt, I must tell you, was a delight. I would strongly urge you to interview Jim Turbitt because he brings a perspective of a field operative for many, many years. He worked independently in Field Division, which has always been independent. Coming in, he was a delight to work with. He had been in the Bureau, gone to the field and come back to headquarters again.

Pemberton: **Is he in the Boston area?**

Levine: He is now living in Providence, Rhode Island. That's how we came to get the jobs, l think. I was surprised when the job was offered to me. Even when the Deputy Associate Director's job was offered, I had no idea that Joe Wright had any feeling for me at all other then the fact that we had a number of arguments. We had a number of field trips together, but that's an entirely different experience, being on a field trip with Joe Wright—a very unusual individual. Probably one of the most unusual individuals I ever met in my life. Again, you might want to talk to Joe Wright.

Pemberton: **In what sense?**

Levine: Joe saw it from a different perspective. He was brought in politically; he was brought in as a deputy director if you may recall. I think he holds the record for holding more acting associate director jobs as well as deputy director jobs then anybody else. He then moved into the SESA activity, so he has seen the Bureau from quite a number of perspectives. He then went over to the Department of Agriculture and saw the Bureau from another perspective. So you might find it an interesting perception of the Census Bureau from a political appointment as opposed to someone who is a career appointment.

Pemberton: **Is he still in the Washington area?**

Levine: No, I think Joe is most likely in New York. I'm sure Vince Barabba could find him for you; Vince can find anybody. I don't remember what else you asked me about becoming.

Pemberton: **You mentioned when you were appointed Deputy Associate Director that your focus was on operations, and that Mr. Wright thought there were some problems with operations. What kinds of things were you ask to fix, to improve?**

Levine: Well, in 1972 the Bureau was still putting out the 1970 Census of Population and Housing. In fact, one of the problems supposedly which led to the disappearance of a Deputy Director was that the data were not coming out properly; the wrong states were being done and all sorts of things like that. You may remember Lance Tarrance [Vernon Lance Tarrance, Jr., Special Assistant to the Director, 1969-1973] was brought in to take care of things like that. I don't know necessarily whether indeed we were supposed to focus on operations. They had to set up two jobs, deputy associate directors; so, for want of a rationale, they turned to operations. Both Jim and I had had a lot of operations experience, and I focused (I didn't worry about what I was supposed to focus on) on whatever I thought the problems of the moment were. One was getting out the 1970 census data; the other was the redesign of the Current Population Survey—a lot of new programs were coming into the Bureau. I felt that the Bureau needed a little bit of a shaking up in the demographic area—getting people in the jobs that were essential to do, what I thought was the thing that had to be done. I never really, I guess in my own career, sat down and said here are the five essential things that I wanted to get done. My general view was to see what the divisions were doing and to see if I could improve what they were doing and extend what they were doing. In that way, extend the Bureau's ability to meet the challenges it was facing. Sometimes you are successful and sometimes you're not. There are a lot of things we played around with. For example, I had a very strong feeling that the Housing Division was not really a division in the true sense of the word; it wasn't producing reports; it wasn't doing analytic work; it was doing somewhat semi-operational work. It hung around and sort of maintained itself for most of the decade until the decennial census would come around and then it would get a paltry sum of money to keep it going for a few years. Then it would be right back in the same boat. So I turned some people like Morty Boisen [Morton Boisen, Chief, Statistical Methods Division, 1972-1975; Acting Chief, Statistical Methods Division, January 1972 to September 1972; Assistant Division Chief, Systems and Procedures, to 1972; Chief, Methods, Procedures, and Quality Control Branch, to march 1960; Assistant Chief, Population and Housing Census, post April 1952; Chief, Statistical Procedures Section, to April 1951] to suggest how the Division could get involved in producing analytic reports; but our efforts weren't successful. So you can fail very quickly if you want to. When Herman Miller left the Population Division, there was an opportunity to see who we could put in there. There were some interesting bi-plays between me and Joe Wright as to who ought to be head of the Population Division. For once I won a battle and put Meyer Zitter [Meyer Zitter, Chief, Population Division, 1972-1980; Acting Chief, Population and Estimates and Projections Branch, February 1962 to February 1963; Assistant Chief, Structural Statistics Branch, to February 1962] in there. I think it was an excellent choice. I think the Population Division just flourished and continued to flourish even more so than it did under Herman, because Meyer had a broader outlook than I think Herman did. Meyer was interested in pushing the division to do more things. The Demographic Surveys Division expanded beautifully, picked up a lot of new surveys, and did a lot of things. Basically, I think the demographic area was doing well before I got there, was doing well while I was there, and probably has done well since I have left. The economic areas are a different thing. As Associate Director, of course, I had very little impact on that—that came later when I became Deputy Director. I enjoyed meeting the people and working with people like Shirley Kallek [Associate Director for Economic Fields, 1974-1983] and Jim Turbitt particularly. Shirley came in a little later when Jim moved from being the Associate Director for Economic Fields into a whole series of different titles. I don't remember the names of most

of the titles Jim held, but it seemed like every other day he had a different sign in front of his door and that's when Bob Hagan [Robert L. Hagan, Deputy Director, 1972-1979] moved him around considerably. Let's see, who was the Deputy Director at that time? I guess Bob Hagan came in about that time also. Mr. Drury [Robert F. Drury, Deputy Director, 1967-1970] was bumped out. He left earlier and then Bob Hagan came at that point. Bob was a delight to work with; you got a lot of respect from Bob; he listened to you; he let you participate. I think of all the things that happened between Jim, myself, and Bob was that we were successful in opening up the Bureau. By that I mean, rightly or wrongly, the modus operandi of some of our predecessors was to sit up there as an executive staff, close the doors, make decisions, and hand down fiats. Most of the people would look at the fiat and have no idea what went into deciding why fiat "A" was more important then proposal "B." At least in my view, it was very essential that both our division chiefs and our fellow associates and many of the other participants in our group understand the rationale as to why we thought these were important aspects of the Bureau's direction. Bob Hagan seemed to agree, did agree in fact with Jim and with me. Jim and I felt most strongly about it, and we made it a much more participatory activity. For my part, I brought my divisions chiefs in very quickly into most of the decision making. I have a very bad habit, I talk too much. So when I would hear things at the executive staff level I thought they should know, I would share with them. That was also true of budget. The usual approach was for all these decisions to be made by the Director, by Hagan, and by the budget office, and nobody would every hear about it. In fact, under Drury the Associate Directors very often did not know how the decisions were made. Luckily, Hagan didn't feel that way, and certainly Vince didn't feel that way, or if he did we were able to convince him that that wasn't the way he ought to do it. So very quickly the decisionmaking responsibilities of the Bureau were shared rather widely; there was no question that Vince was the Director. I don't think anybody ever had a doubt that if Vince made a decision then that was the decision. If it was nine to one against him and Vince was the one, he was wont to say, "I guess I'm the one who has the power to say one carried more then nine." Modern arithmetic. But at least everyone had the opportunity to vent one's view, and I passed that down to my staff. I think that was probably one of the major contributions of Hagan, Turbitt, and myself.

