Chang-Lin Tien

FOUR DECADES OF DISTINGUISHED SERVICE:
UC BERKELEY CHANCELLOR, 1990–1997,
VICE CHANCELLOR FOR RESEARCH, PROFESSOR OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING,
AND RENOWNED EXPERT IN MICROSCALE THERMOPHYSICAL ENGINEERING

Includes an interview with
Di-Hwa Tien

With an Introduction by
Norman C. Tien

Interviews Conducted by
Harriet Nathan
1997-1999

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Since 1954 the Regional Oral History Office has been interviewing leading participants in or well-placed witnesses to major events in the development of northern California, the West, and the nation. Oral history is a method of collecting historical information through tape-recorded interviews between a narrator with firsthand knowledge of historically significant events and a well-informed interviewer, with the goal of preserving substantive additions to the historical record. The tape recording is transcribed, lightly edited for continuity and clarity, and reviewed by the interviewee. The corrected manuscript is indexed, bound with photographs and illustrative materials, and placed in The Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, and in other research collections for scholarly use. Because it is primary material, oral history is not intended to present the final, verified, or complete narrative of events. It is a spoken account, offered by the interviewee in response to questioning, and as such it is reflective, partisan, deeply involved, and irreplaceable.

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Copy no. ______
TIEN, Chang-Lin (1935-2002)  Professor of engineering, university administrator


Family background, childhood, and education in mainland China and Taiwan; Japanese invasion, Chinese civil war, 1946, flight to Taiwan; mechanical engineering education and naval academy; University of Louisville, MA, Princeton University, PhD; marriage to Di-Hwa; reflections on immigrant experience, speaking English, discrimination; UC Berkeley, College of Engineering, 1959-1999: research in microscale thermophysical engineering, administration, consultant to industry; vice chancellor for research, 1983-1985; UC Irvine, executive vice chancellor, 1988-1990; Chancellor, UCB, 1990-1997: affirmative action, athletics, focus on students, response to disaster, fundraising, state budget and retirement issues, town-gown relationships, excellence through diversity in faculty, staff, and students. Includes two interviews with Di-Hwa Tien, spouse of chancellor.

Introduction by Norman Tien, Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, UC Davis.

Interviewed 1997-1999 by Harriet Nathan for the University History Series, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Regional Oral History Office, on behalf of future researchers, wishes to thank the Office of the Chancellor, University of California, Berkeley for its generous support of this oral history of Chang-Lin Tien.
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PREFACE

When President Robert Gordon Sproul proposed that the Regents of the University of California establish a Regional Oral History Office, he was eager to have the office document both the University's history and its impact on the state. The Regents established the office in 1954, "to tape record the memoirs of persons who have contributed significantly to the history of California and the West," thus embracing President Sproul's vision and expanding its scope.

Administratively, the new program at Berkeley was placed within the library, but the budget line was direct to the Office of the President. An Academic Senate committee served as executive. In the four decades that have followed, the program has grown in scope and personnel, and the office has taken its place as a division of The Bancroft Library, the University's manuscript and rare books library. The essential purpose of the Regional Oral History Office, however, remains the same: to document the movers and shakers of California and the West, and to give special attention to those who have strong and continuing links to the University of California.

The Regional Oral History Office at Berkeley is the oldest oral history program within the University system, and the University History Series is the Regional Oral History Office's longest established and most diverse series of memoirs. This series documents the institutional history of the University, through memoirs with leading professors and administrators. At the same time, by tracing the contributions of graduates, faculty members, officers, and staff to a broad array of economic, social, and political institutions, it provides a record of the impact of the University on the wider community of state and nation.

The oral history approach captures the flavor of incidents, events, and personalities and provides details that formal records cannot reach. For faculty, staff, and alumni, these memoirs serve as reminders of the work of predecessors and foster a sense of responsibility toward those who will join the University in years to come. Thus, they bind together University participants from many eras and specialties, reminding them of interests in common. For those who are interviewed, the memoirs present a chance to express perceptions about the University, its role and lasting influences, and to offer their own legacy of memories to the University itself.

The University History Series over the years has enjoyed financial support from a variety of sources. These include alumni groups and individuals, campus departments, administrative units, and special groups as well as grants and private gifts. For instance, the Women's Faculty Club supported a series on the club and its members in order to preserve insights into the role of women on campus. The Alumni Association supported a number of interviews, including those with Ida Sproul, wife of the President, and athletic coaches Clint Evans and Brutus Hamilton.

Their own academic units, often supplemented with contributions from colleagues, have contributed for memoirs with Dean Ewald T. Grether, Business Administration; Professor Garff Wilson, Public Ceremonies; Deans Morrough P. O'Brien and John Whinnery, Engineering; and Dean Milton Stern, UC Extension. The Office of the Berkeley Chancellor has supported oral history memoirs with Chancellors Edward W. Strong, Albert H. Bowker, and Ira Michael Heyman.

To illustrate the University/community connection, many memoirs of important University figures have in turn inspired, enriched, or grown out of broader series documenting a variety of significant California issues. For example, the Water Resources Center-sponsored interviews of Professors Percy H. McGaughey, Sidney T. Harding, and Wilfred Langelier have led to an ongoing series of oral histories on
California water issues. The California Wine Industry Series originated with an interview of University enologist William V. Cruess and now has grown to a fifty-nine-interview series of California's premier winemakers. California Democratic Committeewoman Elinor Heller was interviewed in a series on California Women Political Leaders, with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities; her oral history was expanded to include an extensive discussion of her years as a Regent of the University through interviews funded by her family's gift to The Bancroft Library.

To further the documentation of the University's impact on state and nation, Berkeley's Class of 1931, as their class gift on the occasion of their fiftieth anniversary, endowed an oral history series titled "The University of California, Source of Community Leaders." The series reflects President Sproul's vision by recording the contributions of the University's alumni, faculty members and administrators. The first oral history focused on President Sproul himself. Interviews with thirty-four key individuals dealt with his career from student years in the early 1900s through his term as the University's eleventh President, from 1930-1958.

Gifts such as these allow the Regional Oral History Office to continue to document the life of the University and its link with its community. Through these oral history interviews, the University keeps its own history alive, along with the flavor of irreplaceable personal memories, experiences, and perceptions. A full list of completed memoirs and those in process in the series is included following the index of this volume.

Lisa Rubens, Series Director  Richard Cándida Smith, Director
University History Series  Regional Oral History Office
May 2004  

Regional Oral History Office
University of California
Berkeley, California
INTRODUCTION by Norman C. Tien
From Chang-Lin Tien’s memorial service, November 2002

Our family would like to express its sincere gratitude to all of you for coming to this memorial service for my father. And we would like to thank you for all the generous support and warm thoughts that you have given us. It has been overwhelming. Never does it cease to amaze us, the number of people he has touched and the tremendous respect and love that you have for him. Today, our family would like to present a collage of remembrances about my dad. My sisters and my children will be up here soon to give their thoughts and memories.

Week before last, our friend, journalist Sam Chu Lin, asked me what I felt was my father’s legacy. My first response was “Wow, what a difficult question.” As you already know, my father was a giant who straddled so many different worlds; academia and the business world, East and West; fundraising with the powerful while helping the disadvantaged and working for affirmative action. The magnitude of his impact on people and society is unique indeed; people like him come along only so rarely. So I reflected on who he was and what helped make him the person and the father he was.

People are greatly influenced by the times they live in and their experiences. The sixth of eight children, my father grew up in the tumultuous setting of China in the 1930s and 40s. Amongst war and revolution, his family alternated from elite comfort to refugee status. His father, who was a banker and a government official, passed away when my father was a freshman in college. From all these experiences was forged a person of great strength with a drive and energy to make the world a better place in which to live, and who was able without fear to stand by his principles.

Coming here to America, he then encountered the segregation in the South, and we have heard the impact that had made on him. He was a young man in a new country, and when he came to Berkeley, he was still growing as a person. Soon after he arrived here came the Free Speech Movement and the Vietnam War. These created a climate where one questioned traditional thinking and encouraged different perspectives. I remember my father used to say that when he first arrived in the U.S., he was very closed-minded about the China versus Taiwan issue. At that time he said he would fight anyone that said anything negative about the Nationalist government on Taiwan. Over time, however, he gained a broader, more open perspective on the issue and built a strong relationship on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. Part of this perspective came from spending time at the East Asian Studies Library where he would go every day to read the Chinese newspapers and magazines. He told me that it was important to read all the papers so that one can learn the different sides of an issue, and then you can make your own judgment. Those years made him a more open-minded, tolerant, and global individual. All the way until the end, my dad was constantly striving to better himself, constantly growing on a continuous road of discovery.

All this is why Berkeley was such a special place to him. Berkeley helped make him the person who he became, and as result he was willing to give so much back to the university. My sister recalled the other day how he would pick up trash he noticed when walking around campus. He loved this place with a passion. This was his home.

I feel enormously fortunate to have had him as my father. One of my father’s greatest strengths had been his bicultural nature, making him as comfortable on the streets of Shanghai as he was on the sidelines of a football field. Though he spent the majority of his life in America, he had a deep pride in his Chinese heritage. And this pride is something he constantly stressed to his “ABC” (American-Born Chinese) children, and for which I am forever grateful. It was not about going through the exercise of sending us to Chinese School on weekends--which we didn’t do--but the mindset and the attitude of being proud of that word “Chinese” in front of American. In fact, for him raising us was never about having to do this or to do
that. It was about becoming a strong and secure individual, proud of whom you are. Ever the supremely confident optimist, he knew that the rest would take care of itself. He never told us that we should go into a particular profession. His philosophy was in fact “choose whatever you want to be, as long as you give it your best, you will be successful.” And we knew that he would be proud and supportive.

However, when I did enter the academic profession, I did sense a little more excitement from him. There was a pride in his eyes and it made me happy. After all, as has been described earlier, academia was so dear to his heart. As for me, how could anyone ask for a better mentor and friend? We talked almost every day, and this is something I sorely miss.

Something else he stressed when I was growing up was the importance of helping the community--of the nobleness of giving. I once heard Chancellor Berdahl make a statement about striving “to be the best of all, in order to give to all.” That phrase is my father.

Though we all miss him, and at the age of sixty-seven, there could have been so many more fruitful years, I take solace in that he was able to see, with pride, his children embark on their careers and families and to have had the joy of being with his grandchildren.

So we get back to the question of his legacy. I think that it lives on in the hearts of each of us and of the many people he inspired in so many ways. Whatever aspect of my father’s life has touched you and inspired you is a living expression of that legacy.
INTerview HISTORY--Chang-Lin Tien

When Berkeley’s seventh chancellor, Chang-Lin Tien, agreed to provide his memoir for the Regional Oral History Office’s University History Series, it was clear that his story would fill in a rich and significant part of the record, for many reasons. He was an award-winning and creative leader in his professional field of mechanical engineering, focused on thermal science, a devoted teacher, researcher, and writer, and increasingly a leading citizen of the world.

He came to the United States as a penniless scholarship immigrant from Taiwan, with a limited grasp of the English language. Nevertheless, his love of learning, remarkable abilities, and energy sent him up the academic ladder at an early age. He became an eloquent and effective supporter of UC Berkeley, its faculty, staff, students, alumni, and mission, from acting assistant professor of mechanical engineering, 1959-1960, to Berkeley’s Chancellor, 1990-1997. He adopted watchwords for both the academic and athletic worlds: “Excellence Through Diversity,” and “Go Bears.” A devoted fan of all sports, he gladly attended games to cheer the team and often to talk with the spectators, usually the athletes’ parents, who also sat through the contests, often late at night.

Despite many invitations to accept appointments elsewhere, he chose to remain at Berkeley, with one exception: in 1988, the Irvine campus brought him in as Executive Vice Chancellor under Jack Peltason, but two years later he was summoned back to his Berkeley home as Berkeley Chancellor. He never gave up his commitment to the education of his students. Regardless of workload, one hour each day found him strolling around the campus, and attracting students to walk and talk with him. Sometimes they would sit together on Wheeler Hall steps, and students would hand him notes about suggested improvements. He read them all, and was able to put a number into effect.

When it was time to set a schedule for his interviews, his successor, Chancellor Robert Berdahl, continued the tradition of providing funds from the Chancellor’s Office, and the interviewer was ready with a list of possible topics for Chang-Lin Tien’s choice. However, it was far from clear when in his commitments, responsibilities, and travels there would be time and place for the interviews. It was the indispensable Nancie P. Hughes of the Chancellor’s Office who kept track of where in the world he would be at any given time, and for how long. Her computer found the few one and two-hour openings in Berkeley time, and she quickly filled them with an “oral history hold,” so that we could gather together the chancellor, the tape recorder, and the interviewer, and get the tapes rolling.

The first interview was held October 14, 1997. There were thirteen sessions in all, filling twenty-four tapes. Most of the sessions were in Etcheverry Hall where he would arrive punctually, tea glass in hand and ready to go. Each time he almost bounced into the room, full of energy and good cheer. As a campus man, he usually wore a blue and gold v-neck sweater, a Bear’s image somewhere, and occasionally a rooter’s cap. When he chose a topic from the list, it was his style to say, “Good, now you remind me. Very good.” As he settled in, he would compliment the interviewer on assembling all the necessary elements, including extra tapes. Then despite the multiple meetings and phone calls that awaited him, he concentrated fully on the event at hand, undeterred by his red-eye flight from another continent, and ready to keep a full schedule at Berkeley.

Chancellor Tien chose to discuss virtually all the suggested topic areas and answer questions, stated or implied. Often, he would complete the thought, and then present a succinct summary, a method possibly developed through years of teaching. A good raconteur, he spoke readily and easily, often with a smile, but with deep feeling on such issues as the need to make the campus welcoming to freshmen and other newcomers, and the urgency of achieving diversity in student admissions, and in faculty and staff hiring. He insisted on integrity in all university dealings from pay and perquisites at all levels to the recruitment of
student athletes. He was alert to the dangers of conflict of interest, and determined to protect and maintain the image of the university as one of integrity in all its dealings. Despite his tightly organized schedule, self-imposed workload, drive to be on the cutting edge of his profession, and continual commitment to serve as a guide to his students, he never appeared to feel pressure.

Chancellor Tien held himself to a rigorous courtesy. He avoided criticising individuals when discussing difficult decisions and matters of disagreement. He consistently separated the person from the issue and spoke of his respect for, and often sustained friendship with, individuals with whom he disagreed. He saw problems as opportunities, focusing on what he judged to be the best for the university, and on that basis took his stand.

During his chancellorship, he was well-treated by the media as he explained the university’s goals and accomplishments. He was present at virtually every campus event and understood when not to be present. The latter decision came into play after he retired as chancellor. As he said, the campus had one chancellor; Robert Berdahl was that person, and he himself was not. He stayed away from campus appearances for a year, in accord with his views of propriety, and as a courtesy to his successor.

After he retired as chancellor, Chang-Lin Tien resumed his teaching and professional activities as the record showed growing lists of awards, honors, and celebrations in his honor. His professional publications showed Chang-Lin Tien either as the leading writer or increasingly the name of of his collaborators, often students, as leaders, all with evidence of worldwide acclaim. Lists are included elsewhere in this volume.

Chancellor Tien had completed the thirteenth and final interview on June 25, 1999; he was diagnosed with a brain tumor in September, 2001, and died on October 29, 2002, at the age of sixty-seven. His family came forward to help in details of completing the memoir. Norman Tien stepped into his father’s role and performed the careful transcript review, usually done by the narrator. He also volunteered to write the Introduction. He, with his sisters, read for accuracy, and with Nancie Hughes corrected such details as variations in the spelling of Chinese names and places, and dates of events. His widow Di-Hwa had earlier agreed to provide a brief commentary, and courageously, with the help of Germaine LaBerge, did so, with a fine result.

This is a vivid account of Chang-Lin Tien’s many-dimensional and productive life in the challenging twentieth century.

It is a pleasure to thank leading faculty members and administrators for their ideas and contributions to this memoir. They include Earl F. Cheit, the late Clark Kerr, Ernest Kuh, George Maslach, and John Searle, for their time and thoughtful comments. Thanks and gratitude are also due such leading Berkeley staff members as Ray Colvig, John Cummins, Joyce de Vries, and Gerald C. Lubenow. Among these and other consultants, six emerged as especially crucial. They are Nancie P. Hughes of the Chancellor’s Office; Germaine LaBerge, an editor at the Regional Oral History Office; Professor Norman Tien of UC Davis, who became the family spokesperson, his sisters Phyllis and Christine, and the chancellor’s wife, Di-Hwa. Thanks also go to the many Berkeley students, staff, and faculty members who provided valuable anecdotes and insights, too many to be listed here.
The Regional Oral History Office was established in 1954 to augment through tape-recorded memoirs the Library’s materials on the history of California and the West. Copies of all interviews are available for research use in The Bancroft Library and in the UCLA Department of Special Collections. The office is under the direction of Richard Candida Smith, and the administrative direction of Charles B. Faulhaber, the James D. Hart Director of The Bancroft Library, at the University of California, Berkeley.

Harriet Nathan
Interviewer/Editor

December 2003
Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library
University of California, Berkeley
Regional Oral History Office
Room 486 The Bancroft Library
University of California
Berkeley, California 94720

BIографiЧАl INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name  Chung-Lin Tien

Date of birth  7-24-35  Birthplace  Wuhan, China

Father's full name  Yung-Chien Tien

Occupation  Banker  Birthplace  China

Mother's full name  Yuen-Di Lee

Occupation  Birthplace  China

Your spouse/partner  Di-Hwa Tien

Occupation  Birthplace  Beijing, China

Your children  Norman, Phyllis and Christine Tien

Where did you grow up?  Taiwan and China

Present community

Education  BS National Taiwan University, MS Univ of
Louisville, Kentucky; MS, PhD, Princeton University

Occupation(s)  Professor, Executive Vice Chancellor, UC I (1988
Chancellor of UC Berkeley (90-97)

Areas of expertise  Mechanical Engineering - Heat transfer/
thermodynamics

Other interests or activities

Organizations in which you are active

SIGNATURE  Di-Hwa Tien  DATE: 6/16/04
Regional Oral History Office
Room 486 The Bancroft Library
University of California
Berkeley, California 94720

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name: Di-Hwa Tien

Date of birth: 12-27-36 Birthplace: Beijing, China

Father's full name: Ru-Jen Lin
Occupation: Lt. General Birthplace: China

Mother's full name: Shin-Chou Wang
Occupation: N/A Birthplace: China

Your spouse/partner: Chang-Lin Tien

Occupation: Professor Birthplace: Wuhan, China

Your children: Norman, Phyllis, and Christine Tien

Where did you grow up?: China and Taiwan

Present community: Hillsborough, CA

Education: College graduate (literature)

Occupation(s): N/A

Areas of expertise: N/A

Other interests or activities:

Organizations in which you are active:

SIGNATURE: Di-Hwa Tien

DATE: 6/6/04
INTERVIEW WITH CHANG-LIN TIEN

I ANCESTORS, FAMILY, AND EARLY YEARS

[Interview 1: October 14, 1997] #1[1A]

Nathan: Good afternoon, Chancellor Tien.

Tien: Good afternoon. It’s a pleasure.

Nathan: Just as some background; over the years you have told your story at Berkeley and in other places beautifully and in a very interesting way. But this is an oral history, and perhaps you would like to talk a little more about why you did and thought certain things, what shaped you, what was influential in your life, how you became the man that you are. So this is a bit different from other accounts.

Consequences of Hardship

Tien: Of course, that’s a very big topic. You can trace all the way back since childhood and also the environment, especially for many people of my background, we went through very difficult and sometimes traumatic experiences. So I think that has a lot to do with what we eventually become and how we look at things. But some people, because of the hardship, cannot recover or they actually fade away.

But others who went through, somehow, in many cases because of luck or good timing, overcame many of those hardships. They became stronger. So I think that’s important to realize. I’m very happy. I’m a happy person, all along, always. I’m grateful for the opportunities offered to me.

1.## This symbol indicates that a tape or tape segment has begun or ended. A guide to the tapes follows the transcript.
and my family, and my life has been more happily fulfilled than I ever anticipated.

Nathan: That suggests that you might want to start back into your family, even your ancestry?

Tien: Sure. I was born on July 24, 1935, in a small city—but now it’s a big city—called Wuhan along the Yangtze River in China. It’s central, but on the southeast side of China.

Nathan: What was the river again?

Tien: The Yangtze River. In Chinese it’s called Long River. I think it’s either the third or the fourth longest river in the world. So the city of Wuhan was on the banks of the river. I was born there, but my ancestral village was perhaps only forty miles away from the city, in the outside suburbs. They called it Huangpi [spells] County. That’s my ancestral village.

Reunion, Family History

Tien: We went [back] there in October 1996. My whole family—that means my brothers, my sisters, all from Canada, United States, and Taiwan, went back all together; a family reunion in the ancestral village. Although I was born not in that village, my eldest sister and my brother were born there. That was a really emotional experience a year ago. Maybe I can comment on that.

We actually discovered our family tree can trace back all the way to 2,400 years ago when the name was Chen. The first Tien was given that name by the emperor. I even have this written down, so it can always be with me; for the 2,400 years of family history. The first generation of Tien started 221 B.C. The first generation actually had the family name of Chen; he was a government official and did some fantastic things for the emperor, so the emperor said, “Now I want to give you a new family name, and that’s Tien.” That’s 221 B.C., the first generation. So right now the Chen family and the Tien are originally from the same roots. We only became Tien in 221 B.C. Then we went through many generations, and I am in the 104th generation.

We have only five migrations over 2,400 years, all due to war or famine. Because of war and some natural disasters you have to move. In the old days people don’t move, and they always stay in the ancestral village. Only five times. And my ancestors moved to Huangpi, the county, only about 250 or 300 years ago, near the end of the Ming Dynasty.

The end of the Ming Dynasty, the beginning of the Ching Dynasty, they moved from another Jiangxi province, to the ancestral village that we talked about. Because at that time there was a big peasant revolution that killed many, many people, especially in Hubei, the province I came from. So that’s why my ancestral group moved to Huangpi. Most people got killed, and so they went to that place.

So we moved out about 250 or 300 years ago, at the end of the Ming Dynasty and the beginning of the Ching Dynasty. After about sixteen generations, it came to my great-
grandfather. He at that time was a merchant doing grocery-type stuff—dry goods, general store. My grandfather became a government official through imperial examinations. He reached the level of second or third grade, there are many levels. After that, he became county supervisor, with a city manager type, in Sichuan. It’s a southwest province. In fact, he was the government official, the number one or number two in the county in the area of Deng Xiaoping, in that county. That was at the end of the Ching Dynasty, at the beginning of the republic in China.

That was my grandfather. Then he died during his tenure in Sichuan province. In old times they had to ship the coffin back to ancestral village. My father was at that time already in high school. My grandfather died when he was forty-five, relatively young. And then my father at that time was either in college or high school.

Father’s Family, Education, Academic and Political Life

Nathan: Was he the oldest child?

Tien: Yes. In fact, he was the only child. My father had a tough time. His mother died when he was three years old, and then my grandfather remarried. The second wife became my father’s stepmother, you know. But my father thinks he became aware of things when he was four or five years old, so he actually was very closely attached to his stepmother. Very close. In fact, my father remembered only the stepmother because the original mother, the biological mother, died when he was three years old. Unfortunately, his stepmother also died in China when he was eight years old. He at that time understood things already, so he was very, very sad. That may have had some impact on him, and he really worshipped his stepmother and her quality was still in him: studying hard, being a nice person always.

But then my grandfather—at that time he always had to have another homemaker—so he had a third wife, and that’s another stepmother for my father. The third stepmother is only a few years older than my father. They don’t see each other that much.

Also, my father by then went to Beijing to study at Peking University, which at that time was very unusual, coming from a village all the way to go thousands of miles to Beijing, the capital of China, to study at Peking University. But then the stepmother had a son and daughter. For an old Chinese family, that’s not good. So there was a lot of fighting in the household, because my father was still the eldest son so he held tremendous power, especially when my grandfather or my great-grandfather was still alive. But once they passed away, then there was tremendous intrafamily fighting about how to divide the property and so on.

But anyway, my father went to Beijing and then came back. He was an instructor in physics. He graduated in physics. Again, he was a very good student. That’s another interesting thing, that during that period when my father was a student at Beijing University, just like Berkeley, it was the center of liberal thinking; student movements, and particularly the so-called May 4 movement.
My father was a participant in the May 4 movement. He demonstrated in the May 4 demonstration protests. In fact, he was on a blacklist as a student with more radical, extreme views. That affected him a little bit also. So when he came back after graduation, he came back first as an instructor in physics in several universities and high schools both.

Then he met a roommate in a faculty/instructor dormitory. The person later on became a major political figure in modern Chinese history. Actually it was an English man—K.C. Wu. K.C. Wu just came back from the United States after he got his Ph.D. at Princeton in political science. Then he went back to Wuhan, the city. First he taught English and also political science in the university. He was a single bachelor, and my father was married, but my mother and family stayed in the ancestral village. The two men shared the same room, so they knew each other. Mrs. K.C. Wu is still alive in Florida.

K.C. Wu in the early fifties became governor of Taiwan. In the late forties, he was the mayor of Shanghai. K.C. Wu gradually, in the early 1930s, moved into the political arena. He became the finance commissioner of Wuhan. Then he got his roommate.

At that time China was a relatively underdeveloped country. Someone with a Beijing [Peking] University diploma, even in physics, is still intellectual, so K.C. Wu got my father as a county tax assessor or collector, or city tax assessor or collector. My father since then moved more and more into the political arena. By the time I was born in 1935 my father already occupied a local high-level position as a government official, like a city assessor.

Nathan: At that time did people go through the examinations that you spoke of earlier?

Tien: Not any more, because that was the new republic. They abolished all of the old examination system, but credentials were still important. If you graduated from Beijing University, that means you are a very high intellectual, so it is easy to get along. They have a new civil service system, but it was not as well developed at that time.

**Affluence, Family Feud**

Tien: When I was born in 1935 my family was already very well-to-do. My father had a private automobile provided by the municipal government and also a chauffeur. We had a family chef and butlers and so on. My sisters and brothers and myself all had our own nannies. Everybody had one, and we had a big family. By then there were seven children; I’m number six, in a family of eight total. I have two younger brothers, two sisters, and I’m number six. So we were a very nice family at that time, except we had some family fights between my father and stepmother and half brother and half sister—mainly the half brother.

In old China women did not play as much of a role. Sisters didn’t have the same kind of influential role in the family as brothers. So my father and half brother—younger by about sixteen or seventeen years because my stepgrandmother was only a few years older than my father—had big fights.
Even when I was young, you have to look at this as an old family feud: very uncivilized. For instance, one day my mother said my uncle may try to poison us, so we all have to hide somewhere. So I actually went to my nanny’s home. Each got away so that my uncle could not locate us and do damage to us. So I still have that vague impression I went to my nanny, my mama. She was a tailor’s wife. She came to our house as a nanny.

I grew up, but still in general it was very nice despite some family feuds. That makes them sometimes very tough, very heated. Eventually my father, because his career was doing extremely well, said, “I don’t want a penny from my ancestral fortune.”

Nathan: So the fight was about property?

Tien: Property, yes. Because we had properties in the city, in the outskirts, in the ancestral village. My uncle was very young. I don’t blame my uncle—very young. But some of the relatives on the stepmother’s side gave bad advice saying, “You can threaten your brother because he’s doing so well. He would be afraid. He’s much more vulnerable, because he cannot afford any public disclosure of his fights and so on,” because he was a public figure in the city.

So finally my father said, “I don’t need anything; you take the whole thing.” Even that was still not enough. My uncle sometimes said, “You have to support us. You have to give to your stepmother and your younger half sister and so on. You have to pay because we are young, we are small.” So this was going on.
II INVASION, OCCUPATION

Japanese Invasion and the City of Wuhan

Tien: But in the meantime, in 1938, the Japanese invasion of China, that was the precursor of World War II. The Japanese invasion of China in 1938. At the end of ’38 they occupied Wuhan, and we were actually staying in the French Concession. In old China there were many, many foreign concessions. But in Wuhan a very special place, those French, American, and British concessions already returned to the local government. So it’s different from other cities; only Wuhan. When the Japanese came to Wuhan in ’38 and ’39, my father was a government official. We had no protection of the foreign concession. We were in the old French Concession, but in the city of Wuhan all the old concessions had been turned over to local government before, so the Japanese came in and took the whole thing. Of course, my father’s life was in danger, being a Chinese government official.

Displacement, Chungking, Shanghai

Tien: So he went to Chungking alone. Because our family was so big, he could not relocate so easily. My father alone just escaped, and followed the government to Chungking, the war capital in Chungking. He went there because K.C. Wu also became mayor of Chungking. As I said, he wanted my father to be the finance commissioner of Chungking, because my father was in the tax area and so on.  

## [1B]

Tien: My father at that time was in the city of Chungking, the capital of China during the war. He went with the government. But when he was offered finance commissioner of Chungking, he actually had to think carefully. Eventually he turned it down because his family was all in Wuhan still. In the early phase of the Sino-Japanese war, life in Chungking was very, very tough. Especially in gathering together family, he worried whether he could afford to support the whole family being a government official, even in
a finance area. If you are not corrupted, then you don’t have means to live on an official’s salary.

Nathan: Did your nannies come with you? Were they part of the family?

Tien: No, at that time we didn’t move. But yes, if we moved we’d have to bring some nannies, but not all of them. Maybe only one or two. We had six brothers and six nannies and so on. So finally my father decided, a big decision, he said, “Our family should move to Shanghai,” partly to avoid my uncle, but mainly to relocate to Shanghai into the French Concession.

At that time, before Pearl Harbor, the French Concession in Shanghai was still regarded as foreign territory. The Japanese could not come in. So my father directed his assistant, some servants, a nanny and so on, my mother, my brothers, my sisters all moved to Shanghai from Wuhan to the French Concession.

**Family Reunion and Father a Banker**

Tien: Then he went from Chungking through Vietnam to Hanoi. That was the only way he could go through, from Hanoi he took a French ship from Vietnam, because it was French. He came that way to Shanghai to the French Concession family reunion. My father gave up the government job for the sake of family and moved to Shanghai.

Then he tried to rebuild the family. He joined a company, a bank; that’s how my father eventually associated with a bank. He started working; not as a physicist, not a government official anymore. Now he’s a kind of banker or business person. We had a good time before Pearl Harbor. Pearl Harbor was December 7, 1941, and he rebuilt from 1939. Then Pearl Harbor.

The Japanese declared war on the U.S., France, and England. That’s the beginning of World War II, and the Japanese took over the French Concession. They moved in. Our life changed again: my father was very afraid he might be arrested because he was connected to Chungking. His good friend and former boss was mayor of Chungking.

**Japanese Rule, Pressure to Join**

Tien: Also there was a lot of pressure for my father to join the puppet regime. In China there was a Japanese-supported Chinese government. Many of my father’s friends actually, some of them, joined it. So they all pressured my father, saying, “This is safe, you have nothing to lose. You’ll live much better. You’ll be like a king again.” They attempted to convince him. That was very tough.

My mother also was very firm. She said, “Absolutely you cannot join. You have to be loyal to your principles. The Japanese are the invaders; you cannot work for them.
People will say you are a traitor forever. The family history—.” That was very tough. My father sometimes felt that for the sake of the family he would sacrifice himself and join. They would give him a very high position, like a minister or cabinet member position, but my mother said absolutely not. Then we had a difficult time.

Nathan: At this time you were—

School: Singing in Japanese, then French; Hardships

Tien: I was in Wuhan until about four years old. I was in nursery school. I still remember we sang Japanese songs. My first singing was Japanese songs, because the Japanese already took over, so everybody had to learn and sing Japanese songs in nursery school and so on. But when we went to the French Concession in Shanghai, of course, no Japanese—from 1939 to 1941. But we sang a lot of French [laughter]. The French Concession in Shanghai was just like Paris: very beautiful, very fantastic. We lived in a very good section, and I went to school there, first grade and second grade and so on.

My father’s business was the banking business, but it was a very hard living when the Japanese came in in 1941 during the war. The Japanese controlled everything to support the war. So for all the people living under the Japanese, it was a very tight situation. I remember my mother, even including my brother, all had to go stand in a long queue, in a line, to get some rice. Rice was a luxury item. We usually didn’t eat rice; we ate like now in the States those hard, dark foods and so on. But even that was hard to get. You didn’t get any electricity, because there was no coal and no fuel. So it’s a very hard time, the end of ‘41, ‘42, and ‘43. The Japanese army came in.

I remember my sisters at that time in high school. Every day when they went to school they had to do some camouflage. They put on some bandages, they make themselves so ugly, so they won’t get raped along the way to their school; the Japanese army and so on, you know. Those are wartime [experiences]—very bad. I remember it very vividly.

I also remember every day when I went to school there would be a dead baby wrapped in grass or some newspaper and so on everywhere. Especially in winter along the street.

Nathan: Just left there?

Tien: Yes. Just left there. Dead babies or deserted babies. Every day we’d see them.

Then in 1945 we had the experience of American warplanes trying to bomb Shanghai. That was near the end of the war. I remember that. In fact, when walking to school they would say, “Oh, that was bombed just yesterday. It exploded here and here.” At that time I was already in grade school—in fifth or sixth grade.
III  WORLD WAR II ENDS, 1945, CHINESE CIVIL WAR BEGINS, 1946

Tien: Then in 1945 came the end of the war. I also had a very vivid experience. I was so happy, we thought everything was fine. My father at that time became promoted in the investment trust banking firm, so we are gradually doing much better.

Father as Shanghai Finance Minister

Tien: Then in 1946 K.C. Wu came back from Chungking and became mayor of Shanghai, the biggest and most important city. He came first, but after six months he persuaded my father to join him again as finance commissioner of Shanghai, because my father was especially familiar with Shanghai banking industry and so on. He said, “You can help me a lot.” That was in Shanghai, because my father had a very nice business already and so on.

My mother was not too keen on my father going into government, something like going into government here [laughter]. You will be confronted with media and all kinds of things. But my father felt so loyal to his friends. He and K.C. Wu were almost like growing up together, so he decided to join, and he became finance commissioner of Shanghai, and that’s extremely important because Shanghai at that time amounted to two-thirds of the gross national product of China almost. A big city—export, import, everything was going through Shanghai. My father also assumed the post of chairman of the City Bank of Shanghai, controlling the banking and finance.

Family Flees, Separated

Tien: My family became again very well-to-do. At that time, because my father was so busy, he normally had three chauffeured automobiles at home. I remember one was an old Packard. One was an old Cadillac, and one was a Lincoln. We had chauffeurs, butlers, nannies, a chef, everything. We lived like a king in Shanghai. But not for too long.
In 1948, in the civil war--Communist and so on--life had become very tough. My father learned of this from the premier’s experience, so he said, "We have to plan a little bit earlier. We may have to move again, to relocate," because he was a Nationalist government official. So he said, "We’ll move half of the family to--" at that time he was thinking of going to Chungking, the old-time capital. So I and half of my family--my sisters, my younger brothers, with one or two nannies, moved to the southwest of China. That was the beginning of 1949. So we went to the southwest. I transferred my high school from Shanghai to a high school in a very undeveloped area not too far from Guilin called Liouzhou. Half of our family moved there, so that way my father felt he could cope with any emergency without such a big family. You know, we had eight brothers and sisters and so on.

And then in 1949 everything went so fast. My father, at the end of April, left in a rush with the rest of the family. At that time they could only find an airplane to Taiwan. So my other half of the family, not including me, went to Taiwan because that was the only place.

Nathan: Did he want you all to go to the southwest together?

Tien: Originally it was planned, because the Nationalist government, Chiang Kai-Shek’s government, was planning to move the government back to Chungking from Nanking. That’s why my father moved half of the family to the other side. Then when everything came so fast in April, he went to the airport. The only flight he could get was to Taiwan, so the other half of the family went to Taiwan when my eldest sister and her husband were in Taiwan, so at least we had one relative already there. So my father went there. Eventually he went from Taiwan to Hong Kong to Guangzhou--Canton now--and then got us from Liouzhou. He went to take the other half of the family and bring them back to Taiwan. Originally we were planning to move to Chungking, but the war went so bad that Chungking didn’t look so safe anymore. Taiwan, because of the Taiwan Straits, was safer. My mother and some of the family stayed in Taiwan. My father alone went from Taiwan to Hong Kong to Guangzhou to get the other half of the family and bring them back to Taiwan. So that was very tough; we relocated so many times. I also wanted to stay in Shanghai.

Finding Classmates

Tien: This fall I spent some time at Cornell University on leave. I was a Cornell University lecturer in the fall of 1997. It's like Berkeley's Regents' Lecturer. So I went there.

I want to mention that over there I saw a professor, the department chairman of Materials Science Engineering, C.Y. Li. He was my sixth grade classmate in Shanghai, actually sitting right next to me. We had not seen each other since 1947. So fifty years ago we were classmates. Actually he didn't remember as well, because he came from Chungking in 1945 after World War II and transferred to my grade school for fifth grade and sixth grade. I was coming from my grade school from first grade all the way to sixth grade, so I remember very well.
I had been there for a long time. So this time when I mentioned it, I said, "You were my classmate in the fifth and sixth grade." He said, "No, I don't remember that at all. I was so new, from Chungking, I couldn't speak Shanghainese, so I felt so left out, and then I stayed there only for two years and then we went to Taiwan." Just two or three weeks ago we had a nice chat and I said, "What's the name of the grade school?" and he remembered. He said, "I even remember your father." It all came back. That was very interesting.

Then when I was in seventh grade—in China, seventh, eighth, and ninth grade is called junior middle school. One of my classmates in seventh and eighth and ninth, again sitting right next to me, is now president of Beijing University. President Chen. J.E. Chen (Chen Jiaer), a very famous scientist in China. He was my classmate in seventh, eighth, and ninth in Shanghai. I was appointed as chancellor at Berkeley in 1990, and he became president of Beijing University in 1995 or 1996. We said, "Gosh, what a coincidence." The best public university in the United States, the best public university in China.

**Crowding in Taiwan**

Tien: So we went to Taiwan after only six months in Liouzhou. My father came over to get us out, and so we went on a ship nearly like refugees. We slept on decks; there was no room. It was an open deck. We came to Taiwan, and my family lived with my sister at my brother-in-law's house for a while. That house just cannot hold so many people; very small. So my father bought a small house, because my father lost all the money—no fortune anymore.

I remember we lived in a place about twenty feet by twenty feet with twelve people in that area. One bathroom, and the whole living space is about 400 square feet. We children all had to go to school. We all had no place to sleep. We all slept on the floor. Even on the floor you cannot have all twelve sleeping at the same time; there was no space. So we had to take turns and so on. Again, when we were in Shanghai we were like Rockefellers [laughter], and then we were really like refugees. That hit me a lot.

**Mother's Family of Intellectuals; Her Role as Daughter-in-Law**

Nathan: Was your mother in charge of the household then?

Tien: My mother was a very strong woman; not formally educated. Very good you raised that issue. In old China, women have no place. My maternal grandfather was a scholar and passed the old examination system and became a tutor, a specialized, full-time tutor. For instance, the emperor would have a tutor. Every wealthy family will have a full-time tutor for the children in the family, because a wealthy Mandarin family had many children; they can raise so many children because there are so many servants. My maternal grandfather was a tutor for very wealthy intellectual Mandarin families. Some
of my maternal grandfather's students later on became famous leaders because he tutored them.

He died in Hangzhou, the famous place with the West Lake. He was on a tutoring assignment for a wealthy family; his student became the first Supreme Court justice in Taiwan. He died there, and then my mother——my mother's maiden name is Lee. Lee Yun-Di.

My mother's father died, my maternal grandmother, and my mother—only daughter—went again all the way to the ancestral village of Huangpi. They had to go over the ocean, and then go to the Yangtze River, through Shanghai, and go to Wuhan, and then went to Huangpi. My maternal grandfather and my grandfather were good friends. They were all intellectuals. They all passed the examinations—first grade, second grade examinations—so when they were very young, even before my mother was born, before my father perhaps was born—I don't know whether my father was born already or not. Anyway, they said, "If your child is a daughter, then they are going to get married." They would be the in-laws. So that's how my mother and my father got together. So my mother knew since birth she would be married into the Tien's. My mother, I think, married when she was about seventeen years old. My father was seventeen at that time, in high school. At that time, seventeen was older. Normally marriage may be even fifteen or fourteen in the village and so on. My mother moved into our family, but my father went to a missionary high school in Wuhan. So most of the time he was away.

### [2A]

Tien: My mother did not go to any formal schools, because at that time women were not supposed to go to school; but because my maternal grandfather was intellectual he taught my mother about basic Chinese ancient books and all the classics and so on. So my mother can read and she has tremendous judgment. She's a very strong woman. When she was sixteen or seventeen she got married and went into the Tien household; at that time she was the daughter-in-law. Really it was cheap labor. She had to do everything like a servant for my great-grandfather. A very strict rule for daughter-in-laws, for women. You have to work very hard, even when she gave birth to my eldest sister and my eldest brother. Once you have the eldest son, usually you become stronger. The eldest son in China is very important. But my mother had never told my father how much hardship she went through, because she didn't want to complain to my father, and my father then take actions in the household. So she was that kind of woman, very strong. She always tried to look at the larger picture and so on.

**Family Safety and Education**

Tien: My father, on the other hand, because of the May 4 movement with tremendous demonstrations, was blacklisted, and later he joined the government. Then he always worried about his kind of record, so my father actually in many ways was not as strong. My father was very meticulous and organized things well. He could see a lot of things, but was timid in taking strong actions, because of his experience before. And also he went through so many hardships, so he became much more conservative in life. He tried
to be safe for the family and so on. My mother was much more bold, in many ways courageous, taking strong stands. So when my father arrived in Taiwan, I remember once very well. It hit me very hard. One night I woke up and I saw my father was sitting on the floor and not sleeping. I said, "Dad, you should sleep. You are so tired. Don't worry. It will be okay." At that time I was fifteen years old. I said that I could work, I could sell things, I could even pick up garbage and so on.

"Don't worry; we can manage our family." He said, "No, I'm not worrying about that. I'm not worrying about food. You can always get food. I'm worrying about your education." He said, "I don't know how I can afford sending all of you to college." My brothers went to universities, my sisters, and then I went to senior high school, and my younger brother had to go to grade school. Some of them were private. We always tried to go to public high schools and public universities because they don't need tuition, and my family could not afford tuition. He said he was worried about that. He said, "Food is easy. You can work hard and you can get that. But if you don't get educated, your whole life will be wasted. That would be a largest failure as a father." It still comes to me. He was worried; he couldn't sleep, and his health deteriorated. He died in 1952. But before he died, in 1949 we went to Taiwan.

**Father’s Jobs, Family Property**

Tien: In 1950 K.C. Wu became governor of Taiwan. At that time my father went to Hong Kong, because my father found that he could not afford the family, the expenses, so he went to Hong Kong. He went to the old Shanghai Bank he was with. Part of the Shanghai Bank moved to Hong Kong. It's the bank he was with during World War II. He went there and got a salary, and he mailed money to Taiwan so we could continue.

Then K.C. Wu became governor. He asked my father to come back, saying, "I need your help." So my father came back and became chief of staff to K.C. Wu in the Taiwan government. Again, we became very wealthy. In 1950, immediately we got again a very flashy new car. We got a nice house that the government provided, and we got a country villa [laughter]. But not for long.

**Father’s Death, Son's Response**

Tien: In 1952 my father died. So from ‘50 to ‘52, you can see my life just went up and down, up and down, every two to three years from very wealthy and well-to-do to almost nothing.

When my father died—at that time in 1952 I was a freshman at the university—in the summer of 1952, I found my whole world just crashed. I have no future. We went through so many ups and downs and now my father died. Who is going to carry on again? We still had many sisters and brothers and so on. My mother never had an official
education, could not work, so what could we do? It was very tough. My grades in my sophomore year just dropped tremendously because life had no meaning to me.

I went through maybe half a year, and then I said, "No, this is a time that I really have to show my colors." My mother said, "If you don't work hard, you will disappoint your father." His whole life he said that nothing's important except trying to get a good education and so on. So I recovered. But at that time I also became very fanatic about basketball [laughs]. That's how I got into playing basketball. My grades were always in the top 10 percent, but I never spent a lot of time trying to get number one, because I played basketball a lot. My interests were not in grades alone.
IV HIGH SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY, TAIWAN

Nathan: How was the teaching and the curriculum in high school?

High School Admissions Exams

Tien: In high school it was very tough. In fact, when we went to the number one high school at that time in Taiwan—Chien-Kuo Middle School, it was called; now it's known as the best high school in Taiwan—I went there in eleventh grade. When we went to Taiwan, we didn't have any certificates, any transcripts. We lost everything. Fortunately, during wartime some people said I could just take examinations. So actually I jumped one year. Coming from Shanghai, I thought I could do a little bit more, because the level in Shanghai is usually higher. So I skipped one year. I went to take an examination without any transcript, any record, just purely by competition. I remember for the eleventh grade, as a transfer student, over 700 students taking the test. They passed only nine, nine out of 700. Maybe at that time I didn't have a lot of confidence, so I thought I would have no chance of getting admitted to that high school. That was supposed to be the best at that time, good teachers and so on.

So I didn't even bother to see the results. In old China they posted the results for whether you passed or not. They only listed the people who get admitted. They don't notify you; you have to go there. At that time mailing and everything was difficult, so you go to the school, and they posted that, saying you passed and so on, and then you go to register. I felt 100 percent I would fail. Out of 700 people nine students get admitted, so I didn't even bother to go see the posted results.

So I went to another high school to take the entrance examination. When I went to the other high school, one of my classmates from Shanghai, we were all refugees, said “Chang-Lin Tien,” he called me Tien Chang-Lin in China, “How dare you come here to take the exam? You already got accepted into the other number one high school.” I thought he was joking, to make me embarrassed. I said, “Don’t joke with me. I had no chance.” He said, “No, it's serious. By taking the exam here you occupy another slot,
unless you’re interested in coming to this one and not the other one.” The other one is supposed to be more famous.

I felt embarrassed, but I’m still not convinced. So after the examination—actually it's a two-day examination—after the first day of the examination at the second high school I went to the other high school to see the posted results. It gets very interesting. I went there and I saw there were only seven names posted for the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade transfer students. I didn't see my name. So again I was supposed to leave. And then someone knew me, and he said, "Yes, your name is there." [laughs] I had preconceived I would never pass, so I don't even see my own name. Somebody said, "No, you are right there." So that's how I got in. The second day I didn't go to the other school to take the exam, so I forfeited the other school exam.

The high school was a very good one. Very tough competition because it was in fact almost number one in Taiwan. It has a reputation to this day. Many of the government officials, the premier, the vice premier, vice president, all came from that high school. Like Tokyo University or Peking University.

**Tough University Entrance Exams**

Tien: After I graduated from that high school, I went to the college entrance examinations. Same thing. Very tough. If you don't get to the public university, then you have to pay private tuition. Even at that time my father was in a good position, and I still wanted to go to the most famous university. In Asia, the most famous universities are all public universities, not like in the United States. Even now, like Peking University and Tokyo University and Seoul National University, the University of Hong Kong or National Taiwan University. They are all public universities.

I took an exam at the National Taiwan University. Again, I had the same feeling: I have no chance, I blew it. I'll have to take another exam at a second college. There I took the exam for the third college [laughter] to be on the safe side: number one, two, three. But fortunately I got through all three of them.

**Mechanical Engineering, Old-Fashioned Curriculum**

Tien: I went to the National Taiwan University in mechanical engineering. The reason I went to mechanical engineering was because my father absolutely encouraged us to go into engineering. During wartimes you don't study arts, humanities, or social sciences; that cannot even buy you a meal [laughs]. You have to go to science, especially engineering, not even management at that time, only engineering. So the very best, everybody wants to go into engineering during the wartime. Engineering secures your job. The reason I went to mechanical engineering is because my father, when he was in Shanghai in the investment banking business, he invested in textile factories and machinery factories and
so on, but particularly textiles. When I was young I visited some factories, and saw the machinery.

Nathan: Did you like that?

Tien: I liked that. And my father encouraged me, so I went into mechanical engineering. That's how. But once I got in, the curriculum at National Taiwan University at that time was not that good. It's very hard to get in, and they've got the very best students to get in. All my classmates are all doing well, because they all had very high scores—like at high school, nine out of 700 can not go too far wrong [chuckles]. Same thing in the university: competition, entrance examinations.

But once you get into the university, we have nothing to do, actually. The curriculum was so old-fashioned. I had not much homework. It's not like in the United States now. The university is much harder than high school. In China it's just reversed: the grade school is very hard, high school is very hard, the university, once you get in, is not. Same thing with Tokyo University—

**Basketball, and American Movies**

Tien: Once you get in you can sleep. All the time you can snooze [laughter]. Very easy. We have a saying: "National Taiwan University, or Tokyo University, is so difficult to get in and so difficult to be flunked out." [laughter] Even if you don't do anything you graduate. So I spent most of my time playing basketball, and also going to movies.

I loved the cinema. I was the university's leading expert in contests about cinema knowledge, about Hollywood especially. I knew all the actors, actresses, directors, playwrights, music, composers. Those were my interests: basketball and motion pictures. My own studying was secondary [laughs], but I got by. I was still in the top 10 percent, because you don't need to do much.

Nathan: Did these movies give you an image of the United States?

Tien: Very different. In many ways you admire the United States. It's like a golden country, a country of golden opportunities, and plush, so advanced. You must remember that after World War II America is the superpower in the early fifties. So we just totally admired it. And of course many images were distorted; it's not real. But still in many ways people wanted to go to the U.S. for opportunities and so on, and that was in my mind. In Taiwan at that time it was relatively backward and still developing, and especially during the war.
**Part-time Tutoring**

Tien: My father just died after my freshman year, and now I had to do part-time work, so I did a lot of tutoring. I would go to families in the evening regularly. Every Tuesday I would go to one family, and every Wednesday I would go to another family, and that would give me some money for my clothes or for my books, and the other incidental expenses, and for playing basketball and going to movies and so on.

My family at that time again plunged into a very difficult position. My father was a very great person in many things, although he was a little timid, I would say conservative, but he was so clean. A banker turned government financial commissioner. A lot of people tried to buy him with huge amounts of money and things. He always said absolutely no. But when he died he had no money. When he was in power, he was in power in a government where he was very high up, so he had all those amenities. After he died my family plunged into a very bad situation, and my elder brothers tried to come to the United States. They had no money, so they all had to wait for scholarships or fellowships and so on. That was the time during the Taiwan period.
V POST-GRADUATE ROTC, MILITARY ACADEMY, NAVAL ACADEMY

Basketball, Writing

[Interview 2: December 18, 1997] ##[3A]

Nathan: So you got your B.S. at Taiwan University. I loved your description of “hard to get in and impossible to flunk out.” What next?

Tien: After graduation from Taiwan University, at that time we were required to serve one year in the Reserve Officers Training Corps. It’s like ROTC in Taiwan. I went directly to the military academy at that time in the south of Taiwan. It was in 1955, after graduation. First we had four months basic training. That was very, very tough, just like basic military training for the marines in the United States. That was of course forty-some years ago.

But fortunately, because I played basketball, they selected me for the varsity team for the military academy. Because of playing basketball, we had more leisure time for practice and also to travel back to north Taiwan to the capital, which was Taipei, to play, representing the military academy.

For four months that was very tough training, but in the meantime I played basketball. And also I organized some publications for the Reserve Officers Training, published some of the materials like some articles and so on. I was active in many of the activities.

Nathan: Did you write any articles for the publications?

Tien: Yes. I always loved some writing, even when I was in high school and in college I wrote small articles for newspapers about college life, about high school life, and so on. Some of them got published. I even got some money out of that because they pay for your articles. So I had that interest all along.
**Tutor, then Friend to Di-Hwa**

Tien: But during my year in the military I also started at that time to date my wife. At that time we were just good friends—my girlfriend. So any time when I came back to Taipei to play basketball or other activities I would have a meeting with my girlfriend Di-Hwa.

Nathan: Was she in college also?

Tien: She was still in college, because I think I mentioned I was her tutor for a short while. But we didn’t date. In the old Chinese custom it’s very strict. We could date only after we no longer had a relationship between tutor and student. I graduated from college and she graduated from high school and went to a college, and we started dating. So when I was in the military, that was when perhaps our relationship became closer, probably because the military training was very tough and we were separated. So both were very good.

**Assignment to Naval Academy**

Tien: After four or five months in the military academy, we graduated basic training. Then I was assigned to a naval academy. I went to another town, also in south Taiwan. I played some basketball again and also attended classes, and then we went on ships; so I was like an ensign. We went to the South Pacific, not Pacific as much, it’s in the Pacific, but it’s the South Sea off the China coast. That was maybe six months. We came back a few times and went to some outlying islands in the South Seas. In the meantime I also still did some extracurricular activities like what I mentioned before, playing some basketball and other things.

I graduated in my ROTC class—that’s one year—and I think I was ranked number one in the naval academy during the graduation for the class. I remember I got an award there and so on. At that time I also started to apply for graduate school in the United States.

**Benefits of Military Training**

Nathan: In ROTC and in your naval experience, what did you learn?

Tien: I learned a lot in the sense of how to discipline yourself. Military training does help you to organize your time. I remember very well when they start to wake you up with the trumpet, the reveille. In fifteen minutes you have to clean your teeth and shave and get your bed all in exact order, your clothes, everything, in fifteen minutes. If you were a little bit late you would be in deep trouble. Many of the penalties were very severe, so you learn how to plan your life. And of course they don’t allow you to have any leisure time; they always schedule everything to the minute. Very tiring, because of the training and so on. So overall I learned a lot about how to manage your time, how to allocate your time, how to do things more efficiently.
Also dealing with weapons: we learned how to use many different weapons, pistols and semi-automatic. In fact, I was the person carrying the automatic weapon. Each platoon has a person carrying automatic weapons. Some carry rifles, some semi-automatic. I was assigned to carry the automatic weapon. I learned a lot from military training.

Also I made a lot of friends, because they came from different universities, different schools. When we get together, we sleep all close together, not like in the U.S. Just like this [gestures] you sleep ten people, one by one, almost shoulder to shoulder. So I learned a lot about how to get along with people. Away from home, you have to handle everything by yourself. So that was really a good maturing process. Beyond that I learned about military jargon and so on. Navy-wise, since I was a mechanical engineer I learned about marine engines. Even some of the ships were diesel engines, so those things were very helpful for me.

Applying to U.S. Graduate Schools: Few Scholarships, Fellowships

Tien: At that time I started to apply to graduate schools. Almost all my classmates were thinking of going to the United States for graduate school. In the mid-fifties Taiwan was still very backward generally. It developed not much opportunity for advanced engineering. The economy was not as well developed as now. My family, after my father’s death in 1952, also became very poor in many ways. My two brothers went to the United States at that time. One went to Purdue and the other went to Missouri, ahead of me. They all went, maybe one year before me and two years before me. So I tried to follow them, because that was the best opportunity for us, for the future careers.

Nathan: And did they go on scholarship also?

Tien: It was very hard at that time to get scholarships. My brothers had to borrow money to come to the United States. When it came to me, my family simply could not borrow money any more, so I had to rely on scholarships. I applied to many universities, maybe fifty schools. I hoped for a full scholarship, because my family could not even pay the transportation costs. That’s very expensive. Fortunately at the time there was no application fee like we have now, because I could not afford the application fee.

The atmosphere in the United States in the early fifties, right after World War II, the U.S. was the number one country, the most powerful country, but also very internationally oriented because World War II opened a lot of Americans’ eyes about Asia and Europe both. Europe of course always had an influence in the United States, with immigration and so on. But for Asia, not that many immigrants, except some of the railroad workers or laundrymen or carpenters. In terms of graduate school many universities had few or no Asians. Also at that time there were not that many scholarships and fellowships like what we have right now.

There was no research infrastructure, because all the research expansion happened after 1957. The Soviet Union had Sputnik, and then the U.S. had the big expansion in research in science and technology.
One Offer: University of Louisville

Tien: At that time, there were not that many fellowships and scholarships, but I got one offer out of many, many universities, and that’s the one from the University in Louisville. I was very happy. It covered my whole room and board and tuition. I had no hesitation, no choice, in going to the University of Louisville. Many people now ask me, “How did you end up in that school?” Actually, I’m very grateful for the opportunity in Louisville. After my one year of ROTC training, my scholarship and also the support of my family, I had to borrow for my air fare and others.

Taiwan’s Civil Service Exam: Number One in Mechanical Engineering

Tien: I also took some exams because in case I didn’t have any opportunity for going abroad, I had to find some jobs in Taiwan, so I took a civil service examination. They had different categories in engineering, mechanical engineering, economics, and so on. I ranked number one in the whole country for the civil service mechanical engineering category. I was ranked the only one in the “superior” category. The rank was like summa cum laude and so on. So I was in the superior class. Sometimes they don’t have any in the superior class, but that year I was the only one. Even if I didn’t come to the United States, I would have had a very good jumpstart, because the post was supposed to be a very important kind of bureaucrat, you know, the civil service examination. I was number one in the whole country. Of course, I didn’t stay in Taiwan.

Atmosphere of Fear

Tien: Again, before I left Taiwan, I must say also that mainland China and Taiwan were still in war conditions. My family came from mainland China. The Chiang Kai-Shek regime was generally very suppressive in terms of different views and so on. In our military training especially—ROTC—the atmosphere was not good. It was like our McCarthy period. Everybody was afraid.

In my case I was very afraid that if I got tainted somehow, I would not be even able to get a passport to go abroad. I remember one night when we were in the military academy, quite a few of our cadets disappeared. They were just taken away. No explanation, nobody knew. Of course we knew many years later they were suspected of some activities not too good for the government, so they just shipped them somewhere without going through any trial or anything. So that had a lot of impact on me, how to be very careful. It was an atmosphere of uncertainty and suspicion and so on. This happened a number of times in the military academy and the naval academy. With that context, when I finally got onto the airplane for the flight out I felt free. I felt so strong.
VI FROM TAIWAN TO AMERICA, 1956

Charter Flight, Classmates, Alaskan Ice, Fighter Plane

Tien: Our airplane arrived in Seattle. There were no scheduled flights at that time from Taiwan to the United States, so we were on a chartered flight, the Flying Tiger. It was the very first chartered flight, even for them, to go to the United States. I think it was a DC-3, a very good propeller airplane. We stopped maybe four or five places, because you cannot go that far. I remember we stopped by Okinawa and then Guam and then Kodiak Island, and Anchorage. Then we arrived in Seattle. The interesting thing for me was that when we flew through Alaska it was so cold, and the airplane was very old and not equipped with many new things. So the ice got so thick, the airplane almost fell down. They had to come down to melt the ice and then fly again.

When we got to Seattle, at that time Alaska was still not a state; it was only an American territory. When we came to the continental America, the pilot of the chartered airplane and crew are all new, their first time ever. He didn’t know they had to inform radar or down below about the Air Force Continental Command. So when our airplane got into the radar zone without any warning, an American air force fighter plane tried to shoot us down. At that time we were still in the Cold War with the Soviet Union. We could actually see the American air force plane. Finally they saw the sign of the Flying Tiger and the emblems of Republic of China, so they radioed in and they understood a mistake was made [chuckles].

In my graduating class in mechanical engineering, National Taiwan University was the number one university for mechanical engineering. We had about sixteen of my classmates in that plane alone, all from mechanical engineering. So we arrived in Seattle. I almost knelt down to the ground to kiss it. I was so happy I was free, that I landed in a great place with opportunity ahead of us. Yet on the other hand I was very apprehensive of what was lying ahead.
Families’ Ruling: Ph.D. Before Marriage

Tien: Before I left Taiwan, several months before, we were trying to see whether Di-Hwa and I could get engaged. We were deeply in love. We were even thinking about whether we should get married, and then we would be committed, but both families said no. I must go to the United States and settle down and get my Ph.D. before we could get married. So there was no way. Both sides of the family said so.

We didn’t like that, and we felt we were so committed to each other. So the night before the flight leaving Taiwan, we dressed up and we went to a photo shop and had a nice picture of the two of us. To us it was like an engagement picture. I didn’t give her a ring, because it was too obvious; the family was opposed to anything. So I gave her some gifts, and Di-Hwa gave me some. The next day, of course, I left, and Di-Hwa was very sad and so on. At that time she was still in college. She was only a sophomore. She had just finished her freshman year.

When I got to Seattle/Tacoma, the twin city airport, I looked at the architecture. It was so beautiful. The United States—everything was open. It’s a very vivid recollection. Recently I went back, I’ve gone back many times and the airport was not what I thought it was. The same place after almost forty years. I was so poor, and I had borrowed a lot of money from relatives and friends everywhere. After I got to Seattle, many of my classmates who were on the charter flight transferred to different airlines; some went to New York, some went to Chicago or Los Angeles and so on. I had no money, and I had to get onto a Greyhound bus. Greyhound at that time was much, much cheaper than air fare. I got on immediately for Louisville.

Greyhound Bus to Missouri, Louisville, and Jim Crow

Nathan: Oh, that’s a long way.

Tien: Yes, a long way. All the way, about seventy-two hours nonstop—of course they stop for eating dinner and lunch and so on. I was young, so I felt very good. I was seeing the scenery. I went to the cafeterias to eat when the Greyhound stopped and so on. But when I got to Louisville—actually, first I went to Missouri because one of my brothers was in Missouri. But Louisville and Missouri are quite close. Missouri is in the neighborhood of Kentucky.

I saw my brother. The next day my brother took me on Greyhound to Louisville. He took me to Louisville, as an elder brother being in the United States for already one year.

When we got to the Louisville Greyhound station, it was very different from Missouri, because Missouri is not a Southern state. Kentucky was just below the Mason-Dixon line, so still in 1956 there was Jim Crow segregation. Immediately I see that everything is segregated: the lunch counters, drinking fountains, the washrooms, everything. That confused me, but also left a very deep impression on me. Human dignity was degraded.
## [3B]

Nathan: You were saying it was just degrading?

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**Life in the South: One Movie, Spam, Boiled Eggs**

Tien: Yes. To experience the Jim Crow segregation in the South left a very deep impression on me. I went to the university and reported for my fellowship, because the school year started immediately. I rented a small room with an American family next to the university. I could not cook, only sleep. I ate elsewhere. At that time I had to save every penny I could. Now looking back, I’ll talk first about my life there and then about academics.

I tried to save money. When I lived in one room, it still cost me too much. So finally I got to know two other Chinese graduate students. After one month we went to another apartment. It was a one-bedroom apartment, but we had three people living in that one-bedroom apartment. This way we could cut costs and we could also cook and not have to spend a lot. So that helped.

But sometimes we also had to eat outside, between research and other things, but I never ate in the school cafeteria because it was too expensive for me. I always walked about ten blocks to the black district. It was a very run-down area, but the food was much cheaper. There was a lot of soul food and so on. Whenever I went to eat, I always walked a long distance to go to some very inexpensive but not very good area. But nothing really affected me; I was penniless and just as poor as anyone. This way I could save a lot of money.

Nathan: Did they accept you?

Tien: Yes. Actually it was quite good. They regarded me like a guest. Foreign, international, and so on.

So that was eating. Never went to any restaurant. Never had any entertainment the whole year. I remember only one movie for the whole year. I went to see *Oklahoma!* It impressed me so much. That was the only movie I went to see. That was almost at the end of my stay at Louisville.

Although the salary was quite low for my fellowship, about seventy-five dollars, I had to pay some tuition and other things. Normally my monthly expense was about forty dollars. Rent was about fifteen dollars, and then twenty-five dollars for everything else: laundry and eating and so on. I sent twenty dollars a month back to Taiwan for my mother and my family and to pay back in installments some of the money I borrowed.

It was a good time, actually. I ate lunch meat every day in the laboratory. I still remember some of the Spam. But now I cannot eat any of that because my stomach will react. I ate a whole case full in one month. Then we bought some eggs, which we boiled in the laboratory. Every day the same.
**Experience: Segregation, Prejudice, Friendship**

Tien: Overall it was good, because I learned, even in a segregated atmosphere, the Southern people were actually very warm, very nice to foreigners, to any guests, very nice. They were even nice to what they called Negroes at that time, as long as they knew their place. They treated the Negroes—the blacks—like dogs, like people treat their dogs. They really had a lot of sentimental things with their servants as long as they knew their place. Like dogs. So I learned a lot.

At that time I went through many things. The first time I went on the bus, I had to go to the downtown, I didn’t know where to sit. The bus was segregated, with blacks sitting in back and whites sitting in front. I tried to stand next to the driver. He was very kind, he said, “This is dangerous. You should sit in front,” because I was a guest. But after that experience, I just felt the human dignity was so degraded. I never even rode on the bus any more for the whole year, even when I wanted to go to downtown, partly because I didn’t want to have that experience, and partly because I wanted to save the bus fare. So I walked one hour to go downtown and do some business and walk back for one hour.

Personally, I had also a more traumatic experience. Most professors were very good, but it takes only one to make your life very miserable. I had one professor who actually shared an office; you know, I was an assistant. I was what they call a “teaching fellow.” That means I still had to do some teaching assistant work. I sat in that professor’s office, in the corner. He was a very elderly gentleman from the South, so he could not change that view about very discriminating attitudes. He treated me very well except I had to know that I was lower than he was because I’m Asian. So he always called me Chinaman. He would say, “You Chinaman,” and so on. When I was a teaching assistant, he would tell the class, sometimes jokingly, he would say, “That Chinaman, he doesn’t know anything. He’s a sucker,” in front of my students. I was a teaching assistant to his students. I felt bad, but I still didn’t know what to do. I didn’t even realize that “Chinaman” was a bad term. So I very gladly accepted. I felt bad for two months.

They explained it to me, and finally I knew. That was very tough on me. I was facing this dilemma: if I challenged this professor I could lose the fellowship. If I didn’t have a fellowship, I would have to go back because of the immigration situation. And if I didn’t challenge him, I knew that was so bad. I just couldn’t decide. For two days and two nights I couldn’t sleep. I was so scared about my future and my whole life. Also my fiancée was still waiting for me. After many hours of no sleep and so on, you become a little bit unbalanced. Finally I made a lot of friends with lab technicians and many other office secretaries and assistants, and they were very nice to me. One day when they knew me enough they said, “You should not let this professor call you Chinaman.” I said, “Why? I come from China. It’s a very nice term. Maybe he likes me.” They said, “No, it’s a very insulting term. It’s not good for you at all.”

Finally I went to see this professor. I don’t say I’m a courageous person, but somehow I went to him and said, “Professor, please don’t call me Chinaman.” He said, “What’s wrong?” He spoke with a very strong Southern accent. That was very hard for me to understand sometimes; my English was so poor in the beginning anyway. I said, “I know this is not a good term. You should call me by my name.” He said, “No, I’ve been calling you that for two months and we work out very well.”
That’s the interesting thing: in the South at that time, as long as you know your place, you’re second-class or third-class, they treat you so well. But once you try to challenge them, they change. He said, “How should I call you?” I said, “Call me C.L. or Chang-Lin or Chang or Lin or call me Tien.” He said, “How can I remember those strange crazy names? Ding-dong, ching-chong--I cannot remember those strange names.” Now I got very angry and said, “Professor, if you cannot remember my name, that’s fine, but don’t call me Chinaman anymore.”

So after that I left. Since then, the next ten months, I stayed twelve months in Louisville, he never called me Chinaman, but he also never called me by my name. He also felt he must stand on his principles. He told me he could not remember those crazy names. But I learned a lesson: I didn’t lose my fellowship, I kept my dignity, and I still worked with him well, but I was also very careful not to offend him anywhere and so on. He still gave me some hard times when I made mistakes. So that’s one incident that really shook me tremendously.

There was one time I really cried. I was in the laboratory. I was a TA [teaching assistant] to a steam turbine lab. He was lecturing, and like in any laboratory class, the professor gave his lecture introduction and then he said, “Why don’t you come up and close the steam valve?” So I went up the vertical ladder. I closed the valve. When I tried to step down, I slipped a little bit, and then by instinct grabbed another line, which was a live high-temperature steam line, so my skin immediately burned up. I came down and was bleeding, and I could not tell him. I knew that if I told him, he would not say anything but “You sucker, you don’t know anything. How can you grab that line?” in front of the class. I was really sweating and shaking and bleeding. I put my hands in my pocket and waited until he finished his lecture.

Usually the professor would finish his introduction lecture and then leave and I would take care of the laboratory operation and stay with the students. After fifteen minutes I had almost fainted. I was sweating and so on. He finally finished and then he left. Still to this day, he passed away a long time ago, nobody knew. I finally told the students, “I will leave for five or ten minutes; I have to do something immediately.” So I ran to the clinic, like our Tang Center, and tried to wrap up the burns and so on. That night I really cried; this was so tough. I wrote to my future wife, Di-Hwa.

Those experiences make you strong. I feel sometimes you have to be patient and not to react even with tremendous pain. I think you have to always think of what the best way is; you have to consider all the conditions.

**The Positive Side**

Tien: So that was some of the highlights I had living over there. I loved the University of Louisville. They gave me opportunity, they gave me an honorary doctorate degree, I knew many professors. Just this one professor gave me trouble--maybe now looking back it was a good experience; it made me stronger. The other professors were so nice to me. One professor was very religious-oriented, a Christian. Of course, I had a Buddhist background. But he was a missionary person, so he always tried to give me a Bible, and I
remember he took me to see Billy Graham. At that time Billy Graham just came out. The Billy Graham Crusade was at the Hall in Louisville, a beautiful place. They still use that for some events, but now it’s so small. Again, I went back to the Hall to receive the honorary doctorate degree not too long ago, and the first time I saw the Hall I thought, “Wow, it’s so huge.”

Anyway, that professor was very nice. He helped me tremendously. Maurice Carson. I kept in contact with him after Louisville, and he went to Lafayette College. He was dean of engineering at Lafayette College. I even went to Lafayette College to see him. He was so proud of my achievements later on. He helped me a lot. He was also my master’s thesis advisor.

Limited Choices for a Major Field; Unique Curriculum

Tien: Now on the academic side, when I reported to the department they asked me what kinds of things I would like to major in. In mechanical engineering we have many different fields. I said, “I’d love to do textile engineering;” because in Taiwan and also in China, textile factories were very prosperous. My father, before he passed away, was an investment banker and other things, so he was very much associated with the textile industry. So I had this impression I wanted to do textiles. Of course I thought of any good area for any young person to go in, so my professor told me--Maurice Carson--”No, we don’t have any textile engineering. Maybe only two schools in the United States have textile engineering.” So I was a little bit disappointed. Also I didn’t know school ranking or anything; I thought the United States was a place of golden opportunity and everything.

He said, “What else would you like to do?” I said, “I want to do automotive engineering,” because of cars everywhere at that time. I thought that would be very good. Again, my advisor said, “No, we don’t have automotive engineering.” I said, “Then what do you have?” He said, “We have mechanics and thermodynamics and dynamics--.” I said, “All those are not my thinking in terms of a career.” At that time I was thinking mechanical engineering would be railroad engineering, automotive engineering, textile engineering and others.

He said, “Do you have some other interests?” I said, “Air conditioning.” Coming from Taiwan, where it’s very warm and humid, I thought air conditioning was very promising. He said, “We don’t have air conditioning.” [laughter] Same thing in the department here: there’s no air conditioning, there’s no automotive engineering. I didn’t know what was going on. I was so naïve, so ignorant. He said, “We don’t have air conditioning.”

Finally I said, “No, no, I have to do something related to air conditioning.” He was a very nice person. He finally said, “Okay, why don’t we do this: I’ll work out a curriculum, a course plan, and you write a master’s thesis, on air conditioning.” So I would study fluid mechanics, gas dynamics, vibration. So my master’s thesis was room air conditioners, you know, attached on the window, and their noise characteristics. At that time there was always a fan noise, which is sometimes not very desirable. How do you design the fan in such a way or arrange it in the air conditioner so that you can eliminate or reduce the
noise levels? That was my master’s thesis. I did it almost by myself. I learned a lot about acoustics and about fluid mechanics through that.

**Sole Day-Time Student; TA; Attending Various Classes**

Tien: At that time Louisville was not a very good top school. They didn’t have too many graduate students. They were all evening students. You know, we had many classes in the evening in mechanical engineering and not that many students, because it was a small school. It was a commuter school. I went back several times; I’m their most distinguished [chuckles] alumnus now. Again, just like many opportunities, since they didn’t have many classes in mechanical engineering, they didn’t have any of those students.

In fact, for full-time day students, I was the only one. They had maybe ten or fifteen part-time evening graduate students working for their master’s degree. I was the only full-time student. That’s how I also got my teaching fellowship, because they needed the TA help, and I was the only TA in the department [laughs]. That gave me a good opportunity, so I took many classes in mathematics, in physics, and even in chemical engineering, different departments. That helped me later on. In fact, I remember I took a statistics course offered in the mathematics department. Now I remember that book--the author was Albert Bowker [laughs].

Nathan: Wonderful.

Tien: Yes, 1957. I mentioned to Chancellor Bowker about that. His book just came out in the mid-fifties. I said, “You really taught me a lot already.”

**Applying to Other Schools, and to Industry**

Tien: I also took many different mathematics classes. That helped me later on. At that time I also applied to schools. After six months I knew this was not the place I could make a living [laughter] or do anything. But I was really thinking I wanted to get married. So I also applied to industry. I got offers from IBM. In 1957 the most important thing in IBM was electric typewriters. They had a very big electric typewriter plant they were just building in Lexington, Kentucky.

I remember I went to an interview, and again I was treated so well. I couldn’t believe it; they treated me with wine and drinks and dinner. For a poor student trying to save every penny, they treated me well in Lexington, so that gave me a very deep impression. I interviewed with a few companies. I did get an offer from IBM, and I was waiting for other places.

I applied to quite a few schools, I don’t remember how many. Since I already had been in Louisville, even though it was not a top school, my grades were all straight A’s--because
mechanical engineering did not have that many graduate students, but compared to mathematics and chemical engineering, any class I took I was always number one in the class. So I finally got accepted with a fellowship and assistantship from Princeton.

## [4A]

Tien: I applied to different schools for my Ph.D. One option was to go into industry and maybe go back to Taiwan to get some practical experience. The immigration office said I could do eighteen months in the United States for practical experience and then I would have to go back. I got some offers, and then I tried to think whether I should go for a Ph.D. If I couldn’t get any Ph.D. program then I would go into industry.

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**Accepted: Johns Hopkins, Princeton; Professors’ Help**

Tien: Then I finally got two acceptances, I remember: one from Johns Hopkins and one from Princeton. Both had unique opportunities. Johns Hopkins at that time had a very famous professor, Robert Long. He was in fluid mechanics. He offered me an assistantship. But also the reason I connected with Johns Hopkins was because I had one professor at Louisville, a very distinguished professor, who retired from Johns Hopkins—chemical engineering and industry—and then went to Louisville because he had a farm in Indiana. So he got a distinguished professorship there. He really liked me. I worked for him for about three months in my research. This is a different Long. He wrote a very good recommendation letter for me to Johns Hopkins, and the professor--

Nathan: Oh, Robert Drake? Bunnell? Somebody else?

Tien: Somebody else.

Nathan: Where is Robert Long now?

Tien: Robert Long is at Johns Hopkins. But I worked for another Professor Long, I forgot his first name, at Louisville. He was a retired very distinguished chemical engineering and chemistry professor at Johns Hopkins. I worked for him for three months on research. He really liked me, so he wrote a very strong letter to Johns Hopkins. That’s how I got accepted. Usually, coming from Louisville it’s hard to get accepted because it’s not a very top school.

Princeton, also very nice, because Robert Drake was the new department chairman at Princeton. He got his bachelor’s degree from the University of Kentucky. He was raised in Kentucky; he was a native of Kentucky. After Kentucky he went into the air force during the Second World War. Robert Drake is still alive. He came to Berkeley after the Air Force for two or three years. He eventually got a Ph.D. from Berkeley. That’s how I got to Berkeley. So he helped me tremendously. He got a Ph.D. from Berkeley, and he was an associate professor here. He was a very fast upcoming young star, so Princeton offered him a full professorship. So he went to Princeton as a full professor and department chairman.
He was trying to rebuild Princeton’s mechanical engineering. People coming from the South have a lot of feeling about their native land. So he always wanted to bring somebody from Kentucky [laughs]. I was from Louisville, and I applied to the school. My professor, Maurice Carson, my one nice advisor, my master’s thesis advisor, one of his very best friends was a professor at Princeton, so that person also helped me. I got an assistantship from Princeton. At that time I had an offer from industry, and I had Johns Hopkins and Princeton.

I talked to my brother--I have two brothers; they came here early--and I talked to Di-Hwa. Di-Hwa was still in college. Her family would not allow us to get married before a degree or graduation from college and so on. Then we said I should go for a Ph.D.

Between Johns Hopkins and Princeton, although Johns Hopkins’ research program was much stronger at that time especially at the professor level, Robert Long was very renowned; just maybe subject-wise I thought I should go to Johns Hopkins. But my brothers said, “No, Princeton has a much even bigger name, and they have much more potential, and they are a great university anyway.”

I finally selected Princeton. That changed my life a lot. Because of Princeton, Robert Drake and also another professor, Charlie Soo [spells]--they had a great deal of influence on me. So that was my Louisville period.

**Louisville Professor’s Master’s Degree**

Tien: But before I left I finished my master’s thesis. I was trying to get the department secretary to type it. To my surprise, the department secretary was typing another thesis. So I asked whose dissertation it was, and she said, “I have to type the other dissertation first before typing yours.” I said, “I’m the only full-time master’s student.” She said, “No, Professor Robert Zucker, I have to type his dissertation.” I was surprised because Zucker was my professor. I took three graduate classes from him at Louisville for my graduate study. So I thought maybe he was getting his Ph.D. Then I went to check, and we didn’t have any Ph.D. program. Actually, he was also getting his master’s degree. He was one of two professors teaching graduate courses even without a graduate degree.

The reason is Robert Zucker was a very smart guy and graduated from MIT with a bachelor’s degree. Then he went into the navy for several years and served maybe in ROTC and so on. After the navy he wanted to get a degree, but he also needed support. But with an MIT bachelor’s degree he could even teach graduate courses in Louisville. He was a great teacher. I took several courses, I think it was three, in my graduate program from him. He was getting his master’s degree at the same time as mine. That was very interesting. I kept in touch with Professor Zucker also. After his master’s degree--which we got at the same time--he was an assistant professor, and he even became an associate professor. He was a smart person with an MIT background. He went to Arizona later on, I think, to get his Ph.D. Then he became a professor at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey [California]. So when I came here and became more well-known in the area, I was invited back to the Naval Postgraduate School to give seminars and distinguished lectures, and I met Professor Zucker and also fellow students
together. That was a very interesting story at that time. Professor Zucker just recently retired, I think, from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey.
Painful Differences in Preparation

Tien: Then I went to Princeton. At that time I already knew a lot more about the situation. Let me first mention my academic work. When I came from Louisville, my preparation was so different. The universities were very different. My fellow classmates—at that time they were all from MIT, Brown, Oxford, Cornell, and Princeton, and other top universities—were much better prepared than I. I was hired as a research assistant and worked directly with Professor Soo. He came originally from China but got a Ph.D. from Harvard and then went to Princeton to teach for many years. He was a very creative person. He had a group of students who were quite good, and they were all highly prepared. I was the only one from Louisville.

So when we got in a group discussion, in the first few meetings—this is really true—I have to come back to the Louisville story—I was a teaching assistant in Louisville. In China we were not that good at playing with instruments and devices and so on. I had to learn how to teach students. I remember very well that we once had to measure a shaft’s rotating speed, like a steam turbine. We used a so-called strobetach. It’s a kind of shining light, and you can measure the speed with it. I couldn’t understand how that works. And nobody knew. And I didn’t dare ask that professor who gave me a hard time. So I must have spent one week every night until midnight in the laboratory trying to find out how this works. I went to the library. After many nights—I didn’t dare do that during the daytime; I had to hide my ignorance—I learned how to operate the strobetach, and then I could discuss it with the students.

So that’s the same thing when I went to Princeton; the same situation was happening again. We had a group discussion, our first meeting, and Professor Soo said, “You’re going to be working with me, and you have a great recommendation, and your grades are so good. I’m looking forward to having you join us and so on.” He asked me, “What textbook did you use in your graduate fluid mechanics course?” I said the name of the graduate textbook. He said, “No, no, no. Impossible. You mean maybe another title.” After that I immediately wouldn’t say anything. Apparently the textbook I used for the graduate course was even lower than the junior level textbook used at Princeton. So that’s why he was saying it was impossible. After that I wouldn’t say anything.
In a group discussion, when they mentioned something, I hadn’t even heard the term. I still remember Stokes’ Law. I had never heard of Stokes’ Law, and I took several classes in fluid mechanics. I heard so many terms—Oseen Approximation. All this is still very much in my mind.

**Engineering Library, Lectures, Catching Up**

Tien: I was jotting down the names, and then at midnight I would go to the library and check and see what Stokes’ Law is [chuckles]. So in my first few meetings I didn’t say much. I couldn’t say anything; I couldn’t even understand what they were talking about. I could only pick up some terms. I didn’t even dare to ask them how to spell those words. Again, that’s very interesting—working at midnight—because Princeton was a small college. Not any more. Each graduate student could have a key to the engineering library. You just open the library yourself and it’s all to yourself. You can borrow books; you just put down your name and so on, and you take the book out.

After about three or four group meetings, my professor said, “Chang-Lin, you haven’t said much. We know you are new and so on; you should not feel shy. Next time we’ll ask you to make a presentation.” I was in deep trouble. I pleaded with my professor, “Please give me a little more time. I’m busy.” I always tried to delay it so I wouldn’t have to reveal my lack of background and so on. Of course, all week I worked at midnight. At Princeton I usually went to bed at about five o’clock in the morning every day, and I would come back about ten o’clock to my office, and then I worked from ten-thirty to about four or five o’clock in the morning. Midnight was the best time for me, because I tried to hide many things I couldn’t disclose to any of my fellow students. Very frightening. I was scared; I had to hide my ignorance. But I caught up fast, and I don’t sleep that much.

But I caught up pretty fast. I remember Princeton at that time was very good. They were so free, like Oxford or Cambridge, so they didn’t have any homework. The professor lectures, and they assign things to you but nobody collects homework and so on. So you don’t need to do anything until the semester ends. In England they had one class. As Princeton had. But in between there was no homework, just lectures. You go there and listen. So that gave me a lot of cushion time. I remember in the beginning I didn’t spend any time on my classwork, because in the class I didn’t have to say anything. I was busy trying to get my research; I couldn’t understand what they were talking about. So I spent all my time on my research with the professor.

When we got to Christmas/New Year break everybody went home. Princeton is still that way. The final exam came after New Year’s break. I used Christmas and New Year’s to catch up in all the classes, reading carefully and preparing for the final exams. So the flexibility gave me the time to catch up, and I worked very hard. I would say sixteen to eighteen hours a day, every day, even when eating: when I was having lunch or dinner I was always reading something, my notes or my papers and so on. So I caught up very fast in that sense.
When I came to the first exam—again, this was forty years ago, I had a mathematics class, and the professor told us, “This is like a Nazi system. I have to give an exam and a grade.” [laughs] In the old system the professor didn’t have to give an exam and grades and so on. Everything is personal and small. But already by that time the American system was in transition. Princeton was starting to have more rules: they had to give final exams, they had to give grades.

Princeton at that time didn’t give A, B, C, D grades; they gave “excellent,” “very good,” “good,” “pass,” and “fair.” I remember I had one class where I got a “very good.” I used to get straight A’s [inaudible], so in that class I got a “very good.” So I went to see the professor—actually, I saw him only two weeks ago at Princeton; he just retired—and said, “Professor, how come you gave me very good? I thought I did very well in your class.” He said, “That’s it exactly. You did very well. That’s why I gave you a very good. You are the number one in your class.” [laughter] He didn’t give excellents. But on a transcript when you put very good and not excellent people will say, “That’s a B.” But that’s the old time.

Then I also went to another class—Professor Soo, my research advisor directly. He said, “We have a three-hour exam.” It started at about nine o’clock. He gave eight problems on that exam. After two hours I couldn’t even do a single one. It was so advanced and so difficult. Three hours later he came back from a class of about eight to ten students. He said, “Well, how many people finished?” I didn’t even do even one. We said, “This takes much longer than three hours. We can’t finish in three hours.” Then he said, “Okay, since you all couldn’t finish, why don’t you go on, and in the afternoon give it to my secretary before five o’clock.” Then he left. I felt relieved that I had more time. I didn’t even eat lunch because I couldn’t finish. I tried to finish everything. Close to five o’clock I maybe finished only two problems.

We went to his office, and the secretary said, “Oh, Professor Soo just left. I have to leave very soon. If you couldn’t finish before five, why don’t you just turn it in the next morning at eight o’clock or nine o’clock?” I was so happy. I did not sleep the whole night. Of course, I had something to eat, and I was prepared to try to finish. The next day I went to the office at about eight-thirty to give in the exam. Professor Soo came in and said, “How was the exam?” I said, “Too tough.” He said, “It’s not a tough exam. You should be able to finish in three hours. You are so good. How many hours did you work on it?” I couldn’t say twenty-four hours, so I lied a little and said, “Maybe five or six hours.” [laughter]

Nathan: Did you ever finish?

Tien: No. Even after twenty-four hours I still didn’t finish. I finished maybe six problems. Some of them were incomplete, just halfway. And I was inexperienced. He actually knew, I think, we couldn’t finish, but he used this kind of tactic to teach you that there is more than you know, and sometimes it takes a lot more than you thought you could do.
First Year Learning, Accomplishments; Marriage at Home

Tien: After the first semester I began to catch up on my research and so on. But at that time I needed to prepare my foreign languages because the oral exam was coming up. I had to finish my foreign language requirement: German and French or Russian. I chose German and French. Chinese didn’t count at that time. So I had to study German and French. My English wasn’t that good [laughs]. I had to study very hard. I used my spare time.

After the final exam at the end of January, I immediately went to intensively study German and French for two months. And then I went to take the French and German exams. I passed both of them. I didn’t study anything about my classwork, because they didn’t require me to. So I tried to postpone my written exam, until May, then I spent my whole time with my classwork twenty-four hours a day. So it was kind of hectic. After one year I passed two foreign language exams, five written exams in sub-fields, held my research assistantship, and then I went to the oral exams.

## [4B]

Tien: The reason I rushed myself, sixteen to eighteen hours a day of studying, was because I wanted to get married. I was so deeply in love. Every day we would write letters. At that time long-distance calls were so expensive. We would always write air letters. It was much cheaper. I remember it was only five or ten cents for international air letters at that time, but still it was expensive for me. We wrote almost two or three times a week. We wrote long letters and wrote small. Sometimes we were afraid of delays, so we numbered our letters so that I knew if I missed a letter, and Di-Hwa would know. We would communicate that way. I wanted to rush everything so I could finish my Ph.D. and settle down and Di-Hwa would come and we would get married. That motivation was so strong.

Oral Qualifying Exams and Questions on Thermal Radiation

Tien: So I went to take the oral qualifying exam. At Princeton there was a British system. No requirements except you had foreign languages, some written exams, no course requirements. So any time you felt ready you could take the exam. They failed you sometimes, but they could pass you. That helped me. I officially took only six courses, but five for credit—for pass or fail. Six courses for my Ph.D. at Princeton.

But I went to the oral exam, and the oral exam went quite well, except one professor came to talk to me and asked me, he had a prepared question; he did a lot of research. He had three sheets of paper. He said, “Question number one.” He read the question and I said that I couldn’t answer it because it was in a field called thermal radiation. At that time there were no books on that topic; it was so new it was not covered. Also, my major was heat transfer, and the major professor was Robert Drake. He was also department chairman at that time. He came from Berkeley and was well known. At that time, heat transfer was number one at Berkeley. That’s how he went to Princeton. I took heat transfer graduate courses from him. I did very well. So before the oral exam I went to
see him. I said, “Should I prepare anything on radiation?” He said, “No. I didn’t teach radiation, and this is so new. You don’t need to prepare radiation.”

So I went to the oral exam, and this other professor was Martin Summerfeld, a very famous aeronautical engineer. He came with these prepared questions. He said, “Number one. This question is about radiation.” Of course, I said that I couldn’t answer. Then he said, “Number two. Again, radiation.” I thought he couldn’t understand my English, so I spoke very slowly and I said, “Professor Summerfeld, I didn’t really prepare anything in radiation. Please ask me something else.” He said, “Question number three. Another radiation.” I was sweating, and I thought he must be deaf. So I spoke loudly now. I said, “Professor Summerfeld, I didn’t prepare radiation. Please ask me something else,” very loudly. He said, “Yes, I understand what you said, but question number four: radiation.”

I just stood there sweating and said that I couldn’t answer. I didn’t really want to argue anymore. I saw Professor Drake sitting there at the oral exam, and he felt very bad. He told me I didn’t have to study radiation. Of course I couldn’t say, “Professor Drake told me not to study radiation.” Then he said, “Number five: another radiation,” and “Number six: another radiation,” until question number ten. He prepared ten questions. I couldn’t even answer one. All the other professors—we usually had five professors; Drake was one, Summerfeld was another, and so on. I felt so bad. I was really angry. I said, “Why are you doing this to me?” I had been answering all the questions very well until the end when he gave me this junk. I thought that he was coming to torpedo me, to destroy me. He had no reason to do this.

After the oral exam they asked me to wait outside. I waited outside, sitting on the stairs, and waited for what must have been more than one hour while they were discussing inside. They came out, and they didn’t shake hands with me, so I felt in trouble. Professor Drake said, “We were very disappointed about your performance, but since you have done so well in past years so well in everything, we felt we couldn’t flunk you straight. So we want to give you another chance. A second chance. We want you to come back again, but you should still go on for your Ph.D. dissertation. At the proper time we want to question you again. We give you a conditional pass.” I felt so bad. This was just terrible.

So first Professor Summerfeld came out and shook hands with me and said, “Young man, I just want to let you know that radiation is a very important field. That’s why I asked you all those questions. I want to impress on you that the exam is not just questioning; it’s teaching. I want to teach you what’s in line in the future. I don’t know anything about radiation. That’s why I wrote down everything, but I don’t know that much. But I knew it would be a very important field. That’s why I want to impress on you, you will never forget that radiation is so important in the field.” But I was so young, I was so angry at him. Of course I couldn’t do anything; just in my mind I swore that I would never touch radiation for my whole life. I felt he was just trying to give me trouble. Of course it turned out to be that I am the world’s leading expert in radiation [laughter]. I came back later on. I was devastated, very depressed. My professor, Professor Charlie Soo, tried to comfort me. He said, “Well, you show a lot of potential, but you should have studied some radiation. That’s just embarrassing that you couldn’t even answer even one question.” Professor Soo did not know that Bob Drake told me not to study it.
Later on, Soo told me that in their deliberation Bob Drake was trying to help me. He was very skillful. Later on they told me this. Professor Drake had said, “I was so disappointed in Chang-Lin Tien. He couldn’t even answer one question on radiation. You cannot pass him on this.” But they did a turnaround. He said, “But he had done so well. He showed so much creativity and potential for such a young person.” I was only twenty-two years old. He said, “If we failed him, it would be such a devastation. He may not recover, for such a young person.” So they decided, “Well, considering all this, maybe we should give him a conditional pass and give him an opportunity to prove himself.” And of course he put it in such a way that everybody said, “Okay, okay.” That’s how I got through. It was just remarkable, considering this kind of turnaround.

I don’t know whether we should continue more on this.

Nathan: Maybe talk a little bit about how you finally came to deal with radiation, if you have time for that?

Tien: Okay, we’ll just finish the radiation chapter. Princeton—I would still like to talk about my living and my many experiences and learning at Princeton. But let me just finish the radiation part.

So I tried not to go into radiation. I did my dissertation and I started to do original research, and in a few months I showed it to all the professors. I applied to many schools. I also applied to industry; I got very good offers from industry. I thought I might come back—but that’s a long story. I’ll just talk about radiation.

**Acting Assistant Professor, Berkeley, and the Push to Radiation**

Tien: I came to Berkeley, reporting to Professor Ralph A. Seban. He was my immediate boss and division chairman, and I reported to him. It so happened that he was Professor Drake’s advisor. That’s how I came to him. There were many interesting things.

The first day I reported to Ralph Seban he said, “What do you want to work on?” In fact, he also told me “Don’t buy a house.” He said, “You are not established.” Professor Seban is a very strict character. He passed away only three years ago, and he was very strict. “Don’t buy a house. We don’t know how you will perform here.” I came here as an acting assistant professor. He said, “We’ll try to see how you are working out. Get an apartment.” At that time I felt it wasn’t very friendly [laughter]. But that was Seban.

I’ve been very grateful to him for many years. Then he asked me, “What do you want to work on?” I knew what he was doing, and I wanted to work on that. He said, “No, that’s no good.” That was his own field. Already mature, not on the cutting edge. I said, “No, no, I want to work on that.” Then he said, “Well, you really shouldn’t work on that.” So I said, “Then what do you want me to work on?”

He said, “We actually hired you to work on radiation.” [laughter] It was like fate; you can never escape it. I argued with him. I said, “No, I want to work on this three-dimensional boundary layer flow.” It’s a fluid mechanics thing. He said, “No, that’s not
that good. You shouldn’t work on that at all. You should work on radiation.” I knew I
didn’t have any bargaining chips as an acting assistant professor. I said, “No, no. Why
don’t I put in some time working on radiation but also I’ll work on some of my own
boundary layer flow?” Being a senior professor he didn’t want to discourage my only
initiative.

But looking back, all this experience was just superb. Sometimes, being young, you have
to learn from your own mistakes. You have to try something and so on. After that, I
found radiation became so important. After a few years I gave up my boundary layer
flow [laughter]. I still had some chances to write papers, but I found it wasn’t worth my
time to do some old research. So I worked on radiation, and I became famous on my
radiation work. Then Professor Summerfeld, he passed away two years ago, was always
laughing, “See how I made you the world’s leading expert? You should remember I gave
you that hard time.” At that time I didn’t think that way [chuckles].

Nathan: That’s a marvelous story.

Tien: I learned a lot.
Princeton Living Quarters, Housemates

[Interview 3: January 15, 1998] ##[5A]

Tien: I’d like to mention two things about Princeton. First about my Princeton life. I was so poor. When I first went to Princeton I lived in an attic. I couldn’t even stand up because of a very low ceiling, but it was inexpensive; that’s why I went there. That was a third-floor attic. On the East Coast there are many old houses, and this was one of the very old houses. The landlord kept the second floor closed because that was the owner’s parents’ living quarters. Being traditional, they kept it intact, but nobody ever went to the second floor. The owner lived on the first floor. They kept the second floor rooms exactly the same as when the parents lived there before.

The third floor was the attic, and I lived there. But in the attic there was no washroom or bathroom; only the second floor had one. So I had to go to the second floor. I remember when I was young I always was told many ghost stories and so on, so I was very scared in many ways, especially during the night if I had to go to the washroom or the bathroom. I had to come down to the second floor, and nobody was there, it was the deceased parents’ living quarters and so on. There were even rumors that there were ghosts and so on. When you become very poor, penniless, you take whatever opportunity you have.

Nathan: Could you cook?

Tien: No. Just a room. Anyway, at that time my whole effort was studying, so I didn’t want to spend time cooking. I just ate whatever I could get to save time. I lived there for about nine months, and then I went to another house. During the non-rush time in school, the cost came down in housing, because many students had already settled and there wasn’t much demand. So I chose after six or seven months, in a quiet period, to move to another place even less expensive. That was very close to my department, only one block. The only interesting thing was that again it was an old house—Princeton is a very old town. The owner’s husband—this was a landlady—died, and she kept the first floor, the front portion, intact. Nobody could go in. She lived on the second floor, but in order to get some income she rented out some of the small rooms.

I got my own room, and then the other two rooms were for the physically disabled, plus also a midget couple. They were maybe two or three feet tall. That’s why the rooms could get so inexpensive. But in this case I also shared the kitchen with the midgets and the physically disabled people. Actually, many people find this a little difficult to live with that kind of environment, but I found it was like a social lesson for me: how to live with people very unfortunate. We shared the same kitchen. I didn’t want to spend time cooking, so I would just eat and use the icebox and so on.
So I really spent like eighteen hours a day studying, including when I was eating at mealtimes, I was always studying. Normally I would go to the office between ten and ten-thirty in the morning, and then work through. I wouldn’t eat breakfast, but I would eat lunch or brunch, and I would eat dinner. Then I would go back to the office and work until three or four or five o’clock in the morning.

Nathan: Do you still like to keep those hours?

Tien: No. Normally I go to bed between one o’clock and two o’clock in the morning, and I get up about seven now. But at that time I usually didn’t go to my room until four or five o’clock in the morning. The reason is that the midnight time was the best time for studying. It was so quiet, nobody would bother me, and I could concentrate from night until early in the morning, about four or five hours. Then I would go to my room. It was just one block away. Then I would come back at ten or ten-thirty. It was very concentrated studying, and that allowed me to pick up my background a lot and finish my Ph.D. as soon as possible.

### Driving to New York City

Tien: In 1958 or in early 1959, everything seemed to be going well. I was writing a dissertation and so on after my oral exam. One postdoc was buying another car, so he sold his old car to me. It was a green 1952 Plymouth. It was a very good car. I really enjoyed it. I bought it about ‘58 or ‘59, and then some weekends I drove to New York because my elder brother was studying at Columbia University at Broadway and 116th Street.