Pemberton: **Essentially making it a participatory activity rather then a...**

Levine: Both a participatory activity and also an explanatory feedback. You can participate and never know why the decision went against you. We tried to share most of that. I think as a result of that, the divisions became much more responsible. One of the things that you learn as you move up the ladder is that there are explanations for a lot of things; now the explanations may not hold very much water, they may be built on preconceived notions which are hills of sand, things of that sort. But as a division chief, one would hoard ones resources and tend not to want to share them with anybody. One perhaps would dissemble occasionally in order to protect one's few pennies. As I increased in grade and authority, I became aware of the reasons or the pressures that the executive staff was facing both from the pressures below it and from the pressures from the Department, the Office of Management and Budget, and subsequently Congress. If you share those things with your staff, you are able to engender a much more open climate in which they operated. For example, this open climate helped to explain why everyone had to pay a tithe to support the Housing area; (it became an understandable and shared responsibility). As a result of that, we got to the point where occasionally people were even offering up surpluses, which was very unusual. I found that it was a much better way to work. If you brought a problem that the Population Division had to the table, you also found that there were smart people in other divisions who, much to your surprise, understood

the Population Division's problems, who could offer suggestions which might or might not be unique, but which might help Mr. Zitter make a decision or might help me. And they also began to understand that resources were the Bureau's resources, not just the Housing Division's, the Population Division's, or the Demographic Surveys Division. I also was a great believer in staff meetings. I held a weekly staff meeting and made sure that everybody tried to attend—to talk and to listen; generally we tried to set up an agenda. So, I guess, you have a question down here—"What am I most proud of in my career?" Well it's an interesting thing to think about a career. I guess I thought "a career is a career . . . ," as you use the term. I never really thought about it as an accumulation of 30-plus years as being in one particular place. I guess the thing that I am most proud of is probably the people—you bring people in; you watch them grow; you have a opportunity to see what happens to them; you have a chance to share in their growth and to derive pleasure from the fact that they have done well and you were smart enough to hire them even if they have fallen into your lap. But I think on the flip side of that, I had very strong feelings that no matter what job I held, and I must have learned this very early, was that the more authority or responsibility you got, you were much better off if you did not think of it as authority but as responsibility to help people—the people below you as much as the people above you. So I think my greatest contribution was trying to convince people that I was there to see that they had the resources and tools to do the jobs that we foisted upon them, and that we were understanding, open, sympathetic, and willing to help. A lot of the job was nonsense, but in the sense that you were able to help people to clear away the burdens and barriers that prevented them from doing a good job, the extent to which you could eliminate their concerns that they were being dealt with unfairly, or that they were being persecuted because division "A" got 5 dollars more then they did, that you could share an understanding with them and make them understand what the Bureau was trying to do and where they fit in, and if you were willing occasionally to devote a few dollars to their most desired opportunities to experiment with something. I think those are my greatest pleasures in my career, my greatest accomplishments, Oh, you do a lot of things and look back and say, "well, we accomplished this" or someone says "we conducted the best census ever." That's nice, and all those things are great accomplishments, but they really go to the staff not to me. But to the extent that you can see people enjoy what they do and growing while they do it, and the organization is having fun at the same time, people are enjoying what they do, and feel that you have done something worthwhile. When people are miserable and unhappy, you realize you really failed. It is not always because you have great resources that people are happy. Occasionally people have to understand that we have to take cuts or that we couldn't do it. But if you could get them to understand it so that they can live with it, that's also an accomplishment.

Pemberton: **As a division chief, it seems that most of your focus and responsibility is frequently on the activities of your division. When you became an Associate Director, you had responsibilities with multiple divisions. You mentioned that one of the foci that you were involved with was getting them the resources to be able to do their jobs. One of the ways one does this is to interact with those above you at the Census Bureau but also those outside, like at the Department of Commerce, the Office of Management and Budget, possibly at the White House, possibly on Capitol Hill. How did you find that aspect of the job? Was it interesting? Who taught you what you needed to know? Do any of the interactions that you had, again, either as an associate or as a Deputy Director stand out in your mind?**

Levine: Well, I'll go back to the beginning. How do you learn? You learn by observing very often; nobody gives you a course in how to deal with people. It is one of the most difficult activities that any manager at any level has to learn to do. The first thing you learn is that everybody is different, and you're different too. You can learn certain things from other people, but you can't learn how you're going to use those things. My own style was that I didn't like to sit still; therefore, I prowled the halls a lot. That's both good and bad—I understood I used to scare people a lot; I never understood how I could have scared anybody I'm such a pussy cat. But I used to hop into offices. I'd walk down the hall and stick my head in and ask how certain projects were doing and what was new. I thought it was essential to know my staff, but in terms of dealing with upstairs—I can remember the first time I met Conrad Taeuber; I probably was shaking in my shoes. Now, I never had the feeling that I had the same effect on people, and I'm sure that I didn't. Conrad was a man who had a long distinguished career, an innovator, and a subject-matter expert who contributed widely to the field. He had been president of a number of professional associations and participated in a lot things of that sort. My strength, if I had any, was probably that I tried to know a lot of people and to understand their problems. In terms of dealing with the front office, I didn't see any differences there. I felt that my job was to represent my group. So in a sense you sometimes blunder in and make mistakes, and they turn out well. In other cases, I learned by watching, even as a young junior. One of the nice things in the office I was in was that they always invited you into meetings. They were sitting around the coffee table or conference table, and you may have been sitting in a corner, but you could see the interaction among the senior staff. Morris Hansen used to have weekly staff meetings and invite his juniors in the same sort of way. Now I have seen people fight, and I have seen people resolve problems. I was invited down to a meeting at the Office of Management and Budget and I watched Margaret Martin deal with people. I learned generally from watching. Nobody ever took me aside and said this is how you deal with somebody. When it came to Congress, I learned from Vince, really. I had been to Congress a number of times before that and seen many Directors come and go, and you develop your own way of approaching it. You don't, as you grow up, completely change 180 degrees. What you do is adapt your basic nature to the situation as you find it. But I think that many of the Directors whom I have observed were capable but really didn't have the abilities of two people that I observed—the first was Dick Scammon who had the ability that Vince had. He wasn't intimidated, and I always found that if you allow yourself to be intimidated, you have lost the battle before you started, and you sounded like an idiot anyway—you had no conviction, no moral authority, much less substantive authority relative to the thing that you were representing. So I learned from Scammon and from Vince that if you know your subject, you probably know it a lot better then they do. Yes, you're deferential, after all they are U. S. Representatives, Secretaries of Commerce, or they're something or other, but you're always deferential. You're taught to be deferential to your parents and to your el-