Normally I would go there Saturday and come back Sunday evening. It’s only a one-hour drive, or fifty miles, from Princeton to New York City. I was pretty wild at that time, young and driving to New York to be with my brother. I remember very well Saturday, when we would go there—Saturday night at ten o’clock we would buy a *New York Times*—the Sunday *New York Times* would come out the night before. We would stay in the coffeehouse until four o’clock in the morning to finish the Sunday edition of the *New York Times*. It was huge. Then we would go back to my brother’s room to sleep. He also only lived in a single room. Then Sunday we would do something else.

My brother was a graduate student at Columbia. He studied political science, international relations. He was a very poor student, as in penniless, poor in the sense of financial. Especially in the social science area, he didn’t get many scholarships and fellowships like what I received in engineering. Many times at the end of the month he didn’t have anything to eat, not even to buy a loaf of bread. So sometimes I had to—even though I didn’t have much money—loan him five dollars to buy a loaf of bread. For the last week of each month he normally didn’t have anything to eat. Just bread only. That happened all the time. He did do a lot of dishwashing and waitering and other things. But now this brother is very successful banker in Taiwan. That was some of my life at Princeton being an immigrant student.
Also it’s interesting that when I started to apply for schools, how I came to Berkeley was interesting. My professor, Robert Drake, was department chairman at that time at Princeton. He got a Ph.D. from Berkeley, he was an assistant and associate professor at Berkeley, and then Princeton offered him full professor. He went to Princeton as a full professor and department chair. Of course he always kept very close contact with Berkeley. In fact, his Ph.D. advisor was Professor Seban. So I had this indirect connection; that was very helpful.

But at that time I was more on the East Coast and Kentucky, and in the 1950s most people on the East Coast still looked at California as the Wild West and not very well regarded. So when I tried to find a job I wrote to several universities, and then I wrote to several industries. Finally I got some industry offers. In 1959 it was an easy time for Ph.D.s after Sputnik in 1957. There was a tremendous expansion in science and engineering and research and so on.

Letters of Application and Offers

And you had your Ph.D. by this time?

Six months from Ph.D. Usually we applied for jobs before getting the Ph.D. I started to apply in January for the position in the fall of 1959. I got some industry offers, and then I remember also from New York University, Brown University, and the University of California at Berkeley. They sent me a letter, and they said they were considering me and that they were very much interested. However, “our process is always very slow.” I still remember at the end of February I did not hear anything from the Berkeley campus, so I called or wrote to Professor Seban and said, “I need some indication of what my status is before I make my decision.”

At that time I had a very good offer from New York University and then another one from Brown University. So I was very much interested especially in New York University, because I loved New York, my brother was living in New York, and at that time New
York University’s College of Engineering looked very promising. They gave me a good offer, so I was interested in that. But Professor Drake said, “No, no, you have to go to Berkeley. It’s very promising.” I said, “They didn’t even answer me.” He said, “Write to them.” I wrote to them, and Professor Seban said, “We are really seriously interested in you. However, our process will take some time. If you come to a point where you absolutely need to make a decision, let us know and we will see what we can do.”

**Facing the Need to Keep Improving English**

Tien: Before we get to that point, it was very interesting—Professor Drake told me he wrote recommendation letters for me to Berkeley. He recommended me highly. But he also told me, “You should improve your English. I told them your English is not that fluent, especially conversational English.” I was very mad. I said, “If you recommend me highly, just say I’m good. Now if you say that my English is not good, they may not take me anymore.” But I learned a lot from Professor Drake. He was a very thoughtful person. He said, “Actually, I’m trying to cover you. If I said your English is very good, when you get to Berkeley or any other university and they find your English is not that good, they will be very disappointed and surprised. Not only will they not look on you well, but also they will feel I did not tell them the truth.

“But on the other hand if I told them your English is not good, but on the other hand you have improved tremendously during your two years at Princeton, you don’t see any problem when you start teaching and so on. So I cover myself well and cover you well. When they see you, they’ll feel your English is not that good. But if you do okay, they will feel very happy and they will not use that against you in terms of your appointment. I told you you could handle it, although your English is not that fluent, but based on the last two years here you have improved tremendously and I will expect you to improve even further.” So he was very fantastic.

**“You Have to Go to Berkeley”**

Tien: But I remember I was mad. I said, “You will destroy my chances by doing that.” He did that, and then I waited until about March 15. New York University told me they could not wait anymore because the appointment started July 1. They had to make a decision. If I don’t want to do it then they can go to another candidate. But they could not wait. I liked New York, I turned down Brown University. Between the two I wanted to go to New York. Then I went to Professor Drake and I said, “I want to go to New York University,” and he said, “No, you have to go to Berkeley.” I said, “They never answer. They said they are seriously considering me, but they never give me a clear-cut answer.” Then I showed him the letter from Seban. He said—and this is the middle of March—"Why don’t you write to him and say that your deadline is absolutely April 1. That’s the New York University deadline. You have to know that or you cannot consider it.” So I wrote to Ralph Seban, and I remember very well that March 31 I got a certified air mail—at that time we didn’t have Federal Express and express mail.
Acting Assistant Professor

Tien: They offered me acting assistant professor with $5,500 a year salary. New York University at that time offered me $7,500 a year with the title of assistant professor. So of course when I got the letter I was very disappointed. The salary was about 30 or 40 percent lower than New York University, and the title was acting assistant professor. It just was not very good, so I went to Professor Drake and said, “I’m going to accept New York University.” This acting assistant professor; they couldn’t make sure to get my appointment; they need more time. They were trying to see whether next year they could put me into assistant professor or not. I said, “I don’t need this uncertainty, and I also don’t know California. I want to go to New York, and I know the people there and so on.” I didn’t interview at Berkeley. At that time you get a job without going through an interview. There was no affirmative action process, no interview.

I did interview New York University, because it was very close. But Professor Drake said, “No. You must go to Berkeley.” I said, “Why?” and he said, “Berkeley has great potential in the future. New York University is good, but Berkeley is much better in terms of future development potential, and Professor Seban is a fantastic person and scholar.” He was Drake’s professor. He said, “You must go there.” I said no. Then jokingly he said, “You should listen to me. I gave you good advice. If you don’t go there I won’t talk to you anymore.” I was an Asian student, I always revered professors and teachers, and I thought, “Gosh, my life will be destroyed.” I have no choice; I cannot antagonize Professor Drake, and I did talk to my thesis supervisor, Professor Soo, and he actually said that Berkeley is very good, but on the other hand they’re only giving you “acting—”

## [5B]

Tien: I talked to Professor Soo, and he said that Berkeley was very good, but acting assistant professor has less security. Maybe in one year they wouldn’t hire me and so on. New York University was a good university, perhaps not as good as Berkeley at that time, future potential-wise. But he wanted to leave it up to me. So I didn’t have anyone supporting me saying, “You have to go to New York University.” But Drake was saying, “You have to go to Berkeley; if you don’t go there I won’t talk to you anymore.”
Tien: So finally I accepted Berkeley so as not to offend Professor Drake, and that’s the story of how I ended up at Berkeley. Then I of course finished my dissertation the beginning of June.

Di-Hwa Flies to New York, Wedding

Tien: I submitted my dissertation and then I immediately planned Di-Hwa’s arrival to the United States. She arrived on the fourth of July in the United States, and then we planned immediately the wedding.

Nathan: Did she come alone?

Tien: She came alone. That was an interesting story too. At that time no scheduled flights, you had to change flights. So she went to a chartered flight like TransOcean—like a ValuJet type of chartered flight. A very old airplane. They stopped by the island of Guam, and they stopped by Hawaii before coming to San Francisco, and then to New York. Every time, they had to fly back because the engine caught fire or something. Three times on that flight. I was waiting in New York, New York, always trying to get her by telephone (she was totally new in the United States) at Guam and also in Honolulu, but there were many other people helping her to telephone and so on.

Driving Across the U.S.

Tien: Finally she arrived in New York on July 4, and then we planned our wedding immediately and we got married July 25 and started our honeymoon. We drove, using the 1952 Plymouth. This was the time I could learn American scenery, so we went from New York all the way to Niagara Falls, and from Niagara Falls we followed Lake Erie to Cleveland. Niagara Falls, Buffalo, Cleveland. We went to Chicago and then to Urbana, a
famous university. Then I went from Urbana to Wisconsin, Minnesota, and South Dakota to see the four presidents on the Black Hills. We went to Wyoming, to Yellowstone, and then we came down to Salt Lake City. Really a fantastic view, and then we went to the Mormon temple, and then we went down to Zion National Park and Bryce Canyon and to Las Vegas. From Las Vegas we went to L.A. We visited UCLA and Caltech in Pasadena, and then we came up to Berkeley.

That summer I did not work. I didn’t really know the American system that well. In China at that time if you had a Ph.D. you’re a learned person, and I got a new job starting at the end of August, so I just took three weeks. Actually about twenty-some days. We arrived in Berkeley about August 16 or 17. It was an old car, so of course there were a lot of experiences. I lost my hand brake when I was in the Rocky Mountains. I couldn’t stop my car. It was an old clutch. So I would have to put stones under the back tire in order to get started because there was no traction. Then my radiator got burned out because it was too hot. It was an old car and we were driving for a long time. But we arrived in Berkeley safely.

Berkeley in 1959 was very different. We came up from Telegraph Avenue; I remember that very well. I had a classmate from National Taiwan University there. Actually I had several classmates. They were Ph.D. students still studying at Berkeley in the Department of Chemical Engineering. But I was coming here to teach because I finished my degree sooner than my classmates. I stayed between Telegraph and Durant. There’s a hotel still there. The Carleton Hotel. Now it’s remodeled a little bit; they have only upstairs rooms, small entrance. Probably it’s a relatively inexpensive hotel now.

Nathan: Did Di-Hwa speak English at this time?

Tien: She spoke English already. Her college major was English. But her spoken English was still not fluent, and also she didn’t know anything in the United States in terms of customs and so on. She was an English Literature major.

**The Search for Housing: “No Negroses, No Orientals”**

Tien: We lived in the Carleton Hotel for a week trying to find a flat or an apartment. Then I also went to the department. At that time it was an old building, in the engineering building now. I think it’s 205—it’s still there. Now it’s becoming civil engineering. So I went to see Professor Seban. The first time I went to his office, I was a little bit shocked too. Professor Seban was a great scholar and a very strict person. He had a German background. His first language was German, but he was born in the United States with German parents. His English was always like German, with long sentences and verbs always at the end and so on. He also liked the German style. I went to see him first, and he said, “Oh, very good. Welcome,” and so on. “But I want to advise you: don’t buy a house. Rent an apartment. Because if you don’t do well you could leave anytime. You gain some experience here, and we gain your service. So don’t commit yourself; we don’t know how long you can stay here.”
That was very discouraging. But that’s always Professor Seban’s style. He tells a thing as it is, not like nowadays when people are much smoother or they try to be nice. More of a commercial culture. But he was straight. I was a little bit shocked. But I didn’t know anything at that time. Being such a refugee, a foreign student, I felt so good. I got $5,500 a year; that was very low. I was very happy. He said, “Why don’t you find an apartment? School will start in about ten days. You settle yourself down.” He showed me my office. I was sharing an office with another professor.

Then I tried to find a flat or an apartment. The engineering school, just like Etcheverry Hall now, was on the north, on Hearst and Euclid Avenue side. So I tried to find any apartment off of Euclid, like on Virginia or Vine Street or Cedar, so it would be very convenient to come to school. My lab was right on Hearst Avenue—close to Hearst, in Hesse Hall. It’s still there. My office was in Hesse Hall. I want to come back on that. Very interesting.

So I always looked on this side, and in fact I remember I saw signs put outside on windows saying “apartment for rent.” So I would go there and they would say, “No, we already rented out.” The next day we saw it was still there. I said, “We came by yesterday and you said you rented it out, but you still have the sign out. Can we rent the place?” They would say, “No, no, we rented it out already.” I tried for like three or four days. Couldn’t find any apartment available on this side. Finally I talked to my classmates; they were graduate students living at Berkeley for some time. They said, “Why don’t you go to Mason McDuffie, the real estate agency? They can try to find an apartment for you.”

Office Assignment and Generation Gap

Tien: We went there, and the real estate agent said, "Oh, of course. No wonder you couldn't find anything." Then they showed me the multiple listings. They said "No Negroes, no Orientals" in those areas and so on. At that time on the north side it was all exclusive of Negroes and Orientals, as they called it. So I finally knew that, and they said that I had to go to the southwest of Berkeley, west of Shattuck and south of Dwight or Ashby. Or further west, west of Sacramento. I didn't want to go that far, so I found the closest one was Carleton Street. Carleton Street west of Shattuck. I think 2019 Carleton Street, we found a second-floor flat. We finally lived there. We started to learn how to cook--both of us. My wife and I didn't know how to cook because we came from families where there was a chef or a cook--or a mother [laughter] for many years. So we didn't know how to cook.

Professor Seban was a very reserved person--not like now where an assistant professor has a lot of rights. Nobody told me the rules and the regulations and so on. When I saw him he was very shy always. He passed away three or four years ago. He was a real scholar, a fantastic scholar and person. But he was very shy and introverted. He didn't tell me much.

He actually put my office with all the graduate students in Hesse Hall, upstairs in the lab. In the whole place I was the only one with a professor rank. Nowadays that would not be
possible because people would say that's racial discrimination [laughs]. His thinking was because I was so young; I was twenty-four years old.

We had a division and a department. The mechanical engineering department had four divisions. Our division was called Heat Power Systems Division. The next youngest professor was close to twenty years older than I--because they were just undergoing some restructuring. There was no assistant professor for the whole division, and I was acting assistant professor. The next rank would be associate professor. Most associate professors were about forty years old or mid-forties. So there was a generation gap. Professor Seban at that time was about fifty. He was well known outside. He felt it might be better for me, because I was younger than most of the graduate students, to be with the senior graduate students in their office or in the graduate student office complex.

Nathan: Did he explain this to you?

Tien: No. He never explained anything. It took a long time for people to understand him. He had no ill will; he was always very thoughtful. He felt that whatever he did, he didn't owe anybody any explanation; he's not doing anything bad for anyone. So he just put me there, and I didn't mind. I was so young; I didn't know.

Actually, that came out to my good fortune, because my English was indeed not good. Being with senior graduate students, I could feel more at ease because I was a higher rank than them. But we were about the same age, so I could always speak to them freely and not be afraid of making mistakes. Also my writing was not that good, so I sometimes asked a senior Ph.D. student to correct my writing. Again, that's much better, because I could not go to another professor when I was a professor and say, "Please correct my English." That's embarrassing. So actually it really worked out well. I was in that complex with all graduate students for one year. In fact, I still keep in very close touch with many of the senior graduate students at that time. Many of them are now well-known scholars and leaders in industry and in academia. So that was very good.

Nathan: How did they approach you? How did they treat you?

Tien: They treated me very nicely, because of my being a professor--even an acting assistant professor. Also there weren't that many Asian professors at that time, so it was kind of a novelty. I was like a graduate student dealing with them. We were very close; that's why I still keep in touch with many of them. We still often joke about all this, and they mention my story about how I couldn't understand anything. A lot of things I didn't understand, but I had already become a professor.

Learning American Slang and Work Habits

Tien: For instance, when I was a student--just to give you an example, but not a very good example--many people would say four-letter words. I never knew what four-letter words meant. I could not ask anybody. All the slang in the United States, I had never learned. When I studied English it was always King's English, Shakespeare or things like that. So I never knew those conversational uses--slang especially. But when I talked to the
graduate students I really asked them what they meant. They were so shocked. They thought I was joking, because they knew what they meant [laughter]. I was like a first grader; I had to learn everything. So that was in the beginning.

I settled down and started teaching. The first semester I only had one course. But the most interesting thing is that at that time, because Professor Seban was such a person that he didn't explain anything, I didn't even know what I was supposed to do. I felt that I have a Ph.D., I have only one undergraduate class in the morning in the first semester. It was only three hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, from eleven o'clock to twelve.

Nathan: What did you teach?

Tien: Thermodynamics 105A. It's still called 105 now. At that time it was called 105A. That was my first assignment. So I spent time teaching. I didn't do any research. I didn't know what to do. So I usually came to the school at about ten o'clock. I had parking in the lab area at Hesse Hall, right at Hearst Avenue going in. So I parked there at ten o'clock. I always parked there and I would see senior professors walking to the North Gate at the corner of Hearst and Euclid on the northwest side. It was a Rexall Drug Store. It was a coffee counter, five cents to have a cup of coffee. A nickel. So I saw these people going in there. I was amazed. I thought, "Boy, they always go there." I didn't know; nobody told me.

Finally one day I went to see one professor and he said, "Why don't we go to take a coffee break at ten o'clock?" Then I find they went to the Rexall Drug Store for coffee breaks. We sat at the counter and talked. At that time I met many professors and one of them was T.Y. Lin, the famous structural engineer. We usually flipped a coin for who paid the nickel. That became a habit, kind of a tradition that I still carry on when I see professors: we flip a coin for who will pay for the coffee.

So I was doing something wrong. I would come in to start work and they had already taken their coffee break. Apparently they came really early like at eight o'clock and so on. But in Taiwan when I was a student most professors didn't come in at eight o'clock; they came in only for giving lectures and then they would go home, so I was influenced by that. So I would come in about ten o'clock, prepare my lecture, and then I would go to lecture, and then I would go home, eat lunch with my wife, take a nap, and about two or three o'clock come back and prepare my work and do some research and so on and go home about five. Every night we would go to the movies. We liked movies for many, many years. When I was studying at Louisville and Princeton I didn't go to movies at all. Now suddenly I feel an expansion, so I had money and so on. We would go eat out, we seldom cooked the first few months because we didn't know how to cook.

**Wake-Up Call for Report on Research**

Tien: I remember very well Christmastime. It was a semester break just like now. We would finish around the fifteenth of December and then we would have Christmas and New Year time. So I was planning to go to Los Angeles to have two or three weeks vacation. Then I got a letter from Professor Seban. He asked what kind of research I had done for
the last four months--what kind of research proposal am I submitting? What papers are in progress? He said he would like to receive that by January 15 or something like that. Oh, I was shaking. Nobody told me I had to do research, especially in four months to expect me to have how many papers written and how many in progress and how many proposals? Since then my life totally changed until now. It's always learning. So I canceled my trip to southern California, and I stayed home and tried to immediately write some research papers over Christmas and New Year.

Nathan: Did you have research ideas at this time?

Tien: Yes, I always had some ideas, but I didn't produce until you have pressures. That was kind of a transition point. After that I devoted a lot of time on my research and teaching and so on. The next semester my teaching assignment was to sit in, to audit, a course with Professor Tony Oppenheim. Professor Oppenheim is still here. In fact, if you want to talk to anyone, Professor T.Y. Lin, Professor Tony Oppenheim--his full name is A.K.O Oppenheim. Anthony K.O. Oppenheim. His office is right on the fifth floor now; he retired some years ago, but he's still very active in his eighties. He was the first professor I audited a graduate course from, the graduate course that later on I wrote the book for: *Statistical Thermodynamics*. That semester, when I told some of my friends, they felt that was an insult. "You are a professor. How can Professor Seban assign you to audit a graduate course like a graduate student?" I had no choice; I was acting assistant professor, so I just did my best. Again, that turned out to be a very good opportunity for me.

**Changes in Administrative Styles**

## [6A]

Nathan: It's different now if you are an assistant or acting assistant professor?

Tien: Very different. We must remember that was almost forty years ago. Everything was not as developed. Our system at that time, for instance, I came here without any interview. So they did not go through any process like now when we are so rigorous, with affirmative action and many other search processes and so on. Also I want to say that almost for the first four or five years of my Berkeley stay, there was never a single department meeting. The department or the division was run in a very German or British style. The department head decided everything, no consultation or faculty meeting. I think all of that changed after 1964 [laughter], the Free Speech Movement.

In 1959, my first year, Berkeley was very peaceful and a fantastic living environment, but very autocratic in many ways. I came in when Clark Kerr just became president of UC, from Berkeley chancellor, and also when Glenn Seaborg was chancellor. The previous dean of engineering was O'Brien. O'Brien Hall. Very strong-willed in many ways, an autocratic person.

Nathan: Was this Morrough O'Brien?
Tien: Yes. He had just retired at an early age, in 1958, and then the acting dean of engineering was—I forgot the name. When I joined it was John Whinnery who became dean of engineering. So John Whinnery was really my first dean of engineering, and Professor Seban was Heat Power Systems Division chairman. A.K. Oppenheim was thinking next year perhaps I would teach that graduate-level course. So that was a good opportunity.

Moving to Radiation; Assistant Professor, 1960

Nathan: Were you still an acting assistant at this time?

Tien: The year after that I changed. That's another interesting thing. I came in at the time when there was a famous radiation professor, Professor Robert V. Dunkle. He took a leave to Australia. He was thinking he may not come back, because I think he was a Quaker. Peace loving. In 1959, at the height of the Cold War after Sputnik, he was like a world authority in radiation. But he really wanted to work on peaceful things. His interest was in solar energy. He didn't want to work on space or defense, but at that time pressure was very high. Everybody could only get money for defense funding or space. So he felt very unhappy, and he took a leave. In fact, he eventually resettled in Australia. At that time many people were saying that Australia was the only peaceful land.

So when I came in, he was on leave, and Professor Seban knew he might not come back. That's why he took me and asked me to go into radiation. Eventually, I think Professor Dunkle submitted his resignation, and then they had an open position. When I came in 1959, they didn't have an open position because he was still on leave, so officially there was no open position. But he was planning for me to come in. So after one year my performance was generally quite good, so he submitted his resignation and I became an assistant professor in 1960.

Offers Back East, and Almost Leaving Berkeley

Tien: Now I'll mention two things during that period. One is that when I became an assistant professor after one year, I moved to another building with senior professors. I left the graduate student compound. I shared an office with a senior professor. Also I started to teach well. I'll mention two things before we finish today. One is how I got my Distinguished Teaching Award in 1962. And before that I was almost going to leave Berkeley. Let me go to the first one.

My first two years at Berkeley I learned a lot, but Berkeley at that time was very different from Princeton. Berkeley was much, much bigger. Princeton had maybe 3,000 or 4,000 students. Berkeley already had close to 20,000. The engineering class was big and relatively impersonal. Everything was homework and homework. It was much more regulated. At Princeton it was much more free. It was a small class with a few students and a lot of personal contact. I couldn't get used to Berkeley's environment. After almost one year or two years I told my wife, Di-Hwa, that I wanted to go back to New York
University or Brown University; they were still asking me if I wanted to go. I was still very young, and people always liked to say I was young, with experience at Berkeley and a Ph.D. from Princeton, so they wanted me to go back.

So I said I wanted to go back to the East Coast. I couldn't adjust to this big environment, coming from a small school, Princeton. My brother was still in New York and so on. I fulfilled Professor Robert Drake's wish. He couldn't blame me; I came here. And now I wanted to go back somewhere else. By then, after two years, Di-Hwa liked Berkeley. Also her sister, I think, was in L.A. and so on. Di-Hwa said, "I don't think I'll leave. If you want to go, you'll have to go alone." So I had no choice again. That's how I stayed at Berkeley.

Nathan: Did you have any children yet?

Tien: Not yet. Just about that time my child was born at the end of December 1961. That's almost two and a half years afterwards. So that's how we stayed at Berkeley: she didn't want to move. After we had children that's even harder.

**Hard Work and a Distinguished Teaching Award, 1962**

Tien: Now I'll come back to my second point: how I got my teaching award. It's very unusual; I was the youngest ever to receive it. When I was awarded the teaching award I was only twenty-six years old. This record is still not broken at the university, and it also came to a person for whom English was a second language. I didn't speak that well; I had a very strong accent. So people said, "How?"

It's a very interesting thing. Even now many famous professors were my students before. They told me they could not tell me at that time. They said they could understand maybe 70 percent of my lecture. They couldn't understand 30 percent because of my accent. They didn't dare tell me because I was a professor [chuckles]. I said, "How come the students voted for me?" and so on.

I tried to do a good job. First, I taped my own lectures while I prepared. I immediately played it and I said, "Oh, that cannot be me. It's terrible." My English was just terrible. My conversation, my accent. I started to correct it. Every time before I went to a lecture, I tried to tape part of it and then replay it and correct my accent word by word. Because when you hear your own voice it's so embarrassing. Also sometimes it was very poor grammatically, so I changed that. I worked very hard.

My wife helped me a lot to prepare my lecture notes, by typing. At that time there was no xeroxing, no copy machines. We used ditto paper, we used a mimeograph and so on. My wife helped me sometimes until three o'clock in the morning, and we worked together. We bought an electric typewriter by Corona, so we worked together on that. Since I knew my English was so poor, I worked so hard on organization, my lecture notes, the logic, how to make it clear. Even if they didn't understand what I said in the class, they could see from my blackboard. I worked on the blackboard, so everybody could see and understand the logic, presentation, formulation, and so on. I worked a lot on it.
Some students told me--including like the one coming to see me at three-thirty; he's a chair professor at Urbana and now department chairman. He said, "Your lecture notes on the blackboard are so interesting. They're so logical, so challenging, so stimulating. We have to find the 30 percent that we couldn't understand." So sometimes some of the graduate students would get together after class and try to figure out what I meant in my lecture and so on. They said that through that process they learned much more than ever before, because they would try to find angles and so on. They said they found my class the most stimulating class in spite of the poor English.

So that's always been my feeling: don't feel you have a disadvantage. Your disadvantage can be turned into your advantage. Since I was assigned to audit a class, people would say that that was an insult. But actually I worked very hard auditing and so on, and that became very helpful to me later on. I wrote a book and so on. Everything, I always feel--just like my oral examination and then I became a radiation expert; my poor English in conversation and lecturing and then I became the most stimulating teacher. So they voted, and I was elected as the university's most Distinguished Teaching Award recipient. That was in 1962. I remember I got $200 at that time for that award. The certificate was signed by Clark Kerr; no, it was Edward Strong already. Ed Strong became chancellor in 1961, and I got the award in '62.

**Associate Professor at Twenty-eight, 1964**

Tien: That changed my life. I have always been interested in teaching, but the teaching award made me feel that I was recognized despite my handicap. I was recognized, and I was appreciated. After that, of course, I have always received highest marks in teaching from students and graduate students. Also, because I did excellently in teaching, and also I started to perform as a researcher, so my progress was very good. So in 1964--I kept getting acceleration in promotion--so after four years as an assistant professor I became an associate professor. In '64 I was only twenty-nine years old. Actually I became an associate professor when I was twenty-eight years old. Very young.

Nathan: You had tenure?

Tien: I had tenure. It's very interesting--my life was like a series of steps. In '64 I got tenure. In '64 we also had the Free Speech Movement, and I remember it very well. Now that I was a tenured professor, I could participate in the university more, and political movements. So I was one of the Young Turks [laughter]. It just fit in well, in '64. I still remember December 6 or 8--I forgot. In 1964 we went to Wheeler Auditorium, the emergency Academic Senate meeting, to decide whether we should support the Free Speech Movement or not.

Nathan: What was your view?

Tien: I was very much for supporting it, giving students more say. Of course, since I was new I didn't say too much. I went to the meeting, and I remember Michael Heyman. He spoke out. And T.Y. Lin spoke out. There were quite a few. Martin Lipset. Professor John Searle. They spoke out in those meetings; I remember it very well. As a tenured
professor I was very young, so I was always very student-oriented. I came as a poor student, penniless, suppressed in many ways, disadvantaged, so I always was on their side. That was 1964, and since then of course, everything moved up. Maybe we'll stop here today; it's a good time. I became tenured. [laughter]

Nathan: It was a big moment.
Tien: Happy new year.
Nathan: Happy new year.

Tien: Chinese New Year has just gone by, and actually this evening I’m flying to Hong Kong. I’m traveling too much.

Nathan: When I saw the news of that Taiwan plane crash, I thought, “I hope Chancellor Tien is not on that plane.” What a sad thing.

Tien: What a sad thing. But nowadays you cannot avoid air travel.

Well, last time we came to which point? Could you remind me a little bit?

Nathan: You were talking about being chosen for the Distinguished Teaching Award and how you turned some difficulties into a benefit.

Tien: Yes. That was 1962. I first joined in 1959.

Nathan: Yes, I think you went through it step by step. Excellent.

Tien: That Distinguished Teaching Award really helped me tremendously, not just an award or the recognition, but it really made me feel what the real meaning of teaching is and how to really grow students, to mentor the students, to work with them. Since 1962 that award probably changed my life more than anything else, as I became much more devoted to the teaching profession, to working closely with my students—both undergraduate and graduate—and that interest and devotion still has not changed after thirty-five years.

Also the interesting thing at that time was when I first received the award in 1962, people said, “That may be the kiss of death,” because usually when you get the teaching award, that means you are a good teacher and then you are not a good researcher, not a good scholar. In the early sixties, I think people at that time were concerned even more about “publish or perish.” So they said, “This may be a bad sign for you.” That was very interesting. In fact, several professors told me I should be careful: “Although it’s a recognition for your teaching, don’t forget about research,” and that’s really—especially at a research university—what they place their emphasis on.


The Teaching/Research Connection

Tien: That of course was good advice, although it was a little bit ironic. At that time I was a very young person, about twenty-six years old, and receiving that kind of advice. But in the meantime I was very deeply immersed in research. I also found, it’s very interesting, research and teaching really go hand in hand. So through teaching I learned a lot about my understanding of the research topics and through working with the students they provide tremendous new thinking because they are not tainted by establishment thinking and so on. So again, that’s another thing I find through this teaching award. I became even more appreciative of the relationship between teaching and research.

So I continued to be very active in my scholarly activities and also continued to do great teaching. I began to build up a reputation despite my very strong accent and English handicap. Many students wanted to work with me for Ph.D. simply because I had that kind of close rapport with students and also because I was so devoted in scholarship pursuit and the teaching. Of the students at that time, now of course many of them became very established. This is because of my teaching and research kind of activity at that time.

Nathan: Did this include publication? Did the students have their names on papers as co-authors?

Tien: Yes, many. I always had co-authorship because again to me writing papers, although it is for pursuit of original knowledge, I also recognized that’s a very important vehicle for teaching the students and to let them really understand this creative process. Publication. How do you write a paper? How do you respond to the reviewer’s comments? How do you present your paper? So I worked very closely with them. Except in the very beginning of my career I have single-authored papers by myself, or been the senior author.

Most of my papers nowadays are co-authored with my students or post-docs and I’m the junior author. Always the junior author. A few cases, even students feel I must be the senior author and then I try to argue with them that it’s more important for them instead of me to have the recognition. So that really helped me a lot.

Full Professor, 1968

Tien: After 1962, my advancement was generally rapid. I became associate professor, tenured, in 1964. It is a little bit faster than normal. And then in 1968, after another four years, I became full professor. That happened very rapidly. I was the youngest to receive the Distinguished Teaching Award. That record is still unbroken in the history of the university. It’s thirty-nine years old. That really makes me feel very unique and very proud in terms of devotion to teaching.

Nathan: When you took on other responsibilities you still kept students?
Tien: Yes, all the time. When I became department chairman, vice chancellor, even chancellor, I always had students. I always taught undergraduates too, although it became less and less. Even when I was chancellor I still gave many guest lectures to freshmen because I needed that kind of stimulation from the young people. It’s remarkable in this influence on me. Of course, speaking of my own background, in Chinese culture the teacher always had a very revered status. We always say, “Once a teacher, they’re a teacher their whole life.” For instance, I always respected and revered my teachers for life. So in that sense it’s not very special to see this transformation, spending a lot of time and enjoying teaching and so on.

In ‘64 when I became tenured, that was the time when we also had the Free Speech Movement. I remember very much the summer when I became tenured and suddenly the Free Speech Movement exploded. There were many leaders and so on. Before 1964, I must say, I was so much immersed in my teaching and research, I did not really participate in many campus activities or even department affairs or community activities in the Chinese community. In the early sixties not that many Chinese communities were as big as now, and I was a very young person trying to establish myself, so I did not participate.

Once I became tenured, because I always thought I had more job security and I had a new status, and suddenly the Free Speech Movement came into being, I became much more involved. I remember on December 3, if I remember correctly, there was a big Academic Senate meeting in Wheeler Auditorium. We went in trying to decide whether the faculty Academic Senate would support the Free Speech Movement or not, or what kind of things to do. That was a very eye-opening experience.

**FSM, Shared Governance, Social Responsibility**

Nathan: What did you learn?

Tien: In those meetings, particularly for that meeting, many people stood up debating pro and con and why and so on. I remember very well Mike Heyman was in fact a leader, saying that we had to take a more proactive status in supporting free speech reform. Mike Heyman, I think, was on the Senate Policy Committee—chairman or member. I also remember Rod Park. But Mike Heyman was a much more visible leader at that time. If I remember correctly, the chancellor at that time was Ed Strong.

In 1961 Glenn Seaborg went back to Washington, D.C., and Ed Strong was academic vice chancellor, and he moved up as chancellor in 1961. Of course at that time nobody was prepared to handle that kind of massive social movement, especially at Berkeley. Of course Ed Strong was in a very difficult position. I remember Bob Scalapino also became more active.

I remember a number of professors involved at that time. That was very eye-opening. I began to understand what the Academic Senate is, what shared governance is, and how the university operates, and what the social responsibility of the university community is. Of course this all was very new to someone very young coming from China. China just
did not have this kind of situation. So this really made a tremendous impression on me about my feeling of social responsibility and also in some sense connectivity to the larger community, be it university or the community as a whole. So I think that helped me tremendously. So there are always some key steps.

So starting in ‘64, I became more active in university affairs, although I was still very much in teaching and research, but then I became active in department affairs and the university and the larger community, such as the Chinese community and so on.

Shifts in Structure, Faculties of Mechanical Engineering

Nathan: May I ask what sorts of issues were there in the department when you decided that you could participate?

Tien: A very large number of issues, very complex. The mechanical engineering department had four divisions. When I joined in 1959 there were four divisions called Heat Power Systems Division—and I belonged to that one—Applied Mechanics Division, Aeronautical Sciences Division—aerospace was a big topic, and the Mechanical Design Division. Four divisions. The department was very fractured. Budgetary power went all the way down to divisions.

Each division, like Heat Power Systems, had about sixteen or eighteen FTE [full-time equivalent faculty]. Other divisions had from ten to fifteen FTE. But each division had a division chairman just like the department chairman. And then the department chairman was more a coordinating figure in many ways. It depends on how the personality works and so on. The department had an executive committee: four division chairmen plus the department chairman. But there was very little interaction among the divisions because there were a lot of struggle or fights before, when they split into different divisions. So there were a lot of ill feelings. The division I was in was filled with more senior faculty members.

Nathan: Now this would be the Heat Power Systems Division?

Tien: Yes. But not perhaps as active as the Aeronautical Science Division or the Applied Mechanics Division. At that time, those two were more dynamic, and people would say more emerging. Heat Power Systems had perhaps its own connotation in the traditional technologies. And the Mechanical Design Division was also perhaps not as dynamic or active. So I went to that Heat Power Systems Division. In fact, I was the youngest faculty member in the whole division. Agewise, the next one above me was maybe fifteen or twenty years older than I by age. There was a big gap due to this split. The middle group, some of them went to the Applied Mechanics Division or the Aeronautical Science Division. That was also a challenge. But when we got to 1964, because of the more senior faculty members, some people retired so we started to have more openings. Professor Seban, who hired me in 1959, started to recruit people, so that became very helpful.
So I began to work with them as soon as I became tenured. Perhaps the most important thing was a new curriculum, new coursework, and recruitment of faculty members. So I was involved more in that area. Then in 1964 I progressed more rapidly, and in 1968 I became a full professor. After one year, in 1969, I became division chairman. At that time the name of the division was changed from Heat Power Systems to Thermal Systems, perhaps because people thought it was a better name. “Power” sounded like old technology. “Thermal Systems” could include many new, modern systems.

Nathan: Who appointed you?

Tien: If I remember correctly, I think that was Ralph Seban. I think in—I don’t remember the date exactly; (I can find this out. I believe it was 1997.) Professor Werner Goldsmith wrote a very good history of mechanical engineering at Berkeley. When I was an assistant professor, Professor Seban was division chairman, and Professor Samuel Schaaf [spells] was department chair. He just moved up from the Aeronautical Science Division, chairman, and became department chairman.

Later on when Sam Schaaf finished his term he became more politically active in the school board, and he became president of the Berkeley school board. In 1967, if I remember correctly, Berkeley became the first city to institute busing for integration. Sam Schaaf spent a lot of time. He became school board president; he resigned as department chairman, and then Seban moved up and became department chairman.

At that time the new chairman of the Heat Power Systems Division was Ernest Starkman [spells]. That’s another indication of some of the problems at that time, because when Seban became department chairman, instead of trying to find a division chairman, found inside the division, they actually moved a faculty member from the Aeronautical Science Division back to the Heat Power Systems Division as chairman. That was Ernie Starkman. Starkman was a very well-known expert in internal combustion engines. He really was a Heat Power Systems person, but since Heat Power Systems had such an innate problem he chose to go to the Aeronautical Science Division because of gas turbines and jet propulsion and also combustion. But when Seban became department chairman they tried to find a division chairman and they couldn’t find anyone because none of them was measuring up in terms of stature or dynamic character or personality or so on. I was too young, I was just becoming an associate professor.

They talked to Ernie Starkman and asked him if he would be interested in moving into the Heat Power Systems Division as division chairman. Of course division chairmen had budgetary power and so on and certain leverage. So he agreed, but under the condition that the name of the division would be changed to the Thermal Systems Division. Maybe he asked for some other things, but I don’t know. But I know that once he came in, the division name changed to Thermal Systems Division.

Ernie did not stay too long, however. He got a good position systemwide as vice president for environmental affairs. I think it was 1969. At that time environmental issues and emissions, especially air pollution, became a very big topic and the state wanted to develop an air pollution research center through the university. He was the very best person to do that job, so he moved to systemwide at Berkeley [University Hall].
X ADMINISTRATION: EXPANDING RESPONSIBILITIES AND INVOLVEMENT

Division Chairman, 1969-1972

Tien: So in 1969 there was an opening for the position of chairman, and I had just become a full professor one year before in 1968, so I was appointed as division chairman. Again that was a very major transition for me because it was my first taste of line administrative positions. So I had to deal with budgets and personnel. At that time the division had clerical and shop personnel: electronic technician, mechanical shop technician and so on. Again, that was a very good experience for me.

##[7B]

Nathan: Was this something you felt prepared to deal with?

Tien: You can never really prepare for your first administrative job. You begin to learn. Before I became division chairman I already began to be active in some committee work—department committees, division committees, and so on—but not much on the university level. I also sent down personnel action cases, so I already knew a little bit. But that time was also a very tumultuous time because of student movements, student unrest, the Free Speech Movement, the Vietnam issue, Cambodia.

Personal Political Transformation

Tien: Maybe I could deviate just a little bit to talk about my personal political transformation. Because of my family background as a refugee from the Communist revolution, when I was in Taiwan and also my early years in Louisville and Princeton and also Berkeley, I was very anti-Communist. Anything Communist I was just dead against. Because of that, I also became very much attracted to the conservative political ideology. So in the United States I was really a rightist. Very rightist, because of my family history and so on. During the Vietnam War situation in ‘64 and ‘65, I was totally supportive of going
into Vietnam, supporting U.S. troops and anything like President Lyndon Johnson told us about the war and other things. I was always on the very right side.

Being a scholar and starting to read newspapers like the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, I started to change. Before 1963 or ’64, if anybody said the Vietnam Communists or the Viet Cong or the Chinese Communists were doing something right I would argue with them, sometimes to the point where we would fight or have a very emotional response. Then I started to change. I began to say, “Well, maybe different views—” I think that’s American. Because the freedom of the press, the freedom of information, changed me gradually. After ’64 I was pro-Free Speech Movement in Wheeler Auditorium, although I was very anti-Communist and also for American involvement in Vietnam. So that was not too compatible for many people, because usually people who were for the Free Speech Movement you can say were more liberal. However, I was for that but I was very conservative with political and even military intervention in Asia and so on. I started to change. By 1968 and ’69 I became anti American involvement in Vietnam. I was so strongly for, and that became very anti. I remember Madame Nhu [Dien Diem’s sister-in-law] came—remember, the president’s sister-in-law in Vietnam came to visit Berkeley. I was there, and we protested and so on. So that was a big transformation.

**Demands to Reconstitute the University, 1969-1971**

Tien: I was not prepared still for the tremendous unrest, what they called “reconstitution of the university” in the 1969-1971 period. In fact, my very first day, if I remember correctly as chairman in 1969, when I moved into the office, I saw on my desk a memo written by all the clerical staff and shop staff. They were on strike because they wanted to be on the side of students. To reconstitute the university we should stop normal university functions. This was a very special, extraordinary time, and everybody should go to the teach-in on how to reconstitute the university, becoming more socially responsible. That was my very first day. They said they were not coming to work from now on and they wanted to have dialogues and teach-ins to say how to reconstitute it. So that was my very first challenge.

I think maybe I had an advantage being new and very young. I was only thirty-three or thirty-four years old as division chairman and a minority. For many people, they felt minorities are much more suppressed in their thinking. Instead of being handicapped as a minority, in this case I became maybe advantaged. So I said, “I understand your feeling. Many people are suppressed. I was one of them. I went through turmoil myself in my personal life not only as a refugee but also as a minority in the United States. I can share with you my feeling, but again I feel it’s so important, we still have to have our normal work continued and not to stop, because that will not help everybody. It’s especially not helpful for suppressed groups.”

At that time they felt students were all suppressed. I said, “Students need to learn. I love students. I was a Distinguished Teacher, and I have no agenda. I am with all of you. But on the other hand, from my perspective we must still carry on our normal university functions which are very important for students. Especially important for them.” After
one or two days, I had a lot of individual discussions with faculty members and many others. That was a very tough time.

**Issues: Classified Defense or Military Research, DOD [Department of Defense]
Funds and Quid Pro Quo**

Tien: I remember another incident which still influenced me for many, many years. At that time students, especially in engineering—engineering was supposed to be more conservative compared to social science or humanities students. The University RA's had a movement, they picketed, and they tried to even have dialogue with professors who receive grants or contracts from military agencies. They demanded no federal government connection, especially military; at first they said “no classified research.” The university actually adopted that, so Berkeley separated out from Lawrence Livermore and Lawrence Berkeley Labs—we didn’t have any classified research on campus anymore.

So students actually began to pressure professors since they could not get to the regents, and especially in ‘67 when Reagan became governor. The first thing in 1967 was to fire Clark Kerr, so the regents would never pass anything like those demands. So the students began to picket or demonstrate against individual professors if they had research money from the air force or navy or army or DOD. Fortunately at that time I didn’t have any DOD research money. But because of that, I never really received any grants or contracts all these years from DOD, probably because I began to solicit or get support from DOE [Department of Energy], the National Science Foundation [NSF], Department of Commerce and other agencies. So I never really got any grants or contracts directly from DOD. It’s very interesting. Then they said no defense or military research. That was much harder because concerning the defense department, not only the university but many faculty members relied on their support. But the federal government said, "If you don't take DOD money or support, we won't even give you funds for NIH [National Institutes of Health], NSF, or any other federal agencies." So it was very hard. The university could not take that kind of unilateral position on defense. But pressure from students was very, very intense.

Nathan: Was that part of your principles?

Tien: I don't think I took that strong a position. But on the other hand, because of my experience at that time I didn't need to rely on their support, so I never really got any support from them. I don't say I purposely tried or not to avoid dealing with them, because defense is still very important. So I always felt reasonableness and rationality should always be the most important thing instead of emotional or extreme positions taken at that time. That was when I was division chairman from 1969 to ’72.
Lobbying to Abolish Department's Four Divisions

Tien: Then at that time I was lobbying or campaigning for abolishing all four divisions. I felt divisions had become not very constructive; they were barriers for exchange among faculty members for research exchange, or even for students teaching and so on. We broke into four smaller budgetary units, and also for faculty hiring and so on. I remember very well the division chairmen always fighting for their own division instead of fighting for the whole department or for the engineering college.

Being young and also pushing nothing too extreme, no agenda as such, I became much more active, saying that we should abolish divisions. So many people at that time were surprised. They told me, "This is against your own interest. Losing the division, you are division chairman and you have power. You hire people, you evaluate people, you have the budget and all of this." Again, I was young, I was more idealistic. I said, "No, this is not good for the department or for our college or the university." So I became a champion much more for abolishing divisions.

The department chairman after Seban, in 1972, was, I think, Bob Steidel. He came from the Mechanical Design Division. He was the division chairman and became the department chairman. Again, the Mechanical Design Division also was not a dynamic group, but more prestige-wise and so on. He was also a great teacher, a person of great integrity, although he was not very active in research activity. But he was really a great citizen of the university community. He also wanted to abolish the divisions. He felt it was better for the department and for the College of Engineering. I would say that he and I were the two more vocal ones, and that the other two divisions were more conservative. They felt, "We were more highly prestigious divisions and we may lose our stature and lose our power. We would be diluted by perhaps not as productive or dynamic faculty members and so on." So there was a lot of fear about that.

My reputation began to show. I came from the Thermal Systems Division, I was very active, dynamic, and internationally became known and so on. So that's how we changed the structure as some people from the Mechanical Design Division came in, like Professor Mote--then vice chancellor; he came from the Mechanical Design Division, and a few others, the younger faculty members. So I campaigned and campaigned. In 1972, with the support of the dean of Engineering and also of the department chairman, we gradually moved from a division structure to the whole department. Although we became one department, we still had de facto groups. Gradually those groups lost their budgetary power, FTE, because we went down all the way like how many TA's, how many clerical staff, and we had become very rigid. A small budgetary unit cannot cope with the rapid change efficiently. I became vice chair of instruction in 1972, '73.

Because I was supporting the merger or the integration of all divisions, I became vice chair. After one year I took a sabbatical leave. After administrative duties I liked to have a sabbatical leave.
Sabbatical, then Department Chair, 1974-1981

Tien: I came back in 1974 and became department chairman. I tried to break up the de facto groups, so we are becoming more integrated. I must say I was a rather popular department chairman, because at that time departments still had many, many factions and a lot of mistrust and old ill feelings, and I was relatively young and not involved in some old controversies. I was regarded as a good teacher and also a good scholar and so I had a certain stature. So I was immediately accepted, although we still had some tough decisions during that period.

I was supposed to do only three years to five years as department chairman. The dean at that time said that I could not leave. They polled the department faculty, and they all wanted me to stay. Finally I said, "I cannot stay anymore. I have to take a leave because of my research." Always after a few years of administrative things, I wanted to go back to rejuvenate my scholarly activities. Finally in 1981 I stepped down as department chairman. I became more active in university activities when I was division chairman and also department chairman--I began to participate more in the Academic Senate committees.

Activities: Academic Senate Committees; Curriculum Change

Tien: My first one, as you can imagine, was the Committee on the Status of Women and Ethnic Minorities. I was chairman for one year, I think. I was also on the Committee on Teaching from '78 to '81. That was a period when I was department chairman but also I served in some other functions. Also I served on the chancellor's Committee on Student Conduct. That was a very sensitive political one. A lot of students got arrested, and came to the committee; we had to decide what to do. The committee consisted of more modern, some conservative, and some very radical liberal faculty members.

I was perhaps in the middle--modern but a little bit on the progressive side. I served three years on that committee. We had a lot of student hearings. I remember one member, the attorney for students, was Dan Siegel. I remember him very vividly. He was a student leader, the ASUC president, when he was a student at Berkeley. Then he got his law degree and then practiced. He always felt very strong about student rights and so on.

Those are some activities. During my department chairmanship, the first thing I did was to overhaul and reformulate our mechanical engineering laboratory course. That's a famous course that used to be called 131. Now it's 107. I don't know which one; I don't remember now.

Nathan: And this was required?

Tien: It was required for all mechanical engineering students for the junior and senior level. It used to be a most important course for all our students. We got a lot of complaints from students: a lot of hard work. But after they graduated from Berkeley they always said that was the course that really left a deep impression on them. They had to design their
experiment, they had to write their report, make presentations, do data analysis, perform their experiments. It was a very important learning experience. But by the late sixties that course became a little bit too overbearing perhaps. Students easily spent forty hours a week on that one course alone. So they benefitted a lot when they graduated, and they would call back and say it was a great course. But really you have to ask whether the time spent and the benefit they got are proportional or not.

I was given the task in 1968, I think, to reformulate the course. That was a very big task, again another major organization because many professors and many TA's were involved. So I had to organize as a group. It was a little bit like an administrative position. But you always had to think visionary, how to change the curriculum and so on. That was something I remember very vividly. After the merger of all four divisions, this curriculum reform dealt with how to do all different things.

But perhaps during my period we really settled down the department from a very fractured department in the fifties and sixties, but it began to shape up in the seventies. We have became a more integrated department, and also department rankings really went up, so we hired many new faculty members. I would say mechanical engineering at that time really came into a very strong position on the national scene. Of course it's not really my effort but many, many people just being together at that time.

Also I became more active in the Chinese community. One thing I remember during that period was Nixon's visit to China in 1972.

### Faculty Visit to China; Taiwan; Blacklist

**Tien:** By the time when Nixon went to China, I was already transformed. I was much more objective, perhaps, in the broader perspective. Also I became a U.S. citizen in 1968, if I remember correctly, so I felt more like an American. I had taken a much more fresh view. I began to become more open-minded about Communist China.

Right after Nixon's visit in 1972, a number of Chinese faculty members mostly in engineering, decided to visit China. We were invited in 1973 as one of the very first groups to visit China after Nixon's visit. I remember our group. We had several Berkeley faculty members, including Ernest Kuh, and a few others. And we had some Stanford faculty members and Caltech and UC San Diego faculty members. So it was more established scholars in California engineering visiting China in 1973.

**Nathan:** Was this difficult for you?

**Tien:** Very difficult. There was no direct flight to Beijing or Shanghai in 1973, so we first went to Hong Kong and took the train to the border called Lo Wu. Then we had to walk across the borderline between Hong Kong and the People's Republic of China. At that time the other place was Shenzhen. Shenzhen now is a big, big city, but at that time it was a very small village with not that many people. So we had to walk across. That experience was
so vivid and deep. The government sent a delegation to receive us or to take care of us, and we thought, "Oh, these are Communist cadets." We were afraid, because when we were young we always felt that was the enemy. For instance, my wife's father was a general fighting against Communist armies and so on. So we had that residue of feeling.

Of course everything was new. That was twenty-four years since we left mainland China and lost everything--family, fortunes, belongings, everything--and now we are coming back. But they treated us royally [chuckles]. But that was still the beginning of the U.S.-China relationship, so we were very timid, and they were extremely careful and cautious. Sometimes they didn't know how to handle us and so on. But it was a very, very eye-opening experience after Nixon's and Kissinger's visit.

Because of that visit, my mother who was still in Taiwan, and some of my brothers who were still in Taiwan, and my sisters--the Taiwan government, Chiang Kai-Shek's government, feared I was becoming a traitor. My family was part of Chiang Kai-Shek's government; in my wife's family was a military person for the government, and now I went to see them and I spoke glowingly about some of the improvements they [the mainland regime had] made and so on, so Taiwan immediately black-listed me. Not only that, they made several attempts to intimidate my immediate family: my sister, my sister-in-law, my brother, and so on in Taiwan.

In Taiwan in the early seventies, it was still very much a police-control state. Everyone was very careful. My sister and my brother all passed the word and asked me to be very careful because they were watched. In fact, for some years I would not be able to go back to Taiwan because they wouldn't give me a visa, even as an American citizen, because I was unwelcome. In the sixties, Communist China, I could not go back. If I went back in the sixties I would probably have been purged and eliminated. In the seventies, with Nixon's opening, I began to develop a fresher, broader, geopolitical view, and then I became black-listed and intimidated in many ways even in the Chinese community here.

I was active in some Chinese community movements. I even got some threatening calls saying, "If you participate in that Chinese community, you might be in deep trouble. Your life may be threatened," because there was a pro-China version and a pro-Taiwan version. There were tremendous pressures. It was within the Chinese community, even nowadays. But now it's much more peaceful and so on.

In the seventies, there were even some bloody events in Chinatown. Maybe I was young. People would say, "You were courageous. You went there to speak. You didn't get intimidated." Some people got clobbered and beaten and so on. But I'm always much more open and try to be much more direct. So that was kind of interesting.

I was not able for five or ten years to go back to visit my family and relatives in Taiwan because I was classified to be pro-China. Of course, on the other hand, I was watched very carefully by the CIA and FBI. I have big files [laughs]. Especially after McCarthyism in the 1950s, and then the 1960s people looked at China as a big enemy, second to Russia, and at anyone who came from China with great suspicion.
Tien: I think I mentioned before that when I tried to apply for permanent residence, even the Immigration and Naturalization Service [INS] told me, "You probably have to wait 140 years to become a U.S. citizen," because at that time anybody China-born had to wait for the quota. I think I mentioned that, right?

Nathan: I don't think I remember that. I'm glad you said it now.

Tien: That was a very interesting story. When I first came to Professor Seban in 1959--maybe I'll retrace back. In 1959, in the fall, I joined the department. Then I went to see Professor Seban, the division chairman. I said, "I have the F visa." That's a student visa, because I was a student. I had to change that to "exchange visitor" or "permanent resident." I had to try to apply. Seban told me, "I didn't know that. If I knew that, I wouldn't have even hired you." [laughter] At that time it was very hard to hire a China-born person to change the status from student to permanent resident. Very difficult. After the Korean War and now the Vietnam War and so on--in '59 especially. He said, "I didn't know that."

Professor Seban was a very direct person always. The first day I saw him he said, "Don't buy a house. You may not stay here." Then he told me, "I didn't know you had this; otherwise we wouldn't have hired you. Anyway, I made a mistake. Now we have to see how to do it." But he told me, "No, I cannot do anything right now. Why don't you apply for a six-month extension, for what they call 'practical training' after your Ph.D. for student visa? You can get six months practical training, and you can apply for three six-month extensions. The maximum is eighteen months."

So I did. I went to the I-House, the International House. They still have the Office of International Students and Visitors. I went there and got practical training status. I was, of course, an acting assistant professor. That's why he said we couldn't do that much. I took a couple of practical training extensions, and after twelve months I became a regular assistant professor. Then I went to the I-House, and the university lawyers tried to get me into permanent residence, so I had finally achieved that by a green card. But when I tried to get my green card, the INS office was very hostile to any immigrant minorities, because that office in California always dealt with either blacks or Hispanics or Asians. It was such a bureaucratic thing.

I went there thinking, "I will have a hard time," and one person told me, "I must tell you you have no chance of becoming a citizen." I said, "Why?" At that time there was a quota for China-born. If I remember correctly, the quota was 150 or 200 per year, you could move from permanent resident to citizen. I think that on the waiting list there was already a tremendous number of people because a lot of refugees were coming to the United States and applying and already got permanent residence. So I was way down the line. He said I had no chance of becoming a citizen. I said, "Why?" That person told me, "You have to wait 140 years according to the quota and the wait list in order to become a citizen." That was very interesting. I just said that was a great thing for me. He said, "Why?" He was very surprised. I said, "That's a great incentive for me to live longer. If I want to become an American citizen I can work towards living longer." [laughter] He didn't know how to respond to my dark humor.
Subsequently, after I became a resident, there was a bill introduced by Senator Ted Kennedy that changed the whole immigration system. At that time for instance, only 200 a year China-born permanent residents moved to citizenship. For Great Britain they had 10,000 openings a year but maybe only 200 applying to become a citizen. All the rest are vacant, but nobody can fill them. So finally Ted Kennedy introduced this bill, and that changed to any unfilled quota. The other countries, if they're on a long waiting list, can fill into the quota. So I became a citizen. I didn't wait for 140 years. I actually became a citizen relatively soon. That was an interesting thing.

At that time, the atmosphere, especially during the Vietnam War period, many professors of Chinese origin or ancestry were very much watched by the FBI and CIA. I was visited by a CIA agent, and I was visited by an FBI agent a number of times.

Nathan: What were they looking for?

Tien: They tried to, in some sense, intimidate you. "Be careful. We are watching you." I became department chairman in ’74. During that time I was sitting in the department chairman's office now, on the other side corner, on the sixth floor [of Etcheverry Hall]. The chief agent of the Berkeley FBI office came to see me and made an appointment.

Nathan: In your office?

Tien: Oh, yes. They came a number of times. They said that I should be careful, I should not be doing things pro-China or pro-Vietnam or anti-war things. I said, "Why?" I was department chairman, I was an American citizen. He told me that the Berkeley office had the highest concentration of FBI agents in the whole United States because of the Berkeley student unrest and many other political issues. In terms of population, Berkeley had the highest among all places in the United States. He said he was assigned, he moved from Hong Kong to join the Berkeley office so that he could specially take care of the Chinese students and Chinese professors.

I said, "We don't have that many professors. Why?" He actually learned to speak Chinese. He said, "I'm familiar with Chinese culture, I can speak Chinese, and the Chinese are known to be very clannish. They always get together, sometimes secretively, like societies and so on." I got very mad. I said, "Where are you from? What's your ancestry?" He said he was Irish American, second- or third-generation. I said, "Irish. Also known to be very clannish. Do you have the same problem?" He apologized. Actually he was trained in law, like many of the FBI agents.

He said, "I made a mistake. All different ethnic minorities--." I said, "You leave my office. You never come to my office again." This was really bad. I wasn't afraid of him. "You can put me on all kinds of documents, that's fine. I'm an American citizen and I have my basic rights. I'm not doing anything wrong, but you should not come to intimidate me and say those types of things." Oh, he apologized. He was a very well-behaved agent and a very knowledgeable person in many ways. But unfortunately that was the time. In the seventies there were still many things going on. Even the CIA sometimes called me to say, "Be careful" and other things.

Nathan: Did this agent keep away from you after that?
Tien: Actually I still saw him. He never came to my office anymore, especially in the office, mentioning about, "You Chinese, we are all watching you." [laughter]. I couldn't take that any more. At that time it was very natural; there were a lot of things going on that larger society didn't realize, like Martin Luther King who was killed in the late sixties. We went through that period without knowing how difficult it was, even with the civil rights bills in 1965 or '64. Martin Luther King was killed in '68.

But when Martin Luther King was killed, I cried. I felt very touched because I was in Louisville and went through Jim Crow segregation. But when I went to the coffee breaks--I mentioned to you we had regular coffee breaks--some professors said, "Gosh, he deserved it." At that time it was very common. Many people thought it was all a Communist plot, tied with Vietnam, all a Communist plot. The FBI, J. Edgar Hoover was trying to tag Martin Luther King with the Communist thing too. They were polite to me. There were many incidents of that time.

Nowadays we've changed a lot. In the 1960s, for instance, one professor spent some time in Australia on a one-year sabbatical leave. This will be my last story [chuckles]. I want to say the sixties were transition periods, even in the universities. A liberal place like Berkeley was not that liberal. A close colleague spent one year in Australia, enjoyed it immensely, came back, I saw him and we had coffee. I said, "How did you enjoy it?" He said, "Oh, fantastic. A great place, like paradise." At that time Australia had a policy: white Australia. So they didn't allow Asian or any colored people into Australia. I said, "No, I don't like Australia. They have this policy." It's so interesting; this person was my close colleague. He actually forgot I'm Asian. He said, "You cannot say this. If you allow the Asians to come in, the whole place will be destroyed." He was speaking to me. He said, "Asians coming in would create troubles. Then the whole place would be destroyed." I said, "Do you not recognize I'm Asian? I'm Chinese. You cannot do this." Oh, and he apologized. "I'm sorry. I didn't realize--" He thought that was a compliment. "I never view you as an Asian. You are my close friend, close colleague. I apologize for my speaking those words," and so on. It just shows the deep-rootedness of the biased views and so on. This happened all the time.

Even when I became relatively established, even as department chairman and vice chancellor, some people still spoke that way. For instance, another friend of mine, a very good friend from England--England again was very much more behind the U.S. in terms of treating some colored minorities. This was a person in the FRS--a Fellow of the Royal Society--a very well-known scholar in my field. I argued with him about things. Then he suddenly told me, "My God, you're not like ordinary Asians." I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "Asians are always quiet, they don't argue, they take anything, and they're submissive." I said, "Gosh, that's an insult. This is very wrong stereotyping." He said, "Oh, sorry, sorry." He thought it was a compliment to me.

Nathan: That you're different?

Tien: That I'm different. I'm more dynamic, argumentative, I tried to be more assertive. Then he looked at me and said, "No, I was trying to praise you." To praise me in a sense from a very biased, stereotyped viewpoint. This happened all the time. On the other hand, it made me feel I had to stand firm about my convictions, I tried to correct things, change things around. But I was also becoming relatively understanding: "I don't blame all those people as much." Because I felt it was a symptom of society, not the individual.
The Tien family in 1979

Photo courtesy of Di-Hwa Tien
Nathan: We were talking about the part of your career in which you were, and of course you still are, a professor of mechanical engineering. These were your professorship years. You had spoken about your China trip in 1973. We could go on, if you’d like, with any other overseas trips and relationships that developed during this period.

Tien: Yes, 1973 was a landmark trip because my family left Shanghai in 1949 as refugees. We didn’t go back for the next twenty-four years. My father died in 1952, my mother died in the late 1960s, and then when I went back with my whole family—three young children and my wife—that was a very big thing. At that time that was still during the Cultural Revolution period. China was still very much under the Maoist ideology. Now of course, China is totally different from that time. After that we made many trips back to Asia. I have always been very outgoing in terms of interactions with people abroad, mostly professional, university professors, and research interactions. So during the 1970s, at that time of course I was also department chairman of a major university, and my research was doing extremely well, so every year I took several trips abroad in Europe. I can mention one thing particularly relevant to the present, and that was during the 1970s.

Tien: I and sometimes my wife, we would go every year to the former Yugoslavia, particularly to Dubrovnik because at that time there was an international center for heat and mass transfer, and that’s my field. I also have been an editor of the *International Journal of Heat and Mass Transfer*. For a while I was on the executive committee for this international center. This center was supported by the Yugoslavian government, which was still under Tito’s rule, and also by the United Nations’ UNESCO. I was on the executive committee, and then I became chairman for a while. Because of that, I went to Yugoslavia and particularly to Dubrovnik many, many times—at least once a year, and sometimes twice a year.

We also went to neighboring cities like Belgrade, which is now the capital of Serbia; Yugoslavia; and we would go to Ljubljana, which is the capital of Slovenia, and to Sarajevo which is now the capital of Bosnia. Sarajevo particularly at that time was such a beautiful city. Everybody was commenting on how miraculously Yugoslavia could
unite all different religions, different races, like a model between east and west. Sarajevo was so pretty, and now Sarajevo is kind of semi-ruined because of the war. Belgrade, of course, not as much now, so no big change. Dubrovnik had some damage but not major. It was a big city. We also went to Montenegro, and I went to Kosovo. Right now there’s a big controversy about citizens with Albanian ancestry over there getting killed by Serbians and others.

Patterns of Travel: ’60s, ’70s, ’80s

Tien: It was a very interesting experience, and especially from my standpoint. My family went through war, refugees many times. Then when we in the 1960s went to Beirut, it was a beautiful city. At that time it was called the Paris on the Mediterranean. We had a lovely time in Beirut. But now Beirut has been changed a lot. In the 1970s and 1980s Yugoslavia was in a very good situation. We went there many times and now they’ve changed. There were many highlights of our international cooperation, both in Europe and Asia.

Also in the 1970s and 1980s I went to South America a number of times, particularly to Brazil. For a while almost every year I went to Brazil, to São Paulo and Florianópolis. That’s a big city in southern Brazil. Again, Brazil is a fascinating country. There is tremendous diversity in terms of race and color, and tremendous resources, but tremendous social problems. It’s also developing. It’s a very rich country with rich culture, but with a lot of developing pangs. We went there many times, mainly through professional research and educational things.

We also went to the Caribbean. I was a consultant for a while to the Dominican Republic. That’s right next to Haiti. At that time Haiti was one of the most underdeveloped countries, and the Dominican Republic was much better developed and also very interesting. So we went to many different places all around the world. We went to Russia, to the Soviet Union, in the past. We visited East Berlin before the Berlin Wall came down. In fact, that was an interesting thing: when we went to Berlin—I think that was 1980 or ’81—we spent six months in Munich, in München.

Nathan: Why Munich?

Munich: von Humboldt Foundation Senior U.S. Scientist Prize

Tien: I was awarded the U.S. Senior Scientist Award by the von Humboldt Foundation. It was a very big prize. I was given the equivalent of $45,000. The award had no commitment except to visit some university in Germany of your own choosing. We talked to many people, our friends, and they said Munich had the best university or was the best city to visit, and it so happened that a very strong university department in my field was in Munich.
So we went to Munich and we again took the whole family. That was a very good cultural experience for my family, including myself. I was at the Technical University of Munich. That university particularly is worth noting. It’s really like in some way the holy place for heat transfer engineering. It started in the late nineteenth century with some very famous scientists and then continued in the early twentieth century—always the best heat transfer center in the world for many years. That’s also why we chose to go there.

The von Humboldt Foundation gave me the Senior U.S. Scientist Prize in 1980 of $45,000. The von Humboldt Foundation was set up and also gave the prize to U.S. accomplished scientists, the reason being that the Marshall Plan helped rebuild the country so much so they felt they wanted to repay with gratitude American generous support. So through this senior scientist prize they paid back the general support of the U.S. My wife, when we heard that they were giving me this prize—at that time we also tried to buy a car—immediately, without my detailed discussion and so on, talked to some friends and then ordered a Mercedes. I asked her why and she said, “That’s because since they’re paying back the Marshall Plan for the U.S., we should pay them back by buying a German car.” [laughter] This was a very nice way, in a way very Chinese.

The first time I went there I picked up the car from Stuttgart, from the headquarters of the Mercedes-Benz company, and then I drove to Munich—it’s very close, only about a two-hour drive. So we had a car in Munich. You’ve seen the car. It’s still running very well after 120,000 miles. Very reliable. At that time the new model came out so we drove across Europe using the car. On one trip we went to Czechoslovakia, Poland and East Germany. When we went into East Berlin that was very interesting too. I was an American citizen, but East Berlin or East Germany was still not an area U.S. citizens should go. In fact, only East Germany or Cuba were places we were advised not to go, but I did not know this.

So we went into East Berlin on one trip without knowing. When we were inside East Berlin and there I checked the passport—at that time passports said you shouldn’t go there—I was scared, especially with my background being Chinese originally and being a naturalized citizen, whether I would be able to go back to West Berlin anymore. Fortunately the border guard, the Russian, did not read English that well so he didn’t read the fine print, didn’t give me any trouble and they let me out. That was a small scare.

We also drove the car to East Germany and to Czechoslovakia and Poland. Very interesting in terms of our cultural experience, broadening our view about cultural diversity and so on. When we were in Prague we got lost one night, and then we were stopped by the police. With the police were two huge dogs in the car, and we were really scared. We couldn’t speak Czech, and they couldn’t speak English. We were trying to find our hotel. Those experiences are all very memorable.

On the Western Europe side we went to Italy and France. We drove around many times. It was really good for my children. My children were very young, to be traveling around many times.

Nathan: Was this partly a deliberate decision of yours?
Tien: Yes. We felt it was very important to know in the world different people, so whenever possible we had our children with us because it’s good for them. When we were in Munich, my daughter went to a Gymnasium—a German secondary school. She made a lot of friends. To this day it still influences their outlook, their views and so on.

**Sabbatical Leave, 1965; Guggenheim Fellowship, 1966**

Tien: So those were interesting travels through the benefit of being a professor, and sometimes we could travel more easily. Also sabbatical leave. My first sabbatical leave was in 1965 after I came here in 1959. I had seven years and then I had one full year of sabbatical. Then I was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1966. Then we traveled around the world with our son. At that time our daughter Phyllis was only six months old. We couldn’t travel with the six-month-old for the long trip around the world so we actually bought a ticket—now looking back it may not be the best decision—we had a special stewardess who took her back to Taiwan in 1965.

Di-Hwa’s parents took her. Then she waited there while we went to New York and London. We spent some time in London at the Imperial College, and then we traveled to Europe, Beirut, Egypt, Thailand, Bangkok, and Hong Kong and Taiwan. Our daughter Phyllis waited there. She was only less than one year old. Then we came back all together. So that was the first around-the-world trip. Then we had many others after that. It’s always good to have a sabbatical leave and so on.

So those were some of the international activities, but actually in the United States I also traveled a lot. By nature I’m a very active person, so whenever possible I was visiting other universities, talking to colleagues in different places, trying to know what other people are doing and what direction my laboratory should move in and so on. I visited almost every place in the United States many, many times. Even now I still do that a lot.

Nathan: You find that that gives you new ideas?

Tien: Oh, very much so. That’s why in academia the free exchange of ideas is so essential, generating new ideas and combinations of others and so on. I think if there’s any success in my own research, it’s mainly because I really took a very outgoing reach and looked at many different interactions in different places.

**Consultant to Industry and Government**

Tien: In this context I can also mention I was very active as a consultant before I became chancellor. I had been working with industry for a long, long time. It started in 1960. I joined Berkeley in 1959 without any industrial experience. So my thinking was I needed to go to industry to get some industrial experience. Also at that time Ralph Seban, department chairman, was encouraging me to have some interaction with industry, especially with my background, coming from China and very young. Without any
American industry experience, being an engineering professor is not a good background in that sense.

In 1960, my first summer, I was with Shell, the oil company—Shell Development Company. At that time the headquarters of the Shell Development Company was in Emeryville, right here. A very first-rate, world-class petrochemical research company. A lot of heat and mass transfer problems. I joined and worked for the summer there. I still remember many of my colleagues. Many of them later became very famous scientists and scholars. In fact, the department head and my immediate supervisor a few years after, in the late sixties, became president of Shell Development Company. They are one of the best petrochemical research companies, so I learned a lot. That was in 1960.

In the summer of ’61 I joined Bell Labs, in the Whippany area of New Jersey. At that time people said, “Why are you going to New Jersey in the summer? Summer at Berkeley is so nice and comfortable. Why do you want to go there?” Actually, I had always been raised in the big city: Shanghai, Taipei, and so on, so I always liked big cities. I really liked New York. That’s why when I finished Princeton I didn’t really want to come to Berkeley, because I like big cities.

So when I went in 1961 to Bell Labs in New Jersey, we actually lived in Long Island. I had lived in Long Island because my brother was in Long Island. I stayed with my brother in the Queens district, in Forest Hills. Every day it took me, one way, about an hour and a half commute. I would take the subway to the Port Authority and then take the bus to Bell Labs and so on. Looking back I enjoyed it a lot. At that time I also enjoyed it. The reason is every morning I got up early, bought a New York Times, and the New York Times has so much material it took about an hour and a half. So by the time I got to the lab I finished the New York Times from the front page to the end. Again, that helped me a lot in terms of learning America. With the New York Times you read very broadly and have a much more worldly view and so on. So that was the summer of 1961. And I went back to Bell Labs again in 1964, I think, because I liked Bell Labs very much. Bell Labs was another great place at that time.

Nathan: Would you present yourself to them? How did you approach them?

Tien: In the early sixties science and technology was in a great booming period because it was right after Sputnik. There was really kind of a shortage of high-level skilled people. There was no problem getting any summer job or any summer experience, and even research projects and grants were very easy to get. The U.S. was putting a lot of emphasis on science and technology to catch up with the Soviet Union. Sputnik really shocked the U.S. about the level of expertise. They actually sent people to campus saying, “Could you come to work for us in the summer?”

Actually at Bell Labs I remember Dr. Franz Geyling came to the department—he knew many people—and he talked to me and he said, “Why don’t you come? We’ll have an interesting problem at Bell Labs. You can come in the summer.” After the first summer I did very well, so they invited me, saying that I could come anytime. I went back again in 1964, I think, to Bell Labs. Bell Labs is another place that influenced me a lot, because that was the best industrial research laboratory in the world. In the fifties and sixties there was no match. I remember they had 3,000 Ph.D.’s, all from the very best institutions.
Nathan: They were actually recruiting then?

Tien: Oh, yes. They recruited a lot of people. Also Berkeley recruited a lot of people from Bell Labs. But Bell Labs was really the center of tremendous interaction and research power. I was young, but when you are surrounded by the smartest people who are really doing great research, you are inevitably influenced. That really gave me a tremendous impact and I learned a lot from my experience there.

Then starting in 1960, again, I mentioned at that time many industries were looking for people, so I was contacted by Lockheed. Now it’s called Lockheed-Martin. At that time it was Lockheed Missile and Space Company. They had very high-level research laboratories in Palo Alto at Stanford. They were one of the best aerospace research laboratories. I was contacted by them. They said, “Could you do some work as our consultant?” I said, “Sure.”

I could get some extra income, and also because of my lack of industrial experience, any experience for me would be great. So I started with Lockheed Palo Alto Research Laboratories in 1961. I stayed there almost twenty years as a consultant. And here I became vice chancellor and chancellor and so on. There was potential conflict of interest and other things, so I curtailed my consulting relationship.

So Lockheed also helped me tremendously. They are one of the best aerospace defense research laboratories, so much of my research was related to what I learned from Lockheed and then continued to work on that.

Nathan: So you were really doing some research in areas that were not necessarily heat transfer?

Tien: No, no, it’s heat transfer, but it’s aerospace heat transfer.

Nathan: I see. So it was connected.

Tien: Very closely connected. Heat transfer is interdisciplinary, so it applies to the chemical industry like Shell Development, they are interested in so-called distillation and condensation and two-phase flow and so on. At Bell Labs I was working in remote-sensing or infrared sensing; that’s more high-level defense activities. At Lockheed Palo Alto Research Lab I was involved mostly with space vehicle heat transfer power. In the 1960s we had Werner von Braun shooting some satellites into space.

One of the major challenges was that they couldn’t manage heat transfer well enough, so many of the satellites or space vehicles in the early days were burned. Or they became so hot, electronic equipment couldn’t function anymore, so they became very silent. Then that’s why many people say we “lost contact” with a satellite. So it’s a tremendous heat-transfer problem, a thermal problem. I was brought in to do some of those problems. That was my work with Lockheed for about twenty years. People working with me, for instance, one of them in 1961 later on became the corporate vice president for science and technology of Lockheed-Martin. He moved up after twenty or thirty years.

Nathan: And what was his name?
Tien: His name was Robert P. Caren. But we called him Chris, his nickname. Until two years ago he was corporate vice president for science and technology for Lockheed and then Lockheed-Martin. There were many people like that.

In the late 1960s together with General Electric, the major division in San Jose in General Electric hired thousands of people. It was the Nuclear Power Division. General Electric produced boiling water reactors. There are two kinds of light water reactors in the world right now, basically. That’s the most popular reactors for nuclear power plants. Among the light water reactors there are two major kinds: one is called the boiling water reactor, and the other is called pressurized water reactor. The boiling water reactor was mainly produced and designed and developed by General Electric. And then the pressurized water reactor was developed mainly by Westinghouse. Now there’s no Westinghouse; it was just taken over by Raytheon.

At that time there were a number of companies producing pressurized water reactors, like combustion engineering, but they were out of that business. And then B&W, Babcock and Wilcox and Westinghouse, they are still in the business. They are mainly B&W and Westinghouse for the pressurized water reactors. For the boiling water reactors, actually all the main architects or pioneer people for the boiling water reactor are all Berkeley heat transfer graduates, particularly Solomon Levy. He was a Ph.D. from Berkeley, 1952. He joined General Electric, and then he developed the idea; all the top managers were Berkeley heat transfer mechanical engineering graduates. I joined as a consultant in the late 1960s, I think. Again, I stayed there for a long, long time—for maybe fifteen years. That was another experience that broadened my understanding. I was working in the aerospace and chemical industries, and this gave me the nuclear industry.

I continued that until only a few years ago, doing research with Professor Per Peterson in the nuclear engineering department here. He was my student, and he is now a nuclear engineering professor. Of course, some of my students go to aerospace engineering and so on. In fact, I have a student, Professor Gail Brager—she got married; she now uses her husband’s name—she’s a professor in the architecture department at Berkeley. She was my Ph.D. student also. Actually, she was a Ph.D. in heat transfer, now applied to architecture, about the building energy situation. So I think all those industrial experiences helped me in my research tremendously at Berkeley, and they broadened my sense.

Nathan: And that affected your students and their interests?

Tien: Oh, very much so. In different areas, and they’re all well-connected. They are doing very relevant research. Especially for engineering, my view is students in engineering would have to do research which is relevant to industry’s major issues. So that’s really through this sort of interaction.

Also in the nuclear power business, which led me to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, that’s the U.S. federal government. Because of my research and my work with General Electric and others, they hired me as a consultant. I was a consultant to the so-called ACRS, the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safety, for many years. I went to Washington a lot to discuss different reactor issues—safety, emergency. So when Three Mile Island accident occurred, I was also called to help resolve some of the issues.
Then in 1980 when the space shuttle couldn’t get up because of the thermal protection system on the outside skin—the thermal protection tile couldn’t stick on the surface—I was called back from Munich, Germany. In fact, I got a call at two o’clock in the morning because of time difference. I was very nervous. I thought of my children. Although my daughter was in Germany, my son and other daughter were back in Berkeley. My son was at that time in college, so he did not go to Munich until the summer. So I thought maybe my son had some problem and that’s why they called after midnight. But it was NASA and so on saying, “Please come back. We have some urgent problems and we need you to help us.” So I came back and we solved that problem.

Nathan: You did solve that problem?

Tien: Oh, sure. The space shuttles are now going out into space frequently [chuckles]. These were all heat transfer problems.

Through this I went to all different industries, and then I also worked with the federal government on reactor safety issues and so on. Of course I was also involved in many other federal government advisory committees and so on. Overall, in terms of my research in thermal issues, the connection with industry has been really marvelous.

National Academy of Engineering, Member, 1976; Loyalty to Berkeley

Tien: Also I was elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 1976. I was, if not the youngest at that time, one of the youngest in the National Academy. It was the highest honor. I had just turned forty years old; it was very unusual to have someone get elected to the National Academy of Engineering at the age of forty or forty-one. Again, as an Asian minority and refugee immigrant [chuckles], it was a very, very gratifying experience. I didn’t even know who nominated me. Now I look back and it’s so difficult—now I’ve been in the Academy for many years, people say, “Well, how about politics?” People are trying to lobby different people to try to get people elected and so on. I don’t even know anything, but somehow [laughs] they just accept me personally.

I became quite well known, and then many people tried to recruit me. I remember even very early, in 1972, I was offered by many universities chair professor or department head. All different universities. I was tempted a number of times, but my wife always was a wise person. She always said, “No, you cannot leave Berkeley. You just have to stay here. If you are going, go alone.” Same thing before. So that’s how I stayed here. But the university has been very good to me.

I was accelerated very fast, I was given administrative positions very early, when I was very young; especially considering my minority status. The university has been so good to me; in many ways that’s why I stayed here. I feel the loyalty, which is not that deep now in American society. I’m one of the very few odd people. They say, “You’re staying at the university for forty years?” In fact, this is my only employer for my whole life. My only job is University of California. My only major employer. Of course, I did summer jobs or consulting jobs, but those are not major jobs. So I always joked with many people. They said, “If you don’t have the University of California what are you
“going to do?” I said, “I’d be unemployed. I’d be out on the street.” [laughter] I only know one employer; I don’t even know how to apply for jobs [laughter].

I’m very happy about my professional life. In that sense, it’s remarkable. In many ways people say Berkeley is very progressive, giving people like me an opportunity to grow. Perhaps in the atmosphere it’s very good. In many other places I know, even for Asians, they feel a little bit alienated because there’s still some bias and so on. But Berkeley is one of the best places, I think. I was fortunate to join this great university and stay for this long. All my three children graduated from Cal and they were raised here, and they are all doing so well. It’s just fantastic. Many people say, “Maybe you want to go to some other place.” But I never thought that way. I always liked to stay here.

Nathan: You have certainly done a splendid job at Berkeley. I wouldn’t question that.

Tien: It’s a great place.

Where shall we go now?

Nathan: I’m glad that you went into these other industrial connections. I think they’re very important.

Tien: Yes, it was very good for my career.

I think I did mention about teaching before. I do want to say my industry interaction helped my teaching tremendously. It made my teaching much more relevant. Also I learned how to present things, communication. How to present things clearly in a very interesting and stimulating way. All that really helped me tremendously in my teaching. So I always loved teaching. But industry interaction, government service, all of it helped me tremendously.

Innovative Berkeley Campus Programs, and Administration

Nathan: I might ask you about something you may have seen. The article refers to a young man, Derek Smith, who went to UC Berkeley, majored in mechanical engineering, and spoke of the university’s Minority Engineering Program. Were you active in that?

Tien: Not only that. In fact, we had a program—in 1969 I became division chairman. Just about that time one of the faculty members, Bill Somerton, was a petroleum engineering professor, but at that time they had some restructuring so he joined our Thermal Systems Division. I became chairman of the Thermal Systems Division. He was very much interested in affirmative action and how to mentor disadvantaged people and particularly disadvantaged and underrepresented minorities. He started a program now called MESA—Mathematics, Engineering and Science Achievement program. It’s very famous now, but it started in 1969 with I think only a few thousand dollars, with some company help. He actually asked me at that time as division chairman if he could get some space so that a staff member in charge of that program could sit. In that sense, he came to the right person. I was very supportive, so I said, “Definitely.” The MESA program later on
became a national model for disadvantaged minority students to go into engineering and mathematics and science-oriented curricula and careers. So Derek Smith was one of the leaders coming out from that minority engineering program.

Nathan: I see. You had mentioned that some of your students organized study groups?

Tien: Oh, yes, many groups. I was, of course, very much involved. When I was in the Academic Senate I was chairman of the Status of Women and Minorities, called SWIM. We organized many groups, tried to help underrepresented minorities. When I became chancellor I had already worked with many, many things in those areas on the campus level, department level, and the college level. That’s a good question. I forgot to mention it.

Nathan: Now that’s a funny little glitch that we have. What is that? [light goes off, then on when Chancellor Tien waves his arms.]

Tien: This? It’s energy-saving. If you are not moving, if somebody leaves this room, and for instance we go out, after a while they just shut off automatically. When we are not moving enough, then it will turn off. It’s an automatic sensor for energy saving.

Nathan: It seemed quite magical. It goes off and then you wave your hand and it goes on again [chuckles].

Was there anything more at this time?

Tien: Maybe I’ll go to administration now. I talked about teaching, I talked about research, my advancement in professorship and so on. When I became department chairman I stayed for about seven years—from ’74 to ’81. In fact, normally the department chairman was three to five years, but the dean at that time felt I did a good job getting the department together. As I said, before I became chairman the department was very fragmented for many years. There were many, many different groups representing very contentious philosophies. These different groups were fighting a lot, and I was maybe one of the few commanding respect from all different groups.

The reason for the fighting was that in mechanical engineering, just like in many engineering departments, one end is very professional, like design, manufacturing, and so on; the practice of engineering, that kind of aspect. And then we have a more fundamental aspect: very science-oriented. Applied science, like applied physics, applied math, applied chemistry. It’s a little bit different from the practice of engineering, really down-to-earth. So this is very natural. It’s the same thing in architecture or any professional school. Professional aspects and fundamental aspects.

In the 1960s, because of the Sputnik effect—and also after the Second World War in general—the U.S. went to a science push. So even in engineering we are much more science-oriented. Engineering science. As a result, we have many professors who know a lot about science but really don’t know the technical engineering or industry side.
So in the sixties and seventies, when I became department chairman, it was high time for this transition. We had one group of very active, science-oriented, engineering professors. Then we still had some senior-level, mainly the old engineering type, who were more industry-oriented. So they didn’t see eye to eye. In fact, at every department meeting we found we couldn’t have a department meeting because they were fighting so much. I was one of the few, because I was in the young group, science-oriented, but also I had a lot of industry interaction. I appreciate the practice of engineering, and also maybe because of my Asian heritage I always tried to be a little bit moderating and see the advantages and strong points of either side and try to build a common ground.

I was able to maybe get people together in the department. As a result the department ranking moved up a lot. Because of that, also faculty at that time did not want me to step down. They were afraid that if somebody else came up there would be factions again. Because of that, the dean asked me to continue. I said, “No, I absolutely don’t want to. I want to go back to more teaching and research. I’m very much interested in that.” Finally I said, “If you don’t let me step down I will take another leave. I will get out of the country.” [laughs] So finally I stepped down as department chairman.

The record shows I did very well for a large department; there were close to fifty faculty members. It was a very large department compared to even some schools. It’s bigger. So some people felt I would be very naturally moving up in administration. Of course, I’m not really that interested in administration per se. I really love students, my scholarship, teaching, and research.

I think in 1981 or ’82 the dean of engineering was supposed to step down. Of course my name was very prominently mentioned, that I would be a good candidate for engineering dean. But I did not get the position. There are many reasons I don’t even know. Anyway, because I did not get the dean’s position many people were not happy, particularly affirmative action groups. They felt that I was someone with a proven record of administration, administrative capability, a good scholar and a good teacher, and how come as a minority I still couldn’t get the position? Of course, that was a high time for affirmative action. I didn’t complain, but the tremendous pressure was put on the chancellor at that time, Chancellor Heyman.

Heyman became chancellor in 1980, I think. People said, “How come you don’t appoint Tien?” Former Chancellor Heyman is also a very politically astute person. He probably mentioned to many groups, including Asian American active community groups, “We appreciate very much Chang-Lin Tien’s capability and qualifications, but there are reasons why we did not appoint him for dean of engineering. But the next major opening, we definitely will put him in.”
Tien: That paved my way to go to Vice Chancellor for Research. At that time the Vice Chancellor for Research was just about to retire. That was George Maslach.

They contacted me, asking whether I might be interested and so on. I said, “No, I really want to go back to my teaching and research. I couldn’t take it.” So I told Chancellor Heyman and also Vice Chancellor Rod Park, and I was very naive, “If it is only a 60 percent or 70 percent position for vice chancellor, then I will take it.” I really wanted to keep my academic professor activities. Many people felt very strange. Many people want to be the vice chancellor—especially full-time vice chancellor. They said, “You simply cannot do it. You want to be a full-time vice chancellor and full-time professor; you’ll have two full-time jobs.” But I said, “No, no, I want to try.” Because when I was department chairman I did very well for my research and so on.

So they finally agreed, we worked out something, and I was actually 70 percent vice chancellor and 30 percent my professor’s job. Eventually, of course, I worked almost two full-time jobs. When I became Vice Chancellor for Research in 1983, I spent one year—from 1982 to ’83—as special assistant to the chancellor—or to the vice chancellor at that time, Rod Park. After that I became Vice Chancellor for Research in 1983.

The first thing when I became Vice Chancellor for Research was the animal research controversy. OLAC [Office of Lab Animal Care] and all these conflicts were a big problem. The other problem was our computer center. In the flux of change, transformation, we dismissed our computer director and hired a new one. That was a very busy period for the Vice Chancellor for Research at that time. After two years as Vice Chancellor for Research, I really found that I could not continue both together. But I really also found that Vice Chancellor for Research is not my cup of tea. So I said I had to resign as Vice Chancellor for Research and devote myself full-time to teaching and research. My lab was going so well, I was developing this new area; right now I’m the founding kind of person in this area called microscale heat transfer. I was just developing that area, so I needed all the time I could have to develop that.

So I went to Chancellor Heyman and said, “I have to resign.” He was totally surprised. In fact, he told me, “Vice chancellor is a very powerful position. Many people want to do it. Why do you want to resign, especially at this time? You only did it for two years.” I said, “I have this developing new academic endeavor. It’s very exciting. I need all the time I can have,” because in engineering, in science, for a new field, the timing is very important. If you don’t get in at that right time you miss an opportunity for your whole life.

Of course I don’t think Chancellor Heyman, being a lawyer and law professor, could fully appreciate what I mentioned. He told me, “No, you cannot leave. I always like to keep my chancellor team unless I fire someone.” I said, “You should fire me.” [laughter] He said, “No, no, I don’t want to.” I said, “Well, you don’t want to destroy my career.” I finally put it in a very simple way. So finally I resigned.
I immediately took a sabbatical leave and spent the whole time developing the new area. I got my students—that’s 1986 to ’87—I was vice chancellor from ’83 to ’85. From ’85 to ’86 I took a sabbatical leave. I developed this new field, and also I want to say that my lab was very big. I had about thirteen to fifteen Ph.D. students and several postdocs of many different fields, who were working in many different areas: some in nuclear, some in aerospace, some in chemical, some others in industry. At that time I said that I was going to devote more and more time on this new field: microscale heat transfer, which is related to more microelectronics and also advanced lasers. So that’s more future-oriented.

I started teaching a graduate course, trying to offer the course. At that time, even now, the university has a regulation: no professor can simply offer a course unless you have more than eight to twelve students to take the course. This is to try to prevent someone trying to beef up their teaching by having a course with only one or two students. When I offered my advanced graduate course, no student wanted to take it because it’s so new and ahead of the times. So it wasn’t possible. I actually persuaded my students; I paid them because they were RA’s, which now we call GSI, Graduate Student Instructors. I said, “No, all of you have to take my course so that I can offer my course. By offering the course I can learn myself through teaching.”

Nathan: How did they respond to this?

Tien: They didn’t like it. They said, “My research is in nuclear. I don’t want to do microscale.” At that time nobody knew this was a great thing. Some said, “I’m working on an aerospace thing. I don’t want to do this course.” But sometimes graduate students have no choice because they are my employees. So they took my course, and some of them, I forced them to change their dissertation, to orient their dissertation to the new field of microscale heat transfer. I remember one of them, Markus Flik, came from Munich and then went to the Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, Switzerland. ETH Zurich, they called it. It’s the place Einstein was, where he taught before he came to the United States. So it was a very good school. Flik got a diploma in engineering, and he came to my lab. He was working in nuclear at that time. In Europe also nuclear was very hot. I said, “No, no, you are going to work in this microscale.” He didn’t like it. I pushed him. He was an excellent student. He eventually got his Ph.D., his dissertation, in this new field. And then of course he did very well, and later on he joined MIT and became an assistant professor there and then he got promoted to associate professor after three years.

Then he got a great offer from Germany, his native country. He’s now very high up, like a managing director equivalent to a vice president for strategic planning and research in an American corporation. There were a few students at that time who resisted in the beginning, because many students cannot see what will happen five or ten years later in engineering. That’s a professor’s job so much, to foresee what’s coming, and it will be appreciated. I pushed this way, so many of the students at that time, if I remember, at the first seminar in the graduate course. All of them have become very famous professors and in the industry. Some of them are professors at Berkeley now; they were in my class at that time. That was very interesting. But after two years I got a call from Irvine. Now I come to Irvine.

Nathan: Good. Before we come to Irvine, one more question: after that first original push, what happened the next couple of years?
Tien: It continued.

Nathan: It did continue?

Tien: Oh, yes. I set the course. The timing was so important, and it also oriented my research more and more, and then I started to leave other areas. For instance, now I'm completely out of two-phase flow, and I'm no more in nuclear. At that time I was also in environmental heat transfer, like building heat transfer. That's why my student Gail Brager is now in architecture as a professor. I was in many different areas--aerospace heat transfer. Now I'm also out of that. I tried to orient only into this new area.

Nathan: Was that a gamble for you?

Tien: That was certainly a gamble, but in research you have to do that. That's how you make your name. You see something before other people see it. In fact, you always have the resistance in the beginning. Even my colleagues were not very supportive. They would say, "Oh, Chang-Lin Tien may be vice chancellor, he's out of the mainstream. He's down here now. That's why he tried to go into some other stuff that's not very interesting," and so on. That was common.

Every time I moved into a new area people actually criticized me. That's how you make a big name out of that. In fact, microscale heat transfer is now the hottest area in my field of heat transfer. The whole world is now moving into the area that I started ten to fifteen years ago, so my students are very much in demand. Everyone wants to have my students because we are the only laboratory consistently producing very high-level research in this area. So that was very gratifying, even now, that my students are very much in demand.

**Recruiting Scholarship Students in China**

Tien: Before I went to Irvine, one year I went to China and I also became an advisor to a very big Hong Kong foundation. They support people from China to the United States for advanced studies. I went to China and interviewed some potential students. I went there in '86 when I just stepped down from vice chancellor. I was trying to develop the program and then I said I would go to China; they have some of the very best students. I talked to some universities and said, "Select the very best students for me, to come to the United States to work. I can support it through this foundation." It's a three-year scholarship.

The two universities I talked to, one was Tsinghua University, the best technical university in China. Right now all the Chinese leadership, most of them, came from that university--Zhu Rongji, the premier, and others all came from that university. They actually pre-screened; they selected three, I think, of the best ones. And from that we arranged for me to do an oral interview with them, face to face. In my native place, Wuhan, the university is Huazhong University of Science and Technology. The best university is in the place I was born. They did the same; they pre-selected. So I went to Beijing and Wuhan, and I interviewed and then selected two people, one from each. This foundation gave them three-year scholarships to come here.
Before they even arrived here I was talking to Irvine; they eventually went with me to Irvine. Although I started in Berkeley, they got admission at Berkeley and so on. By the time they came I was in Irvine, so they had to move to Irvine.

**Irvine: Executive Vice Chancellor, Distinguished Professor, 1988-1990**

Tien: Irvine called me in January or February 1988 saying, "Are you interested in coming as an executive vice chancellor?" I never thought I would leave Berkeley to go to Irvine, so I said, "No, I don't think I'm interested. I'm doing so well with my research and my teaching. I just love Berkeley, so I don't think so." But they did not give up. They had several people call me and say, "Just come visit us. You have no commitment; it's a long process. It won't cost you anything. It'll help you to visit another university, to see our College of Engineering and also the Irvine campus." It's sometimes hard to say no because they feel insulted, because maybe "you don't feel we are good enough for you." Since I knew many people there in engineering I said, "Okay, I'll come by and take a look one day."

So I went there one day and I became a little bit stimulated about the potential opportunity there. It was a new campus growing very rapidly in a very good area, although it was very conservative--Orange County--but it had tremendous growth potential, particularly in terms of industry. They had tremendous industry nearby. So I came back. I didn't say I would turn it down or anything.

I talked to Di-Hwa, because for many years Di-Hwa always said, "No. You cannot leave here. If you leave here you go alone." This time somehow she became very receptive. She said, "It may not be that bad. Maybe you can decide." That's an opening for me. Then later on I knew because her family were all in Los Angeles; her mother and father, brother and sister, all of them were in the Los Angeles area. It's so close. Her mother had cancer at that time and was in bad health. My son was in San Diego doing a Ph.D., and my daughter was also in San Diego doing M.D. work, studying. I knew Di-Hwa felt Irvine was in the middle between Los Angeles and San Diego [laughter]. She said, "Oh, no, it's up to you. You decide." At least the barriers were no longer there. Then later on Irvine called me and said, "We are really interested in you. You are one of the top candidates. Please come back to see us again to spend two or three days."

I went back again, and of course I saw the chancellor, Jack Peltason, and I saw the deans and talked to the search committee. In fact, Horace Mitchell, the vice chancellor here now, was Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs at Irvine. He was on the search committee. I became even more interested. I learned I was not the first choice. Although the search committee may put me as number one, the second candidate perhaps Chancellor Peltason felt was perhaps better qualified or something like that. I knew the other person too. Another person at that time was a vice chancellor. He was a dean, provost, at UCLA and then was vice chancellor in North Carolina.
I knew that later on from many other different sources. They offered the position to the other person. I wasn't feeling bad at all, because I was very much interested in what I was doing. I always felt that way. But at the last minute that person, due to some family reasons and so on, turned down that offer, and then they offered it to me. I negotiated with them. I said, "I have to continue on my research." Because of that they offered me UCI Distinguished Professorship, so I had a chair. Also I would move my laboratory, I would move my students down there and so on.

I went down, and the two Chinese students immediately went down to Irvine. It took me about a year and a half to move all my equipment and my laboratory down to Irvine. You have to set up the new lab and remodel the lab and everything. I was just about settled there, and then Berkeley came back saying I should come back [laughter]. So I stayed only two years, and then I had to move my lab back again.

Nathan: Did the two Chinese students go back too?

Tien: They came back again. Of course, they got Ph.D.'s from Berkeley. So that was the interesting thing. I moved back to the same lab in Etcheverry Hall here, because at that time they hadn't allocated my laboratory space to other people yet. So it was very convenient.

I had gone to Irvine; we bought a house on university land, in University Hills. The first year we went there [chuckles] we rented a place and waited for the house to be built. They had a housing project for faculty, and we selected a very good one. The next year we moved in. But six months later we learned we were going to move back to Berkeley.

Nathan: Had you kept your Berkeley house?

Tien: Yes, fortunately. At that time the housing market was not that good. It was very bad in the late eighties and early nineties. Just crashed down. We didn't want to sell the house, so we kept the house and just moved back. Of course we were not moving back to our old house, but we were moving back to University House. All this was kind of interesting for us. And the two Chinese students both graduated from Berkeley and now they are doing extremely well. One is a professor at MIT, and another is at UCLA. Of course there are many others doing as well in that original group. They are all in this new area.

When I started this area I also had very close ties with Japan. People in Japan said, "Tien's Army in Japan," [laughter] because all their most prominent heat transfer people either were my students or my postdocs in my lab. They were very much influenced by our laboratories, and that's why they were called "Tien's Army in Japan," controlling the heat transfer field and so on.