ders and there is no difference here. Deferential is different then being intimidated or cowed before them. Some Directors disliked or even cowered at the thought of going before Congress. Ross Eckler, for whom I had a tremendous respect, somehow had gotten it in his mind, the way I perceived it, that the way to be deferential was never to say no or to differ with the Representative's assertions. Mr. Rooney, the person Ross had to deal with, was a very difficult individual, and Ross was just never able to break through that. I saw Ross go down there, and his perception was "kick me again, it makes me feel better, I love it." When he would go down and ask for another senior position, it seemed to me he was already admitting that he didn't expect to get it, and he just wanted to be told to "go home and stop bothering us." This was not the way Vince asked the question or acted with Congress or the way Scammon did. So I guess all I can say is that I consistently tried to be myself, which probably caused the Bureau a lot of heart ache at times. I got along rather well with Congress; I had no problems with them. I got along well with the people in the Commerce Department. When you are dealing with an Assistant Secretary with whom you've met over 15 times, by the 15th time you are much more comfortable in the situation, just as a new division chief is much more comfortable with a staff member. When you are dealing with the Secretary of Commerce, you are a little less comfortable, a little more apprehensive; but again, depending what your job was, you tried to present the data as best you could or explain the situation or justify why you wanted to hire, fire, or get five more grade 15s or whatever you could. It was quite an experience. The first time you walk into the Secretary of Commerce's office—that room must be 650 miles long and about 400 miles wide— it seems like it takes you 3 days to get from the door over to the desk where the Secretary is sitting. Some Secretaries make you feel at home, Juanita Kreps and Phillip Klutznick [Philip M. Klutznick, Secretary of Commerce] were just wonderful. Others were very standoffish. Directors were like that too, so it's hard to say. Some Representatives made your life easy; others you hated with a passion, but you weren't able to show it. There was a wonderful exchange in the paper yesterday on the Federal Page—letters between Mr. Brown, who's Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and a Representative who complained that the Secretary of Commerce wouldn't come down to an affair in his district. I suggest you read it. Government employees in particular just love those things because here is a Secretary saying "you're an idiot." You don't see that sort of thing very often, certainly not from career employees. I certainly wanted to say that so many times to a U. S. Representative or to some of the other people I met. The one thing that you had to remember was that you were down there for a particular task, and if you lost your temper it might be temporary, but the Bureau was the one that was going to suffer. You might feel better by losing your temper, but you had a task and you would have failed in your task. So I think it was Vince who taught me most graphically when to "fold up your tent" and go away. I saw that a number of times with him. He seemed to have a very well developed sixth sense when we would see a Representative and try to convince him of the truth and beauty of our position, and we would discuss it back and forth. The Representative would say, "I understand your position, but I differ. Someone in the group with Vince would say, "but Mr. Congressman." Vince would lean over and touch your arm and say, "no, the Congressman has given us his view; it is time to say thank you." So you left in a way which didn't endanger the Bureau; you didn't cross that threshold of becoming a nag—it's a talent and not everybody has it. Above all the essential ingredient is not to appear as though you are begging. You go in as an individual with a particular issue on the table and you try to leave personalities out of it. It's not always easy to know when to "fold up your cards" and say "the pot is yours." Those were interesting times.

Pemberton: **I assume that you participated in both testimony before subcommittees and in private meetings with Representatives staffs or Representatives themselves.**

Levine: Oh, yes and in telephone calls—those are the ones that are not on the record you see. Representatives have the ability to be so arrogant, and it is hard not to tell them so; you can not do that if you are representing the Bureau. If you do not care, it is different, otherwise it does not work very well. Now, I have seen instances where in a sense we told the Representative to go take a "flying leap," but those instances are very unusual. There was a case, for example, with Speaker Albert [Carl Albert] of the U. S. House of Representatives. His wife was a genealogist, and she wanted something from the Bureau which we would not give her, something covered by confidentiality requirements of title 13. She wanted to see records, and Mr. Albert called up Vince and said unless his wife got what she wanted, the Census Bureau would find itself in Salt Lake City in the next week or so. Vince laughed and said it probably would be very good for our health. Well, we were never moved; maybe it would have been a lot better then Suitland, I don't know. I have had a few Representatives call up and scream, I mean literally scream at me.

Pemberton: **That must be an unnerving experience.**

Levine: It is indeed, particularly when you do not expect it. See, you expect the Director to handle calls like that. When you're Acting Director, there's nobody to give it to.

Pemberton: **I was going to say you were Acting Director for at least 9 months.**

Levine: I remember one, which was fun, really fun. It probably was one of the most direct learning experiences I have ever had in my life. I had a call from Mr. Jamie Whitten—he was head of the appropriations committee for a very long time. He came from Mississippi, I believe. This was prior to the 1980 Census of Population and Housing, and the Census Bureau's Field Division, in its inimitable fashion, was carving up the country as to where it was going to put the district offices. I don't remember why, but I got this telephone call from Jamie Whitten himself. I do not think I was the Acting Director at that time, maybe Vince was off on a trip, and maybe I was acting at that point. Normally when you got a call, it was not from the Representative, but from the secretary in his office saying the Representative is calling, or it was from a staff member saying "the Representative has asked me to tell you . . . ," that sort of thing. Well, I picked up the phone and there was this soft southern drawl, and he had a small question wanting to know why we were not putting a district office in his Congressional District. I was rather surprised at that myself, because the one thing I had learned was that appropriation chairmen generally get a district office. I told the Representative that I really was not sure, but I would be very happy to look into it. I was very shocked to hear his voice—nobody in between us. He said that he understood that there was a small problem, and he would really appreciate it if I would take care of it. It turned out that the Field Division had been told that we could not get the right number of telephone lines that we needed and some other nonsense like that. I said, "do you mean to say the telephone company won't give you the lines?" Well, it was a small town and this and that. I said, "it's going to sound pretty silly." Oh, they said they had investigated; they had reams of material. So in one of my more stupid moments, I accepted their explanation, and I called the Representative back and said, "l understand that we have looked into this; the problem is that the Bureau could not get the telephone lines." He said, "how many telephone lines do you need?" I said, "I understand that we need "X" number of lines" and he said, "well let me look into this and I will get back to you." About 2 minutes later he called back and said, "I understand from people I've been

talking with that there is no problem getting a 1,000 lines if that will help. We could have them in there tomorrow." Then this went on for another couple of days and it turned out that the Field also was having trouble getting minority candidates to apply for jobs as interviewers, supervisors, and clerks. So I placed a call to Mr. Whitten and said, "I'm sorry to bother you, you have been so helpful on the telephone issue, but I find that we are having trouble getting candidates, minority candidates. As you know, your district has a large minority population, and we need to have interviewers, and we would really appreciate your help." "Oh, Mr. Levine, I'm so glad you called. How many candidates would you like, and would tomorrow morning be soon enough?" So I learned the power of persuasion; it's a great asset. Now on the other hand, I remember a Representative calling and he was very angry about the fact that we did not have an office in his district. He demanded one and insisted on an immediate answer and an apology for our stupidity, and he went on and "reamed me out" over the telephone. I was glad I was away from his presence; after all he was the commanding general of the entire world at that moment. He threatened to send me some place, I can't remember, Alaska, Africa, or some place like that. Those are the interesting experiences you have; it is fun; telephone calls that you got from what is now talk radio. Between 1970 and 1980, there was a lot of that. The job is a lot of fun but the job is more fun if you remember to put it in perspective and that you are there to help people. I was talking to Margo Anderson [Margo J. Anderson, Professor of History and Urban Affairs, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee] recently, and she gave me a perspective that I had not had before. She told me, much to my surprise (I should have understood and realized this) that I was very fortunate in being in the Bureau during an exceptional period when the Bureau was thought of positively. If you look back historically, the Bureau has been blasted, maligned, and otherwise condemned to purgatory many, many times. Margo said actually it's more typical for the Bureau to be maligned and not thought of as a repository of good and beneficent things. But, during the period between 1940 and 1980, we had a "golden age." I do not know how else to describe it; it really was a wonderful period. What Margo told me made me feel even better about being here at the right time, and it made me feel less bad about leaving when I did because I certainly did not want to stay around and watch the Bureau sink into an abyss again, which I am sure it has not.

Pemberton: **You mentioned being able to find a way to persuade Congress that it needed to fund the decennial census throughout the decade rather than let it go down to zero and build it back up several years before the decennial. How were you able to present the case for full decennial funding across the entire decade in a way that was sufficiently convincing that the appropriations and oversight committees accepted it?**

Levine: Now I find in talking to people at the Bureau occasionally, is that the Bureau has a large amount of money for the intercensal period now, much greater then we ever had before. They are getting huge amounts of money. I think we got $1 million, and they are getting $10, $12, or $15 million. You have to be careful that you do not get such a top heavy staff that it suddenly becomes immobile during the 10-year period; they get locked in and that's not good either. You have to turn some of that staff over and bring in new ideas and new technology. It is true that what has happened is that the cost of technology and the pace of technology is changing so rapidly that it becomes difficult to do without lots of money, but I think there is another problem. In the past, where the Bureau could develop a Film Optical Sensing Device for Input to Computer (FOSDIC) machine within 3 or 4 years, and it was so far ahead of anything else that you could use it for at least 10 years or two censuses with minor modification. Now if the Bureau locks into some technology too early, it finds itself owning equipment that

is outdated by the time of a census, and there is something far better. So it's a problem; I don't know how best to approach it. I did not have to deal with it, but I have a great deal of sympathy for the people in the Bureau who do. The procurement rules are so archaic and so difficult—I guess this administration is trying to change them. Whether it is for the better or not I have not the faintest idea. But it just seems to me you have to be lean and mean. You have to be careful that you do not become fat and lazy. Therefore, I wonder if the Bureau has too much money for the intercensal period for the decennial. The decennial has become so important.