When I had an offer to Irvine, because Chancellor Heyman or Rod Park never thought I would ever leave Berkeley because I have been here for thirty-some years, when they heard about that they realized it would be a tremendous loss to Berkeley especially in terms of Asian-Americans and their controversy at that time about admissions. I forgot to mention that was a very big issue in the late eighties. I was very much involved in trying to arrive at something which would be very good for the campus. At that time the
administration did make some mistakes about the Asian American admissions issue. So when Chancellor Heyman heard that I got an offer from Irvine and may go there as an executive vice chancellor, he talked to me and Rod Park talked to me. They tried to persuade me not to go. The Academic Senate also offered the chairmanship for me. Before that I was on the Committee on Committees but they said, "It would be a tremendous loss to Berkeley if you go there, so why don't you stay here. You've been active in the Academic Senate. You'd be a natural choice for chairman of the Academic Senate."

I was weighing all that, and also my family. My son and daughter at that time were both in San Diego, and my wife's family were all in L.A. Also, my research after three years--plus the vice chancellorship--I laid a good foundation for microscale heat transfer. I thought I could spend a little bit less time and perhaps spend more time on administration.

In the Irvine case, it was very challenging trying to build something new. Also I felt very strongly that I could learn a lot from Chancellor Peltason because he had such a fantastic reputation in terms of his experience, his knowledge, and his administrative capabilities. All of this made me finally decide I should go to Irvine. Of course, Irvine was trying everything to recruit me, so they gave me fantastic packages and so on. Finally I decided to go to Irvine.

That was a big move, after thirty years at Berkeley to decide to go to Irvine. I never thought I would come back to Berkeley. I resigned my professorship, despite the fact people would say, "No, no, you can take a leave for two years at least." I said no. As an executive vice chancellor at Irvine, if I still kept my Berkeley professorship it's just not right. I have to show my total commitment and dedication to Irvine. So I resigned my Berkeley professorship and went to Irvine without knowing that two years later I would come back.
Photo courtesy of Di-Hwa Tien
XI CHANCELLOR, UC BERKELEY, 1990-1997

[Interview 6: June 22, 1998] ##[11A]

Nathan: Perhaps we’re ready to bring you to Berkeley as chancellor?

Tien: Sure, yes. First we talk about recruitment for the post. As I said, in 1988, I went from Berkeley to Irvine. That was a little bit unexpected move on my side, but they finally convinced me to move to Irvine, partly because my wife’s family were all in southern California area, Los Angeles, and my son and my daughter both studying—two of my—yes, the elder son, the elder daughter, they were studying at San Diego. So Irvine seems a good place for us. And also, it’s growing at that time.

We went to Irvine, and we bought a house in the faculty housing in the University Hills. We enjoyed it very much. But just about when we moved into the house, not even getting the draperies and so on, I was getting calls from Berkeley whether I might be interested in the chancellor’s job at Berkeley. Of course, I said I would be interested, because I knew the campus so well, but I didn’t expect I would be chosen. But after interviews and so on, I remember February 15, I was given the post as chancellor of Berkeley, they made the announcement. I think it was Monday, February 15, 1990, to have me start on July 1, 1990, as chancellor.

Di-Hwa’s Presence at the Job Interview

Tien: There’s a number of interesting episodes mentioned here in the topic list. When I was invited to do an interview for the job, they also asked whether my wife, Di-Hwa, would be coming. She would be very much welcome to attend the interview also. Yes, that’s something very new to be interviewed by the selection committee, chancellor’s search committee, which consists of sixteen members: five faculty members, five regents,
and then one undergraduate student, one graduate student, one staff representative, I think two alumni members, and then the president at that time, David Gardner. Such a large search committee.

We debated whether Di-Hwa would go with me, and finally we said we should both attend the interview session. Of course, they didn’t ask any question of my wife, and she was just listening and smiling. She was very nervous; I of course was nervous.

Nathan: How many of the committee were present there?

Tien: Sixteen.

Nathan: They were all there?

Tien: Yes, all there. Every one asked me questions. I was sitting at the end of the long table, and my wife sitting just beside me. It went about two hours. Overall, it went quite well. Later on, of course, I found they made the same offer to other candidates, but we were the only candidate actually coming together, husband and wife together. That’s interesting, because I felt for a chancellorship, it is really a teamwork, the family and spouse and the person should work together.

Silence, then the Peltason Note

Tien: Before they made the announcement, there was also an interesting episode. I was interviewed, with my wife together, but we didn’t hear anything for a week or two. We didn’t expect anything. In fact, I said my chances would not be that high. So on a Sunday, Sunday morning, the San Francisco Sunday newspaper, Examiner/Chronicle, already had a headline saying because of leaks: they said, “Regents are going to recommend Chang-Lin Tien as chancellor of Berkeley.” That’s a Bay Area newspaper. I was in Irvine, so immediately, many people called me from the Bay Area, tried to find—confirm it—anything, but I had no idea whatsoever, and nobody called me beforehand, although I did the final interview and so on.

So I thought, “It’s very hard to handle all the telephone calls and interviews,” so my wife and I, we said, “Gosh, Sunday morning. Why don’t we just go outside and have a brunch, and then we go to the movies, so we can avoid all these telephone rumors. Since I don’t have any inkling, or nobody had told me, I really don’t want to deal with the press.” So we went out to have an early brunch, and then we went to a movie.

By the time we came back, we drove through our garage, and on the garage door there was a slip of paper. We drove in, we opened the door, and then that slip actually came down. So we parked our car and Di-Hwa said, “Well, it’s interesting, a sheet of paper on the floor.” I said, “Gosh, probably somebody just left it there.” I just threw that paper away. And it turned out to be that paper was from at that time Chancellor Jack Peltason. He was chancellor at Irvine at that time. Apparently, President David Gardner called him on Sunday morning and told Jack, “The regents have decided and are going to make an announcement Monday. Please ask Chang-Lin Tien to call me as soon as possible, this is
urgent.” Jack called me at my home, and nobody answered. He lived not too far—we all lived in the same compound—so he drove his car to my house and put a slip on my door, garage door.

So I saw the slip, I just threw it away. I said, “No, this is nothing.” So we just went into the house, and that’s about four o’clock, after the movie and so on. Fortunately, at that time, about four-thirty, my son, Norman Tien came by. He is now teaching at Cornell University, he was a Ph.D. student at UC San Diego. So Sunday, he drove up to see us, because we’re a very close family. So he came to the front door. We already drove our car into the garage. So he came from the front door, he saw another slip. That’s to say, “Urgent, please call Gardner.” And the telephone number.

So my son came into the house and said, “Dad, there’s a slip asking you to call Gardner someone,” the number. I said, “No, I don’t think it’s very important. Probably some reporters trying to locate me,” and so on. But my son said, “No, no, maybe this is David Gardner, the president.” Because he tried to be confidential, so not to tell many things, just say, “Call Gardner as soon as possible.”

So I said I’d take a look at the telephone number, I said, “Yes, that might be Gardner.” So I called Gardner. I think now-President Peltason, being an extremely experienced person, when he left a note on the garage door, he felt I may not go into the garage, or he didn’t know I threw the slip of paper away. So he came to the front door, put another slip on the front door, in case I go in through the front door.

So then I got the note, and I called Gardner. Gardner then explained to me, “This is very important, you should come immediately. We have Monday, we’ve already scheduled a press briefing about either before noon or early afternoon. You should fly up tomorrow to Oakland, Berkeley.” Let me see, we had the press conference at that time still at Berkeley. “Why don’t you fly up tomorrow morning, and then we’ll have the press conference already scheduled?” He was so nervous because he couldn’t locate me Sunday, and I didn’t even know, you know.

Then I called immediately Chancellor Peltason and told him there, and then we went out with Chancellor Peltason and Suzie, Mrs. Peltason, four of us, to a dinner, restaurant. We tried to thank him, and also tried to learn a little bit more background on how we should deal with many of the things, because Chancellor Peltason was very experienced. He was chancellor at Urbana and then chancellor at Irvine, and also he was president of the American Council of Education before. So we had a nice dinner, and we were very excited. We made arrangements.

**Berkeley Press Conference, Death Threats**

Tien: The next day, we came up, and then we went through the press conference. Everything went well. In the afternoon after the press conference, I flew down to Irvine again. So that was fine except that on the first day, there was an episode. When we flew down to Irvine, February 15 in the afternoon, after the press conference, of course the CBS News and radio, they were all broadcasting I’d be the chancellor and everything, and so on.
And then we got a call in the evening about seven o’clock or eight o’clock from the police department at Berkeley saying they got several death threats, messages. They also not only got a written note, but also telephone calls. They said, “Somebody may be trying to kill you, so you should be immediately careful.” They already notified the Irvine police to give us extra protection [laughs] and so on. In the meantime, they are locating wherever this crazy person is, what really happened.

So we were very nervous, so we closed our door and so on. That was a very interesting experience. [laughing]

Nathan: “Welcome.”

Tien: Yes, “Welcome.” In this very visible post.

And then about eleven o’clock at night, Berkeley police called us again and said, “Okay, now we have located that person, we have detained that person. That person is—” maybe, I don’t know who—we never followed up. They said maybe psychologically or psychiatrically not balanced, “and so you don’t need to worry about your safety any more,” and so on. So that was our first day—[laughing].

**Transition: Advice, Timing, House Sale**

Tien: Of course, the next day, we worked in Irvine. Then I tried to prepare the transition, and deal with the Berkeley situation immediately. At that time, Chancellor Heyman was at Berkeley, and then Chancellor Peltason gave me a lot of good advice. He first said, “You are in this transition, but remember, you are not Berkeley chancellor until July 1. So you should not try to interfere with whatever Chancellor Heyman’s work is during this interim period, because he is still the chancellor until July 1, and you should respect that and try not to.”

Secondly, he said, “You are executive vice chancellor at Irvine until June 30, 1990, and you should really do a full-time job, as much as you can, for your Irvine constituency, because this is the way to do it.” And that was great advice, because during the excitement, sometimes you may go overboard, and even to this day, I feel very strongly. For instance, when I stepped down July 1 of last year, I never tried to do anything for the campus any more. I’m out. Chancellor Berdahl should be the person. Before that, I do everything I can, not thinking I’ve only a few months or a few days left, and so to the last day, I was very much in charge.

So he told me that. Chancellor Peltason says, “I want to make sure you don’t go back to Berkeley unless very, very unusual, special circumstances, and you should stay here as executive vice chancellor.” So I in fact did that exactly, only maybe once or twice, attending regents’ meetings.

When I came up to attend regents’ meetings, the regents wanted to introduce me and others, and then I stopped by Berkeley, talked to Chancellor Heyman to do some, say,
possible transition and so on. Chancellor Heyman was very nice, providing all the information and anything he can help to do this.

John Cummins was assistant chancellor and still is assistant chancellor. He also helped a lot in the transition. He came to Irvine maybe twice during that period, from February until the end of June, just to provide some transitional issues, because many decisions were of tremendous impact after July 1, then of course I should be involved and so on.

So everything went remarkably well, and we didn’t have our new house at Irvine in good shape. We didn’t have the furniture, we didn’t have the drapery, so we called our furniture store and said, “Stop anything, we’re going to move out.” [laughter] We did get the drapery; it was too late to cancel our order. We put the drapery out. And then we put our house on the market in Irvine. It’s on the university project, compound, very nice place. But the price is regulated by the university, how much you can do, and also, only the university members at that time can be eligible to buy the house.

We put it on the market; the first day, we had eight offers, all alike—we had a good house. That was a part of the incentive when we went to Irvine—the good location, good view, and so on. Then they had a problem. If they had eight, then they have to have criteria, who will have the preference? And finally, they said the criteria should be for faculty ahead of the staff, and then for recruitment or retention as a tool. If someone absolutely needs it for retention or recruitment, and also seniority on the faculty.

So finally, the house was sold, bought by Dean Harold Moore. He was dean of Physical Sciences at Irvine. Because at that time, he also got offers from other places, and in order to retain him, they had to give this preference to him. So he bought our house, and he still lives there, but he is retired from the faculty now, and actually, the person succeeding Harold Moore is the current, newly appointed chancellor at Irvine. Again, it’s kind of interesting to have that.

**Search Committee Process**

Tien: You mentioned here some of the questions so it can refresh me. Coming back to “who recruited you?”, I think I was nominated by a few people, my colleagues; because I knew Berkeley quite well, some Berkeley faculty members nominated. I knew most of the search committee people. But still, I must say, it was a high honor for me to be picked, because I was only executive vice chancellor of a branch campus, a campus, Irvine. Berkeley is very much a place many, many people would like to come as the chancellor.

I think I owe a lot to David Gardner, who was president, and also who headed the search committee. From what I understand, at that time they had a list of 258 names for the position. It took a long time to channel down the names from more than 200 to 140, and then to forty, and then to twenty, and then to sixteen, then twelve, and so on. At that time, the chairman of the Board of Regents was Roy Brophy. I had several discussions with him. I must say, he again helped tremendously to put me perhaps ahead of other people. Roy Brophy and I became very good friends; so I am very grateful to the search committee.
Also, during the search committee interview, they asked interesting questions. My being an Asian, speaking with a heavy Chinese accent, of course, many regents and search committee members were a little bit concerned. I think the first question I was asked was, since I’m Asian American, how can I handle the fundraising? Because being a minority race and not in the mainstream of the society, I’m under very wealthy alumni, and also clubs and organizations, “How do you think you can do that?” That was one question.

Another question I remember—there were many, many questions—I remember another one, in fact, that question was asked by Steve (S. Stephen Nakashima) and other regents. He is a Japanese American regent.

He asked, he said he knew it because he of course is Asian American, Japanese American. He said, “You are relatively short and small, Asian American, but to the university, one of the most important things is the sports events. How can you be a leader in the sports events, athletics?” Of course I told them I was a basketball player, semiprofessional, although I was short; I’m short, but I’m very fast, and I’m very determined, I’m well disciplined, and so on. So all the questions.

But I mention this because it’s very interesting. First is the stereotyping. People would say, “You are this way, that way.” And that’s, of course, not without basis. In general, that’s probably true in many cases, but somehow, we should not stereotype too much. It so happens now, looking back, two of the areas where people say I did extremely well: one is the fundraising, the other is bringing the tremendous spirit in our athletics. So how ironic. That was a major concern in that.

In fact, the third question, another question I remember very well, someone said, “You are an engineer by nature for many, many years.” At that time, not that many engineers are becoming chancellors or presidents. Engineers—people also have this stereotyping, feel they are antihumanistic and so on. So they said, “You are an engineer by training. How do you view the humanities and liberal arts, how can you deal with many of that?” and so on.

So again, I tried to explain to them, although I’m an engineer by training, I read widely, I appreciate the values, human values, humanistic values, and so on. Even when my announcement was mentioned, as I said, February 15, a newspaper article indicated many humanistic, social science faculty members were very concerned about appointing an engineering professor as the chancellor. Of course, all engineering professors in the College of Engineering here, they were very supportive, they were very happy to see their colleague selected.

**Image, Attitudes, Research Concerns**

## [11B]

Nathan: So at the end, did they accept?
Tien: Yes. At the end, when I stepped down from my chancellorship in 1997, actually, I have very strong, broad support from the humanities and social sciences. Of course, I also say from physical sciences, engineering, or biological sciences, they also support me strongly. So again, it’s the kind of image sometimes, not necessarily always reflecting the right thing. That’s very, very interesting.

It didn’t take me long, of course, to decide to come back to Berkeley, especially when I was offered. I didn’t try to deal; I never really dealt with the president about what kind of salary, what kind of benefits and so on. I always say, “If I like the job, I just take it. I don’t care how much you pay me,” and so on. Somebody later on commented that I was very strange. In fact, I heard some comment from staff people in the president’s office that I was the only one in the search of the chancellors not to have any discussion about the offer.

I just accepted it and never negotiated anything. In fact, they say that in even a negative tone. They implied that I’m so naive, I really don’t know what I’m doing. But this may be again part of my Asian culture. You’re interested in what you do and you don’t worry about that kind of thing. So I never tried to negotiate anything.

So when David Gardner offered me the job, I just accepted immediately. He said, “How can you do this? You should tell me you’re going to think, you’re going to take a longer time.” I said, “Why? If I do this, if I’m interested, why should I let other people wait?”, and so on. That was again kind of interesting.

I was concerned about my research. When I moved down to Irvine, I was determined to carry on my research. They also offered me a UCI Distinguished Professorship, and I moved my laboratory from Berkeley to Irvine, bought some equipment, relocated my Ph.D. students and also postdocs. Everything was just about right after a year and a half, and then with this coming, I had to move back. I called the department chairman here immediately, and that was Dan Mote. He is now going to the University of Maryland as president, Dan Mote, C. D. Mote. He was department chairman. When I was department chairman in ME, he was vice chairman. Later on, when I was about to come back, he was department chairman.

So I called him, I said, “I’m coming back. Do you have still my laboratory there?” He said, “Gosh, fortunately. We were almost allocating your laboratory out to somebody else, but since it’s so soon, now we change our plan, you can go back to your own old laboratory, still the same here.”

Nathan: And could all those students and postdocs come back too?

Tien: Yes, they also came back. So they came back too. So that relocation was not a major issue. I still have my research project, so I still intend to continue my work as professor.
Questions of Berkeley FTE, Professorship

Tien: Originally, before I went to Irvine, they made me the chaired professor, A. Martin Berlin Chair. When I went to Irvine, I took a one-year leave, because of transition, and the second year after, I resigned from Berkeley in order to be at Irvine full-time. Also I didn’t want to have any impression I might still be hanging on with Berkeley although I’m executive vice chancellor at Irvine. So I resigned from the Berkeley faculty position. I resigned as the A. Martin Berlin Chair professor also.

In fact, I became the chancellor at Berkeley; I was a professor at Berkeley and A. Martin Berlin Chair professor at Berkeley, but when I first arrived to Berkeley as chancellor, I still don’t have my professorship approved. Not only that, I didn’t even have a faculty position, FTE. Because at that time, the budget became tight, and there’s no FTE. And then now I'm coming back. So I asked Dan Mote, "Do I still have the title?" He said, "Fortunately again, we haven't allocated that, given that away, so you can resume that title again. Except that the bureaucracy now, coming back, we have to go through our Budget Committee, Academic Senate faculty committee."

So they said well, I should come back, they would approve my professorship without FTE in the beginning. That in fact created a problem when I resigned my chancellorship, I was planning to come back to ME. Then I discovered I didn't have an FTE. [laughs]

Nathan: You had it during the time you were chancellor?

Tien: I just had professor without FTE, because of my hours working full-time as chancellor. Now I have to come back, so they have to juggle around, find an FTE position for me. So finally, they got one, with a lot of help of the dean and Academic Senate, so I came back with an FTE, and I had to buy a home. That was interesting.

Same thing happened when I moved to Irvine. When I became executive vice chancellor in 1988, I didn't have a professor position. They had to approve. Coming from Berkeley, joining Irvine, I thought it should be automatic. No. I had to go through all the process, and recommendation letters, and the evaluation, and so on. That was very interesting.

Also, when I became chancellor, I remember both the chairman of the board, Roy Brophy at that time, as well as President David Gardner, both separately talked to me. They said, "We know you are a very active scholar. You do research, although you have been in administration." But they forewarned me, "Chancellorship is very different. It will use up all your time. We would advise you, please don't work on your own research any more. Devote all your time to the chancellorship, administration, and managing the whole campus. Berkeley is so complicated." And so on.

Finding Ways to Continue Research, Teaching

Nathan: How did you answer that?
Tien: I said, "Well, of course, I will do my best to handle all the administration, management, as well as others," but I didn't say, "I'm going to stop my research." I didn't want to tell them in front. So my first two or three years, actually in some sense I was hiding. I would never come to my laboratory, the department, like this building here [Etcheverry Hall]. I would always stay in University Hall. My first year as chancellor was in the University Hall. At that time, systemwide administration just moved out to Oakland, so I was in the University Hall. At that time, I don't come here. So all my Ph.D. students and postdocs can only see me at night, sometimes after midnight, and then I come to the lab and talk to them, guiding their research and so on. I didn't want to have anyone accuse me of not really paying full attention to administration. Administration is not at the expense of my research or scholarly activities.

But I firmly believe whoever is chancellor or president and so on, by having intellectual activities, scholarly work, alongside will help to remind them of the feeling of academia, and the sense what the faculty have been doing. Because everyday administrative pressure is very real; sometimes distorts your sense of priorities. You always feel, "Well, maybe I can compromise a little bit here at the expense of the quality or academic excellence in order to achieve some administration. But if I keep always myself still very active in the scholarly work, then I perhaps will place a much higher sense and a value on the academic, scholarly work."

So I feel very strongly, so I still see students every night, midnight, or later. I remember many times, students want to see me urgently. I said, "The only time I can see you is two o'clock in the morning." And they grab it. They say they want to see me at two o'clock. So I come here at two o'clock. But at eight o'clock a.m., I go to my office. Eight to five, or eight to seven, I stayed long time, working on that. So nobody can say I'm neglecting my administrative job by working in the closet for my research and others.

Again, very interesting thing is after two or three years, people have confidence in you. In fact, people were saying I was doing extremely well. Then I began to come out of the closet. Then many of them, even President David Gardner, liked to say, "Gosh, it's just fantastic. Not only he is doing great in administration and managing Berkeley, such a complex place, but he also is doing research, scholarly activities." Of course, the faculty really liked it, because they talked to someone still active in that.

I enjoyed that a lot, so I never stopped my research, although my laboratory became smaller and smaller. Right now, I've reached more equilibrium. So that was another very interesting point, even looking back now. I still feel very strongly, recommend if possible the administrator should keep some activities, scholarly activity, alongside. I must say, several of my colleagues, Dan Mote, he has maintained very active research activity, his laboratory. My first provost, John Heilbron, also very active in his research of history of science, very renowned scholar. Carol Christ, our current provost, my second provost, she still taught, and also maintained her scholarly activities. So that was very possible.
Micromanaging vs. Letting Students Blossom

Tien: Also, I want to say a very interesting thing: I learned a lesson. For instance, now, the last two years, after I stepped down from chancellor, in fact people felt very puzzled. They said, "How come? When you were chancellor, in fact, you are doing perhaps even much better research than before, when you were not chancellor," although I was very active.

But they'd say, "Your own research was becoming even more exciting." Actually, it makes me think, maybe sometime, our professors micromanage our talented young Ph.D. students and postdocs perhaps too much, or if you micromanage them too much, they cannot have the opportunity to blossom, to seek their own new directions.

So when I was chancellor, I was so busy, I really don't have any time, opportunity to micromanage them, only set the general direction, the major topic. So if they have any major obstacles, I will get into it, and so my recent Ph.D. students, they were just fantastic. They became much stronger, because they were on their own, they can develop their own thing, and that's a great lesson for many professors to learn. We always thought about professors, "Oh, you know more, you have more experience, you should dictate, micromanage." And I think we should let the young people blossom on their own right. The professor should just be kind of helping them alongside, set the major directions, help them to solve major obstacles, and not try to suppress or affect their originality or innovative talents.

I'm still learning. I respect my students' views, their initiative. If they are wrong, of course, I try to debate with them, but not like before: "I'm the professor, you're a student, you listen to me, you have to follow this direction." So there are many, many interesting things you really learn. So that's another very, very interesting twist during my chancellorship in terms of my scholarly work.

Four Goals, Reality, and Finding the Way

Tien: In terms of the administration, on February 15, there was an announcement I would be appointed, and then immediately, they asked me, "What is your vision, your overall direction?" So I actually had been thinking about this for some time. Being executive vice chancellor at Irvine helped me a lot, because many things are similar. I was like chief operating officer at Irvine. So I said, "Four directions, four major goals in my administration. The first one is maintaining academic excellence, faculty and academic excellence." That, of course, was very easily appreciated by everyone. But later on, we find that's a very difficult one to achieve. I'll come back on that again later.

The second thing is, I want to really change the undergraduate education campus atmosphere, and students, paying attention to students, environment, learning environment.

The third thing is, the issue now we talked a lot about, is diversity. I want to make Berkeley a landmark, not just of diversity but excellence. So at that time, I mentioned
about excellence through diversity. It's not just excellence and diversity, because I feel nowadays excellence can only come through diversity. I must say, lately, the development makes me feel a little bit concerned about that. The fourth goal, I want to increase the campus outreach to the community, and including university relations and fundraising and so on, make the campus very much part of the overall community; also we need to get more support from the community.

So looking back, I think in all four areas I have done my best. The first issue, about academic and faculty excellence, was the hardest. I thought that was easy to maintain, Berkeley being a great academic institution, to maintain that would be easy. Of course, I didn't realize right after I became chancellor, we had the worst budgetary financial challenge facing the university, historically unprecedented. We had many years of cuts; we had one year faculty and staff all get salary cuts.

We have to introduce an early retirement program. Berkeley lost almost 30 percent of the faculty members in three years through the VERIP [Voluntary Early Retirement Incentive Program] retirement incentive program. We have to cut down the number of staff members. We have to really reduce the budget every year by 5 percent, 7 percent, 10 percent.

At that time, my concern was not budget cutting, but how can we maintain our excellence in this kind of budgetary shrinking environment? And that was a very, very big challenge. Looking back, I think we probably have done as best we can. Right now, Berkeley is ranked still very high, and our budgetary challenge is not completely over, but still is just really slowly recovering. So I feel very good on that.

[interruption]

Nathan: Will you call the budget for the library part of this process?

Tien: Also, yes, oh, absolutely. All of it. The library is especially hit hard. We tried very hard to protect the library, but when you have such a huge, monumental reduction in budget, just every unit will be affected. That was the very sad part, and how to maintain the excellence in that kind of situation. Every day, you have to make some kind of choice: where to eliminate, where to cut, and of course, every elimination will indirectly have some impact on the program, on the faculty morale, on the quality, and so on. So that was very tough.

The second issue, about students and campus atmosphere, I make a point, every day I walk on campus. I talk to the students, shake hands. I go to dining halls, I go to their residence area, I visit them. I go to their parties, and I go to their longtime singing groups, and so on. I maintained that priority. I remember in the beginning, people would say, "Chancellor, you cannot do this," because they said, "You are so busy. Even if you spend twenty-four hours on administration, you still cannot handle the paperwork." I said, "No, I know that, but what's important is you do the most important thing. You set your priorities, you set your goals." And some of the nonessential things, let other people do, handle. You delegate as much as possible, but what you feel are the most important things, you just have to remind yourself: focus, focus, everything you need to do.
So I remind myself, every day I have to get together, get to the community, students, campus, walk around, and I encourage students to give me suggestions, give me written notes. I must say, I was very deeply moved. Even now, people say, "Oh, I met you on the Sproul Hall steps. We were sitting together and we chatted." I say, "Oh, yeah, I remember this." Many cases, people even give me long lists of suggestions. They already wrote down all the suggestions, because they knew they would see me walking on campus, so they put it and said, "Chancellor, I have this--" and there would be several pages of suggestions about campus.

Oh, we actually followed all their suggestions, and it turned out to be most of the suggestions are the very best, because for many students, they are alive for the four years at Berkeley, and they spend twenty-four hours a day. Our professors, staff, sometimes spend eight hours a day during the office hours, but they [the students] live here. They go to classrooms, they live in the residence halls, they move around. They know everything. So when they make their suggestions, they were always very good suggestions, so I really appreciated that. I must say, I still miss that part of the activity so much, interacting with the young people, and Berkeley students are so intelligent, so creative, and that thing I still miss a lot. That's my second thing.

The third thing was the diversity. I of course tried very hard to do my best about it since 1996, 1995. We had the SPI resolution from the regents abolishing diversity consideration in admissions and others. So that was very, very tough. But on the other hand, that gave me an opportunity to create the Berkeley Pledge program and many others which turned out to be extremely successful. Again, last weekend they had another annual event about Berkeley Pledge announcing eighteen new students coming to Berkeley receiving the Incentive Award, a big event. So maybe later, I can come back on that when I talk about diversity episode. That by itself is a long, long struggle, and still not ending. And that's the third element.

The fourth element is about outreach to the community, and of course, after I became chancellor, I was planning for a new capital campaign, and also restructuring the office of university relations. So the first year, I think Mac Laetsch resigned as Vice Chancellor for Development, so that gave me an opportunity to restructure the development office, and also university relations all together. After the search, we appointed Dan Mote as the Vice Chancellor for University Relations, including the public affairs, university information office, as well as fundraising and development office; they work hard, extremely well. And after Dan Mote came on board, we planned about our next big capital campaign, especially when our budget was very poor at that time, and we planned a $1 billion capital campaign. Later on, that was increased to more than a billion. The development of the new capital campaign also did extremely well. I'm very pleased.

**Significance of Athletics**

###[12A]

Tien: But one area I find perhaps as unique in the university relations-general campus atmosphere is my work within athletics. I am being a sports fan and a true believer in the
importance of college athletics, so I really tried to promote our athletic activity as much as possible. I remember when I first became chancellor, many people advised me. In fact, they said, "Chancellor Tien, we know you are a very ardent sports fan, but at Berkeley, this is poison. You should not try to put yourself so much supporting athletics."

Of course, I didn't pay attention to that, and I said, "We've got to support our [athletic activities]--I feel this is important for the spirit, for the alumni, and for our development function, and also very important for our students to be more participative in many athletic events or activities." Because that can bring up their leadership quality, discipline themselves, to use teamwork, and all those things. So I actually from the very beginning, I went very strong supporting that.

I also, however, make it very clear we must have integrity. Berkeley is different from other universities in many ways. We want to maintain excellence in many different areas, and we need athletic excellence, but not at the expense of institutional integrity. So we must be very clean. During my tenure again, I actually dismissed several coaches. If they do anything or are proven to have done something wrong, or are not very consistent to the university's institutional culture, I'm not hesitating to dismiss anyone of that type.

**Issues: Copper Bowl, Citrus Bowl, "Buy American"**

Tien: So I think we have done very well. Our teams, basketball, football, I went to many of the events, and so on. But again, it also had some tough decisions. Let me say my very first decision in athletics: I want to support our athletics, so in my first year, 1990, I worked with the team, and I came to all the football games. Our football team did very well. And fortunately, our record was such, it put us into the Copper Bowl in Tucson.

Nathan: I remember that.

Tien: That was 1990, end of November. We were selected because of our record to be the participants in the Copper Bowl. Of course, at that time, Arizona as a state does not recognize Martin Luther King holiday, so immediately, NAACP protested strongly about our going to play in the Copper Bowl in Tucson. I actually talked to the coaches as well as the players, and the A.D. [Athletic Director], we actually asked the student players, all of them, whether they liked to go ahead to participate or not, especially those African American players. And all of them said they'd like to go, they want to go. Also, we checked with the City of Tucson. They actually honor Martin Luther King's birthday. Even the City and the County of Tucson both, they actually take a very different view from the state.

So that was a very tough decision. I made the hard decision. I'm a great admirer of Martin Luther King as a person, as a leader, as a historical figure who did so much for all of us; I was very much impacted by Martin Luther King's work. But I feel that there's somewhere we have to separate out the sports activities, especially when players, coaches, and athletic staff, all of them, wanted to go ahead, and considering Tucson city,
they also honor Martin Luther King Day; we should not make such a big issue, and I said we should go ahead.

Once I made the decision, I usually don't try to change, or even not under any threat to change my decision. Of course, I remember just before, in December 1990, early December, seven NAACP local chapter presidents all stormed into my office demanding my immediate resignation from the chancellorship because I do not want to change my decision, and so on. So they pounded my table and make all sorts of this—"You are finished, we are going to work to get you ousted from this office." At that time, many people actually questioning about my commitment to diversity, or to represent minorities, and so on.

So again, I stood steadfastly on my decision. We went there, and actually, we won the game. That again is a major turnaround, because later on it was proven, I'm not only a strong supporter of affirmative action and diversity, I perhaps did more than normal people would do, and took a lot of courageous actions in defense of diversity and affirmative action. So that was an interesting thing about athletics.

There are a number of other athletic things I should mention, since I mentioned about African Americans. In 1992, if I remember well, again we did very well. We went to the Citrus Bowl, and then again, I had the very tough time during that time.

It's 1992, right? Is that 1992 or '93? Yes, 1992. We beat our opponent in the city of Orlando, Florida, the Citrus Bowl. In the post-victory celebration, I went to the podium, and there are some supporters of our opponents who started to chant, "Buy American, buy American." Because even though they knew I'm chancellor, I'm Asian American; to many people Asian Americans are still not Americans, so they said, "Buy American, buy American." That was very embarrassing, awkward, but I took it in a graceful way, and tried not to create a big issue out of that. This happened many times even during my chancellor's tenure. There are a number of athletic things. Maybe later on we can come back again.

**People’s Park, Shoes on PG&E Wires, Life Threats**

Tien: But I do want to mention one thing before we end today: that was my very first major challenge in my first year, 1990. President Gardner told me, regents told me, especially the chairman of the regents, Roy Brophy, really repeated the emphasis. That is, I must do something about People’s Park. I have to handle the People’s Park. At that time, it became such a thorny issue, it became also so disgraceful in many ways. When we go down to, say, Derby and Dwight Way, and near Telegraph, even on those telephone lines, we see all those shoes hanging up and so on.

Nathan: That means drug sales? Is that what the shoes mean?

Tien: No, just people like to throw their shoes, put them on the lines, to show they are different. It's anti-establishment and so on. So I tried very hard. First we got a tentative agreement. Before actually I came in, Chancellor Heyman reached a tentative agreement with the
city, tried to have the People’s Park co-managed with the city, part of the People’s Park leased to the city and so on.

But when I became chancellor, that was the thing I had to handle immediately. In fact, let me mention about the shoes, how I handled the shoes issue. Nothing is simple. The shoes on all those telephone or electric wires is such an eyesore. Anyone coming to Berkeley, sees those dirty shoes on those lines, just terrible. For a while, many of the visitors thought those were the birds, sparrows, and so on, but no, when they find the dirty shoes, they just couldn't believe it.

So I thought that would be a very simple issue. I instructed at that time Dan Boggan, vice chancellor, very good--he was of course Berkeley city manager before--and I said, "Dan, we've got to take those shoes off." He said, "Not that easy." I said, "Why?" He said, "Actually, first, those lines don't belong to the university. It's in the public property on the streets, it's under the city. It's not the university. Second, those lines really are under the jurisdiction of PG&E, and so on. You cannot do it. So it's not that we can send somebody to take the shoes off. In case anything happened, we are violating all the rules and law and the regulations."

I said, "That's ridiculous. Why don't we talk to PG&E? We can pay, we have our support or whatever necessary, and they just give us the approval to take those shoes off." And then we talked to the PG&E. At that time, PG&E said no. I said, "Why?" They said, because they do not want to antagonize, make a big issue out of another community. If anybody makes the issue, it becomes a PG&E problem, give the PG&E a very bad eye, or it is controversial. And right now, people blame it on the university. They don't have to do anything.

I said, "That's very bad. You cannot do this." Then we tried to persuade PG&E, and no, they cannot do anything.

Then I got mad. I said, "This is an outrage, maybe stupidity." I said, "Dan, you just tell PG&E we have talked to them, we have urged them, because that can be a public and safety issue, if some of the shoes came down, knocked somebody down, and so on. Our students could get hit. We are going to sue PG&E. If they are not going to do that, or don't give us permission to take those shoes off, we are going to sue them, because this is a public safety issue for our students and our staff, our people, community."

So we actually took a very hard line, and the PG&E then said, "Okay, okay, you can take them off." So then we took the shoes off, and after we took the shoes off, next day, we see the shoes going back again. Because for some of the people, they feel we are challenging their authority, and they cannot allow this. So they put the shoes back. And now, of course, I said, "Every day, we have to clean up that."

We confiscated all the shoes, and also, after one week, and of course, most of the shoes already gone [laughing]. We finally got that issue resolved, so now we don't see any shoes any more. That was such a terrible eyesore. So that simple issue is not easy to resolve. It took persistence, and really just uncompromising determination, and you get that result.
There are many, many issues of that type dealing with People’s Park. Of course, later on, they also threatened my life. I think in 1992, they built a grave on the People’s Park with my name there. It was a tombstone, as Chang-Lin Tien's grave. I thought that was joking, so I didn't pay attention. Of course, I think 1993 or 1992, they broke into our house, some homeless people broke into University House, tried to assassinate us. Of course, fortunately, we came out safe out of that issue.

So it was very exciting, the People’s Park issue, still ongoing, but at least no longer in the newspaper any more. We made some real progress gradually, but still, we have to keep on. Right now, unfortunately, I must say I heard in the newspaper again, Telegraph Avenue seems to be another issue coming up, and I think a very strong action is needed in order to protect the campus surroundings and atmosphere, and also our students, faculty, staff's safety.

So maybe this is a good time for us to stop, four-thirty-five, and then give me a rest, and then we can continue our conversation next time.

Nathan: Very good.
More on Four Goals

[Interview 7: August 12, 1998] ## [13A]

Tien: Yes, I had four main goals I set in 1990. I maintained focus on those through all my seven years, and that helped a lot. I think in each area, we had accomplished quite a bit.

To summarize: the first area was maintaining academic excellence. Unfortunately, immediately after I became chancellor, everything almost collapsed in terms of financial structure. We had a tremendous budget cut; we had salary decreases for the first time ever; and then we had three VERIPs, early retirement, to try to save money, or utilize some of the pension fund to rescue us on a temporary basis. We also cut our faculty size. But overall, we did quite well. We made tremendous inroads about recruitment and the retention of the faculty, so we remained as a premier institution among the research universities.

Second is the hospitable environment to everyone, diversity and so on. Again, this cut back more and more, affirmative action. I started the Incentive Awards program, the Berkeley Pledge program later on. Also, I visited all the student organizations, walked on campus every day, so everyone would feel very close to me, and that helps a lot in terms of campus atmosphere.

Third is to improve undergraduate education, especially in lower division. From the very beginning, we focused on lower division, particularly freshman year. The reason is for many students coming from different communities, many of them are relatively homogeneous in their own community. So they come to a very diverse environment like Berkeley, it will take a lot of adjustments. In fact, many of them find difficulty in adjustment. These are all very good students, but our atmosphere and environment is so stimulating, a few of them just forgot they are here to learn, to study, and they went to many other extracurricular activities.

Also on the freshman year, we find many students in the freshman class at Berkeley, we are so competitive now, so they are all number one, number two in their graduating class, valedictorian, you know, all ranked the number one or number two. And they come to Berkeley, and in the freshman classes, we grade in most cases on a curve. So some of them will get A's or D's, and a few get A's, and many of them get B's. Many of them, we find out they're shocked, because they were always a straight-A student, number one in class. Suddenly they're finding a C and so on. It's a tremendous blow on their self-confidence and so on.

So all of these factors combined together make the freshman the most important year. Really campus should care for them. So we increased a lot of activities, mentoring, and many programs to help them, student activities, academic activities, and so on. So that helps tremendously.
On the upper division, we also put some new efforts like research assistantship for upper division undergraduate students. We also have created many small classes, so that will make it more personal, many of them in the freshman year. In the freshman year, they have large classes like economics, physics, chemistry, mathematics. Now we feel they must have one or two smaller classes, like a freshman seminar. So we created many of that, with the help of faculty. They were very supportive. Many of them volunteered to teach those classes in addition to their normal workload, so very good overall effort.

Nathan: Did you think that it is advisable to continue grading on the curve?

Tien: I think when you have a very large class, you still have to discriminate some of the very best from the others and so on. So maybe the curve can be a little skewed. We have to think about, if the students coming are so good, maybe the average class GPA [grade point average] should be also reflecting that, and not to say the class GPA should be always a certain set value. We encouraged the faculty members to consider that, everything. But I think it’s inevitable, when you get a lot of good people together, you still have to distinguish them from the A+ or A or B students.

On that part I’m not too worried. Berkeley is known to be a tough school, compared to some other leading, private institutions, that people fear are too easy. They never give anything less than an A or B and so on. Because for many elite private schools, the student pays so much tuition, they are expecting some help from the university.

So because of this reputation, in fact many of our graduates, when they apply to graduate school to other universities, find they actually make a numerical adjustment for Berkeley graduates, because we are known to be tough and grading hard. For instance, many medical schools, when they consider admission of new students if they’re coming from Berkeley, they keep them in some percentage of upward adjustments, to compensate for the difference in grades. So it’s not all bad. We have a good reputation.

**When Not to Yield**

Tien: The fourth area is building ties, which I did do a lot of, both in terms of university relations and also in fundraising and communicating to outside. All of that I think worked very well. But many of these are not that easy. Let me give you two very specific examples. It’s always good to have some specific examples.

One is in terms of campus environment. When I became chancellor, one of the major tasks was to clean up People’s Park. In fact, I was given the very specific instruction from the regents and from President David Gardner, People’s Park had been degenerating very badly after twenty years, almost, since the late sixties going on, and we have never been able to resolve that issue. So that’s one I was determined to do. But by doing so, I also encountered reluctance or opposition from many different quarters. For instance, the city did not want to do anything, because they felt that’s the university’s property, don’t create anything which will have unrest in the general community. Even the neighborhood, they did not like People’s Park, but on the other hand, they did not want to see any riots. So there were different things to consider. If you go too strongly and you
have a riot and so on, that could destroy their peace and so on. Even the peace is not that
good, and so on.

Also, there is a sizeable liberal/radical community. They feel the homeless and People’s
Park are a very important symbol to them. Anyone trying to improve that would not be
really good for them. So I had to work through that very treacherous thing to do that.

But I did take a very hard line to clean up the park and build some student sports activity
facilities over there, like basketball and volleyball and others. Of course, we had riots. I
forgot which year; I think it was 1992, most likely. We had several days, day and night,
of rioting. Even the district attorney of Alameda County threatened me, because they
said they cannot hold the public peace any more, security. So they pressured me to yield.
Even the state government also indirectly asked me, “Please try to compromise,” not to
take such a harsh step.

But realizing this has been a problem of twenty-five years without a very strong step, [it’s
necessary to] make people feel you mean business and no nonsense. So I took a very
strong step not to yield. So that was very tough. Many people all advised me to back
down and not to confront everyone all together.

It eventually worked out well. Especially after that, after four days and nights of rioting,
people started to realize I mean business. I’m not one who can be pushed around, so I’m
determined to find some better solution for that, for the People’s Park. And after that,
everything is going quite well. So from that point on, we gradually every year improved
the People’s Park and so on. Of course, right now I don’t know. I don’t follow that, but I
heard there are some complaints about Telegraph Avenue again coming up. I think this is
an issue very critical to the Berkeley campus, the surrounding campus environment. We
have to make sure that it’s safe, it’s clean, liveable, hospitable. The recent murder of the
student and others, that all creates some problem for us.

I had also my share of very tragic events. We had a woman student murdered in
Eshleman Hall, in the ASUC offices. We had a number of them. I think the south side
environment is a very key issue, and it’s not easy to do. So that’s one very specific
example.

I keep another example about university relations and the sports. Everybody knew I was
a very ardent supporter of sports events. But I don’t know whether I mentioned before,
but my very first decision was whether to go to the Copper Bowl or not. I did mention it.

Nathan: I think you did, yes.

Tien: So then I won’t say much on that one any more. And that shows I’m very supportive of
sports, but when I say they should go to Tucson for the Copper Bowl, and all the African
American groups demanded my resignation, again I didn’t yield. They really gave me a
hard time, that was my first six months, during that period. But I feel if I’m doing
something I feel is right, I should stick to that and not be compromised.

So those are examples I just wanted to show. Some of the things are not that clearcut.
You have to take a hard line, or evaluate many different angles, facets, and then choose
what you think is the right thing for the overall community as a whole. So those are the main goals and some of my views.

Some views, you have this—FSM, 1964. As I said, I personally supported FSM. In fact, I became a tenured faculty member in 1964, the summer. Right after that, FSM broke out, and I feel, “I’m a tenured faculty member, I really should be more concerned about my institution.” So I started joining some activity, but I was very young and relatively new in campus politics. So I did support giving students much more voice. But I must say, I’m not too sympathetic about any negative destructions, so I also take a strong view on that. Just like many issues, you have to be careful not to swing too far.

Divestiture issues, also very important. Apartheid. I remember that; that’s more 19— that’s actually 1980s, in South Africa. I remember that we went to [meet at] the Harmon Gym. Harmon Gym now is Haas Pavilion coming up.

Nathan: Right.

**Involvement in Campus Issues, Seeking Balance**

Tien: There was a regents’ meeting over there to have a hearing, and I was listening to all that. That was a very stimulating time, I must say. I was involved there too. I think at that time I was already Vice Chancellor for Research, so I was very much into overall campus activities.

I always feel we should have students active. I like to have students active. I’m also always a pro-active person. But I always feel they should always keep in mind whatever they do should be positive and constructive, and not destructive, not to go to extremes, so that there is no way to make progress or get a consensus and so on. This may very well be the influence I have from the Confucian view of moderation. I always try to find a proper balance, versus shutting down the university.

But I must say, I also don’t agree with some of the Confucian views of moderation. I like to see that modified as a more active and constructive moderation. I always like to see us push, because social injustice or social justice, you’ve got to push, press hard, but not to the point of shutting down [the university] or being destructive and so on. So that has been always my view, even though I’m a very ardent supporter of affirmative action and racial equality and so on, but I’m not an extremist. I always try to work within the system, but push very hard in the system, and to bring everybody together, and to move in the right direction. So that has been always my philosophy. But of course, everything is relative. Many people say I’m more radical. Some people say I’m conservative. It depends on where you come from.

Another good example is during 1997, 1996-97, after SP1, SP2 passed—
**Regents’ Special Resolutions vs. Affirmative Action**

Nathan: Now, what is SP? Senate—

Tien: No, that’s the regents. There are two resolutions. SP means special. You can say it is Special Resolution, SP1, SP2. That was the famous one abolishing admission for the affirmative action reasons. After that, of course, Regent Ward Connerly became such a target of the more radical or liberal elements on campus.

I fought very hard before the regents passed SP1. I devised many new initiatives after they passed that to overcome those obstacles, but I would not be a lawbreaker. Since I was chancellor, I had to follow the regents’ resolutions. So I insisted I would follow the regents’ resolution, although I would try to do everything I can within that framework to help promoting diversity and so on.

But that stand does not look good to many of our very radical elements, so they said I’m worse than Regent Connerly as an enemy because they said Regent Connerly at least is very clear. He is opposed to all that, and I’m maybe from their viewpoint too wishy-washy. So that was the pamphlet, picket line. They said they were against Chancellor Tien because he is a worse enemy than Regent Connerly, from their viewpoint. That was an interesting point.

Nathan: Yes.

Tien: I feel that was perhaps an honor for me to be thought of that way.

**Widespread Campus Discussion, Consultation**

Tien: [reading from outline] “Relationship with faculty members. Was Dean Kuh someone you consulted?” Oh, I do consult with Dean Kuh, but not that much. Because he was the dean when I was department chairman. He was on the chancellor’s search committee, so he knew more about campus than I do. So I do consult; I consulted very widely. I have many dinners and lunches and breakfasts with all faculty members, many, many of them. I knew probably at least 60 percent of the faculty members on campus. Also I made a point to know as many as possible, and especially those who are perhaps more widely respected and esteemed faculty members, I know almost everyone. So I consulted with them.

For instance, Daniel Koshland in biological science, I talked to him a number of times. You know Daniel Koshland.

Nathan: I do.

Tien: Again, I always enjoy talking to him. He was very forthright. Many people couldn’t take much of his advice or views, but I find my relationship with him just superb. He was one I always valued very strongly, because he’s straight. He’s very straight, honest. So I can
go on. In the biological science Bob Tjian, Professor Robert Tjian. He was later on the chairman of the Chancellor’s Committee on Biological Science. I talked to him also on biological areas.

I talked to many of them. Bill Simmons, he just left to become provost and academic vice president of Brown University. He was dean of the Social Sciences when I was chancellor, and we both worked very hard trying to introduce some reform on our curriculum. We both were regarded as too liberal or too radical. So this happens. But I’m fortunate, even people who disagree with me, they don’t dislike me. So they like me, they respect me, so I have many, many people of that type. I talked to many, many people.

I talked to the former chancellors a lot. I make the point, because they have very special expertise and experience. For instance, I talked to Roger Heyns before he died. He was in the Hewlett Foundation, and periodically I talked to him. Also—

Nathan: Albert Bowker?

Tien: Oh, Albert Bowker, yes. Almost every month either he came to my office, or sometimes he just called me, he wants to give me some advice. I’m always available. Glenn Seaborg, I see him very often, especially in athletics, and then we talk on many things. Michael Heyman, I of course call him, ask him for advice. It’s very helpful. But I also call David Gardner. He was president, and even after he left the presidency and went to the Hewlett Foundation, we maintained very close contact. He is another very, very wise person. I respect a lot about many of his judgments, views, and so on. Despite some people say the last two years of his presidency, he was tainted by some of the controversy and so on.

And Jack Peltason, also he was my former boss. Then he was Irvine chancellor and then became university president. I feel very lucky. I’m one not too sensitive about my ego, so I call, I talk to them, I welcome them. Any time they want to talk to me, I’m available, because it is very important to get all different views.

But I must say, I always remind myself, I’m the chancellor now, I should make the decision. I’m in charge. But I should hear as much as I can.

Now, of course, you mentioned Clark Kerr. That’s very much my idol. In fact, I have regular lunch meetings with Clark Kerr, and Budd Cheit too. Budd was my official advisor also in many ways, Budd Cheit, and Clark Kerr, and many others. Clark, of course, he is so incisive and penetrating, refreshing in many of these creative views. So I find it’s just fabulous. This is a great human resource for us, many of the past chancellors and presidents, vice chancellors, deans, so I have very close contact with all of them. And even faculty members, younger faculty members, I make a point to see all the younger faculty members, to talk to them.
Changes Toward a Lean Administration

Tien: My administration organization, yes; I tried to at that time to make the organization as lean as possible.

Nathan: There are so many facets to all of this. Very interesting, how you were able to find your one way through.

Tien: Yes. I tried to, when I came on board, I feel I have to keep our administration streamlined and cut the levels, reporting levels, both in terms of vertical as well as horizontal. For instance, after one or two years, I abolished the three-provost system. We had two professional school provosts. That’s the Letters and Science provost and the professional schools provost, and then we have the vice chancellor, and then we have a provost for graduate studies and research, dean of the Graduate Division. That’s one layer I feel maybe we could cut down one level. That’s on the vertical line.

Again, at Berkeley, any change will be hard, especially when you try to affect a number of offices and so on. But I did do that. Now I think the new chancellor also changed that to executive vice chancellor-provost. Carol Christ is still the same person; and then we have just the deans. So we eliminated one layer. That’s on the vertical layer.

On the horizontal one, I tried to keep it very tight, so we had only five vice chancellors. At that time, especially with the budget so tight, we had reduced our staff by about more than 10 percent, the faculty also 10 percent. So I tried to say the top level also should not expand, but now I see we have again several new vice chancellors coming up, and again, that’s fine with me. Everyone has a different style.

But in the systemwide, I was famous to be very stingy about keeping too many vice chancellors. UCLA, as a comparison, has eleven or twelve vice chancellors, and we have only five. I may have gone a little bit too far, so it’s hard to say. I always feel the top level should not be too happy. The front line people are very important for us. They should not feel that there are too many chiefs but we should pay more attention to the Indians, the lesser people. And so on.

Nathan: Does that mean a redistribution of assignments or responsibilities?

Tien: Oh, yes, many. We shuffled many of them. Also combined several offices. For instance, I created the vice chancellor for university relations development. At that time, there was only a development vice chancellor, but I put on public information and relations with fundraising, all together. Dan Mote, now he is going to University of Maryland as president. He worked with me for many, many years. He was vice chairman of the mechanical engineering department, and then he became chairman after I moved out. When I was vice chancellor, he was department chairman, and then when I was chancellor, he became a vice chancellor. He is a very good person, fantastic capability. We lost him. He will be the president of the University of Maryland.
University’s Image, Media’s Attitude

Tien: But at that time, that was hard. The former vice chancellor, when I tried to make a change, I made him very unhappy. So in this job, you also create a number of people who don't like change. So I won't comment too much. When I change, move people, they are not happy. But I feel nothing personal; what is the best for the university, I will follow, and I could be very tough. But I want to be tough but very humane and personal.

So I think we did a lot. I put a lot of emphasis about public information, communication to the public. I do that myself a lot, because especially at that time, Berkeley's image was not too good. We needed to do a lot to revive the good image, and that will have a direct impact on our fundraising capabilities. You must have a good image outside in order to raise money.

So I worked with the media a lot. When American media met me first, they had been very nice to me. I had no complaints. Some people even say I must have done something which made the media so biased towards me favorably--favorably biased. I didn't know, the major media like San Francisco Chronicle, San Jose Mercury News, or news stations, San Francisco Examiner, they had been very critical of, like before, President Gardner, President Peltason, and even Mike Heyman and others. But during my tenure, suddenly they have been very friendly, very supportive. I don't know whether that's due to my own Asian background or the way I treat people, like in a very personal way. I try to be honest, no playing around. But I don't know. It's hard to say. But I have no complaints.

Asian media, of course, treated me like a hero in California. The papers, all of them--I must say uniformly--New York Times, Washington Post, all of them have been extremely positive. My being the first Asian American chancellor in a major university may have something to do with it.

Of course, I do have some, not enemies, but some people disagree with me strongly, like Pat Buchanan. He wrote a piece in his column, even the title saying "Tien's Vision of America," just tried to ridicule me about the diversity, affirmative action, so on. So many conservative press, columnists, give me a hard time. But generally, I have no complaint. I have been treated very well everywhere.

Focus on Students, Campus Police

Tien: Focus on students: yes. Absolutely. I love students. I always feel my main job is the student.

Nathan: Was that a sort of natural focus?

Tien: I think it's very natural, based on my personal experience. I feel students sometimes are on the receiving end, are more vulnerable, compared to the faculty and others. Also, they are in their formative age. It is so important to give them the best environment we can ever have. Coming from my own background, I always have a tendency to root for the
underdog, always. I feel for students. Berkeley for many years, has had a reputation of
being not very friendly to students, and not personal, and our campus is not that
hospitable. So I said I have to change that.

There are many issues. You mentioned the new police chief. I am very proud about
Vicky [Victoria] Harrison, the first female chief of police in the university and at
Berkeley, and also in any police department in Alameda County. She is so capable and
doing so well, always maintaining her cool in dealing with very sensitive and heated
situations.

So we cooperated very well all along, for the police department. So that's another
interesting thing is, although I'm always on the students' side, but many students don't like
police, especially campus police. So I have to maintain good relations on both sides,
because I feel police have a tough job, to maintain peace and safety and so on. So that's
very good. All the police still say hello to me. In fact, they always say, "Oh, we miss you
so much now," and so on.

**Fires, Deaths, Racial Issues, Disaster Prevention**

Tien: But I think the key with the students, was Phi Kappa Sigma's fire. That was very
traumatic. That was in my first few months; three students died, and I went there. I think
I spent all the time with the students and family, and that perhaps changed the modern
image, people's image about Berkeley administration, particularly one.

I remember in the fire tragedies, one student, the body was already recovered. But the
police and firemen would not allow the parents to see the body, because there was some
protocol and regulations and so on. Except if I go with the parents, because I am head of
the institution, then they would allow. So I said sure, I would. Whatever the parents
wanted to do, the parents were crying and wanted to see their son--I don't know if it was
son or daughter; son, I think. So I said, no, no, I would go. So that changed a lot. And
the parents to this day, they still are very grateful for me to take that step, in order to
accompany them to see the body.

Then assassination attempt, the thing I mentioned before probably already in Berkeley, in
the past. So I don't go into that much.

Oakland-Berkeley fire: that was also the first year, I think, or second year of my tenure.
In fact I went to Toronto for an AAU, Association of American Universities, meeting.
When I got to Toronto, go to the hotel, checked in, there was immediately a reception,
and then somebody sent me a note saying there was a big Oakland hills fire. Many
students and also staff and faculty affected, so I said, "I have to go home immediately."
So I just turned around, fly back to Berkeley--Bay Area--and inspect immediately.

Again, there was a situation right after the fire, the next day, of course we had many
students affected. Three thousand houses burned down, many faculty members lost their
lifelong collections and manuscripts, and a lot of graduate students, Ph.D. students lost
their dissertations. A lot of very bad experiences. I toured the Oakland hills area the next
day. Again I went there, it was just like an atomic bomb blast. It all became burned down, barren, very deep impression on me. So that was the fire thing.

We again mounted a tremendous effort to help all the faculty, staff, and students. Again, that helped to promote our image in a very positive way.

Then you also mentioned on campus, we have many, many flare-ups of black/Korean, because of the racial strife in Los Angeles, and then you have also on the campus. There are also black and Asian in general, the Chinese, and also we have Jewish and Muslim issues coming up all the time. So how to maintain a balance between all different groups? But I think generally, I must say all people, despite some people who have very strong personal views, they are all rational, I must say. Again, this is my unfailing belief, so that I work with them all quite well. So no issue really makes me unacceptable to different groups. They all generally trust me, although I don't satisfy necessarily all their demands, but you have to try to find a way to help all sides.

We do a lot of trying to prevent disasters, trying to anticipate anything which might come. Like right now, every summer, we spend a lot of time doing preparatory work, trying to prevent any potential flare-ups or any potential trouble spots; we work on that. I think the best way to control campus unrest is preparation and prevention. Just like personal health, same issue.

Nathan: Yes.

**Student-Friendly Campus; Incentive Award**

Tien: Student-friendly campus: you have already mentioned. That was one of the major initiatives, how to eliminate lines. Berkeley had been famous for [waiting lines] for many, many years. Now I think that's pretty much eliminated. We automated enrollment and put up also a lot of counters any time needed. I personally monitored that every day, and I checked how long students were standing in a line. Anything beyond ten, fifteen minutes is totally unacceptable. So I will always mark down where delays persist.

I also walked through all the classrooms to make sure that they are clean, everything is ready for students and so on. If anything is wrong, I can do that. I don't know whether there was an issue. During the final exam, some student got sick, vomited, and I helped. I even helped clean the washroom, because I don't want the student to walk on that during the final exam. So those are some of the issues.

I think when you are really trying to help and you are very much determined, then gradually, people will recognize and support your effort. That changed the whole thing. We put in a lot of grants and scholarships, very helpful, because of our fundraising doing well. We put a university fund for students to help student accessibility, Incentive Awards, Berkeley Pledge. We put a lot of university unrestricted gifts into those things.

Nathan: Did you want to say anything about the Incentive Award?
Tien: Oh, yes, I can say a lot. Incentive Award was such a great program. Of course, I want to give the tremendous credit to the current director, what's her name? Maryellen Himell, the current director of the Incentive Awards Program.

She started with a $50,000 donation, volunteered to develop this program, submitted a proposal. I must say, one or two vice chancellors were not that supportive. They feel this is diverting some of our effort or our energy, attention, it's such a small program, and not that important. But I overruled. I said no.

Again, probably this is for underrepresented or underprivileged students, families. Again, that's something I had a soft spot for in my heart. So I said, "I'm going to carry this out." So I supported it very strongly. Every year, I go to attend that, and I talk to many of them. Then I raise money for that, try to. And now the program is very successful, the most successful. Even some people who originally were very skeptical about this program now later on became strong supporters of the program. So this is a very successful example, story.

Now they have expanded. Originally it was only for San Francisco. Now they are expanded to the East Bay, and also now even go to the Peninsula. They also raised a lot of money, an endowment, so on. I miss that very much. But very moving every year, when they have the annual meeting, go there, you hear the story.

**Conduct for a Former Chancellor**

Tien: I have very close rapport with all those activities, but since I am no longer chancellor, and especially with the new chancellor coming, I should not go there; I feel so bad, because if I go there, people still try to attach importance to my presence. So I do not take anything away from the new chancellor. He should be the one leader, strong leader. So that's why I miss a lot of that, although my heart is still there.

I don't even go into the campus. Very seldom, now. Because if I go there, people will talk to me and so on. I want to be relatively invisible. [laughs]

Nathan: That's a very sensitive response.

Tien: Well, I feel that's maybe again my upbringing. I always feel you have to think the other side, you should not think for yourself only, although I miss it a lot. I miss interacting with the students. I miss seeing many faculty members. Now, I never see Carol Christ. She worked with me very closely; I never see her, because she has a new boss, and we should respect that. Any time if I see her, I talk to her, it could be sometimes interference or undue influence and so on, so I don't see—even my chief of staff, John Cummins, I never see him, never talk to him, unless it's something I can get cleared from the chancellor's office.

For instance, Shirley Dean, the Berkeley mayor, a candidate, will come to see me. This is a key example. I worked with the community a lot and so on. When I was chancellor, I cannot take any position or endorse any candidates, but when I'm not, I could be as a
citizen of the community, Berkeley. I live in Berkeley for almost forty years, and I could endorse.

But because of my background as chancellor before, I don't want to have the new chancellor fear I'm intruding, so I actually called [to check with] the chancellor's office. And of course, they don't have to say anything. My view is Shirley Dean's candidacy probably will be better for the chancellor, for the campus. But when I agreed to endorse Shirley Dean--that was last Friday, that's the deadline--I called to let John Cummins know, and say, "I want to get cleared." Because anything I do, because my former chancellorship connection, I want to get cleared. So they said, "Oh, yes, you can," but the best way is to do that, not even with the university identification, just say “1451 Olympus,” resident. [laughter] So that's what I did.

So yes, I always think that way. Other than that, I never talk to them, my chief of staff before or my chief academic officer, because I think the new chancellor should be the one who can do everything.

More on Student Issues; Carnegie Report; Cybersemester

Tien: Okay, let's go on. More on student issues. Bay Area school reform, collaborative--yes, I was of course working on this, also very much tied to our Berkeley Pledge program. This is for the outreach to the community. We also tried to work with secondary schools. We actually have worked with many grade schools and high schools for their curriculum, teacher training, outreach. I personally went to visit many schools: Berkeley High, Lincoln High in Oakland, and Galileo High in San Francisco. I visited many community colleges also, because we have a lot of transfer students. Because that's the only way we can get the very best student input recruitment coming to campus.

(I think “undergraduate education,” I think we have done most of that.)

Nathan: Yes, we talked about that.

Tien: Yes. Expansion in educational opportunities: oh, one area we do a lot is expanding our international education, international; make the campus much more global. So we organized our International Area Studies, so we have a dean who right now is still Richard Buxbaum. He worked in the Institute of International Studies. We put a lot of emphasis on that. We inaugurated the Center for German and European Studies. We pushed hard for U.S. French activities. Of course, we also do a lot in terms of Asian Studies.

## [14A]

Nathan: There was one thing, if this interests you--

Tien: Yes. You just interrupt me any time.
Nathan: There was a report, a Carnegie report, "Reinventing Undergraduate Education, A Blueprint for America's Research Universities."

Tien: Yes, right, right.

Nathan: Were you involved in that?

Tien: Oh, very much so. We spent about two years, more than two years, on that particular project. That report is finally coming out. I was on the commission. A little bit critical, but very forthright, so it created a lot of attention everywhere about research universities. Mainly we find many research universities in that sense, including Berkeley, not paying attention to undergraduate teaching. Also, in many, many ways, our undergraduate teaching has been very outmoded, ancient style. We have not yet adopted--I mean "we," American university teaching, undergraduate--not adopted the new instructional technologies.

For instance, multimedia teaching, our teaching has been focused more on the transmission of knowledge instead of learning, really learning how. That's a key element. That's the report, those are some of the key recommendations. I spent a lot of time on that, and I feel that's a very valuable output. It generated a lot of attention and discussion. Hopefully it will be helpful in improving undergraduate teaching, education.

See, if we miss anything--Cybersemester, I missed that too.

Nathan: That was in '97?

Tien: Yes. Under undergraduate education, that was a new thing we did. We put down one semester--spring semester '97. Yes, '97, second semester--spring, I think, second semester. So we focused everything on how to make information technology available for students, class selection, registration, enrollment, for also administration too. We find our payroll, financial office, planning office, they all need to move into the cyber era. So we used that as a kind of tool to focus everybody's attention, we should do more and more. So that was very successful. I think it helped paving the way a lot.

I think overall, I find university leadership, administration, has to learn to be management wise. How to focus issues, how to mobilize people's attention and effort all together, instead of very passive. I'm always believing in proactive leadership, and trying to set agenda and mobilize people. Cybersemester is one example.

**Views of ROTC Policies**

Tien: I also see you have ROTC anti-gay policy. That's very interesting too. We are one of the few schools that still have a very active ROTC program. I'm actually a strong supporter of ROTC, but also, I disagree strongly about their anti-gay policy. So we worked on that. I talked to the ROTC general and head of the ROTC program in the Pentagon, and we worked out some compromise, so we can still have our ROTC program, but in the meantime, we are not against gay participation. So that's again very rewarding, I find.
Of course, President Clinton also had this "Don't ask, don't tell" issue. I find in many cases, the ROTC general told me, "Just don't tell me anything." [laughter] "You can go on, just don't let me know."

Nathan: You mentioned that you are a supporter of ROTC.

Tien: Yes.

Nathan: What is your thinking on that?

Tien: Okay. The reason I am supporting ROTC, because I studied a little bit of ROTC, what their function is, why they are helpful, and because many of the students, some of them, again from underprivileged families, need scholarships to carry their studies. ROTC is one way they can actually support them, keep them overall, and their military commitment is later on. After graduation, they are to do some ROTC program. For those people coming from very disadvantaged backgrounds, it is another channel. Whether you like ROTC or not, that's very important for them to achieve their education. So that I find very important.

The second reason I support them, because I feel whether you like military or not, especially at Berkeley, many people say, "You have to get out." I feel you have to give people multiple choice. Let people decide. Some people may like to have a career in ROTC. We have very famous generals coming out of ROTC from Berkeley, our ROTC program, making a tremendous contribution to the country. I always feel we should not try to limit people's choice, give them a choice. You don't have to take it.

Nothing wrong to keep it here, as long as they don't discriminate or they don't do anything we don't like fundamentally. That's my line, my bottom line. In fact, I was very tough. I said, "If you are really anti-gay openly, you get out. I don't want to take anything unsuitable. But if you can help in some way, or you just don't ask, don't tell, don't do anything, that's fine. We can have that for our students." It's still a very valuable educational experience.

I went through ROTC myself, but I was in China, so I learned a lot of some of military training about discipline, about many ways of how to manage your time, and drills, and so on.

Nathan: You may remember that originally it was compulsory on this campus?

Tien: Right, right.

Nathan: That has always been an issue, but is not now?

Tien: Exactly. It was not compulsory; I only see it is very good for us to keep it. Again, in that sense, I'm very different from some of the radical elements or liberal elements on campus. I'm for all different things. I'm for very conservative organizations on campus, because a campus has to be inclusive, try to get everything together.
Curriculum: Academic Content; American Cultures Requirement; Women’s Studies

Nathan: Did you want to say anything about the American Cultures requirement?

Tien: Oh, yes. Actually, I touched about it slightly. That was the first battle I had, a war with the faculty, American Cultures requirement. I mentioned about Bill Simmons, Professor Bill Simmons. He helped me a lot on that. Because he was more identified as very liberal, and I was identified as a moderate, but liberal. We have faculty members, very well-known scholars, opposed to that, on the grounds that this does not help scholarship, or education, or mission, or learning, and so on.

So the American Cultures requirement was in my first year. The Academic Senate approved in not a big margin, a small margin—that was a big test. But eventually, that program became quite good, very successful. And again, like the same thing, I agree with those opponents; we have to be careful about academic content, not to sacrifice that. Because so many of the courses in some areas have not enough scholarly content, really watered down almost. So that's the American Cultures requirement. Now I think it's going quite well. I myself, including John Heilbron at that time—John was in fact chairman of the Academic Senate before; a year later he became provost and the vice chancellor. He also was very much in line with my position. We feel American Cultures requirement is still a good one for our diverse student body to get some experience, but we have to make sure all the courses have to have sufficient scholarly content. It's not wishy-washy and so on, so it has a standard. On that basis, eventually most faculty accepted that. In fact, Bill Simmons was, if I remember correctly, the first director of that program, and then subsequently he became chair of the Social Science Division. Now he is the provost and vice president of Brown University. He just went there.

Cybersemester we already mentioned. Women's studies: that also is very interesting. I think we had one of the first women's studies departments devoted in the country to women's studies. Again, people were very surprised, I strongly supported that. We really made elevating the status of women's studies to a department in a very short time. People were wondering why.

Nathan: It's remarkable.

Tien: Yes, very good, so I feel good there. Again, make that a little bit more—we again pay a lot of attention about the academic content, because we feel that's the only way. Same thing like African American studies, ethnic studies departments. I think we are generally doing quite well. Of course, now the regents are questioning all those departments about whether they're relevant, or whether that's good.

So, anything else? Maybe this is a good time to stop, right now. And then we come back in the future.

Nathan: This is excellent. We meet again in September?

Tien: Okay.
Photo courtesy of Di-Hwa Tien
Nathan: During the last interview you had covered a number of different topics. Perhaps you have more to say about students and athletics.

Changes in Athletics: Basketball, Football Coaches; Athletic Directors

Tien: Yes. That’s what I wrote down. I don’t know what I said before, but in any case during my tenure there were a number of major changes in athletics. Some of that you have pointed out, but the first one—when I took over in 1990—maybe I have mentioned it before—that was the decision to go to the Copper Bowl, to Tucson.

Nathan: Yes, you did mention that.

Tien: In many ways that really made my view much more crystallized. As I said, I am for athletic events, I’m for affirmative action, but I would not go too far to say prohibit our university team to go to Tucson despite the fact that the state of Arizona at that time was not honoring Martin Luther King Day—although the city of Tucson did pass a resolution to honor that. Also, our team’s black players and coaches unanimously voted to go. So I was on their side. That created a lot of animosity among the NAACP. They came to my office to demand my resignation. They felt that although I spoke for affirmative action and for equal rights, but on the other hand, in their view, this was a very big mistake.

I went through that, and then we had perhaps two major events that came—again, that made my stand become very clear. The first one was Lou Campanelli, our basketball coach. He was a very good coach in many ways, although just like many NCAA coaches, he became so autocratic in many ways in treating student athletes. In his case he did treat some of the student athletes not in a very civil way. Perhaps also he used some racial language which it’s hard to perhaps prove or stand out in court, like even the current situation in Washington, D.C. But I felt at that time, with the advice of Dan Boggan, I said we simply cannot allow this kind of behavior in mistreating our student athletes and also shouting in profane language.

So we actually dismissed him, and he subsequently followed with a lawsuit. In fact, the lawsuit was brought by the former mayor of San Francisco, Joe Alioto. Joe Alioto later on practiced in the law firm, he represented Campanelli, sued us for several years. It did not finish until maybe six years later, but now that’s done and so on. That issue was about our university’s integrity; we absolutely could not allow that behavior.
Then we—this is for basketball—hired Todd Bozeman as a coach. He was assistant coach at that time under Campanelli. He was very young at that time: twenty-eight or twenty-nine years old. He was very capable. He handled the student athlete recruitment of basketball players very successfully. So we had very good recruitment, of course at that time we didn’t realize [any questions about] his personal integrity. We thought everything was right.

When we installed Bozeman, Dan Boggan got tremendous criticism because they felt Campanelli was fired in order to put a black coach in. I’m a minority, and Dan Boggan is black, so we conspired to fire Campanelli. Certainly many people, perhaps including Campanelli, thought that way. Then Campanelli of course felt Bozeman betrayed him and conspired with the administration to get him fired and have the first young black coach at Berkeley. We went through a tough period.

Fortunately, after Bozeman became coach, immediately our basketball teams were doing extremely well. We went to different championship games, Sweet Sixteen and others. Everything was going well, except later on we found Bozeman had some issues, really a little corrupted in the recruitment, especially for the player Jelani Gardner. A very talented player, but he was given some cash and he bought a car, or something like that. Later on Gardner’s father had a falling-out with Bozeman and started to tell people about this, and then we started to have an investigation. Again, Bozeman was very successful in recruiting many people like Lamond Murray. He just brought in tremendous talents.

But Gardner’s case again challenged us. So we eventually also fired Bozeman. Again, we made it very clear we cannot tolerate any mismanagement or corruption or issues in student athletes. I’m absolutely for students and for sports, but I want to have clean sports; sports with integrity. So we fired Bozeman, and now we’ve got our current coach, Ben Braun, and he’s doing quite well. That’s it for the basketball part.

Then we had an issue of athletic directors. Dave Maggard has been our AD [athletic director] for many, many years; if I remember correctly, either seventeen or eighteen years as our AD. He himself was an Olympic athlete, and he is very personable. But we also had an issue about his management style, and others, for instance how to enforce some integrity rules and others. He himself is very clean, very nice, but we were concerned about that. After a while he decided when he got an opportunity from the University of Miami, Florida, he chose to go there.

Again, a lot of alumni were not happy because they felt that Dave had been a very successful AD for a long time, although previous to my tenure our athletic programs were not doing well, basketball and football and others. So he left, and again I got a lot of criticisms.

We finally hired Bob Bockrath. He came on board. For a while it went quite well, because our basketball and football were going well. But then we had a lot of financial control issues; student sports always created a lot of stress on the budget, and we had to control that. So we tried to institute that. Again, Bob Bockrath had some administrative difficulties, especially when you tried to control the budget, and his style in some way perhaps didn’t create a good atmosphere and so on. Again, eventually we fired Bockrath; [laughs] so there were a lot of changes.
We brought in John Kasser, and John Kasser is still our current AD. He is an extremely capable and personable guy. I think we are extremely pleased to have him as our AD. He has been really performing well. So those are some of the key issues—oh, a major one is Bruce Snyder. I remember when we went to the Citrus Bowl, I mentioned people chanted “Buy American, buy American.” That was 1992 or 1993—I forget which year, when we went to the Citrus Bowl. It was ’92, I think. When we went to the Citrus Bowl we beat Clemson and we ranked very high in the national ranking. I think at that time we went as high as number eight in the country. That was very special for Cal for many, many years.

Right after the game, Bruce told us he was leaving, that he got a tremendous offer from ASU, Arizona State University, where he is still the coach. Bruce is a fabulous coach, extremely capable and maintained very good relations with the players and coaches, and he’s also a person of integrity. He’s probably one of the best coaches I have seen. I remember even before I became chancellor he told me, I think it was 1987, “Well, our team is really doing very badly, but give me five years.” To rebuild a team will take about five years. You have your new recruits, transfers, freshmen and so on; it would take about five years.

That was very impressive because I remember that in ’92 we reached the top ten of the teams in the country. The only thing I was upset about was that he didn’t give us any forewarning. Of course he knew because of Berkeley’s situation, also my view about salaries, I felt there was no way we could go beyond a salary that was double or triple the chancellor’s or the highest professor’s salary. I was very resistant to giving a very high salary to a football coach. Maybe that’s the reason he didn’t even try to negotiate. He told us he was going to accept ASU, and I think the offer, if you add all the fringe benefits and everything together, amounted in 1992 probably over $500,000, in that ballpark. It was maybe triple his salary at that time at Berkeley. We actually tried very hard to make a counteroffer, although it wasn’t as high as $500,000. Also we tried to find whether alumni could contribute even up to $100,000 in addition to his salary which we were going to increase and so on, but still not to the same extent as Arizona State, so he left. Many, many alumni were very unhappy, because the first time we had a national team we lost our coach. He left, and then we started to hire another coach.

In 1992 we hired another coach—I forgot his name—not Holmoe. And before Steve Mariucci. It was Keith Gilbertson. (I should have prepared a little bit more.) After Bruce Snyder we hired another football coach. He didn’t do well, and we eventually also dismissed him [chuckles], and then we brought back Mariucci. That was very successful. In 1996 we brought Mariucci back. Because when Bruce Snyder left, Mariucci was a candidate, but at that time we chose another person with a lot more experience. We knew Steve Mariucci was a great coach, but he was very young. Even now he is very young. So we chose the other person.

The second time we asked Mariucci, he was the quarterback coach of the Green Bay Packers. He did very well, and he came on board, and he did fabulous. He is very personable, capable, has tremendous leadership, is dynamic and young, but after one year he was snatched by the San Francisco 49ers. I remember DeBartolo and at that time Carmen Policy, now they had split, they both came to my office and pleaded with me to release Steve Mariucci, because usually when we sign a coach we have a five-year contract. But in that case I said there was no way I could hold Mariucci; this was a great opportunity for him, and I always felt individual personal considerations must be
considered, so I agreed to release Steve Mariucci. But we did negotiate some compensation from the 49ers, which turned out to be also generally good mutually.

When Steve Mariucci left in 1997, that was my last year, we hired Tom Holmoe. Holmoe was the defensive coordinator. He came from the 49ers, actually. He was the defensive line coach or something and then came to us as defensive coordinator. When Steve Mariucci left, we felt the most important thing was to have continuity, a steady and stable leadership. So we elevated Holmoe to be our coach. So that was football.

**Status of Other Sports**

Tien: I’d like to say a few words about other sports. I was a very, very strong proponent of women’s sports, so during my tenure and with leadership from Bob Bockrath and particularly John Kasser, we really developed more women’s sports, and they all became varsity sports, national level. And because of that, in 1997 or 1996, I don’t know which year, Berkeley was presented the award for best efforts to maintain and promote women’s sports. So that’s very, very good for us.

Of course, I like all sports. During my tenure I think we did quite well for football and basketball; however, the third important athletic team, baseball, unfortunately didn’t do that well. I attended many meetings. We did also elevate a lot about our women’s basketball activities, but unfortunately after 1997 our women’s basketball did not do as well. We tried very hard on tennis, both women’s and men’s, and generally doing quite well. We also do water polo, always very strong, men’s water polo was very strong. Also rugby, always championship. We probably had thirteen national championships out of fifteen seasons.

Nathan: Were you interested in crew?

Tien: Oh, yes. Crew. I’m interested in all sports; I love sports. In fact, my daughter was the coxswain in the freshman crew team before at Berkeley High School. I still have a crew tie that people gave me, although I don’t participate in crew. I love all sports, so we covered tremendously: gymnastics, Cal is always very good. Hockey, women’s hockey, women’s soccer, we instituted that again, generally doing extremely well.

Of course, my view is I like to promote all sports, but I want to make sports as clean as possible and should be part of the education process for our students. Personally, of course, I think I mentioned my secret dream has been an NBA player, but since my height didn’t change to my satisfaction, I remain five feet six inches, and that destroyed my dream.
Chancellor on the Court

Tien: But I did practice whenever possible. I practiced with many of them together, I always felt that was my greatest experience, to be practicing with many of the famous players. Now they are playing in the NBA. That was my secret dream. I was a very good friend of Lamond Murray, who is playing at L.A. now. And Shareef Abdur-Rahim, and K.J. Johnson is with the Phoenix Suns. Another player with the Phoenix Suns—his name has escaped me. [I think it was Jason Kidd.] I played with him before. That was a very good experience for me.

Nathan: Were you interested also in intramural sports?

Tien: Yes. I did play in a few intramural games, especially basketball in the recreational facility. I played some midnight games, and I also went to ice hockey, usually at Berkeley Iceland, especially when they would have the Berkeley-Stanford game. Usually that happened at midnight. That was fun. That’s part of my good experiences as chancellor. I always felt that if I were not the chancellor I would not have those opportunities to see so many games of my interest; I like those things. So that was great.

More on Athletic Ranking

Tien: In 1992 the Bears ranked seventh nationally by coaches. I said it was eighth, but it should be seventh. That’s football. That was Bruce Snyder’s team in the Citrus Bowl. It was a very eventful time. In 1990, Snyder was voted coach of the year for the PAC 10. The Copper Bowl, Citrus Bowl, and the Alamo Bowl. We went to several football bowl games and also basketball. That was a high time. The only regret I had was we didn’t go to the Rose Bowl.

Tien: On January 1, New Year’s Day, we actually played in the Rose Bowl in 1959. In the fall of 1959 we also became the national champion in the NCAA basketball national tournament. So we were a big power in football and also in basketball. Of course Cal at that time was also a highly respected academic institution. I was at Princeton, I joined Cal in August, and I said, “This is the best place I could ever get. A great academic institution, great college sports, and so on.” I was so happy.

But then after 1959, certainly not due to my joining Cal [laughter], we just went down forever, we just didn’t do well. I was joking, telling many people that I have to become chancellor to revive our athletics program. When I became chancellor in 1990 we did do quite well in both basketball and football as well as in many other sports. Except the big prize—the Rose Bowl—I still didn’t realize. That was my major, major regret; I thought I could deliver that, but I just was not successful.
**Unifying Men’s and Women’s Athletics**

Tien: Unification of men’s and women’s athletics, that’s another very important thing. When I first became chancellor, we had two athletic directors: men’s and women’s. Because we had two separate parallel administrations, sometimes they didn’t coordinate, even in terms of use of facilities. So I felt that was not very efficient. Also, my first year as chancellor, I appointed a blue ribbon commission on student athletic programs. I remember that was chaired by Professor Budd Cheit, and he did an excellent job. He made a number of recommendations. One of them was unification of men’s and women’s athletics.

We followed that, and that also was very tough, because men’s athletics for many, many years had been dominating. Even now it is still dominating in college sports. By merging them together, the women’s side always felt insecure and that maybe they don’t get as many resources or support and so on. I assured them I would even invest in more support for them. I think because of my record, my stand, I made things a little bit easier to merge together. Now we have one athletic director for both men’s and women’s sports. Now they share resources, share personnel, share the use of facilities. It’s a much more efficient operation; and cost control. That’s another major step; it’s not easy. There are many other things; perhaps those are the key elements.

**Some Concerns: Academic Compliance, Red-Shirting, Stars and Early Departure**

Tien: We worried about the graduation rate and grade-point averages and all that. We had faculty representatives try to enforce the academic compliance for the student athletes. I take a very strong stand on that. But despite that, college sports have been involving a lot of controversies because of some corrupt practices, and also it’s tough on the student athletes when they play varsity team sports and then they have to carry a full load. I experienced that myself when I was in college. I spent six hours a day on the court every day, and I still carried a full-time workload as a student. That’s very tough. But on the other hand, people learn how to use their time more efficiently and wisely, and in many ways it’s a good educational lesson for student athletes.

Nathan: Do you have any particular opinion about “red-shiriting” the freshmen?

Tien: I would not like to see that. That’s a very good question. There are two things: one is about red-shirting. I don’t like that, but on the other hand I don’t interfere with the athletic directors’ or with the coaches’ decisions, because I feel it’s so important chancellors should not micromanage, as long as the basic things are in place. But when they have anything not good, then I go into it with the athletic director and we always work together. But other than that I try not to interfere. Red-shirting in principle is not that good, but on the other hand it is allowed at almost every university. So I didn’t take an active role in going either way on the red-shirting issue.
The other issue is student athletes leaving college very early. This has been particularly bad the last few years. We’ve had people in basketball particularly who were doing very well, and then after one year—like Shareef Abdur-Rahim, who is now with Vancouver. He played only one year as a freshman, but then he was offered tens of millions of dollars to play. I don’t blame them, but I feel it’s a bad practice. I think somehow we need to find a way to make sure that education’s first. We’ve had many: Lamond Murray stayed only for two years, and Jason Kidd. I practiced with Jason Kidd. He only stayed one or two years. All of them only one or two years.

But then Kevin “K.J.” Johnson—I mentioned he’s with Phoenix. He stayed four years. He is a remarkable person, a great student-athlete model. He played four years and then he went professional. It was so tough, but he was determined to finish his education. He just got his degree last June. But he set up his own foundation contributing to the community. Kevin Johnson is a great role model for all of us and a great tribute as an alumnus of Berkeley, a very devoted alumnus also. So there are many good things, but also some troubling aspects of college sports.
XII AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Nathan: The next topic on our list?

Tien: Yes, my view on students and diversity. I don’t know whether you have seen my recent Express interview?

Nathan: Yes.

Some Personal Experiences, Views

Tien: Maybe you can use some of that [laughter], for my view. But I’ll just mention I even got some hate mail, some hate calls. I think I mentioned to you, these are random thoughts, although I am a very strong proponent of affirmative action, I debated and spoke out to my own disadvantage, many people would say.

Nathan: That you opposed [Proposition] 209?

Tien: Yes. But still people will say, many more of the radical left community feel, I may be a hypocrite, that if I feel that strongly I should either resign or I should not resign but not implement what the regents rule. I just feel that’s against law and it’s not right. Some people call me worse than Regent Ward Connerly. I’m a worse enemy than Regent Ward Connerly. These very radical leftists, after this week’s Express interview, they had some letters criticizing me a lot, but I’m used to it [chuckles]. Yesterday I got a hate call, very scary. People still remember about the Rosebud incident, they blame me, and they feel I’m a fake liberal.

Nathan: She was the woman with the machete?

Tien: Yes, the machete, and who broke into our house after midnight and got killed by the police and so on.

But affirmative action--I think I did mention about People’s Park before, right?
Tien: So we don't have to say anything about that. In terms mainly of diversity, some of my views expressed in many different interviews become my own background. I'm very sensitive to human dignity, and even now after my tenure as chancellor, I sometimes still have people who will, because of color of skin or the accent I have, give me a hard time, or say I look very foreign and so on. But that happens all the time.

But I just feel I have to do everything I can to promote equal opportunity and equal rights and affirmative action. Affirmative action is not only for racial issues. I feel very strongly about women, the physically disadvantaged, or any immigrant student regardless of color and so on. Any disadvantaged groups we should try to help. That's the American dream, everyone regardless of their background can still have a chance. America is a rich country, can afford to be a little bit more generous to help the underprivileged or disadvantaged people. I feel that way because although I came from a disadvantaged background, I "made it" myself.

But I still feel very attached to those people who are disadvantaged not because of their not working hard or not being intelligent enough, but because of some inherent, perceived disadvantaged situations. That's my principle. But I'm not a radical in the sense like I mentioned about the Copper Bowl incident. Arizona did not honor Martin Luther King Day. At that time the NAACP really questioned my commitment to equal opportunity or affirmative action. So you always have different shades of views. I always liked to work within the framework; not to destroy anything, but in a positive, constructive way.

Tien: Yes, exactly. I mentioned in that Express interview that when Proposition 209 or the regents' SP1 passed I was so upset. I contemplated about resignation, but then I said, "No, I could not. I can still help." It's very easy for me to say resign, but who will help the other people? So before I leave, I said, "I want to do something," so that set some mechanisms. That's how the Berkeley Pledge came about. Of course many people worked on the Berkeley Pledge; I should not take the sole responsibility. We all work as a team.

Outreach: City Colleges and High Schools

Tien: The outreach, for instance, in 1991 extended to San Francisco City College. When I started in 1990, I felt I had to go to outreach for city colleges and also high schools, especially urban-area city colleges and high schools. So I was the first one in fifty-five years to visit in this way San Francisco City College. We had a meeting and I gave a lecture, and it went extremely well, and I encouraged students to do a transfer. Subsequently, actually during my chancellorship I visited for instance even the L.A. area: Santa Monica City College. It's an excellent city college, one of the major schools. Again, I was the very first Berkeley chancellor ever to visit there.
I visited many high schools, like Berkeley High School; I used to teach over there. I taught as a volunteer there. I gave a three-unit course with some other professors together. We instituted a class called Introduction to Engineering. It was a senior elective for Berkeley High students.

Nathan: How did that go?

Tien: It went very well, and of course I don't think they have the course now, because after myself and a few other professors who were interested in that moved to somewhere else, that course ended.

I did a number of things. I went to Galileo High School in San Francisco. I'm still on their advisory board. I tried to transform Galileo High School into a science academy. Its name is now Galileo Academy of Science and Technology. They changed their name in 1995-96, and also they received a national award. I participated in that with many other proponents because Galileo High School was a very historical high school with a lot of famous alumni, including many of the Haas family people, and also one very infamous celebrity: O.J. Simpson. He was also a graduate of Galileo High School.

But then in the last twenty or thirty years there was a tremendous transformation. Now I think they have more than 95 percent minorities in Galileo High School. Mainly Asian, black, and Hispanic, only 5 percent Caucasian, I think, although they are located near the Marina, a very good area, but the school was so run down. Three or four years ago I went there.

It was a little bit scary, because the whole school didn't have a single laboratory class because they had no equipment, no laboratory. They didn't have qualified teachers like in science and mathematics and so on. We had a few people active in the community, and we went in and talked to the San Francisco Unified School District. We got support from the superintendent, and we started to transform the school. Now they are doing much, much better. I visited many schools of that kind, and I tried to generate this outreach, both for city colleges and high schools.

**Recruiting for Cal, Repairing Relationships**

Nathan: In a way are you recruiting for Berkeley?

Tien: Oh, yes, very much so. Always. Because when you go to those areas--I also went to St. Ignatius [SI], the famous Catholic school in San Francisco. I also went into their sister school, I think it is St. Rose's Academy. I visited many, many high schools and tried to recruit the very best students. These are all in urban areas. Even the private schools like SI and others. I also went to the private high school named College Preparatory School, and gave commencement speeches and so on. I think it's very important to have that kind of activity so that people feel Berkeley is right next to you or very close to you and Berkeley wants you and so on, so that you can get a lot of students. My message is, "I feel very strongly about you."
The '92 convocation. That was a very moving thing. Thank you for reminding me of all those major things. Even to this day, many Japanese Americans still congratulate me on that particular event, about really one dark chapter of American history: the internship of Japanese Americans. There are many, many moving stories about that. At that time in '92 we held a convocation and also a kind of a graduating ceremony, a commencement, for some of them. They were sent into intern camps [during World War II].

Nathan: It was the class of '42, a fifty-year anniversary?

Tien: Yes, an anniversary but also a commencement for them. They never got commencements. So that was very good. Same thing, I think, Harvey Otano quoted a Berkeley writer about the Japanese American experience. I even went to visit some of the places and memorials for Japanese Americans. I think it's important we always remember some of the history so we will not repeat that; same thing like the Holocaust.

Anti-Immigrant Wedge Issues and Personal Consequences

Tien: Proposition 209. SP1 was earlier, 1995, and then 209 was 1996. I felt very badly about those. That is a rehash of many reported things; I also feel very reluctant to repeat a lot of them. I disagree with the regents a lot and indeed with Governor [Pete] Wilson. He was very supportive of me. When he was a senator for California he helped organize a reception on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., in my honor. He was very supportive.

But then during the 1994-1995 period--first was Proposition 187. I call it an anti-immigrant state proposition. I was opposed to that, and I wrote an editorial one week before the voting at election time. My staff, some of the vices [vice chancellors], said I really shouldn't do that, that I will antagonize the governor, because that was very important. That was for the 1994 election. Of course the governor did beat Kathleen Brown at that time. After that in 1995, mainly because of the presidential election for 1996, some people tried to make a wedge issue. With the success of 187, 209 seems natural; or SP1 as a precursor. There was tremendous emotion involved at that time in the regents' meetings and so on.

Again, I want to say that although I disagree strongly with many of the regents and Governor Wilson, I never harbored any personal views or hatred or anything. I respect them. In China I came from where "there's no human rights," so I felt I came to this country with a lot of freedom.

## [16A]

Tien: I maintained a very good relationship with the regents, including Regent Ward Connerly and Governor Wilson. In fact, when Governor Wilson heard of the rumor that I may announce my resignation in September 1996, I think, for my resignation in 1997, he called me from his hospital bed because he was under surgery for his vocal cords. He called me, and nearly without any voice he pleaded with me not to resign, and he felt we had been always on very good terms. I said, "Governor, I have no personal grudges against you. It's mainly my personal decision on SP1 or 209 or affirmative action--it
played a minor role, not a major role." When you make any major decision there are
many, many factors you weigh, some positive, some negative, and then you decide
overall.

I explained to him I worked very well with Regent Ward Connerly and many others
although all the general view of the Berkeley community, the Berkeley campus, was all
for affirmative action--all the Academic Senate leaders, all the chancellors, endorsed the
principle of affirmative action and against 209 or SP1.

But we failed. That's the time when I tried to see whether we could do something else.
For the Asian groups, that's very true. I was reading here that for Asian groups, I would
say they are split almost in the middle: half for, half against. In fact, I would say 60
percent for 209 and 40 percent for affirmative action. So many of my Asian friends
advised me, "Why are you doing this? You don't gain anything. You antagonize many of
our Caucasian friends, and then you even antagonize the majority of your Asian friends."

**Speaking Out for Equal Opportunity for Disadvantaged Groups**

Tien: I said, "I'm not trying to please anyone; I'm trying to do what my conscience says I should
do." So I spoke out to many Asian groups, Asian American community events,
indicating this. Some of them perhaps converted by me about why and so on. My main
point was for Asian American parents: they may gain a few seats in the university
admissions for their children, but we will lose the major affirmative battle not only for
Asian Americans but for any disadvantaged groups.

Right now for Asian Americans, other than that we are overrepresented in the university
student body, if you go to corporate or government decision-making levels, Asians by
and large have one-third the opportunity than the average, compared to Caucasians. Also
compared to blacks and perhaps even Hispanics, Asians are the most neglected groups in
the higher level of government and business and corporate sectors. There are many data
on that. You take the affirmative action out, you get your children to go to the university,
but after they graduate they won't be able to go anywhere [chuckles].

Again, that's a very short-sighted view. We should not really try to promote Asian
Americans either; we should say any disadvantaged groups should have an equal
opportunity to rise to the top. That was my view. That worked out quite well. But still
even now, both left and right, they disagree with me, feeling I'm still not the right thing.
But that's Berkeley [laughs]; it's very good, I enjoy Berkeley tremendously.

Enrollment and acceptance consequences at Berkeley--right now it's already shown that
in graduate and undergraduate and professional schools like law schools, we have a drop
in minorities. Just last year it's a very huge drop like 50 to 60 percent. Very, very huge.
This could become a major problem for the university in the future because the
atmosphere of the university would be changed. In fact pretty soon if we don't do
anything else it would be only Caucasians and Asians, and that's not very good in terms
of a multicultural environment. In a couple of years California as a state would not have
any majority groups.
Right now it's almost close to 50 percent minorities. So in the long run we'll have some very major social implications. I think we have to do something about that. I did participate on the task force on diversifying the student body without using race or ethnicity, but I must say it is a very formidable task [chuckles] how to achieve that, unless there's some sort of structural changes in the guidelines and so on.

**More on Pledge and Awards, Regional Partnerships**

Tien: A proposal to create a regional partnership? Yes, we have that; that's a part of the Berkeley Pledge. Right now Berkeley is already tied in with four school districts in the East Bay, twenty-four schools, and now we are expanding to the Peninsula. Berkeley will now in fact help design programs providing some teacher training, curriculum design and help those urban low-performing schools. That went extremely well.

Nathan: Are the students responsive?

Tien: Oh, yes. Another very major program is Incentive Awards. It started with a $50,000 anonymous donation to set up this concept; it is still the San Francisco Incentive Awards Program. I don't know the latest figures, but they probably have already $10,000,000 maybe in donations. The idea is, in the City and County of San Francisco we earmarked ten urban public schools; now I think they've added an eleventh. In each school we selected one graduating senior to receive this four-year scholarship. At that time I think it was $5,000 a year for four years guaranteed. The recipient, the awardee, must be not only academically demonstrating tremendous achievement but also have to demonstrate overcoming tremendous obstacles through family life and others. So we had this independent of race, of origin, or color.

We had poor Caucasian immigrants from Russia or Eastern Europe, and we've had poor immigrants from South America or Central America or Vietnam or Cambodia. Then we also had just very poor African American families and students. Very moving. One from each school. It's already been five years, so they have a lot of alumni. We require the recipient who receives the $5,000 a year for four years to go back every year to the high school to talk to the lower-class students and tell them the opportunities they could have if they work hard and don't worry about their backgrounds or tremendous hardships and so on. It was extremely successful, the San Francisco Incentive Awards Program.

Again, I want to repeat that the program started with this anonymous donor idea and with tremendous staff commitment and so on. I was only behind the whole idea, trying to facilitate something, but it became a national model.

The Berkeley Pledge received last year a national award from the U.S. Secretary of Education, Dick Riley.
Another incident has just come to me; so many very moving interactions with students and experience, moving experience. One was, I normally work late in the chancellor’s office in California Hall. In this case, I was not working. One weekend I was flying in from Los Angeles. I attended a meeting, and then it so happened, sitting right next to me was a student, also coming back to campus from his home in L.A., so we were on this airplane together. When we were sitting together, I asked him where he is going. Then I find out he was a student at Cal and he knew me as chancellor. He got a little bit nervous, with the chancellor right next to him.

We arrived [in] Oakland and then I said, “Do you have a ride?” He said, “No, I’m going to take the BART and go home.” I said, “This is very late. Why don’t I just give you a ride home?” He said, “Fine.” So we walked together because I had the car in the parking lot, so I said, “I’ll take you home, before I go back home.” So I took him home. But he probably was very nervous. He dropped his wallet in my car on the right side—let me see, [the] driver’s side is on the left, so he was sitting on the right side, and then his wallet dropped in the space between the seat and the door. I didn’t know, and he did not know.

So he went home that night and found he had no wallet, and then he became very nervous because of all the credit cards and many other things and also some money—he just came from home this time, flying back to the campus. I didn’t even know because I just went home. Then, next morning, he was nervous. He tried to call everywhere, whether he lost it in the airplane or other place. He wanted to make sure. And then finally, in the afternoon, he called the chancellor’s office to see if “by chance my
wallet might be in Chancellor Tien’s car because I lost my wallet, and the only thing now I could trace is he gave me a ride. I might have lost it, so I didn’t know.”