Pemberton: **The Bureau is having substantial hiring problems now. There has been a freeze on hiring people for some time. I suspect that this is the kind of thing that happened right after the 1980 decennial census because there was a reduction in force in 1982. There were apparently the usual kind of difficulties, but it was a substantial moral problem which lasted actually beyond your tenure.**

Levine: Absolutely, it was uphill. A whole generation of young people coming in that's what happened; that's very difficult. Well, I do not know how the Bureau's going to handle some of what it is doing. You see what bothered me a little bit, I can see the rationale for it, is that the Bureau split the decennial census as an activity off from the Associate Director for Demographic Programs. Now you have an Associate Director for Decennial Census. Now you have a hierarchy which you have to support for 10 years. When you set up an associate director, pretty soon you have to have three special assistants and four secretaries. If you are going to have an associate director, you had better have some divisions around. If you have some divisions around, you had better have some people around, and they had better be doing something even if they are doing nothing. So pretty soon you have a very large organization, and you have to fund it, and it has to be at the expense of something else, which also bothered me. As head of Demographic Surveys Division, I always resented the decennial census because come decennial census time they would take away the best interviewers from Current Program Surveys and make them field supervisors. The field would take its best field supervisors and move them over to decennial; the best industry and occupation coders would be moved over to become supervisors in the census at a higher rate, or I would have to offer them a higher grade (which I couldn't afford in the first place). Beyond that, I was subsidizing the field in the intercensal period because they had to hang on to some of these people. As I say, when you move up in grade and position you begin to understand the perspective, and you have to feed that perspective back down. I am not sure whether the Bureau is better or worse off, but I would worry that it has to be very sure that it has a lean and mean machine during the intercensal period, and I am not sure that they do.

Pemberton: **One of the things that one gets through interviews with you and some of your colleagues was that the 1970s was a period of time during which many Government operations were under more political influence or efforts were made to influence the activities of various Government agencies. I heard stories about the Bureau of Labor Statistics and some about the Census Bureau. What I was wondering is, you were in a position to be able to see across time through a Republican Administration, then a Democratic Administration, and back to a new Republican Administration. Would you say that there was any trend in efforts to influence the activities of the Census Bureau over that period of time, or was it really trendless— Democrat, Republican, one Republican or another Republican— it just didn't make much difference?**

Levine: Well, I'll tell you one thing; Republicans are a lot smarter then the Democrats. They observed what the Democrats did and then they built on it. In the 1960s during the Johnson administration, when all that legislation was passed in the mid-1960s, the Bureau was first called upon to do certain things. The Bureau suddenly began to get publicly oriented and, much more so, it became the focus of a lot of people's attention. Even beyond that, Johnson brought into the White House a number of people like Ben Wattenberg. Ben was one of the first people who worked in the White House who understood (he had written a book with Scammon) what the Census Bureau had to offer and what it could provide in the way of policy relevant data. So, the White House began to call on the Bureau, and more and more people in the Bureau began finding themselves spending time down at the White House or working with Ben producing tabulations that could be used in policy evaluation, in program planning, in other words, in everything that a good statistician would like. His or her data were finally going to be used for something substantive beyond just "this community is 400 happy and enchanting people." The Bureau was just ecstatic with the idea. We were tabulating all sorts of stuff out of the March Current Population Survey and out of the 1960 census. It was rather fascinating to see it develop.

Then along came Mr. Nixon and his administration realized two things—that you could use the data, and if you controlled the data, you could present it to support your policies. So they had an entirely different idea. Instead of using the data as the Democrats did, the Nixon team decided it would control the information. The same was true with the Bureau of Labor Statistics. It used to have a monthly press conference when the Census Bureau would release the results of the monthly Current Population Survey unemployment data. Hal Goldstein [Harold Goldstein, Assistant Commissioner, Bureau of Labor Statistics] would get together with the reporters, usually in the basement of the old Labor Department building on 14th and Constitution Avenue. It was not much of a room, like a class room kind of thing. The reporters would wander in, and they would throw questions at Goldstein, and he would give them answers. What happened very quickly was Goldstein retired and the press conferences were abolished and that is when the Joint Committee on Economic Statistics called the head of the Bureau of Labor Statistics down to talk about the unemployment statistics. That happened during the Nixon administration. As far as the Bureau was concerned, the administration decided the Bureau was putting out data that was dangerous. and so they did a lot of things.

Pemberton: **What kind of data would be considered dangerous?**

Levine: Unemployment was dangerous; that is why Goldstein disappeared. The processing of the 1970 census was going on at that time and very shortly Bob Drury disappeared because they accused him of ordering the processing of state data in such a way that would benefit the

Democrats and not the Republicans. Next thing you know we had Lance Tarrance sitting in there with a staff of his own running the tabulations, deciding the order of the tabulations, and also deciding whose request of the tabulations would be met and in which order.

Pemberton: **Then Bob Drury rather than Bob Hagan was let go?**

Levine: Bob Drury went. It was announced that Bob Drury was going down to a vital job that had opened up in the Patent and Trade Office. Drury was going to the Patent and Trade Office. The following Monday it was announced that Bob Drury was retiring effective immediately. And then they put somebody in the Population Division who sat next to Herman Miller, Chief, Population Division, to review the reports. At the same time, Julian Shiskin decided we would not use the term poverty anymore; we would use the term "the poor." Then the Social and Economic Statistics Administration (SESA) was established somewhere along that period.

Now you asked about what happened under the subsequent Democratic Administration. Well, Carter was elected. We had nothing under the Ford Administration that I remember; it was very quiet. When Carter came in January 1997, Courtenay Slater became the Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs. Courtenay was a very good economist and had a great interest in the statistics that the Census Bureau and the Bureau of Economic Analysis put out. So, where before the reports would go downtown and seldom got looked at there but just were released, Courtenay began to take a statistical interest in them— an analytical interest I should say. Where we were sloppy, or where we weren't explaining things properly, or where she felt the focus was incorrect, we heard from Courtenay. It was not a censorship type of approach; it was an analytical responsibility that I think she correctly had, that probably had not been exercised by her predecessors. It was a natural growth, incidently, of what President Johnson had started in the White House. Now Commerce was understanding, and everybody was understanding, that the Bureau had a store of very important data. A lot of the public was beginning to pay attention to those data, and those data were being used for policy. Suddenly the Department of Commerce realized that this agency which was about 10 miles east of downtown had better be payed attention to. A number of embarrassing things did happen, rightly or wrongly. As the 1980 census was being planned, minorities were complaining bitterly about the lack of adjustment of the 1970 census undercount, the desire that the Bureau do a better job in counting minorities in 1980, and that the agency reflect their opinions and their views. Minorities also were demanding that we deal with them in terms of approaching their communities. So, when Mr. Carter became President, the White House started getting a lot of complaints from Congress about the way the 1980 census was being developed, particularly under the Republicans who had preceded them and from the constituency that said the Bureau itself was not being properly responsive. At that point the Commerce Department decided it had best pay attention to the Census Bureau, so we started getting much more attention. The Director at that time was Manny Plotkin, who unfortunately did not seem to get along very well either with the Department or the hill. So, finally the administration arranged to replace him and pulled the coup of the decade if not the century in getting Vince to come back. He walked into the first meeting with Juanita Kreps, and you would have thought the sunshine had just broken out behind the clouds. Then when she left, Klutznick [Philip M. Klutznick, Secretary of Commerce] came in, and he and Vince hit it right off instantaneously. Klutznick was a strong supporter of the Bureau and, therefore, that period was very, very pleasant.

Pemberton: **I've heard that the period under Mr. Plotkin had a number of difficulties. I assume that some of them were stumbles and some of them substantive. You mentioned several of the things that you thought he had done that were good, and that he had difficulties communicating with Congress and apparently communicating with the Secretary. Did it also extend inside the Bureau so that the communications between the Director and the executive staff were not particularly good?**

Levine: They were cordial, but they were not particularly collegial. Manny, as I say, found it very difficult to make decisions. He established a war room in what had been the Director's conference room a couple doors down from his office, installed motorized drapes, and all sort of charts on the wall to plot the future of the census. But the problem was that by the time he got it plotted, the war had gone beyond you, and you had lost four more battles. So it was really tough. He was just a difficult person to deal with, and he had some very tough times with the department itself, which found him not always responsive. When he dealt with the advisory committees, he generally stepped into it with both feet and could not figure out a way to get out of it, and that's not a very good way to be. I remember a number of occasions where he would get telephone calls and put them on hold until he could summon a member of the staff to sit next to him to listen in on the other telephone and give him the answers. That is not a very good way for a Director to be. Congress also seemed to find him difficult to deal with, so he destroyed any constituency he had in no time at all. The administration finally decided to ask him to step aside. It was a very difficult period for him, I know, a very difficult period.

Pemberton: **Of course, a very difficult period for the Census Bureau because after all it was beginning to build up for the 1980 census.**

Levine: Yes, Vince did not come until 1979. At that point, we were running really fast. Manny could not make his mind up about things like the pro-bono program of advertising, which was just this hanging fire; he could not make up his mind how to deal with Congress on the issues of the questionnaire content; he could not get decisions on what to do on a lot of things. It made it very, very tough for people.

Pemberton: **So morale was affected throughout the Bureau.**

Levine: Oh, yes. I think morale was affected throughout the Bureau. Manny appeared on "60 Minutes" and Shirley Kallek was absolutely petrified. If you ever look at that video tape, Plotkin looks like one of the caricatures of one of the commercials where the guy is perspiring visibly.

Pemberton: **So a good public face was not something he could put on for the Bureau's activities.**

Levine: Managing things was not easy for him. But the Bureau was lucky getting Vince back because obviously he did not need the year-and-a-half period that most Directors need to know what the Bureau does and how to get things done. Barabba had obviously been there through the development in the early years of the 1980 census, and he was able to pick it up and restore the Bureau's confidence and the Bureau's credibility with the Congress; thus we moved ahead very rapidly. I think "the proof is in the pudding." The 1980 census, rightly or wrongly, was called a good census, and Vince deserves a lot of credit for that good job.

Pemberton: **You were an Associate Director between 1973 and 1979 I believe, and I think the two people that would have been directly involved in the decennial under you were David Kaplan, and when he retired I believe in 1979, I think Earle Gerson, who was the one who became the Assistant Director for the Census.**

Levine: Probably.

Pemberton: **Then right after him, I guess in 1981, was Pete Bounpane.**

Levine: Actually the key person was George Hall, who was the Associate Director and did a very good job. I was very shocked when Bob Hagan informed me that he was planning to retire and even more so when Jim Turbitt followed him almost immediately. Then Vince decided to leave sometime in January 1981 as I recall. When he announced he was leaving, it was a big shock to me.

Pemberton: **David Kaplan was called "Mr. Census" for sometime. He clearly had day- to-day responsibility for a lot of the preparation for the 1980 census and had similar responsibility for the 1970, I believe.**

Levine: And had worked in the 1960, 1950, and 1940 censuses. In fact, Vince used to tease Dave unmercifully. I think Dave did not like it, but he learned to swallow it. When they would go before an appropriations committee, advisory committee, or authorization committee, Vince would point to Dave and say, "now he advised President Lincoln on the 1860 census." But by the 40th time, it wasn't humorous any more. Dave was an amazing individual. Absolutely amazing, he had the capacity to keep 4 million facts distributed beautifully in his memory, to be able to recall them instantaneously, to know the status of everything at any given moment, and to be able to deal with "umpty-ump" different things. He always looked like he was running even when he was standing still. He always looked like he was going to fly apart; yet, he was very calm at all times. An exceptional individual, he really was. I had met him the first time when I was applying for a job—that was quite an experience! I enjoyed it very much. He asked me a lot of very pointed questions. David was a good thinker, a very interesting guy. When I became the Associate Director and even the Deputy Associate Director I found that period very difficult. The early days of being in both of those positions was very difficult. David was just an icon! He stood apart from everyone else, and to be put in a position where you even had the temerity much less the right to ask him a question and expect to get an answer, was something that I found very difficult for a very long, long time. But he was an exceptional resource for the Bureau, he really was. He could recall very quickly what was done in each of the preceding censuses, both in terms of operational aspects of the census as well as subject-matter areas. He knew what the questionnaire contained, and he had an outlook that he imparted to me very quickly. David brought home to me the fact that he "managed" the census that but the essential thing to remember was that the decennial census is done not to make it easier for the Field Division, not to make it more efficient to process, not necessarily to save money, but to provide worthwhile, reliable, and useful data. So the important thing in a position such as his, as he tried to remind me tactfully, was to make sure that the decisions he, and we, made were consistent and agreed to by the Population Division or the Housing Division, which were the subject areas. It did not do us any good to do the 10-year census at half the price if the data were not worth the paper they were printed on. And that is an outlook that a lot of people do not have. It is a position that is very difficult to get across to people in the Congress, at Commerce, and at the Office of Management and Budget. For example, I remember arguments at the Office of Management and Budget where

they would say, "look at your total computer capacity; you have way more then you need." We would say, "you are absolutely right if everything was just running on a constant level, but when you have a census that has a spike like that, and another spike like that, and in between you have the Current Population Survey and the Survey of Income and Program Participation, and all the rest of these things. It is not the total capacity, it is the ability to meet the excessive need, the spike that you have to have, even if that capacity is wasted and underutilized 12 or 16 percent of the time. People don't understand that, they really have difficulty. David and Morty Boisen [Morton Boisen, Special Assistant to Assistant Director for Demographic Censuses] were the two people that understood that better then almost anybody I know.

Pemberton: **What was Boisen's position?**

Levine: Morty was a mathematical statistician. He came from the Machine Tabulation Division in the 1940s and worked his way up and ended up in Statistical Methods Division. He worked for Joe Waksberg as his Assistant Division Chief, and he was in charge of his budget. Morty was a wonderful individual; he had more fantastic stories and could defuse more crises with a story. He could always come into a meeting where you were fighting and screaming and say, "do not worry about deadlines; I have never missed a deadline in my life; I just moved them forward when necessary." Everybody started laughing, and you would begin to resolve the problem and figure out a way to meet it— he was very, very talented that way. He became Chief of the Statistical Methods Division following Joe Waksberg, and then when he decided to retire, he became a Special Assistant to me. He had tremendous insight into the way operations worked and their relationship to the topic that you were trying to study.