I called my wife at home at that time because I was living in the University House, so I usually don’t drive, so I just called Di-Hwa. I said, “Could you check whether there was a wallet on the right side, between the door and the seat?” So Di-Hwa checked, and oh, we found the wallet. Then I got Joyce de Vries to call the student. “That’s fine. We find the wallet. You don’t need to worry. I can send it to you right away.” He said, “No, no, no. I can come.” I said, “No, no, no.” At that time, it was already late, after five or six. I said, “I have an engagement, but I will come about ten o’clock to deliver your wallet to your home.”

So ten o’clock I went to Haste, near Haste and Bowditch, that whole area between Bowditch and Telegraph. So I went there about ten o’clock. Suddenly I find the whole rooming house; people on the street. They had a big group. They wanted to see the chancellor delivering a wallet for the student now. Then they have also picture taking—you know, the students, they all loved it, so that became a very good story [laughing]. I think the *Daily Cal*, they cover that because eventually they told some people. So that was an interesting experience.

Normally, if you’re chancellor, you are considered so different, higher up, it’s not like an ordinary human, so yes, yes. I think the most important thing, really, is to deal with students as just like another human being, colleague. I walk on campus every day and talk to many of them, especially when we have, like, people that are performing in concert. I just sit down there. I go there all the time and sit on the ground with the students, clapping hands and so on. I think that was very enjoyable.

I also worked with my own graduate students, many graduate students. I mentored many of them. We still keep in very close touch. As for graduate students, why, I have had more than sixty Ph.D. students under my direct supervision. They’re all doing well. Many of them are renowned professors now in leading schools. Those are very gratifying things.

I support a lot of student activities. (I see the Young Musicians program listed.) That’s really very, very special to my heart. Many of them are disadvantaged, coming from very disadvantaged backgrounds. Chancellor Roger Heyns was a very strong promoter of that program, and I continued. The Young Musicians program is still, I think, going quite well.

There are many other student activity things that are going on. I think the thing is really whether a chancellor should try to always think what we are here for. It’s for students, for their education, knowledge. And education is not only in the classroom but most of the time outside of the classroom they can learn a lot more: in library, in dormitory, laboratory sections, working with other students, and so on. I think that’s very, very important.

So that covers the student relationship. We can come back again if we need.
Retaining and Recruiting Quality Faculty

Tien: Yes, I see you have already Professor Patterson’s case—it was also reported a lot in the newspaper before. If I remember correctly, he got an offer from a major Eastern school, with a 150 percent increase of salary. I talked to him, talked to even, perhaps, his wife and others. I worked a lot with the family because I think it’s not just an individual decision but also the family.

We, of course, made some adjustment for him, but can never match that high salary increase. This is Professor David Patterson of the computer science department, electrical engineering-computer science. He was offered by a leading Eastern school, a much higher salary, 140 percent or 150 percent increase. But he eventually turned that down. He made a point. Money is so important, but he felt the important thing is the campus leadership and atmosphere. Because of my involvement in his case, he felt Berkeley would be doing very well, that even with a much lower salary, he’s going to stay at Berkeley. So that was reported, and he wrote some letters himself to that effect. That was a case I almost forgot. You remind me of a lot of things, yes.

“How did you do it?” I find in many cases it’s the human touch. Really, most professors are not that concerned about, say, salary increases. Of course, those are important, especially if you have such a high offer coming in. But they are more interested in working conditions, environment, whether they are appreciated or not. So by making them feel, especially as chancellor, make them feel very appreciated, their work and that they’re really important to the campus as a whole. And in many cases they would just feel they want to stay. This happened in many, many cases.

When I was chancellor, I spent a lot of time working on faculty retention and recruitment cases. I can even cite some. I remember one case, one dean told me this person would be so important to them, asked me to make a phone call, but since that person would decide by Monday I should call that person this coming weekend. It so happened I was out somewhere. I think in this case in Beijing. But I felt it was so important, so I called according to the dean’s suggested time, from Beijing, called this professor to talk to him. He was in New York.

I called him, maybe because of the time change, almost twelve hours, when it was convenient to him. It was probably midnight or something like that. I remember midnight. That’s about morning time in New York. So I got him. He was so surprised. At first, he was surprised about the chancellor of the university calling him, usually they deal with department chairmen, sometimes with the dean. So it was a total surprise to him that the chancellor was familiar with his case and was trying to persuade him.

Furthermore, he asked me, “Where are you? This is Sunday.” I said, “I’m in Beijing.” [laughing] Actually, my time was midnight, Monday morning. I said, “I’m calling you because we know you have to make a decision tomorrow,” so I talked and talked. He was so impressed. Of course, he decided he had to come to Berkeley because it was that kind of leadership. He felt he absolutely could not be wrong by coming to Berkeley. So that was an interesting case.
There were many cases like that. In fact, I called many professors, mostly retention and recruitment, calling myself, directly, and following the case. I think that really makes the faculty feel I have faculty really in the highest priority. That helps a lot in my operation.

**International Connections**

Nathan: You’ll never forget that.

Tien: Oh, yes, yes, yes. Many. And then you have the U.S.-Asia Scientific Exchange, 1993. Well, during my tenure, of course, I put a lot of emphasis on international connections, both Asia as well as Europe. We expanded tremendously our Berkeley-French exchange program. In fact, we were the first American university ever to receive some government support from the French government, yes—to establish French-Berkeley academic exchange program, yes. That has been going quite well.

And then I spent a lot of time about U.S.-Asia relations, in terms of Japan, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, even other countries. That’s very close to my heart. Also being on the Pacific Rim, Berkeley, we have to position Berkeley as the leading American university facing the Pacific Ocean, both in terms of Asia and South America, too, Latin America. I’m still doing a lot of things for U.S.-Asia, in general.

**Budget Reductions, VERIPs I, II, III, and Fighting for Berkeley**

Tien: The next one is VERIP. That’s a tough, tough thing. This is a major episode. When I accepted appointment in 1990, February 15 I was appointed as chancellor to start in July, we had one of the best budget supports from the state. But once I came in July of 1990, that summer, we found out our state budget situation was so bad and would have a big dip. So for the next four or five years, Berkeley went through a historically unprecedented budget challenge, reduction.

We had not only budget reduction on campus, 5 percent, 7 percent every year, but one year we also had a faculty, staff, everybody had their salary cut by 5 percent. So that was a very, very tough period. But to cope with this budget challenge, systemwide, universitywide, we instituted the Voluntary Early Retirement Incentive Program we call VERIP. In the beginning, we had VERIP I, and then we had VERIP II. Finally, we had VERIP III.

After VERIP II, a lot of people debated whether we should have more VERIPs because we already lost a lot of faculty, staff, from the retirement incentive program. For Berkeley particularly, this is very critical because we had the most renowned faculty members among all the campuses, and our faculty, on the average, is more senior, age-wise, perhaps older faculty members because we’re established much more. So by having the incentive program, a lot of the leading authorities just retired and changed the campus atmosphere a lot.
Although we saved a lot of money, I was very much concerned to maintain the vitality of our campus academic program. So when we got to VERIP III—that was July 1994, VERIP III, I had very major disagreements at that time with systemwide administration.

Nathan: Were the VERIPs mandatory?

Tien: Not mandatory. All campuses were the same at that time. VERIP I, VERIP II—they were all voluntary. But the incentive becomes so big, especially VERIP III—in fact, most people cannot afford not to retire. I had a big disagreement because of Berkeley’s special circumstances. You have very leading scholars, many of them of the age just about to retire, so if we make the retirement incentive so rich, we would lose a lot of people, much more than other campuses.

Systemwide, their thinking is they have to make this in order to cope with the budget cuts. Also, I don’t blame them because from a systemwide viewpoint we should have a uniform policy, each campus, every campus the same.

From the Berkeley campus viewpoint, since I was chancellor, I took a very strong position: Berkeley’s situation is very different, and we should make a special provision for Berkeley: in a sense, make the incentive not as rich as, say, UCLA, Davis and San Diego and others.

So we had very basic policy disagreements. At that time, President Jack Peltason felt strongly that there should be uniform policy. And then I felt so strongly it should be either uniformly not as rich as they proposed or if they want to maintain very rich incentive, then Berkeley should be made a little bit different. It was a very difficult position to take. First, the university has never had any policy exception for one campus, historically. Secondly, by taking my position, I was working against our senior faculty members that are nearing that incentive retirement age.

In fact, some faculty members got very mad at me. One faculty member said, “This is totally unreasonable, irrational. You are against us.” One faculty member even threatened to file a class action suit against me. Although for the Berkeley campus, I must do that in order to maintain our academic stature and also vitality. So I stuck to my position. President Peltason disagreed with me strongly.

Finally, I told President Peltason, “I’m going to resign because we have such a basic policy difference, I cannot do that any more. I’d like to resign.” I think that was 1995 maybe. So I said, “I’m going to resign.” He, in fact, verbally accepted my resignation. He said, “Well, you’re making a mistake, but I cannot do much because I don’t feel I can yield this basic principle. No campus should be made an exception.” Of course, President Peltason came from the Irvine campus. He was my former chancellor when I was executive vice chancellor, so I could understand his stand.

Well, I was going to Japan for a meeting. I said, “I’m resigning now.” He said, “Okay, we’ll talk after you come back from Japan in one week.” At that time, I was so stressed, so I said, “I’ll go to Japan to attend the meeting anyway and have some other things to think about.” During that week, apparently, word leaked out that I was going to resign. Of course, the newspapers—the *Chronicle*, the * Examiner*—on the front page and so on.
And then, apparently, some regents at that time heard about this, and then they talked to President Peltason and said I should not resign. I was fighting for Berkeley. Berkeley was the flagship campus and perhaps we can make one exception. So after I came back, President Peltason said, well, he thought those things over; he talked to the regents; he’s going to make one exception, so I didn’t need to resign. So I didn’t resign. That was a big thing.

Some faculty members at that time, a group which, because of retirement benefits, got a little bit shortchanged, they were not happy, but other faculty members felt very good that I was fighting for the campus, academic programs and so on. So that helped me in many ways. Even the person who threatened to file a class action suit, later on he did not, and he also now is a very good friend of mine [chuckling]. He was very happy.

I think a few people still are mad at me because they retired at that time and they lost some retirement benefit. If they were at UCLA, they would get much more money than at Berkeley. So it’s always tough to get that. But that was one of the battles besides the affirmative action—two cases—that almost caused my resignation because I felt I could not change my views.

**Aiding Affirmative Action: Readiness to Resign on Principle**

Tien: Affirmative action. I felt I could not really in my conscience work with the new rules, but later on I changed my mind. I felt I had to work some program out to sustain, to help affirmative action, although we are not allowed to use race and religion, color, as a criterion for admission.

## [17B]

Nathan: You were taking a stand on principles?

Tien: Yes.

Nathan: I suppose there are only a limited number of times that you can take an opposing position on a university policy?

Tien: You can say that. Only on the very, very fundamental issues. I mentioned the two issues. Affirmative action—even after the passage of SP1 and SP2, although I debated for two weeks, I actually decided not to resign because I wanted to institute, like the Berkeley Pledge and other programs before I stepped down.

On the VERIP incentive program, I felt at that time there was no other way. I didn’t want to see Berkeley destroyed. I fought the hardest and I couldn’t prevail, so I actually submitted my oral resignation. But eventually, again, I didn’t resign because the systemwide administration changed their minds and accommodated my position.
The “Keep Fighting” Gifts

Nathan: That doesn’t happen very often?

Tien: No. So it’s how to choose those kinds of battles. But one interesting thing is for the VERIP retirement: when the newspapers came out that I may resign on this and so on, and then two days later, when I came back from Japan, I got a letter from a person who donated actually several million dollars for the student activities and so on, scholarships. He wrote me a letter. He said, “I read in the Chronicle you’ve threatened to resign.” Then he said, “You cannot resign. I’m going to support you.” He attached four checks, $1 million, checks—yes, cash [laughing].

Nathan: Really astounding.

Tien: Yes, yes, really amazing, that person. That person eventually gave the campus more than $5 million, all cash. In one case it was when he read in the newspaper and he gave me, yes, yes. So it’s remarkable goodwill. People tried to support me because I saw that the budget was so high and I could not do anything. Support happened in a lot of cases, very moving, people’s goodwill, good feelings, yes, yes.

Nathan: To stand on a matter of principle.

Tien: Yes.

Nathan: And be rewarded.

Tien: Yes, yes.

Academic Senate Committees

Tien: My services on committees, Academic Senate. Over the years, I did serve on many different Academic Senate committees. I became more and more active in the Academic Senate. I chaired the Teaching Committee, I chaired Affirmative Action, another, the Status of Women and Minorities because it was important. And I was on the Committee on Committees. That’s a key committee. So over the years, I served on many committees. I feel that’s part of my responsibility, especially coming from engineering. The perception is most engineering professors are not that active in campus affairs, so I made a special effort. I tried to be active.

I think that helped me in many ways later on, going to the administration, various vice chancellors, and chancellorship. I learned also in that process, through the Academic Senate. So I appreciate the Academic Senate a lot in the sense of how I learned the way shared governance works: administration and the Academic Senate, faculty senate. Berkeley has a great system. We should try to preserve that. But over the last few years, because of affirmative action, that was also challenged, that system, a great tradition of Berkeley.
My committee experience was very positive. I learned a lot, especially for my activities graduating from engineering to teacher, professor, researcher, and then into university affairs, and then gradually into university administration. So that was a good one.

**Revoking Tenure**

Tien: Resignation of a tenured professor, 1991. That was one of the first major issues I confronted dealing with the faculty. I really don’t know how much that was in the newspapers. Do you know?

Nathan: I don’t know where I picked that up.

Tien: Yes, yes. I don’t want to say too much maybe because there may be a legal case. This is one case, a tenured professor, eventually he resigned; he was not dismissed. He was a tenured professor in a humanities department. He repeatedly got complaints about his sexual harassment, even using test grades and course grades in exchange for maybe sexual favors. The evidence seemed quite strong, so we went through the Faculty Conduct Committee and others’ review, the Faculty Budget Committee, and they really supported our proposal to dismiss him.

Again, that’s a tough decision for me to make. I always try to make common sense. I just feel you cannot do this. I’m not going to be blackmailed or retreat because of his threat. So we finally confronted him that if he would not resign by a certain date, we would dismiss him, fire him and he could sue us, and then we could have the court opening up all the cases. If he agreed to resign, we would not pursue that further. He would just leave the university. Of course, at that time, few people ever had tenure revoked. It was so sacred. Tenured faculty members cannot be dismissed unless it's something very serious. Sexual harassment even about eight, nine years ago, was still not as weighty as perhaps right now. Even our President Bill Clinton has this issue. We just felt in the university, especially in terms of faculty, using course grades and test grades to do things like that is not good, so we confronted this professor. We suggested maybe he should resign. He said no, he's going to fight. He's going to file suit against the university if his tenure was revoked.

In the beginning he said, "Absolutely not." He wanted to fight. But the last day, he resigned, so that was the case, 1991. That was during my second year, so those are decisions.

Subsequently, later on, we had another case, which is still unresolved. I'm not going to say too much. It's still in court, yes. Again, those are very tough faculty tenure cases. We actually dismissed or are on the verge of dismissing some faculty members, tenured faculty members. But generally it worked out quite well, as long as we had the right grounds. If we have the evidence, everything, we should not be afraid of doing the right thing, yes.
Affirmative Action Hiring, Administrators

Tien: Affirmative action hiring. Of course, this is a very sensitive issue for me. I always feel we should give the minorities and women opportunities because they really in many ways, in the Caucasian male-dominated environment, they are disadvantaged groups. So I worked very hard for the faculty on that. I think the progress has been very good.

I also worked a lot about issues with the staff, especially leadership level; for instance, like, deans and vice chancellors and so on. During my tenure, I had some people laughing. They said I had a Rainbow Coalition because I had a black vice chancellor, Horace Mitchell. He is vice chancellor of Business and Administrative Services. And then I had at that time, still now, Genaro Padilla, the vice chancellor for Undergraduate Affairs. He's Hispanic. And then we have myself, who is Asian. And then we have a woman as the second person; that's Carol Christ. In fact, when I appointed Carol as the provost and the vice chancellor--now her title changed to executive vice chancellor--she was the first in the history of Berkeley, a woman appointed to the chief academic office of provost. In the history, the first one.

They are all still staying with the current administration. Then we have some Caucasians. But generally that's covered very well. We have Hispanic and black--

Nathan: Excuse me, is that Herman Padilla? I didn't get his name.

Tien: Padilla is Genaro, G-e-n-a-r-o, Genaro Padilla, P-a-d-i-l-l-a. He is still the vice chancellor for Undergraduate Affairs. I think it's very important. I benefitted greatly because there are many issues involving race relations, in student, faculty and also staff affairs. I think someone of that kind of background always can give a different perspective, sometimes very penetrating. So that was very helpful, affirmative action hiring. I believe that is very positive. Of course, some people say, well, you sacrifice standards or so on. I don't think that's the case.

Writings

Tien: My writings. For the plus on this issue, I wrote quite a few articles on affirmative action. If you'd like to have that, Nancie Hughes can get from any national magazines we published in, and also major newspapers, like the *New York Times*, the *L.A. Times*, and others.

The outreach program for faculty and students. I think they are going quite well; Berkeley Pledge for students. Although we cannot use race and color as explicit factors, we are still doing a lot of outreach programs, generally quite good. And also for faculty, also very strong. I think Chancellor Berdahl is also a very strong supporter of that.
**Unions for Graduate Student Instructors, Faculty**

Tien: Effort to hire, support, retain, secure faculty, relations with the T.A.s. I think, yes, maintaining T.A.s. That's one thing that's very important. We at Berkeley call them GSIs, graduate student instructors. They are non-tenured. We in fact maintain a position: they are students first, graduate students first; they are employees second. Because of that, we have tremendous disagreements with unions because they want to organize GSIs as a union, as union members. I have very mixed feelings. I support the labor movement, I support unions; but I must say I'm absolutely against organizing intellectual activity members into unions.

For instance, faculty unions. I don't support the idea at all because once you organize, like, faculty into union status--in some universities they do have unions, unfortunately--and I can say those universities who have faculty organized in unions, they are not doing that well, at the academic level, because once you're in a union, you're always asked what are regular working hours, time, and everything becomes mechanical, regimented.

Then, for creative professions, intellectual professions, that's just not compatible. So for the GSIs, that's a little bit of a gray area, so it's very hard for me. I support labor unions generally, but then I'm really opposed to organizing faculty members into organized unions.

Partly because I was chancellor, the university has a general rule, they (GSIs) are not union members; they are students. They are student employees. They are not regular employees, so we cannot recognize the union status. We have had several strikes. In fact, we may still have a GSI strike coming, so that issue is still not resolved.

Some universities, like Yale University and others--Minnesota--they did have very major strikes for the T.A. or GSI (in our case). But so far, our campus has not been affected as much, although we did have strike attempts and some disturbances, but not major. During that time period, although I disagreed with them, I went to the picket line myself almost every day. I talked to the picket members. I sympathize with them, I'm for them, but I just cannot agree on the unionization for GSIs. So on that we disagree.

I think many students also felt a little caught in between. They like me. They feel I'm sympathetic with them. But on the other hand, as chancellor I cannot accept the unionization, particularly since most students, GSIs, blame systemwide. They feel that's a university policy. They feel I was caught in between. I had to support a systemwide policy. Some radical members said, "You can violate that. You're chancellor. You don't have to listen to that." I said, "I'm not that kind of person."

Same thing with affirmative action. They said, "You're chancellor. You don't have to listen to that. They can fire you, but you stand on principle." But I felt that as long as I was chancellor, I had to be a team player. If I could not, if I had basic policy disagreements, then I would resign. So that's what I chose in a few cases.

That's the GSI strike issue.
International Symposium on Thermal Science and Engineering, 1995

Tien: "November 1995 symposium of Thermal Science and Engineering in your honor. What this meant to you." Oh, really, that was maybe the highlight of my life career.

Nathan: How wonderful.

Tien: That was in November 1995. My former students and postdocs and colleagues, they organized an international symposium, a two- or three-day symposium in honor of my sixtieth birthday, at that time. People came all the way from the Soviet Union or Russia, and also from Europe, from Asia. Actually, the Soviet Union at that time sent a delegation to come to Berkeley to celebrate this occasion. China also sent a delegation, with their Academy of Science members. And Japan, England, France, Germany, all parts of the United States. They all flew in for two days, two or three days. Presented papers, and I was there.

To me, I felt very gratified, a combination of my long career, many of my former students, postdocs, they all flew in. They presented me with what they called a Tree.

Nathan: The "Tree of Life" painting?

Tien: Yes, that was the event.

Nathan: It's hanging--

Tien: Yes, yes. In my office.

Nathan: And it is the first generation of your students, and then their students?

Tien: Yes, students' students, yes. My students are peach--the first generation of students are a peach, each one, their name and year; and then their students, and their students' students are plums. Because peach and plum means in Chinese--we call peaches--will cultivate a lot of peaches and plums. Those are the students and the students' students and so on. That was a symbolic thing, on the wall of my inner office. That's very good. I think two hundred people, or more than two hundred people came from all over the world. They were all very renowned scholars. They also published a book. [The title is: The Symposium on Thermal Science and Engineering in Honor of Chancellor Chang-Lin Tien.]

Relationships with Colleagues

Tien: My relationship with previous chancellors, other faculty members, consultants. As I said earlier, I maintain a very close relationship with all the former chancellors. When I arrived at Berkeley, my chancellor was Glenn Seaborg, 1959. Clark Kerr was 1958, was chancellor, became president; and then he appointed Glenn Seaborg. But Glenn Seaborg did not stay very long; then he went to Washington, D.C. After Glenn Seaborg was Ed
Strong. I did not have any interaction with Ed Strong because Ed afterwards also passed away. His tenure was relatively short.

Glenn Seaborg always joked. He said how smart he was to pick me in 1959 as the assistant professor in mechanical engineering and now also his successor. At that time, he was so high up—Nobel Prize winner and chancellor—so I never had interaction with him much. He also stayed only for two years; then he went to Washington.

Then Ed Strong became chancellor. I didn't have the pleasure to interact with him. After Ed Strong, then we had this turmoil, and we had Roger Heyns. Before Roger Heyns, we had who was it? Acting chancellor for one year.

Nathan: Meyerson?

Tien: Meyerson, yes.

Nathan: Martin.

Tien: Martin Meyerson.

Nathan: He was an acting chancellor and he and President Kerr went out together.

Tien: And then after Martin Meyerson—he, of course, left. Went to Penn State as president and then eventually the University of Pennsylvania presidency. Roger Heyns came in. After a while, Roger had a heart attack because it was too stressful. I think Budd Cheit was at that time acting chancellor for a very short while. Roger came back, and then in 1974 or '75 Roger Heyns resigned and went to Washington, D.C., ACE, American Council on Education. And then--

Nathan: Bowker?

Tien: Albert Bowker. Bowker stayed for eight years, I think. Al Bowker. So I have close interactions. I am also in touch with Martin Meyerson. Even after he went to the East Coast, I saw him periodically. After that, Roger Heyns became a very close friend for many years. He actually gave me a lot of good advice.
Supporting Athletics and Playing with Athletes

[Interview 10: February 1, 1999] ##[18A]

Nathan: Earlier we had talked a little about your working out or playing with the good basketball players. Could you tell us more about that? Where did this happen?

Tien: When I was chancellor, of course, I really loved sports and I supported sports a lot, especially basketball because I played varsity basketball myself, before. So when I had an opportunity I always tried to join, especially our team, so I went to many rallies and also practice sessions. For instance, Jason Kidd, when he was with us, Lamond Murray, I go to some practice sessions with them. Of course, I was not in top condition to compete with them, but we just played a little bit around, like I would dribble and try to play against them. That was a thrill, yes.

Many people: Lamond Murray I mentioned, Jason Kidd, and even later on, Abdur-Rahim. They’re all now NBA stars. Even before I became chancellor—for instance, when I was vice chancellor, 1984, I helped to support the team, basketball. If I remember correctly, at that time we had Kevin Johnson, who is now a superstar also in Phoenix right now, NBA. Kevin Johnson, always a fantastic ballplayer, and just recently he completed his degree also, after so many years. Always supporting our kids and also supporting many youth programs in the Sacramento area.

I don’t know whether I mentioned either that in the late 1970s I helped a Cal basketball team to recruit an Asian American player, Richard Chang, C-h-a-n-g. He was the first major Asian American player in an American university program. I remember at that time the coach, Dick Kuchen, K-u-c-h-e-n. He came to visit me and asked me whether I know the family and whether I could help to recruit this young person. I think he was six-five or six-six.

It so happened I knew the family, originally from Taiwan, so I talked to the family, talked to him, and eventually he joined Cal and he played for several years. He later became a professional star and went back to Taiwan also. So that’s Richard Chang I helped in basketball.

So I’ve been always very active in those activities, yes.

Nathan: You mentioned going to the ice hockey games?

Tien: Ice hockey, too. Ice hockey is not a varsity sport, but especially when Cal and Stanford meet, it’s still a very big event, the big game of ice hockey. But they usually have the game at midnight because Iceland—Berkeley Iceland at that time—they were open ’til ten o’clock in the evening for the public, and so they schedule the game usually starting around midnight. I like ice hockey also. I like all sports.
It’s a very fast game, especially our team, when we have a big game with Stanford. I went there a few times. Every time I went there, the students just got so thrilled because at midnight—usually it’s Friday or Saturday—after midnight they would not expect that the chancellor will come after a long, long day and go to the ice hockey game at midnight. That was a very good experience. I’d sit with students, rooting for our team. It’s very good for that, yes.

I went to almost all sports. I went to women’s soccer games quite often, and squash, and also I went to women’s basketball games all the time. I love that. And also I went to the men’s baseball games quite frequently. It’s always nice to watch the game, and to talk to the students, talk to the alumni, friends, and many parents. The parents of the players, they also attend. Those are not very big sports in terms of audience, so when I go there, I have great opportunity to talk to many of the parents of the players, the student players, and then many friends of students and so on.

Nathan: Are you able to be alert late at night? I know you’ve made appointments with graduate students very late.

Tien: Yes. I usually go to sleep quite late, and I don’t usually need that many hours sleep, so I often have appointments at eleven, twelve, or one o’clock in the morning with students, and I go home. For instance, today. You are here today. I went to bed slightly after two o’clock this morning [chuckling], and I got up about seven o’clock and came to the university. So that’s my routine. It’s nothing special when I go to the hockey game at midnight. That still fits into my schedule.

Nathan: It’s as though you expand your time?

Tien: Yes, yes, yes.

Nathan: Well, thank you. Is there something more you’d like to say?

Tien: No, that’s fine.

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**Professional Development Program, MESA (Mathematics, Engineering, and Science Achievement) and Excellence Through Diversity**

Nathan: Did you want to say anything about PDP, the Professional Development Program?

Tien: Yes, yes. Well, I talked to the PDP group, and I’m very much in support of any effort for diversity or to help preparation of some underprivileged, underrepresented groups.

In fact, one of the most successful programs in mathematics, science, and engineering is called MESA—Mathematics, Engineering, and Science Achievement group. MESA, M-E-S-A, was established, if I remember correctly, in 1969. That was the year when I became Thermal Science Division chairman. The reason I mention MESA now is it is a very famous national model. People say over thirty years ago, that was an idea coming from just one or two people. One person who was very much instrumental in setting up
the MESA program, was Professor Bill—William Somerton, S-o-m-e-r-t-o-n. Professor Somerton, of petroleum engineering. At that time, petroleum engineering was part of mechanical engineering and also in my thermal science division.

I remember one day he came to see me. He said he had this idea; he had someone also supporting him, to help minority and underprivileged groups to study more mathematics, engineering, and science. But they didn’t have any space, and they were short of money. I was the new division chairman, and so I said, “This is fantastic. Very much in line with my own thinking, my own experience in the past.” So I said, “I will try to find something for you.”

Actually, being division chairman at that time, I allocated office space for this group and also allocated some money to support this group. With that kind of support in the beginning, MESA finally really progressed, and now it’s a national program. It’s one of the most successful, reputable examples of affirmative action programs. That was my effort in diversity. Again, I was only just helping out in the beginning. Professor Somerton spent a tremendous amount of time. He really did a beautiful job in getting that done.

But later on, because the program became so big, he started to pass that to professional managers and directors. Later on, they moved to the Lawrence Hall of Science. Now they are more a statewide organization.

Nathan: It was the right thing at the right time?

Tien: Yes, in the beginning, yes, yes. More effort, but it made a lot of difference.

Nathan: I came across this phrase: the Coalition for Excellence Through Diversity. That’s part of MESA?

Tien: Yes, right. When I became chancellor in 1990, the first thing I thought was to coin this phrase, Excellence Through Diversity. I remember that February 15, 1990, when I was appointed as the incoming chancellor starting July 1st, 1990, I got phone calls from various media, newspapers, I was in Irvine. After the announcement, I went back to Irvine.

They said they need a statement about what vision you have and so on, and so I remember that day I outlined the four directions for the university, which I faithfully adhered to during my seven years’ tenure. But the main, overall thrust is Excellence Through Diversity, yes. That was my diversity commitment.

Nathan: We might just move along? Shall we go now—anything said before you would like to come back to, or should we go on?

Tien: Okay, sure, sure. We can come back.

Nathan: When you see the whole transcript, then you can insert material.

Tien: Sure, yes, yes.
Nathan: And any time something comes into your head, you can certainly do it.
XIV ALUMNI, PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF THE UNIVERSITY, AND INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS

Tien: I think during my chancellorship tenure, the most important thing I learned was how important the alumni and the public perception of the university are—especially when we are in need of both government budgetary support as well as private fund-raising. Then the public perception of the university will make a big difference, both for the public support, money, and also private money.

This was the first thing I found is so important, very different from being a professor, an engineer, and so on. But I liked that part very much because I like to make a lot of friends. I like to communicate with them about how the university has been doing. So I think maybe that’s really the key to the success of our fund-raising effort as well as the general good rapport with the public.

Of course, I also spent a lot of time in our outreach activities, for both alumni and the public. In terms of alumni, I find the personal relationship, especially the chancellor’s talking to them on a one-to-one basis in a very personal way, that can really make a big difference.

In terms of public media, I of course visited, formally, all the editorial boards of, for instance, all the major newspapers in the Bay Area. I visited also electronic media, tried to communicate to them. I think for the media, one thing I find the most important thing is always be very straight, be very honest in many ways, and also be sincere. They can detect that when you deal with reporters. I think I maintained very good rapport with the media people, to the point that some people even accused me, saying I’m so good in manipulating or getting all the media people somehow supporting Berkeley or myself, so they keep writing very favorable articles, reports, and so on.

I think, actually, it was really just I tried to be myself and honest and sincere and deal with reporters in a very straight way, although we have confidential issues usually we don’t mention. But whenever I can also tell them anything, I don’t regard them as an adversary but also regard them as part of the team. I think that attitude is very important. Even to this day, I always feel the media is so important, even if we are being criticized unfairly in some fashion, they are just performing their job, and a very essential job. You have to really work together with them and not take an opposite position.
Olympic Games at Nemea

Tien: I think that really helped a lot. Of course, being very visible, active, that helped me in terms of my image also. I see you have here, for instance, Olympic Games at Nemea. That’s a very good example. I was so pleased I had this opportunity to go there and to play in the games. Again, my schedule was so tight at that time, I almost said it would be impossible to participate. But those were very big games in 1996, I think.

The earlier Olympic games began in Greece. They had the ceremony, and I think that was in June. Professor Miller, Stephen Miller, of classics, is really a great instigator, supporter or organizer of our programs in Greece, especially in Nemea, digging and so on. He wanted to reconstruct the ancient Olympic games. I remember it was early June. My schedule was all fixed, but he invited me to participate because that was so important, so I remember I flew in.

I arrived in Athens about midnight because I had another commitment and couldn’t go earlier. I arrived there at midnight, and then he had someone pick me up in the Athens airport. We drove about two hours, after midnight, and went to Nemea. I went to a guest house, and I went to bed about four o’clock or five o’clock and then got up at eight o’clock. So I had only maybe a few hours of sleep, because the preparations would start at eight o’clock.

I got up, and I had to follow all the routine: register. We also ran—

Nathan: You registered?

Tien: Yes, yes, sure. Barefoot.

Nathan: Oh, my.

Tien: Just like the ancient games. That was a great event. They have videotape, everything now. It’s still being played a lot. A former chancellor, Al Bowker, was there. Although we didn’t run the same race because there are different classifications; he was in a more senior group. I ran also the race. But I was concerned; the most important thing was because of my time, I didn’t sleep for twenty-four hours, but I had to show. I said, “I cannot get injured because my muscles, everything was out of tune.” So I had to be very careful and watch not to get injured, muscle pull and so on. That’s the first.

The second, I should not be the last in the race because that doesn’t look good, either. As chancellor, you’re not going in there as an athlete. I didn’t want to run too fast because I was afraid of my muscle condition; I may get injured. So during the run, I always watched. I didn’t want to be the first or second or third, but I didn’t want to be the last, either—so I was watching, making sure I didn’t get injured. So I went through, barefooted, and actually it was only a tunic and nothing else. That was just like the ancient times.

We spent the whole day in the beautiful setting. It was attended by 10,000 people. Many of them were Cal alumni. Actually, Mrs. Gerhard Casper [Stanford] also went and also ran a race in a women’s category. There were many alumni friends and so on.
That evening, that night, after all this whole day, I only had two or three hours’ sleep, and then I again left. If I remember, I went from Athens to Frankfurt to Beijing—that whole trip, yes. That was Nemea.

Again, I will say that I was actually so interested in participating. I enjoyed it so much, although it was physically very taxing, because of the schedule and so on. Now, looking back, it was a fabulous experience. I have many, many examples of that kind that really make everybody appreciate my effort to try to outreach.

**Flying to Attend Major Cal Games**

Tien: There are many, many cases, as when I go to, say, either a major basketball game or a football game. Again, I remember there was a football game, very important one, played in Kansas. I think I actually, because of my schedule, flew to St. Louis and then got a rented car, drove to Lawrence. Lawrence is the University of Kansas, at the township, Lawrence. Reached the game only five minutes after it started. And then I went to the press box and said hello to all our alumni and so on. That was Cal and Kansas playing.

After the game, I took off immediately and went to the East Coast. I had to go there. Many, many games of that type. That was the first one or one of the first—oh, I think it was the Copper Bowl, one of the post-season bowl games. Actually, I had visited Asia, so I flew all the way from either Thailand or Singapore to the bowl game, a few hours before the bowl game, and then attended the game and talked to everyone, seeing everyone and so on.

So this happened all the time. I enjoyed it. If I can make the time and if my physical condition is such that I can do it, I would like to do it.

**Activities in the International Arena**

Tien: I was also perhaps the chancellor most active in the international arena.

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Tien: I was very active in the international arena, not only because I’m a more international person. Of course, I go to Asia. I established the Asian alumni biannual meeting, and it went very successfully. Once or twice a year I go to Europe and Latin America and to see friends and others. For instance, Mexico. I went to visit Mexico several times during my chancellorship. I know today our governor is going to Mexico. California-Mexico relations have been strained for some years. Now our new governor is going to see if he can help on this.

But when I first became chancellor, very interesting. At that time, the minister of higher education was now the current president, President Ernesto Zedillo. Since I came as the
chancellor of Berkeley, he knows very well Berkeley’s position in Mexico. I had several
meetings with him, at that time Minister Zedillo. We had very good rapport. So later on,
when he became president, was elected president, I think in 1994, he invited me to his
inauguration. I again took the opportunity to visit Mexico and see our alumni there and
also attended his inauguration. I had a talk with him, and he said, “You are the only
American chancellor of a major university we invited to the inauguration.” So that was
very good. It just was an example.

There are many examples of this type. When I went to Europe and Di-Hwa and I went to
Asia, it really elevated Berkeley’s prestige and visibility to much higher level than before.
So for the international travel, I think I can comment a little bit later on.

**Distinguished Foreign Visitors**

Tien: We also invited many distinguished foreign visitors. For instance, in the very beginning,
we invited Chancellor Helmut Kohl. He came to spend actually three days when he was
still chancellor. He stepped down only last year. He came to Berkeley. We had a great
experience together. He was very moved about Berkeley being a public university
because most of German or almost all German universities are public universities.

At that time, Germany also had many diversity issues in universities, not only East
Germany and West Germany not being united, but also they had minority issues like the
Turkish constituency as well as Yugoslavia. Now, they split, Yugoslavia split into many
different countries. But in Germany, a very large component of the communities is from
the former Yugoslavia and also from Turkey. They also confront this issue.

I remember one day when I walked with him he said he’d like to walk around the campus.
He saw the diversity of our students, and he almost was in tears. He said, “This is just a
great feeling to see so many different races and cultures all in this great public
university.” He said, “I would feel much, much happier if during my lifetime I could see
a major German university achieve the same kind of level of diversity and excellence as
Berkeley.” He commented on that. I felt very moved. He is a very emotional person.
When he sees something, he speaks out. He was almost in tears, saying what he felt.

The other thing he felt was very interesting: When I walked with him, most of the
students all know me. They all say, “Chancellor, Chancellor Tien, Chancellor.” He
found people calling him.

[Both chuckle]

Tien: Although he’s a tall, big guy, he said, “Well, at Berkeley certainly everybody knows this
chancellor and not me, the other chancellor.” So very interesting, yes.
State Visit of the Chinese Premier, and Blacklisting by Taiwan

Tien: We had a few other distinguished visitors also visiting us. One of them—actually even before I became chancellor. I might mention that.

Nathan: Yes.

Tien: In 1984-85 I was vice chancellor. At that time, the People’s Republic of China, mainland China, just opened up the relationship with the West. Deng Xiaoping visited in the early 1980s, and then the Chinese premier, Zhao Zhiyang—Zhao, Z-h-a-o, Zhiyang, Z-h-i-y-a-n-g. He was premier at that time. For a state visit, as the first Chinese premier visiting the United States, they arranged for him to visit Berkeley.

Nathan: The State Department arranged it?

Tien: Yes. Oh, yes, because he was the premier, so it was a major visit. Very careful. The first time a significant, very major Chinese leader was visiting the United States after the Cultural Revolution, they arranged for him to visit Berkeley. Chancellor—at that time still Mike Heyman—I was vice chancellor for research. Because of my background, Chancellor Heyman, of course, asked me to participate in a number of things regarding the visit. Of course, I can speak the language, Mandarin, and so on.

Someone suggested, perhaps Premier Zhao suggested, perhaps I can ride with him to the Lawrence Hall of Science so we could also speak. He doesn’t, of course, speak English that well. I can speak Chinese, so that would be much more comfortable. Security people ruled that out and said, “You cannot have that.” That was fine. So when he arrived, we shook hands and he was very pleased. At that time, also for the State Department—security was very, very tight, very careful, to make sure everything went well. There was an incident, I can mention that, a kind of interesting incident. The first day, he suggested that maybe I could ride with him to the Lawrence Hall of Science. At that time, the major receptions were in the Lawrence Hall of Science. At that time, security could be easily controlled, and also it’s a little bit away from the core campus. We still had, at that time, demonstration potential, student demonstration problems, because at that time China was still a major Communist leader, Russia and the Soviet Union still, because we were still in the Cold War period.

Then I remember at the end of the visit in the Lawrence Hall of Science we briefed him about Cal's development and all. He was just about to step into his limousine. Of course, I was shaking hands, saying goodbye. And then he started to speak Chinese to me because he knew I can speak Chinese. He knew me already. I knew him before. In Beijing I visited him several times, so we actually had a good personal relationship. So he spoke with me in Chinese, and now, just out of courtesy, I also spoke back and discussed with him, in Chinese.

We were there maybe one or two minutes, not too long, because it was a long line and also he was going off to the next visit. But after his visit I was bombarded by the FBI, CIA, White House security forces, asking me, "What did you talk about to Zhao, and what did Zhao tell you?" In a state official visit, this was not in a setting where they had a recording. You know, usually they record everything. He was going to leave in a limo,
so then we talked. They thought I may have some special discussion with him and so on, so everybody, for the next two, three days, they asked me, "What exactly did he say to you? What exactly did you tell him?" All different agencies [chuckling], trying to find out.

Nathan: How did you handle that?

Tien: I told them straight. I said, "We didn't talk about anything." I knew him before; I met him many times before, so we had a kind of personal relationship. His visit was so short, and he didn't have time to talk to me individually. He felt bad. He would like to suggest, "Please come to visit us in Beijing again. We can talk," and so on. So we just talked about he was very happy to see the Berkeley situation. All like that. So it was very interesting.

Nathan: Were there any demonstrations?

Tien: I think almost none. It was controlled very well. Because the Lawrence Hall of Science, it's very hard to get people going there. There are only two roads to get there, so it's very easy to control. That was 1984 or '85.

Of course, I also got into trouble at that time. During that period, there was still a lot of stress between the U.S., the Soviet Union, China, and Taiwan. Since I came from Taiwan, you know, I was born in China but my high school and university were in Taiwan. Taiwan is still regarded as having students well educated and so on.

But this is an official function, being vice chancellor, because I do everything. I was also American at that time already; Taiwan was very unhappy about me because Taiwan and mainland China were arch enemies, and "The premier came and seemed to show very close relations with you, and you received him, helped organize some activities," and so I was blacklisted by Taiwan.

Even my brother, my sister-in-law, in Taiwan at that time all got interviewed by Taiwan government people, in a veiled, threatening way, saying, "You should tell your brother to be careful; otherwise, you may have some problems." I still had at that time some relatives in Taiwan. I was also blacklisted this way, even though I came from Taiwan. As an American citizen, I could not get visas to Taiwan for several years. I could not get a visa to Taiwan. So that's another kind of episode for that visit. Very interesting.

Receiving Top Visitors from Latin America, East Asia, Europe

Tien: Now, during my chancellorship, of course, we also had many other people visiting. For instance, Alberto Fujimori, president of Peru, was the first Asian elected to the presidency of a Latin American major country. Also, he felt my Asian heritage helped. So when he visited the United States, he picked Berkeley as a place he'd like to visit. Again, we had several meetings when Fujimori was here. Again, there are a number of interesting things in that case, his visit. He was a Japanese by ancestry, although he is
second-, third-generation in Peru. He was elected at that time as the first Asian chief of state.

When he came, Peru, even now, still has a lot of internal constituency struggles. There was a very more radical group that used force and so on, advocating revolution, called Shining Path. I didn't realize their international headquarters outside of Peru was actually at that time in Berkeley. So he was in the U.S., visiting Berkeley, and here was this violent, radical group.

He was giving a lecture, so we had to be very careful with security. Although his lecture was interrupted by Shining Path, some of the people, generally there were no major incidents. We escorted some of the protestors out. So his visit generally was very calm, although we were very nervous for a while. But it was very important for us to have those chiefs of state visit, especially Latin American. I mentioned Fujimori and President Zedillo.

And then [from] eastern Asian countries we had many visitors. From Europe we did have Helmut Kohl's visit; during Mike Heyman's period, also at that time the president of France.

Nathan: François Mitterand?

Tien: Mitterand visited Berkeley. I think it was 1989 or something like that. He visited Berkeley and established a Berkeley-France exchange program, still going strong. Because of that visit, I went to visit France many times, many times. So those are in the international arena.

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**Visiting Overseas Chiefs of State, Other Officials, and the Role of the Berkeley Mafia**

Tien: I of course visited Asia and met many of the chiefs of state. For instance, in Japan, I remember in the early 1990s I visited Japan and had a private meeting with Prime Minister Toshiki K-a-i-f-u, I think. Again, I was the first American university chancellor or head the prime minister received. Usually, in protocol, you seldom have a private meeting with a prime minister. So Kaifu I visited. In that case, actually, because I was chairman of our California alumni club in Japan, a close confidant of Kaifu was a Diet member--D-i-e-t--that's their parliament--a parliament member. He arranged it so I could get that. That, again, added a lot to Berkeley's associations.

I visited Korea and also I had meetings with the [South] Korean prime minister and the president. Some of them now went to jail [chuckling]. Kim Young Sam and also General Roh Tae Woo. General Roh Tae Woo was president (1988-1993) succeeded Chun Doo Hwan (1980-1988). Of course, Roh Tae Woo, of course, later got arrested, and so on. Maybe he's still in jail right now. But, again, at that time it was very important. We had a very strong alumni showing in Korea. Several deputy prime ministers over the years were all Cal Berkeley alumni.
I went to Indonesia. President Suharto I saw at that time, and also many, many ministers in that area. One day, when we were in Indonesia, visiting in the mid-1990s, Suharto was still in control. The economy was still going well.

Berkeley was very well known, especially in terms of their economic development since 1960, all under Berkeley alumni's planning and guidance. So the Berkeley group was known at that time in good terms, like the Berkeley Mafia, they called it, but in a nice way. They called the Berkeley group, the Berkeley Mafia.

When I visited there in the early 1990s, I remember there were many we visited--all the top people, because the Berkeley Mafia was so powerful, and I being the chancellor. One day we had a lunch with a distinguished Berkeley alumni group. When I went to the restaurant, I heard the restaurant owners were so nervous about this event because they learned that there were something like twelve or thirteen cabinet ministers and former cabinet ministers all gathering for that event. They were concerned about security and so on, so many cabinet secretaries, ministers in that event. So that shows at that time the Berkeley influence.

Then I went also to Singapore. I saw the president, even still now, the president, President--the name--I forget the official English name. I know the Chinese name, because he was ethnically a Chinese; Singapore has 75 percent of the Singaporeans of Chinese origin. That's the president, in Chinese called Ong Teng Cheong. It so happened that his son was a student at Berkeley, architecture. So he visited Berkeley before he became president, to see his son, at that time studying architecture. So I already had met him, received him before. So when I went to Singapore, of course I also paid a visit to him and again saw other ministers and so on.

This goes on and on. When we were in Thailand, we didn't meet the king, but we met the crown prince Maha Vajiralongkorn, a very popular figure. I remember one visit in the mid-1990s to Thailand, Bangkok. We had a big event, gathering. Again, our alumni group is so powerful and we also have some workshops, a short-course program for mid-rank government officials of Thailand, handled through Cal. Many of them graduated from that short-course program, like three months, and they went back to Thailand. And then eventually they all become high-up government officials.

Thailand is divided into seventy provinces. I remember when we had this meeting, we probably had twenty or thirty governors who all flew in, flew in from their individual provinces, came in to attend this party to meet me. Not only that, they being very hospitable, they brought some of their local special food and other things, like a gift. I could not carry all those things back to the United States. Also arts, crafts and so on. Very large numbers of governors came. They were also local deputy prime ministers and cabinet ministers all attending the meeting.

So all those are all very really remarkable in that sense. I gave only a few highlights, examples. There were many others. I went to China. I saw Jiang Zemin, now the chairman of the Republic in China. Also the current premier, very famous--people sometimes called him at that time the Gorbachev of China. He was mayor of Shanghai before. Now he is premier of China, Zhu Rongji, Z-h-u Rongji. Premier Zhu, Z-h-u. He is very famous. He is coming to visit the United States in April or May.
I remember 1994, when he was mayor of Shanghai at that time--Shanghai and San Francisco are sister cities, and so he came to visit. One day he called my office and [said], "I'm in San Francisco. Can I come by to see you and have a meeting?"

##[19A]

Nathan: Before I forget, I have two questions.

Tien: Yes?

Nathan: One, does your wife Di-Hwa accompany you?

Tien: Yes, most of the trips we take together. She has been really remarkable. In fact, we just came back from another Asia trip for two weeks. We were together. To Beijing, to a southern island off China, and then went to Hong Kong and went to Taipei, Taiwan. Just came back last week. She joins with me on most of the trips. Very physically demanding, but, again, if you're interested, you like what you are doing, you feel this is good for the university, we try to do everything we can.

I was mentioning about Zhu Rongji. Zhu Rongji now is premier of China. In 1994 he was still mayor of Shanghai. He came to the Bay Area, San Francisco, and then he called my office to say that he would like to have a meeting, a visit with me. I said, "Why don't we have a dinner together?" And so we had a dinner. In fact, in the upstairs of the Yen Ching, downtown, in Shattuck Square. There's a small, private room upstairs, so I invited a few professors. We had a very nice meeting. Of course, shortly after that he became vice premier, and now he is premier. He is very important in this period in transforming China's economy, Zhu Rongji.

Subsequent to that, of course, I also visited China and saw some of them quite often. Only two or three weeks ago, I was in Beijing. Again, I didn't see Zhu Rongji this time; I saw his executive vice premier, Li Lanqing and then I saw the minister of finance and many other people. I know the mayor of Beijing, the mayor of Shanghai--all of them quite well. That's good.