Pemberton: **Do you have any thought about the Bureau's advisory committee meetings. The Bureau plans to shorten presentations to the committees as they did 7, 8, 9 years ago. Essentially they hand the presentations out in advance. You do not need to have someone stand up there and talk for 20 or 30 minutes and take up half the time.**

Levine: Assuming people are going to read it, which they do not.

Pemberton: **Yes, but some do. It is better to have a 5-minute presentation and let the advisory committees spend most of their time discussing each topic.**

Levine: Oh, I agree.

Pemberton: **At least that is the position the Bureau now taking.**

Levine: Well, Vince took the position that advisory committees were advising him, which is not the position today. Now they are advising the Secretary of Commerce if I'm not mistaken. Don't they provide reports to the Secretary or something like that?

Pemberton: **What we have now have is something of a complicated system because there is a 2000 Census Advisory Committee.**

Levine: Oh, you have so many 2000 Census Advisory Committees, you have a Secretary's Advisory Committee.

Pemberton: **That's the one I was referring to. Now the others are appointed by the Secretary, but I'm not sure they report to the Secretary.**

Levine: Very complex—I think it was Lou Kincannon [C. Louis Kincannon, Deputy Director, 1982 to 1992; Acting Director, January 1989 to November 1989] who decided the Bureau was wasting too much time with individual meetings, so they put them all together. So now you have almost Chinese menus, take one from A and one from B, which session do you want to see, do you want to see both of them, you can listen to the tape or something like that. I thought that the advisory committees at times were a pain, and at other times I felt they were very helpful. Minority advisory committees were especially difficult and yet they were a tremendous help to the Bureau. The Bureau probably would not have survived the 1980 census if Vince had not initiated the committees. The world would have been a much more difficult place for the Bureau. You have to remember that like many other things, there are different agendas. The Bureau's agenda is very simple—you want to coopt these people; you want their advice but let's not misunderstand it. However, when it came to minorities, you also hoped to coopt them so they would know the truth and beauty. You were not going out there with the devious desire to coopt people for some nefarious end. You were going out there because you were true and beautiful and you understood what they needed; these members did not understand at all, and they looked at you like you were a first class burglar, if not a swindler or a con man. So there were many very heated discussions. We truly believed that what we were doing was right and just and there was no question about our position and our mission. Others, it turned out, did not share our view. Because when we would say we tried to hire Spanish interviewers or Spanish-speaking interviewers and we were unsuccessful, they would respond that, "I don't believe you; you haven't tried hard enough." And they were probably right. I remember one chair of a Minority Advisory Committee who, when we started making our presentation on the decennial census, would pick up the *Washington Post* and turn her back and read. And I thought David Kaplan was going to explode, literally. As well he should. It is very hard sometimes to be a "civil" servant. The Chairperson is a very brilliant woman and she really felt, as much as she trusted Vince, she did not trust any of the rest of us. We were nothing more then hack bureaucrats, which is a appellation that few of us like to hear. We like to feel that we are doing something useful and contributing to the public welfare. The only person she believed was Leo Estrada [Leobardo F. Estrada, member, Census Advisory Committee on the Spanish-Origin Population for the 1980 Census] who was in a sense our Hispanic expert and liaison to the Hispanic community. When this Chairperson would hear something from the Census Bureau, she would call Leo and ask him whether she ought to accept it or reject it. We knew it and he knew it—that is the way it worked. We had a lot of respect for Leo, and he had a terribly difficult job but he handled it very well in 1980. In any case, those were difficult times. Barabba really is to be congratulated for having the vision; he always looks outside of the present and looks down the road, and too many people do not—the people in the Bureau particularly. You wanted to ask me something about the minority advisory committees, go ahead.

Pemberton: **I am sure the response today is very similar to the response you are making, in the sense that sometimes they are very useful and sometimes they are not.**

Levine: When they support us they're useful; when they oppose us, things can get very difficult for the Bureau.

Pemberton: **On the other hand, one of the benefits of this sort of thing is that you are getting people on the outside, hopefully with both statistical knowledge and some sort of knowledge of their communities, telling the Bureau things that it might not hear otherwise.**

Levine: Advisory committees or minority advisory committees?

Pemberton: **Minority advisory committees.**

Levine: Well, first of all the original minority advisory committees did not have very many statisticians on them; there were not very many in those days, number one. Second, we weren't looking for statisticians; we were looking for ways to improve the coverage in the community—that's been the big problem. Collecting the data has not been the problem. If you find somebody, you can generally get the answer. Or you can argue, as we did, in the advisory committee for about an hour over whether the Spanish translation for "farm" should use the word "finca" or "hacienda." For an hour at least, maybe 2 hours. It seemed like a week to me. You can argue about a lot of other things, but what we were trying to do was to figure out how we could get the minority communities to assist the Bureau in convincing people that—(a) our data are confidential, (b) it's desirable that they participate and that is an advantage to them, (c) we are not people with horns and cloven hooves, and (d) a number of other things. Its tough, very, very, tough. It was an eye opening experience I must tell you. Again, I recognize Kaplan's view. I like to think that I understood all these things, and we were doing great and beautiful things. I remember one of our first meetings with a welfare rights group. Dorothy Height came to the meeting, and she's an incredible lady. We were trying to get her organization to convince the males in the households in which we were undercounting, mostly Black households, to try to get the word out that the data were confidential, and we would not tell people. She said, "look, you go out there and count people and I will accept the fact that your data are confidential. But you put out tabulations don't you?" Yes, but they are used for planning, and they will benefit your community. She said, "if we help, your tabulation will show an area to have lots of men that you wouldn't have gotten otherwise. And then down the street here; you have some people looking at recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children and, according to their records, there aren't any men in these households, but the census says there are men in these households. Now that's not violating confidentiality, even though this is a tract or a neighborhood. It's not going to take a genius to figure out that they better send somebody in there and find out if these women really deserve these benefits." In those days, Aid to Families with Dependent Children said, "you cannot have a man living in this household." It had never occurred to me. Now I'm pretty dumb but in somethings I occasionally catch on. I was absolutely amazed by the insight that she showed. These are the sort of things that we started learning from the minority advisory committees. As I said, we learned a lot from the minority advisory committees, but we also learned that everybody didn't love us—that was a tough lesson. The problem is that when you learn that people don't love you, you can react one of two ways. Vince reacted by saying, "why don't you love us; what can we do to bridge the gap? You don't have to love, me but you don't have to hate me either. What is it that we don't understand; I can learn something." A lot of people in the Bureau said, "if you don't love me I will put up a wall; I ain't talking to you; I don't care whether we count you or not." That was a rough one to break down. It's getting worse for the Bureau, not better. Not because of what I'm talking about but because the problem remains. No matter what the Bureau has done in three censuses, and it spent a lot of money in 1980, between $50 or $75 million to improve coverage, it has not bridged the gap. Some people say we improved coverage. Barbara Bailar [Barbara A. Bailar, Associate Director for

Statistical Standards and Methodology, 1979 to 1989] says we didn't improve coverage; we had double counting. Take your choice. But we have not solved that problem. Society doesn't make it any easier. Society changed to make it much more suspicious—e. g., the onset of drugs and illegitimacy and a lot of other problems in the less developed parts of our country. Vince fought hard for the minority committees, and he was lucky again. He had support on Capitol Hill, and he had the support of Thurston Morton. He overrode those in the Department of Commerce who would not have Bobby Seals, or Vilma Martinez, or others. Now the advisory committees are different, as I see the names of the members. These are not the activists; these members do not seem to be activists. I don't know what you do have, I'm not really sure because I have not kept up with it. But the last time I looked at the list of names you had a couple statisticians, and you had a demographer or two. They are helpful but they are not what you are looking for in terms of the problems that you want them to help you with. A statistician can't give you insight into this issue—how to get into a population and overcome hostility.

Pemberton: **That's an interesting point of view.**

Levine: You really need different kinds of people. We had some wonderful experiences; I don't know whether you heard this one. We went to Chicago for a meeting with the Black and the Hispanic Advisory Committee. We met with each committee separately in those days. The Polish community in Chicago came to call to say that we were discriminating against the Polish people because we did not have a Polish minority advisory committee and that we should. Anyway, they were invited to attend the Black Advisory Committee meeting, and one of the members got up and said, "now my Polack brethren who are here" and the delegation members went about 20 feet off the floor, and he looked at them and said, "did I say something that offended you all, I apologize, I apologize." Then the Black Advisory Committee members said we should conduct the dress rehearsal in a city that had a serious undercount, and they suggested Chicago. Vince was attempting to answer this, and there was a hot debate going back and forth and somebody said, "well why don't you do the test in Chicago; I mean do a test in Chicago." And one of my colleagues, who was sitting next to me didn't think he'd be heard but he was—said, "we'll do a test in Chicago, an atomic test." The whole room almost went up like an atomic bomb. Vince almost collapsed, I didn't know whether he was going to laugh or cry at the same time. Really an exciting time. Advisory committees are very difficult because the Bureau has a very wide range of subject areas in which it needs advice or help. It takes a lot of time to become knowledgeable and sophisticated on those problems—an advisory committee trying to cover problems in the Current Population Survey, trying to cover census problems, trying to cover nonresponse followup and all the problems you are having right now with the Congress—none of those advisory committees, unfortunately, can help you with Congress because they do not have the credibility. Which leads me to note that one of the real problem the Bureau has had since Vince left is that its Directors don't seem to have credibility on Capital Hill or at the White House. Since Vince, there hasn't been someone who is able to go up to the Department of Commerce and tell them, "support us." The Bureau made a major mistake, in my judgement, in 1990 in not standing up and telling their story—the 1990 census was not a disaster and now everyone believes it was a disaster. Now the current Director is not having much success either, unfortunately, for whatever reason. I wish the Bureau well; I enjoyed my time there immeasurably. It was a delight! It may be one of my worst faults, but unlike many of my friends, I was never sorry I worked there, I never spent my time looking for other jobs—never spent my time complaining about it. Yes, we complained among ourselves about our problems, about each other, but we enjoyed it.

We looked forward to going to work. I had a grand time, and listening to Margo Anderson I am so pleased that I was there at the right time with the right people—a wonderful experience.

Pemberton: **It's kind of sad because I think that to some extent there are certainly some people that come with the same kind of feeling that you just expressed. But I think that because of a variety of difficulties, some institutional, some personal, that it's a little more difficult to work there now, agreeing with your view.**

Levine: Dave Kaplan found himself in a can't win situation. Prior to the 1970 census, we would sit at lunch and say, "this is such a wonderful place to work, we do such wonderful things here; we produce such magnificent data like unemployment data, health data, smoking data, the economic census. People don't appreciate us. We just can't get them to appreciate us." Then came the mid-1960s, and the data were being used, attention was focused on the Bureau and they didn't appreciate us; they hated us; they resented us. Then we had Maynard Jackson, the Mayor of Atlanta, say "you guys don't know your ... from a what's." People said, in effect, that there are only two things important in the census, money, and politics. The rest of what you do is irrelevant because you guys produce numbers that give us money and politics, and if you don't produce the numbers I want, I don't want you. Others would say, "I don't believe you; you are not upright and righteous; you are part of that lousy group that's trying to take food out of my community, out of the mouth of my community." Most of us suffered bitterly with that. But with all, we loved it; we loved the experience; we could not have found a better place to work. Because l was in Demographic Surveys Division, I had the fortune of having the job that I liked. I did different things, different surveys, and different activities. I did not just move papers from my left hand to my right hand. So I have interacted with virtually every agency in Washington. I tell you without fear of any contradiction that there is none like the Census Bureau; it's a delight; it was and I hope it still is.

Pemberton: **One final question. One of the things that one learns when they come to the Bureau is there is a kind of variety of walls with doors, one is between the economic and the demographic sides and there has been a variety of efforts since I've been there to foster communications across that barrier. Another barrier that runs differently is between censuses and surveys, probably more so on the demographic side, but the economic side has a large number of surveys as well and many of them are administrative, using administrative records so there are some similarities. But did you find that this series of chasms was there when you were there, and did you have any luck in trying to bridge them?**

Levine: Chasms were there when I was there. They were as deep if not deeper then they are now. I worked in the Bureau starting in 1948. I do not think I had any knowledge of the economic area between 1948 and 1972. As far as the censuses, I found them a pain as I told you. They took away my resources, my people, and interfered with my programs the whole time I was in the Demographic Surveys Division. Now, the people in the Population Division did both activities. To that extent, I was familiar at least with the demographic censuses. In 1950, 2 years after I got there, we were all sent out in the field as technical advisors. What an experience that was; I thought it would kill us all. It is a fantastic experience, but we won't do it again, because it's too expensive for the Bureau, but we did it in 1950.

Pemberton: **Where were you sent?**

Levine: I was sent to Queens. Myer Zitter was in Williamsburg, and Lee Paley was somewhere else. We shared one hotel room between the three of us, downtown in New York. Art Hauser, who used to work at the Bureau , got sent back to Bureau headquarters in disgrace because they printed a pull-out picture of him flying in an airplane with somebody looking for missed units. It was a fascinating experience; it way my first exposure to politics. Experiences that I'd never had, like where the police came because an interviewer knocked on a door and as it opened, someone swung a baseball bat at him and so the interviewer retreated. He happened to be a big kid who was waiting to join the police force. The Bureau's district supervisor, who at that time was a political appointee, was an attorney and later became the district attorney for Queens. He called the police, and the police went out and staked out this place and broke down the door. There was a very old little man there, sort of out of his gourd, so to speak, dementia or something. This big policeman walked in and said, "you hit that man," and wack, the little old man went backwards. Experiences you run into during the census are incredible. You really have to get out in the field to see what happens. An interviewer, a very nice old man, walked up to the fourth floor and dropped dead of a heart attack. Lots of experiences in 1960 and 1970. When I became the Associate Director, I felt strongly about opening things up. So to that extent my staff meetings did bring the census to everybody. I made Art Young, Meyer, and David talk about it. The fissures between the Bureau—one of the things I was able to do, only for a brief period of time— was try to put a bridge across the fissures between the people who needed administrative services and the people who ran its Administrative Services Division. I resented bitterly as Division Chief and Assistant Division Chief having to beg from the Administrative Services Division to get a pad of paper or get a wall built or something like that. I particularly resented Personnel Division which said, "justify the fact that you need this grade 13," instead of coming to me saying, "you need a grade 13, this is what we have to do, let's try to do it together," or "your write-up isn't strong enough, we'll help you." Dave Warner [David P. Warner, Chief, Personnel Division, 1990 census] tried to change that attitude. At least he did when I was there because I insisted. I never understood people who said, "my job is to prevent you from doing your job." My view was let's try to do the job together. In the Economic area, I was less successful. Why? Jim Turbitt and I were parallel, doing different jobs, and had no reason to bridge. He and I talked a lot and I learned a lot from Jim; I really did learn the economic area from him. Shirley Kallek believed that was her fiefdom and nobody should touch it. And that was a tough one. When Waksberg was the Associate Director for a very brief period of time, we talked about the possibility of making some changes there, but like everything else the cost was very high. Shirley and everybody opposed it, and we had other priorities. Therefore, we turned our attention to the ones that people were willing to support. The same thing happened when I became Deputy Director. I would push on Shirley slightly. I would try to cross that chasm, but it didn't work. I moved people from the Population Division. One of the branch chiefs from the Demographic Surveys Division went over to Shirley's area temporarily, but it just didn't work out. She wanted to run it her way. In fact, as Deputy Director, we had some of our most bitter fights because she didn't like the decisions I was making. She was very tough. But nevertheless, she accepted the decisions, but she kept the door closed. She was an awfully tough, awfully brilliant, very talented lady, and she made tremendous strides and improvements—that's one thing you could say about Shirley. I had a terrible time convincing Shirley, but once she was convinced, she was like an unmoveable object. She just plowed right through; you couldn't stop her. But the differences remained. People who work in a particular area, learn that area, and stay in that area. Maybe we should change the division chiefs too, but nobody gave me a chance. I did some of that later on. I moved people around in the

demographic area, but Shirley ran the economic area with an iron hand; even Vince couldn't get in there. We would cajole her into giving up money, or accepting a decision, or we had to tell her that was it. But reorganizing her staff, no! She was good at innovation. She was one of the leading lights in introducing innovation in terms of processing. For example, she brought the bar codes "into the census," and a lot of data- processing innovations came from her area.

Pemberton: **I would think that today the administrative records work that the economic side has been doing for years ought to have, if not direct application, at least analogous situations to research into using administrative records to improve the decennial census.**

Levine: The problem is different unfortunately. The Bureau has been trying to work on using administrative records in censuses since 1972 when we began doing revenue sharing—that's when we started using administrative records in the demographic area. If you talk about trying to match up people, however, who were missed in the census by using welfare records—well spellings are wrong, addresses are wrong, they are 10 years out of date—you go crazy. A lot of the problems the Bureau had within the adjustment process after the 1980 and 1990 censuses was the fact that the cities that were suing us, like New York, deliberately were using records that were out of date, and they knew it. They were trying to pad the records. You don't do that with the Internal Revenue Service records (like Shirley used), or with the Social Security Administration records. Those are different types of record. They contain payroll information and other sensitive information. There are probably plenty of problems in trying to identify whether the payroll counts are right or not. Some bright people are working on it.

Pemberton: **O.K., I'm not sure, but I understand that the administrative records issue is going to remain essentially experimental.**

Levine: Nothing wrong with it remaining experimental if you have an experiment that teaches you something. It's my understanding that if you look back you will find, that the Bureau did virtually no experiments in the 1990 census leading towards understanding the year 2000. There was no experimental program at all. Why doesn't the Bureau put an administrative records program into one or two cities? Now they're doing continuing measurement. The Bureau is finally doing that, but that was not tested in 1990 either.

Pemberton: **That's one of the tough things about it. It does not require one big funding; it requires it year in and year out.**

Levine: And at any point in time Congress can decide to cut budgets—"take it out of your own hide." That will hurt terribly.

I still like the Bureau. I'm still interested in it, that's one of the reasons I enjoy to being here because I hear about the Bureau. People call me and talk to me occasionally. I'd like to think that the Bureau would take advantage of some of the people who have been here before, but the Bureau does not seem to want to.

Pemberton: **You retired from the Bureau in 1982. When did you go to Westat?**

Levine: I retired in 1982. Bob Hagan, Jim Turbitt, Danny Levine, and George Hall [George E. Hall, Deputy Director, Department of Commerce, Office of Statistical Policy and Standards; Associate Director for Demographic Fields, Bureau of the Census, July 1979 to May 1981]

formed a company called Cenex Incorporated, otherwise known as Census Executives. We started doing consulting and some survey research, but we were very low key. People wanted us to work; they kept bring us work to do. We did very well; we actually had a lot of fun. I enjoyed working with those chaps. We stayed together about a year an half. Then we realized that Hagan wanted to do something else, Jim Turbitt wanted to go back to Providence, Rhode Island, and George wanted to earn more income since he had retired early. At that point I had been asked by Ed Goldfield (then Executive Director of the Committee on National Statistics at the National Academy of Sciences,) to take on a study to assess the statistical program of the Immigration and Naturalization Service; I said I would. So from 1984 until about 1986 or 1987, I worked for the National Academy of Sciences. I did an assessment of immigration statistics and a review of poverty estimates for small- area estimation. Probably the most impressive thing we did (because it got some action) was the assessment of the National Center for Education Statistics. I chose Vince for the chairperson of that particular study, and after a violent battle he allowed me to say to the audience, which was the Secretary of Education, "either improve this organization or abolish it." About that time, of course, Vince was at General Motors. He had left the Xerox Corporation. He called me up one day and said that he had taken over this particular organization, and they did a lot of surveys. He said he needed somebody to do an independent assessment. Could I give him some names? So, I gave him lots of names; about 15 minutes later he called back and said, "you know I'm kicking myself." I asked why. He said, "I'm asking you for names. Why don't you do it?" So I said I would do it. Therefore, while I was working for the academy, I took a leave of absence and went out and visited General Motors a half dozen times, and wrote him about a 30 page report which suggested a number of things he ought to do. Then, he called me up and said, "well who's going to do them?" I said I would be glad to write him another couple of pages, and I did. I pointed out that I would do some of them, but I was not going to set up an organization to do what he wanted done. Therefore, I suggested he get in contact with an organization and he said, "whom would you suggest?" I mentioned Westat, so I met with Morris Hansen and told him I had taken the liberty of mentioning his name, and here was the program. Morris said that he would be glad to work with General Motors, but only under one condition, that I [Levine] would be the coordinator, as a consultant. In other words, I would coordinate all the work and would stay with him. About that time, I was spending about half my time at the Academy, and I became a consultant to Westat about 1984 or 1985. Then the Academy asked me to take on a full-time task. I said I did not want to, but that I would help to get it started. I realized that I wasn't interested in it at all, I'm doing something I do not enjoy. I was going to Westat periodically, and most of the time I was doing a little work for other people. Then Joe Waksberg asked me to come to lunch, and he said he had a broom closet. We will take the brooms out, he would give me a computer, the broom closet would be my office. All he asked was if they opened the door and asked what happened in the 1860 census, I tell them. So I have been consulting for Westat and a few other people ever since. That's what I do— a little consulting for a variety of agencies, some work for an International Education Assessment program, which is a lot of fun.

That's another one of those strange happenings. I went to Florida on vacation and got a call from a former colleague who said, "there's this huge international education assessment program getting started 45 to 50 countries. It's going to be run out of University of British Columbia, and a lot of people have doubts about their capabilities. Would you do me a favor and go up there?" I said, "I can't; I'm in Florida on vacation," and he said, "oh, you have got to go." So I said, "OK, I will go." So I flew from Florida to Vancouver, a lovely city. I got there one night, and the next day I listened to the discussions that they set up. We were supposed to be there a week, and I said, "we can write the report now." There were three of us.

So I wrote the report, and flew back to Florida. Larry [Larry E. Suter, Chief, Education and Social Stratification Branch, Population Division, to 1979] called me up a week later and said, "would you become a full-time consultant and tell them how to do it?" I said, "they can do it, but they can't do it within a year—it's impossible." So we developed a plan, which was accepted and the study has been completed and results are now available. This was quite an accomplishment.. Anyway it's been a lot of fun. I have enjoyed it.

Pemberton: **Well, thank you very much.**

Levine: It's my delight. Sorry the interview took up so much of your time.

Pemberton: **Not a waste at all.**