During my chancellorship period, I mentioned Taiwan. Originally they were not happy about my situation, but after the Tiananmen incident in 1989 and also my becoming chancellor in 1990, of course, my situation in Taiwan also improved greatly, so I went back many times. I still remember 1990, when I went back to Taiwan. President Lee Teng-Hui at that time--one night he came to my hotel. We had a private dinner. Again, that was very interesting. This is the Grand Hotel, a famous hotel in Taiwan. I stayed there. We had dinner in a private banquet room in the Grand Hotel.

Again, the hotel management people felt very strange. Who is this guy? The president came to the hotel to have dinner, and a private dinner and a meeting with him. I remember that. President Lee Teng-Hui is still the president in Taiwan. Of course, I met many people. Subsequent to that, I've seen him quite often. Of course, I was very active in Taiwan in many other functions.

Nathan: Were these also professional in addition to representing the university?
Tien: That's right. Yes, yes. Sometimes they are not totally separable because my professional activities certainly augment a lot of our Berkeley's relationship with local constituencies. That's a reason we were so successful in fund-raising in all those countries, being very visible, and they appreciate the close relationship. And then they start to voluntarily give support to Berkeley.

Also one person, for instance, for the last four years the governor of Taiwan, is James Soong, S-o-o-n-g, James Soong. He is very powerful right now, and the most popular statesman or leader in Taiwan. He was a graduate student here in the mid-1960s in the political science department. He worked as a part-time teaching assistant. Actually, it wasn't even teaching assistant, in the Center for Chinese Studies library. Bibliographer. He worked part-time as that, to support himself. So he did a lot of writing, a lot of index cards, and so on.

Actually, the day before yesterday, he came back to visit us just two days ago. I took him to the university to meet Chancellor Berdahl. We talked about when he was a student here. After he got his master's degree, he moved to Washington, D.C. He got a Ph.D. from Georgetown University, and then he went back to Taiwan. He became a very powerful leader. The last time, when he had this popular election, governorship, just like in the United States, when you get a certain number of votes, pass a threshold, the government will subsidize part of your election campaign costs.

After he was elected--because he got a tremendous number of votes, a very high percentage--he got a lot of subsidy from the government to pay back for the cost. After he deducted the actual costs, he still had a surplus. Usually when you have that surplus you can set up an account for campaign purpose or public charity and so on. What he did was he got a surplus; with some of it he set up a foundation in memory of his father, for scholarships. But he actually donated $1 million American dollars from that surplus to Berkeley. Yes. Set up a scholarship to promote the exchange between Berkeley and Taiwan situation. So that's James Soong. He actually donated $1 million American dollars to set up this.

Of course, before he even donated the money, we also gave him the Haas Award. He was I think the first Asian, international figure; it's a Distinguished International Alumnus of the Year award. Yes, the Haas Award. That's James Soong. He just recently visited here. Two days ago I brought him to see Chancellor Berdahl. There are many, many Taiwan dignitaries visiting us.

Those are international activities. Latin America, all across Canada. We also had many people coming from Canada, visiting us, dignitaries. We have a very large number of Canadian students. We have the Center for Canadian Studies also.

Nathan: Finally.

Tien: Finally, yes. So we're very active. In Europe we have many relationships with England, France, Germany, and many other countries. In Asia, I already covered some of them. So those are some of the activities for the international events. I think that helps Berkeley. In Asia they voted Berkeley as the number one university in the United States for Asian students to get educated because we are near the Pacific Ocean, very high-quality public university.
Nathan: When you are doing these extensive travels, do you find a need to prepare in some way?

Tien: Oh, we prepare very, very hard for any trip. We have briefings, attendees' backgrounds, so I know everyone. I read them before meetings, before we go. We structure the events in such a way that we can achieve maximum effectiveness. So there are a lot of big preparations. Of course, our development office, the University Relations, really helped a lot. Vice Chancellor Dan Mote at that time was very, very helpful. We worked together for many, many years. We traveled together for trips, yes.

**U.S. Travels, Meeting Alumni and the Non-Alumnus Donor**

Tien: Now I come back to the States. In the United States, I visited a lot. I'm still on this side. I jump a little bit. I made a point to visit, like, we had Philadelphia, New York, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Chicago--all alumni groups. And then, of course, in the state of California I visited so many different alumni groups: San Diego, Orange County, Irvine, Los Angeles, many trips to Los Angeles, to Fresno, Bakersfield, Modesto. And Sacramento is very important to us. We visit many, many times. Even go north to Redding, to Red Bluff, to Sonoma, Santa Rosa--all different groups. Visit many, many of them.

Again, we really formed very close relationships with many of the alumni people. One of the interesting things--I don't know whether I mentioned Mr. Mike Mahoney, M-i-c-h-a-e-l. Mahoney is M-a-h-o-n-e-y, Mahoney. This is a very interesting case; I may have mentioned that before. He was totally unknown to us, not even a Cal alumnus, no relationship. In 1995 we began to receive checks from him, Mike Mahoney, setting up scholarships. Usually these checks are relatively big, like $100,000 or even $200,000 a check.

He donated, in a short period of three months, he almost set up more than half a million, cash. These are all checks. He's not just pledging. And then the computer record shows this person keeps giving money, so we tried to find out who he is. Mike Mahoney. We didn't know at that time. We checked his background, and he has no relation with Cal, absolutely none. Why does he send the checks?

So after he donated, in a short period, half a million dollars, we said I should pay a visit to him or give him a call to find out why, and we wanted to thank him, too. So I called him. He was very good. He said he knew me very well. I said I never met him. He said, "We never met, but I know you. I know your vision. Your idea is just so close to my thinking, so when I try to give money, I want to give somewhere and to someone I feel very close to, so that's why I give the money." I said, "Why don't we have a meeting together? I want to thank you for your generosity."

He set up a meeting. He was very low key, he didn't want to have any publicity.

Nathan: Where is he from?
Tien: He actually lives in Larkspur, in Marin County. I said, "I'll come over to you." He didn't want to have any publicity--anonymous. I said, "Why don't you arrange that." He arranged, in the Lark Creek Inn, the very famous restaurant, that we have lunch together. I went there and I talked to him and so on. After lunch he sent another few checks, half a million dollars again. I expressed to him my ideas and so on. We struck a very good understanding. Of course, we want to be careful whether all this money is coming from the right sources and clean and so on. We found that he had a very big inheritance from his family. His mother is still alive in Washington, D.C., a very famous philanthropist in Washington, D.C., very active in political and social, community charitable activities.

Then, in 1995 or '96, during that period when we had the very controversial debate about diversity, one day the San Francisco Chronicle had a front-page article saying, "Tien Threatens to Resign." At that time, it was '95--our early-retirement controversy. He, himself, got a big inheritance. He worked independently. He studied Freud. He does research. He used our library a lot. That's why he got very close to Cal. He believes in public education. He believes very strongly in diversity. I still have a very good relationship with him. That's very good. After we have meetings, every year he sends us one or two million dollars--always checks.

Nathan: Oh, yes.

Tien: As I said, I was contemplating resigning because I felt Berkeley would be shortchanged by that very, very good incentive for a professor to retire. The next day, he sent four checks, $1 million, with a longhand letter, saying, "Chancellor Tien," he said, "you cannot retire. I'm supporting you. I know the economic situation is so bad. I'm sending you another four checks." The reason--he had different money accounts, so there's a limit to each check, like a quarter million. "So I'm sending you $1 million. I'm going to continue to support you, but you cannot resign." [chuckling]

Nathan: What a story.

Tien: Yes, fantastic. And therefore, when I have big fights with our regents on diversity--as I said, he also sent in a $1 million check for the Berkeley Pledge program. He just keeps supporting. That Mike Mahoney, really a remarkable person.

**Personal Relationships and Role as Catalyst**

Nathan: Now that you have moved on from the chancellorship, is he still donating?

Tien: Yes, we still have communication. I don't know whether he is supporting with more money and so on, but personally we communicate still. Again, I don't want to interfere with the university's activities, but they asked me to follow up with him. We have a personal rapport. Personal relationships are very, very important. So that's one very, very good case. I think he already donated maybe--at least more than $5 million, with no relationship with Cal, just someone who believes in Cal's work, Cal's direction, and so on.

Nathan: Of course, you were a real person.
Well, a real person, a catalyst in some sense, instrumental to get that.

Another moving story also is regarding Dick Goldman. Dick Goldman gave us $1 million before. Of course, before I stepped down in 1997, we also counted on him to donate even more: $10 million for the Public Policy school. Now it's named after him, as an inauguration gift for the new Chancellor Berdahl. But before we got that gift, $10 million gift, a year before, there was Rhoda, R-h-o-d-a, Rhoda Goldman—Rhoda, of course, is Peter Haas's sister, Wally Haas's sister.

I remember this was just one week before Rhoda passed away. We had a dinner at University House, Dick and Rhoda, my wife, together. The purpose was trying to seek their support of $5 million additional gift. Before that, the year before, they gave the $1 million. Now this was our major capital campaign. We'd like to have them give $5 million, and so I remember that dinner. We talked and talked. Again, we were very close friends for many years—family—and liked to have their support.

Dick always is very hard in planning and orders. "We don't know what we can do." So I was pushing. I said, "We need some commitment in about two weeks. We'd like to have $5 million. Please." So he kept talking, "Probably not possible. Soon we have to talk to our tax attorneys, in two weeks." But I said, "I have some kind of deadline in terms of fundraising, so we need that."

After that, I remember, Wednesday or Thursday dinner night. Two days, less than two days, maybe the next day I got a call from Dick Goldman. I said, "Dick, how come you're calling back so early?" He said, "Well, after we had dinner with you, Rhoda and I were in our car. We discussed it and we felt that since you're in a rush and would like to have some commitment, we should tell you early, as early as possible." I said, "That's fantastic." I said, "$5 million?" "No, no. We cannot give you $5 million." Oh, I felt so bad. I said, "How about $4 million?" He said, "No, no. I don't think we can do that, $4 million." Then I really felt bad. I said, "Well, $3 million?" He said, "No, no. We cannot." I said, "How much do you think you can pledge for this?"

He said, "Rhoda and I, we discussed it, and we feel you're doing such a great job and the university needs support, so we feel we cannot give you $5 million, but we're going to give you $7 million." [laughing] Oh, I was just so happy. Fantastic. That's $6 million in addition to the $1 million they gave us before. So that was a great, great thing. Again, a surprise. Sometimes you never know. Of course, one week after that, Rhoda had a heart condition during a cruise in the Mediterranean and passed away. That was very sad. That was the Goldman episode.

We have many, many stories and very moving, in a sense. In many ways, they make you feel you are doing something very, very important.

How is it for you to ask people for large amounts of money?

Usually it's very hard. Actually, at first, we always try not to ask for money in the beginning. First you have to build up tremendous personal rapport. Even before building personal rapport, you must have a very good image of the university, perception, people's perception of the university. They feel fond of the university. Then you build a personal relationship. They always see the chancellor as representing, like, a symbol of the
university, so then you establish a personal relationship. And then you have to have very good plans. What kind of things you're going to do in honor of them or in memory of them or to achieve a certain kind of goal that they have in their charitable agenda. And then, combined with that, you start to see whether they can help on that.

Then, usually you can get very good results. Most people who do the fundraising, they try to rush. Immediately try to ask for money, cold. Usually, that will backfire. In fact, once you get turned down, you cannot even come back quickly because people also feel bad they turned you down, and they do not want to be asked again.
Local Government Issues, People’s Park, and Interaction with Officials

[Interview 11: March 12, 1999] ##[20A]

Nathan: At this time would you want to say anything about relationship with—I just wrote this in—with city officials?

Tien: Oh, yes, that’s fine. When I became chancellor in 1990, one thing very specifically mentioned to me by the regents was to tackle the People’s Park issue, so at that time I immediately established some relationship with the city government, Berkeley, and tried to resolve that issue. We went up and down because we wanted to change the People’s Park. I think we had a big riot for about three, four days. Even the Alameda County sheriff objected to my taking a strong stand to change or reform, restructure the People’s Park.

At that time, the reason was the Alameda County sheriff—also, actually, let me see—yes, sheriff and not the city attorney, the county attorney. They were afraid for the public safety because of the riots day and night.

Nathan: Was that the main issue about the park?

Tien: Yes, yes, People’s Park. Because the People’s Park constituency, they did not want to see anything changed. Partly I was instructed, and partly I think Berkeley, the university depended so much on a more improved southside environment. I stood very firm. Even the Alameda County sheriff and the city, of course, at that time all appealed to the governor and to the state attorney general, asking them to prevent me from carrying out my stand. But I actually stood firm. After three, four days of day and night rioting, they subsided. Of course, I was not really taking any compromise or retreat. Finally, we reached a certain kind of agreement to change.

But even before that, I think I may have mentioned one very interesting episode. At that time, around the People’s Park, they all had tennis shoes [dangling from PG&E wires]. I already mentioned that before, perhaps, so I won’t repeat that. That just shows the kind of complexity of the issue. Of course, we perhaps made some mistakes. First, in 1990, we signed an agreement with the city, a memorandum of understanding about how to restructure the park. We were going to change the park into the centerpiece, with a basketball court and then a volleyball court. Looking back now, the volleyball court was perhaps not the best way to do it because for the community over there, very few people played volleyball, especially sand type of volleyball.

We thought at that time that was the only way we could get through to the city, to get agreement, and so we finally signed, and then we tried to construct the volleyball court. Had big battles. They burned everything
we put up. We just were going back and forth many times. Of course, finally things quieted down, but we never utilized the volleyball court as much.

The basketball court was an excellent arrangement. I went there a few times to demonstrate the utility, and I went to shoot a basket and play with the community a little bit, and working with the city, the southside.

Of course, that also created a focus perhaps for some hard-core People’s Park people, so they built a grave under People’s Park, with my name on it. That was a precursory kind of evidence before the actual attempt of assassination. They came to the University House, Rosebud, and so on. I won’t go into that. I think we went through the Rosebud episode before.

Nathan: Yes.

Tien: So the southside has been always an issue. But I think by the time I stepped down, the southside really improved a lot. I built a good relationship with the merchants, like Larry Blake’s and also the bookstore and many others, Cody’s and so on. But it is still a problem. I understand right now the southside again resurfaced as a trouble spot, and many of the merchants again are complaining about the deterioration.

Northside Expansion, Objections and Response

Tien: But not just the southside but for city relationships, the northside is also a very important issue for us, especially for the university. At that time, we tried to build quite a few new buildings, like Soda Hall, just right next door, and, of course, Foothill dormitory, and all that. So we had a lot of community groups. Also the city and the city council people, and a lot of interaction.

Nathan: What was their objection?

Tien: Basically, they object to any new building, new expansion; for instance, even the Haas Pavilion now we’re trying to build. Of course, during that period, we were building a lot of things, like Tan Kah Kee Hall and also the Tang Center. They feel the university is ever expanding into the city domain, and the city is losing more and more tax base. Also the university is creating more and more traffic jams, more people coming in, the maintenance of the roads, as well as maintenance of the fire service and police and all, so we always have a lot of interaction with the city.

We contributed to fire stations. We actually donated several fire engines, as the university’s contribution for their maintaining the fire situation on campus. We donated actually many community activities in the city in order to maintain good relationships. And we signed an agreement with the city on mutual police patrols, both for the southside and near the campus, and all that.

For the northside we built some buildings to relieve the traffic, and to increase the parking spaces. So there are many, many issues, not only just the southside but the whole city
around, not to mention some complicated issues with Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. For instance, recently they even had the radioactive waste disposal issue. And so we have a number of issues that have very strong impacts on the city.

**Devotion to Berkeley**

Tien: But overall, I must say, we maintain excellent relationship with the city, city council, and the mayor, Shirley Dean, and so on. So I feel very good, partly because I have been a resident of the city for forty years, so nobody can complain. I love the city; otherwise, I would not have stayed so long, all the time.

In fact, I have lived in all parts of the city because in 1959, when I came here, I tried to rent places on the north, and nobody would rent to me, so I went to the southwest, on Carleton Street, near Milvia, Carleton Street, Milvia. That part was open to us, minorities at that time. And then, after two years, we minorities went to the northwest, Ordway, O-r-d-w-a-y, Gilman, Ordway area. It’s very interesting, considering even my living in the city. We moved from southwest to northwest, then to southeast. We went to Alvarado, behind Claremont Avenue, for some years, and then finally we moved to the northeast, on Grizzly Peak, and now I’m near the Olympus area. So we worked around the university, all around: southwest, northwest, southeast, and northeast. Because of my background, I think they felt at least, despite the fact that we had disagreements, that I am a resident of the city for a long, long time, and I love the city. I am so committed to the city. I think that helps a lot.

The same thing when I dealt with other constituencies. I think most people felt, despite the fact that we had disagreements, my heart is still for that particular constituency. Of course, we also have interactions with Oakland, and other neighboring cities and counties. For instance, I was very active in the Metropolitan Forum in Oakland and tried to develop Oakland, Berkeley into a more progressive city and region. Of course, I participated in many San Francisco, in general, Bay Area groups.

**Regional, State, and Federal Levels**

Tien: My interaction with state officials was relatively limited because the systemwide office usually does most of the coordination and interaction. But I did go to see many state officials, both in the executive branch as well as the legislative branch; for instance, assemblymen and senators. We had annual visits several times to Sacramento, to visit all the people—governor, lieutenant governor, speaker, and so on. So we had a lot of interaction in that sense. I also went to the hearings sometimes, for budget—especially anything related to the Berkeley campus. Still a lot of action, but more limited because of systemwide.

Of course, I also interacted with the federal government because of Berkeley being a very major research and education institution, so we also went to Washington, D.C., to see
Senator Dianne Feinstein. I actually even visited Senator Pete Wilson at that time, before he became governor. So there were a lot of, even federal government, yes, activities.

**Apolitical Chancellor, but Need to Speak on Issues**

Nathan: As the chancellor, did you feel that you could support candidates or parties?

Tien: No. I always tried to be apolitical in that sense. I think it’s very improper for a chancellor [to be political], because it’s a public institution. But inevitably, somehow we were drawn into political issues, for instance, the affirmative action issue. For instance, I had a very good, cordial relationship with Governor Wilson for many years, but then, when he mounted this SP1 and SP2 and also 209 anti-affirmative action—even 157 immigration at that time—157 and 187 and 209—the three of them. 157 is immigration initiative, and 187 was—I forgot what 187 was. [Yes, it was a referendum that barred illegal immigrants and their children from the use of government services; these included public education, social services, and health care.] Those two were during my tenure. 157 Governor Wilson used in his major reelection campaign. He defeated Kathleen Brown, mainly on the strength of 157.

Being an immigrant, I felt I had to stand up and speak out, so one week before the election I wrote an editorial piece for *Newsweek*, speaking out against 157. Of course, 157 did pass, and of course, I’m pretty sure the governor and his staff were not very pleased by a national editorial position on that issue. After that, of course, we had SP1 and 2. That made my position even harder, so I was drawn into this political fight. But I myself never really showed any partisan anything, only on an issue basis.

Perhaps most people don’t even know my party registration. I never made any play on that, but gradually people knew because of my stand on affirmative action, on immigrant rights, and others, even bilingual education and so on. So that was an issue for me.

At the height of the SP1, SP2 fight, I don’t whether I mentioned it before, I think Governor Pete Wilson’s staff made a comment overheard by quite a few people saying “That SOB” [chuckling] “is coming back again, attacking you.” [laughing] I wasn’t attacking the governor. I was just trying to speak out on the issue, which I believe so really deeply in. That was very interesting. I’m the SOB trouble-maker [laughing].

Nathan: Sometimes one can be proud of that?

Tien: Yes, yes. Maybe I’m not proud of that. I don’t endorse any candidate. I never was in that. The first time I endorsed a candidate was after I stepped down as chancellor. There was Shirley Dean’s reelection last year. Even that, I only told her, “I’ll use my name, but not even Professor. I’ll use my name, but as a resident of Berkeley, long-standing resident of Berkeley.” But I was in her pamphlet because she wanted me to be the first endorser of her reelection campaign.

Of course, I voted for the presidency and others, but I never even donated money to any political campaign before, when I was chancellor. I think after I stepped down, at the end,
near the end, I did donate some money for the presidential campaign and others. Those are the political parts, but I always remained apolitical as chancellor.

Any other question you might have on this? At that time, I made a few things clear. For instance, I didn’t do political campaigns, I didn’t do any partisan positions, but, on the other hand, I wasn’t afraid of speaking out on a particular issue as a citizen or as a concerned member of the university community.

**Business Boards and UC Salaries**

Tien: Also during my tenure, I tried to maintain that I would only join one for-profit corporation board. That was an issue during 1994, a very heated issue, because some of the high university officials joined quite a few for-profit corporation boards, which may have had the appearance of being tainted. I was very careful and prudent. I said, “I’ll join one only.”

Nathan: Which one?

Tien: The one I joined was Wells Fargo Bank. I joined in 1990, when I became chancellor. I felt at that time I needed an outreach to the business community and also it would be good for our fundraising. In fact, Wells Fargo at that time gave one of the largest corporate gifts to the university, partly because of my being on the board. But I do understand people’s concern because joining a big corporation board takes a lot of time from your major attention on university business. Also, because most of the board was paid very well; this also could have a financial conflict of interest and so on. So at that time, I decided only one board.

But after I announced my resignation, there were many, many other corporations that asked me, so now I joined several. That’s for the community relations, but also I joined many nonprofit community boards, so I maintain a very active pace right now.

**Equity in Salary Allocation vs. Student Fees**

Nathan: Indeed. Speaking of the funding, there were a couple of other things we might talk about, if you want to. President Peltason in ’92 was talking about raising fees for students, 18 to 19 percent, and the pay for the chancellors. The regents voted “no”?

Tien: Yes.

Nathan: They held that back. Did you have any thoughts about that?

Tien: Yes. At that time, there were two views. The university being a very complex organization, the chancellor should get adequate compensation or at least comparable to other institutions; otherwise, we would not be able to maintain good leadership, high-
quality leadership. So I think quite a few people felt that way, including not only, you mentioned Peltason, or David Gardner, Ron Brady, and others. They felt very strongly.

I can understand their position, but, on the other hand, at that time, the university also was confronting the most severe budget crisis in its history, and so there were many people who argued that if you increase salary for chancellors, are you neglecting the professors and the students? Like an increased student fee in order to increase the compensation for the chancellor at the expense of students? Those are very legitimate questions, how to make a balance.

I always perhaps was on the other side, on the latter side. I feel after a certain level of compensation, any further increase would not really make too much of a difference, as long as we don’t lag too much from the comparable institutions. Because of my background, coming from a very poor [situation as a refugee], I always think about students and other underprivileged groups. In that case, at that time, it was also including faculty members. They didn’t have any increase; their salary was low. So I’m always maybe a lone voice in many cases. But I don’t make any public statements about those issues or even take a public stand because that issue should be handled in the president’s office, systemwide office. They are the ones.

I did voice, during our private discussions, my views, but it’s up to them to decide. I think some of the things you mentioned did eventually come into the newspaper a lot, President Gardner’s compensation, President Peltason’s, and Ron Brady and all those issues.

## [20B]

Nathan: So you were not one of those who was criticized for having too high a salary?

Tien: I was not, because my salary was lower than even UCLA’s chancellor at that time, Chuck Young, and also considerably lower than the president’s salary, but that’s normal. I also must say, it’s very interesting, every time I joined the university administration, I got a salary cut. When I was professor, my salary level as a professor was quite high because I was very active in teaching, research and so on, so I got promoted quite early and young. And then, as a professor, I also drew a three-month summer salary, being an active researcher. My research grants gave me three months’ extra money.

And then being from the engineering profession, I always had very active consulting. I consult regularly to many different institutions, both government as well as business companies. I have very long-standing connections like Lockheed, now it’s Lockheed-Martin Company. At that time it was Lockheed. And there I was. General Electric for a long, long time, and I was a Nuclear Regulatory Commission consultant for many, many years. So I have many, many connections.

When I was a professor, I also incorporated a corporation, company. Many professors, on the side, they can do that. I even had some grants and others, so my income has been relatively high.

When I first became vice chancellor, I had to take actually a salary cut, a very significant salary cut to serve as vice chancellor, because I had to divest—you know, eliminate some
of my interests outside. I didn’t do consulting, when I became chancellor; it was the same situation. I stopped all my consulting. I didn’t want to, in fact, I shut off my company, corporate company, and went out of business in order to take the chancellorship.

To me, although it’s good to have a higher salary, I’m really coming in to do a job and to do something. I think I can make a contribution to the community, but also a lot is because of my background as an Asian American. It is Asian American pride. I have to work for my community, to make people feel Asian Americans can do management, leadership jobs. So those are the things.

In fact, my reputation in the systemwide was that I was always too restricted in terms of salary compensation for higher officials. Also, I always kept the level down. When I was chancellor for many years, I had only five vice chancellors, overall. But UCLA has ten, eleven vice chancellors at the same time.

Since I stepped down, I think Berkeley now increased by two or three vice chancellors because an organization always has a tendency to grow higher. I feel that very strongly; maybe I’m biased. Many people criticize me. I think their criticism may be in many cases very valid. Because of my background, I always try to control, I always think about if you create a higher salary, are you doing that at the expense of other parties, like students, faculty, staff? They don’t get that much in their compensations and so on. So that’s always my concern. Maybe sometimes I carry it a little bit too extreme. I was always fighting systemwide, trying to hold the salary down for the higher levels. They didn’t like that. [laughing]

Nathan: The road to popularity?

Tien: Yes, yes, yes.

Nathan: You mentioned parity with Chancellor Young. Then, in ’95, you pledged part of your salary raise to boost campus diversity?

Tien: Right.

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**Chancellors’ Salary Equity; Secret Compensation; Donating to the Millennium Fund**

Nathan: How did that come about?

Tien: Well, in 1995 they increased my salary. I think it was $212,000, mainly because at that time they found out Chancellor Young had a higher salary than mine. When I came in 1990, accepted the chancellorship of Berkeley, I was given the impression my salary would be or compensation would be exactly the same as UCLA. UCLA has a medical school complex that increases their responsibility more, but Berkeley has always been known as a very complex, difficult-to-manage institution, so I was given the impression my salary compensation would be exactly the same as the UCLA chancellor’s.
Then, because of that, my salary would have jumped in order to get the same level as Chuck Young. Because he rolled that compensation plan into the open thing, didn’t eliminate compensation, but increased, because they could not drop his salary compensation any more. They had to increase my salary, a big jump. I was opposed to that. I said I did not want to have the increase because in 1995 we were still under a very tight situation. I lived very comfortably, at I think maybe $180,000 or something. I said, “That’s a very good salary.” Actually, I was never negotiating the salary, I was given this impression. So I felt very happy. But later on we found, apparently beside the salary, they had some secret compensation deals, only for a few people in the university. The UCLA chancellor had one, and at that time President Peltason had one, Ron Brady had one, President Gardner had one. But I didn't have one. So when that became public, in the newspaper, in fact in the media, a lot of people attacked, and criticized and so on. Finally, they said now maybe we should roll all those secret compensation deals into the public, more transparent, open.

They said they had to do it, and then I immediately announced I was donating all that difference into, I think, the Berkeley Millennium Fund. You see the Millennium Fund. Well, again, some people perhaps criticized me as a kind of a PR actor. You never win. That's always. Some chancellors didn't like that, my colleagues, because they said, "If you donate the money and put us in a very awkward situation, we also donate the difference." I said, "Really, it's an individual decision. I don't think you should do it. It's up to the individual." So that was the case, yes. Good.

Do you have any questions? You have good questions because many of them I forgot. If you ask me, then I can recall my memory.

Nathan: That's part of what an oral history is for.

Tien: Exactly.

Nathan: And your life has had many incidents.

Tien: Yes, yes, that's right.

Nathan: This is very good.

Tien: Also I want to mention, you said "donating the money." When I was chancellor, I was asked to give lectures, and they gave me honorariums and so on. So when I was chancellor, I made a point to donate all honorariums to the university because I felt I was invited because of my chancellor position to give lectures, and so I should donate all those to the university. Again, I did that before that became public because some others--I don't know whether you remember Jack Peltason? At that time, the media dug out, they said these people received a lot of honorariums through lectures, but they took all that into their pockets. But I did not announce myself, make it public. I always donated that money to the university.

Later on, people said, "Again, you see, that's a PR thing. Yes, he did all that before." Of course, I would like to have more income, and as soon as I stepped down from the chancellorship, now everybody asked me to give lectures. Then I took the money, the honorariums, still reporting for the tax. But at that time, when I donated the money to the
university, I had to pay the tax. So not just honorarium, I personally lost money [laughing] because I paid the tax.

Nathan: A funny situation.

Tien: Yes, funny situation.
XV  FUNDRAISING RESPONSE TO CUTS IN STATE SUPPORT

Nathan: Somewhere you might want to talk about the Development Office?

Tien: Yes. Oh, yes.

Changes in the Development Office

Nathan: There were some changes?

Tien: Yes.

Nathan: Mac Laetsch was moved elsewhere?

Tien: Yes, yes. When I became chancellor, we immediately also experienced the first budget cut, indicating the budget change completely. Of course, I took a look at the situation and decided fundraising would be the key for the university's long-term assistance. Being Berkeley, we can always command a lot of prestige and people's loyalty. We have 250,000, more than 250,000 living alumni. Many of them are very devoted to Cal.

So immediately after I became chancellor, I decided I had to overhaul and perhaps expand the Development Office. I knew Vice Chancellor Mac Laetsch very well, for we worked together for many years when he was Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs--undergraduate students--Undergraduate Affairs. I was Vice Chancellor for Research. Our offices were opposite each other in California Hall. We knew each other very well.

Timing Personnel Changes

Tien: But when I became chancellor, just before I became chancellor, Chancellor Ira Michael Heyman moved Vice Chancellor Mac Laetsch from Undergraduate Affairs to the
Development Office. When I became chancellor, I worked with Mac Laetsch, but sometimes we had different views about how to develop. Again, being the chancellor, you have to make some decisions. At that time, I thought, "If I want to expand and also want to restructure the Development Office, it might be best to bring a new person, a new view, or some person who can work with me more closely." Mac Laetsch had been in the chancellor's office, with Chancellor Heyman, for a long time. For anyone who has a long tenure in the office, you form a certain feeling or opinion and views, so sometimes I find that's not open enough to other new ideas.

And so I decided to make a change. Of course, Vice Chancellor Mac Laetsch was not happy. In fact, he wouldn't even talk to me for some time. But I always feel I'm doing this for the university and not trying to be--I always respected him. I personally like him, and I feel he is a great person. But I just needed to make a change. Also, I can only make change when I'm new. I have to bring in a new team. Then they went through a search, and it turned out to be one of my colleagues from mechanical engineering. At that time he was department chairman, Dan Mote.

**Capital Campaigns**

Tien: He came on board, and then we reformulated our capital campaign strategy. It worked out very well, I think. Our fundraising became a really great success for my subsequent years. We raised almost $190 million every year. Our capital campaign also has a goal of $1.1 billion. I think, from what I know, there's no problem of reaching that goal.

We set up one billing regionally. Many people cast a lot of doubts whether we could do it, especially at that time, when the economy was slow in California; but we did very well. And then I tried to raise that to $1.1 billion. Again, many people said, "That's not a good idea; you should be more safe." I said, "You have to raise your bars higher" so everybody can achieve, but now, I think, everybody agrees $1.1 billion is not only reachable; I think we probably will go beyond that number.

So that was an episode, a very difficult decision for me at that time. I talked to colleagues I knew very well. I had to make the decision to change. Both of them felt very hurt and unhappy; the other was at that time the director of the budget, Budget and Planning, Errol Mauchlan. He had been with the university for a long, long time, more than thirty-some years, knew everything. But, again, when you're in one position that long, you have your own habits, your own views, your own system. It's hard to change.

Again, I like Errol Mauchlan. We are very good friends, fantastic. But I just felt I had to make a decision, so I also restructured the Budget and Planning office. We brought in at that time Jim Hyatt. Jim is now also promoted as a Vice Chancellor for Budget and Planning. At that time, he was director and associate vice chancellor. So for those two people, during my first year, I made changes. Both were very tough on me as a person, because I knew them very well. They both were my colleagues, and I liked both of them very much. But you just have to do something, in your view, for the best of the institution. To this day, I think they probably still have some ill feelings about me. When you are in administrative positions, sometimes it is hard.
This is the hardest part, from a personal viewpoint. You try to make decisions for, in your view, the best of the institution, but that sometimes intrudes into your personal relationships with many colleagues of long standing, and that's really tough. There are many, many of them, like a deanship, directorship.

In fact, just today when I was reading, the Institute of Governmental Studies--Nelson Polsby is stepping down as director. That was my last decision during my chancellorship. I just admired Nelson Polsby. Everything was great. But at that time I felt he served ten years, perhaps longer, I don't remember. And maybe it would be good to have a change, especially with a new chancellor coming in.

In fact, I told the new chancellor at that time I would do all the unpopular things before I left, so that you don't have to worry in the first two years to make those unpleasant things. "I will leave some very popular things to you so you can do them." For instance, the Goldman Fund, the donation to the School of Public Policy, $10 million. Actually, I initiated that. I started that, but I said, "Well, let us not announce it until the first day of the new chancellor so he'll get that immediately. He'll get all the nice, good feelings."

And then the last decision I made was a very tough one. I ended Nelson Polsby's appointment in two years; it would end in 1999, June--his directorship. Of course, he may not be happy about me for that decision [chuckling]. It's very tough. You just don't know what is the best. At that time, I had to make that decision also so that the new chancellor would not have to face such a tough thing in the beginning, because Nelson Polsby had been a great scholar and fantastic person.

Nathan: A writer?

Tien: Writer, very respected. But in any case, I felt no one should stay in one job too long. I mentioned many people stayed twenty years on the job. They have a fixed thinking, and so you cannot change. That's how I made decisions, yes.

Nathan: The new chancellor must have been very pleased with what you were doing?

Decision to Disappear from Campus, and Issues of Returning

Tien: I hope so; I respect the chancellor very much. I told him as long as I was chancellor I would do everything I could. I would try to help the new chancellor, give good decisions to him. The unpleasant decisions I will make during the last year of my tenure as chancellor. But I said once I stepped down as chancellor, I would not interfere with anything. I would be disappearing. In fact, I disappeared for a year and a half, completely. I said I would not be there. To this day, since I stepped down the last day, June 30th, 1997, I have not yet stepped into California Hall, even once, never.

Nathan: Good for you.

Tien: I don't want to interfere, so I have never, for the past almost two years, I have never even gone into California Hall. I never call, like, Joyce de Vries. I never call John Cummins,
unless someone asks me or a chancellor asks me. I told Chancellor Berdahl, I said, "I will never volunteer any advice. You're the boss now. You decide. But I'm always ready, if you want to call me on anything, if you feel I can be of help, you call me. Then I will give my very frank, open input." So he did call me a few times, but I never initiate the call.

Nathan: As you move people out of the administration, do most of them have tenure and go back to their departments?

Tien: Yes. Some of them, but not all of them. For instance, Errol Mauchlan was not a faculty member. Also, he retired. He was already quite senior. Mac Laetsch also retired.

It's very hard sometimes for campus high-level administrators after so many years to come back to teaching and research. In most cases, people already stopped their research activities.

But in my case, I was fortunate. I maintained my research activities. As I mentioned, in the first two, three years I was hiding because when I became chancellor, both regents' chairmen as well as President Gardner told me, "Please don't do your research." Very interesting. The first thing was when I became chancellor. Roy Brophy was chairman of the Board of Regents at that time. And also President Gardner, separately, advised me, it was very well-intentioned because they felt that to be Berkeley chancellor is such a big job, complex, and your first goal is university administration. They knew I had been a very active researcher, and I loved teaching, so they said, "Don't do any teaching or research anymore. Focus all your attention to that." I said, "Fine, fine."

But I really love my scholarship, and also personally I feel to be the campus leader, you should not lose touch with some of those basic mission activities. So I still maintained teaching, but reduced to a very minimum level. I taught every, say, freshman class, gave guest lectures in many different classes, and I maintained my research, but I never went to my lab or came to my lab now here during office hours, from eight to five. I was always in the chancellor's office or at some university functions. I always went to my lab at midnight or weekends, and so nobody could accuse me of not paying attention to the university business.

So I was hiding in the closet in many ways. Just three years later, all the regents as well as the President Gardner and then Peltason—they thought I was doing quite well, especially with this very difficult budget and tough situations. And then they felt that they didn't mind if I did research. Then I came out of the closet, and then I told everyone I was all along continuing my research and had the supervision of Ph.D. students. Many of them became famous.

Everybody knew I was doing research. Also, I taught a freshman class. Then everybody said, "That's fantastic," including all the regents and Presidents Gardner and Peltason. They said, "That's a fantastic way" and so on. So when I stepped down as chancellor, my transition was much easier. After the transition, I was in a very leadership position in my own research company, very cutting-edge research, so I have all the research grants, contracts. Now my lab is still going strong. So I have no issue.
But for many, especially vice chancellors or chancellors who also require laboratory research, like physical, chemical, or biological engineering sciences, that's tough. Once your lab is not continuing, you cannot come back anymore. Most people, even Mike Heyman, of course, came back to teach. He also made a statement that it is very difficult to come back. Especially research is hard. Teaching is easier. We can come back. But to continue on your research--

Rod Park also came back. Rod Park was vice chancellor. For laboratory research, it's hard to come back. Most people stop, yes. They retire.

Nathan: You found a way?

Tien: Yes, but I love my students, scholarship pursuit. Even for my case I find it's very difficult. Right now, when I have so many outside commitments, because once you're chancellor, everybody tries to get you to do something. I go to Washington, D.C., a lot. I go to Asia a lot. But I'm teaching a regular course. I hate to miss my classes, so I always try to schedule my travel right after my class and then come back right before my next class. But the teaching part is hard because of the schedule, and trying not to miss classes, so that's very difficult. I find it's a little bit difficult, myself.

The research part I find not too bad. I can come back at midnight and so on. I do that every night. I still come back to the office, working. That part is no problem. Only the fixed hours. Then it's very hard to adjust to your schedule and many other national, international commitments.

Nathan: Sometimes the five-hour delay in the airport?

Tien: Oh, yes, absolutely. That's a nightmare. In fact, two weeks ago, I was at a meeting of the National Science Board, the very prestigious U.S. National Science Board, meeting in Los Angeles. I tried to come back to teach a class Thursday afternoon. My class is in the afternoon, four o'clock. I left the National Science Board meeting, say at twelve o'clock, lunchtime, and then in the afternoon I excused myself from that part. I went to the airport. (It was two weeks ago). I got delayed because San Francisco was fogged in, so I was delayed almost three hours, but I made it for my four o'clock class.

And then after my class, I went back to the airport and tried go back to Los Angeles for the Friday meeting. We have these three-day retreats. I went to the airport. Got delayed again. Once you get delayed for Los Angeles, you just propagate the delay. I did not get to my hotel room until one-thirty in the morning. That one day, in order to come back to teach my class, I was stranded in the airport for seven hours. But I did teach my class, so I didn't miss my class. But it's tough, yes.

**Asian Alumni as Fundraisers**

Nathan: Very exhausting, I would think. Perhaps I could just show a name in the middle of this [referring to outline] page. The Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange. Is that of interest?
Tien: Yes. In order to say that, maybe we should say a little bit about, in the beginning, about the Asian community or Asian alumni fundraising. That's part of that.

Nathan: And the Tang Foundation?

Tien: The Tang Foundation also. First, when I became chancellor, the Tang Foundation surprised me, gave me a contribution in 1990, the first day. In fact, I went to my office, at that time in University Hall, on the seventh floor, and on my desk was a check for $1 million.

Nathan: [laughing] Oh.

Tien: That's the first day. The Tang Foundation, Jack Tang and two daughters, Leslie Tang Schilling and Nadine Tang. They were very, very supportive of Berkeley. They said they wanted to demonstrate support of an Asian American becoming chancellor of Berkeley, so they donated $1 million. That, of course, had tremendous impact on the Asian American community and Asia, too. People felt: even one foundation, a family, they gave $1 million because of that. Subsequently, they gave more, like Tang Center they established, so they are still a very generous family, tremendous dedication to Cal.

Now, after that, we also had a financial crisis, so I made a tremendous effort to try to work toward much better fundraising. Overall, we did very well, but related to the Asian part, first we got the Tan Kah Kee Hall. That's a chemistry-chemical engineering building. And $10 million came from Southeast Asia. Tan Kah Kee; he passed away some time ago, but his associate and family, like nephew, niece or grandchildren, they worked toward this $10 million. And so we named the new chemistry-chemical engineering building after him, Tan Kah Kee.

Now, after Tan Kah Kee Hall, we tried to build a project we called the East Asian Library building. I worked on that. First, a number of highlights of that, but this project has still not yet been completed. Especially after I stepped down, it's hard to carry. One keystone gift came from the C. B. Starr--initial C, B. Starr--S-t-a-r Foundation in New York. C. B. Starr was a founder of AIG. That's the big insurance company, American International Group, one of the largest insurance underwriters. He made his fortune in Asia in the 1920s, thirties, and forties. Manila, Shanghai, Hong Kong, and so on. C. B. Starr.

Then he moved it to New York. AIG is a big company now, very big, the largest insurance underwriter. Before he died, he set up a foundation. He didn't have any children, heirs. He was single, C. B. Starr. C. B. Starr actually attended Berkeley, before he went to Asia to make his big fortune. Again, Berkeley is like a stepping-stone. He didn't finish his degree. He moved to Asia. So he had those kinds of connections.

We didn't even know before, so we did some research, and there I found this. And then, it so happened that the current president is T. C. Hsu, H-s-u, a person I also heard a lot of before. He worked with C. B. Starr for many years, so when they set up the foundation, he became president, being a Chinese American with C. B. Starr and C. B. Starr being a Berkeley alumnus. So I went to New York, and I said that we had this great idea, the East Asian Library, which would fulfill C. B. Starr's vision, a lot of connections and so on.
T. C. Hsu, being an elderly Asian American, Chinese American, always very modest, said, "Probably there was not much chance that we could get you money." We asked for $6 million as a major gift. He said, "Not much chance." First, he said, "We are a New York-based foundation. We usually give only on the East Coast. You're on the West Coast. It's very hard." And second, usually they didn't give money for brick and mortar kinds of capital projects. They like to carry out their programs. Then, third, they said they don't usually give that big an amount of money to a university.

First, I was given all the impression, there's no chance. You are pitching against all those reasons. And then I got this marvelous gift. Not even a phone call, not even an official letter. Just a fax, a fax machine. So that was very good. That helped immediately for this East Asian Library project. So all this was against us. I didn't have much hope. I tried to give my best arguments why, "C. B. Starr's connection, your connections, Berkeley is on an East-West kind of bridgehead, and also this library would be a most prominent library in the United States for East Asian collections." So I gave all the arguments. I didn't have much hope. I waited. Two months later, T. C. Hsu, again, being a very low-key person, he did not even call me. I got a fax saying, "Six million dollars approved." [laughing]

Gifts as Political Issues; Possibly "Tainted" Money; Names for Buildings

Tien: Then we tried to go first to Taiwan and others, tried to get a gift. Taiwan at that time pledged $15 million for this gift. And then we worked with the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation. That's why I came back: hopefully, that we could get $3 million.

Nathan: Which foundation?

Tien: Chiang Ching-kuo. You were asking that.

Nathan: Right.

Tien: That gave us some very troublesome political issues. At that time--because Chiang Ching-kuo was a son of Chiang Kai-shek. Chiang Kai-shek being a very controversial person, not only in China but also in the United States--some people didn't like him, feared he was a warlord and that he was a dictator. And Chiang Ching-kuo, being his son, succeeded him in Taiwan. Also, Chiang Ching-kuo was head of the secret police. So there was a lot of history. But on the other hand--and the later years, Chiang Ching-kuo was credited with being the most liberal, far-sighted leader in Taiwan, really paving the way for Taiwan's transformation into a democratic, very prosperous region, country.

So you have all these views. Some people absolutely liked Chiang Ching-kuo because they felt he did fantastic work for Taiwan in democratic transformation, economic development. It's a miracle in terms of American help, to establish. But then some people would say he was secret police, he was very dictatorial and he killed, arrested a lot of people, like his father, Chiang Kai-shek.
When we approached this, even among our faculty members they had pro and con. Then some of the faculty members raised this issue in the newspaper, in the media, and it became very controversial. The Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation being a foundation, they didn't need all this bad publicity. They are the ones who give money. So our own household was divided, so we never got the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation money.

That's always a problem. We didn't get that.

Nathan: Well, you can never silence a faculty?

Tien: Yes, faculty have different views. I respect that, but we also should remember. For instance, on campus we benefit so much from the Hearst family: Hearst Museum, Hearst Gymnasium, and we have the Hearst Mining Building, and Hearst Greek Theatre. In the early years, many people also mentioned the same thing about the Hearst family, because in the beginning they made a lot of money, maybe not in a very acceptable way from other people, so the question became, "Are you going to accept their gift because of somebody who objects?" Those are very relevant, legitimate questions. We can mention many, many foundations of that type right now that are controversial. But, again, faculty always have their individual views. That really gave us a tremendous setback in this East Asian Library because the faculty didn't have a united front.

That also created some issues, problems for Taiwan's $15 million pledge because Chiang Ching-kuo--many people revered him in Taiwan. He was the one who transformed Taiwan. Now, if the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation got into trouble, why should they give the money, the other $15 million? I'm still working on that. In fact, that's one issue the chancellor called me to see if I could help him.

Nathan: Even so, for the Hearst gifts, it was Phoebe Hearst who gave most of the money?

Tien: Yes.

Nathan: Her hands were clean.

Tien: Yes.


Tien: Yes, yes. This is always a problem. In fundraising, we always have to balance that. For instance, IBM or AT&T or Wells Fargo or Bank of America. They gave money during my chancellor's tenure. We had these big debates. Many of the foundations, like Bank of America Foundation, they gave the money. They would like to have the Bank of America name somewhere.

Nathan: Oh, yes.

Tien: So we put it in the auditorium, or the IBM Auditorium or Hughes Room. Many professors objected to that. "We're selling out. Everywhere we go, now it's the Wells Fargo Room."

[both laugh]
Tien: Intel Room or Hughes Room or Sun Micro [Sun Microsystems]. Or we named for the people, like everywhere, is Haas Pavilion. They said we're selling out. Individual names, I think we've overcome that. Everybody accepts it. Like you mentioned, Phoebe Hearst and others—William Randolph Hearst, that their money is acceptable.

And then, in the 1990s, when I was chancellor, we started to get a lot of gifts from corporations or foundations. Then the naming became an issue. It took us a long time to settle, working with the Academic Senate. It finally agreed we could name rooms or space for corporations. So now we have Bank of America Center or Wells Fargo Room or others. But it took a long, long time, fight, although other universities have been doing that for many, many years. But Berkeley's faculty has always a different say. So that also was very much interesting.

And the judgment was it went to a little bit of an extreme. That got us into some very deep trouble. But for fundraising you always have those issues. For instance, I'll give you another person, Michael Milken. Some people disagree with his junk bond work. He was convicted; he went to prison. Of course, he made a big fortune. Now he came out. He has done a tremendous, a good job for biomedical research, yes. They are interested in giving us money. In fact, they also tried to give money to UCLA because Michael Milken—unfortunately, also at Cal, their brother was also from Cal. They love Cal. But Cal rejected because this is "tainted money." That was an issue also.

Many, many issues of this type, what we call tainted money. But I said the first family's money is tainted, too. So many, many of them. Stanford, Leland Stanford, Jr. You can say that's tainted money. But now they built a tremendous institution on the peninsula, Stanford University. So it's hard to say how to draw the line. In fundraising we have many, many of this type of issues.

I got into trouble also, I can mention, because one of the Indonesian—wealthy family—Riady family—R-i-a-d-y, Riady. The senior person, father, is Mochtar, M-o-c-h-t-a-r. His son is James Riady. Somehow, James Riady became a very good friend of President Clinton and—that episode—John Huang, in this Asian American political contribution fight, was involved with the Riady family. But the Riady family are a very prominent family. He donated $200,000 to Cal, to Berkeley, because of our international reputation—like Tan Kah Kee and so on, and others.

**Some Personal Consequences**

Tien: Also, unfortunately, his two grandchildren also attend Berkeley. So they connect us. They said Riady gave $200,000 and also his children come here. Maybe he bought admission. It so happened also the Riady family was connected to Clinton's political campaign episode, contribution episode. So they said I was also tainted in that sense.

That's the reason—the first time, 1994, I was suggested for federal Secretary of Energy. One week before the final decision, one week, the *Washington Post* said, "Riady gave money to Berkeley, $200,000. His two grandchildren also got into Cal, and Riady also is
very much tainted with this Asian American connection." Okay, after that, of course, they said the timing is not good for me to serve as a cabinet member.

Also, last year, in the 1998 reelection--is that 1998? Yes. My name resurfaced again for Secretary of Energy. At that time, there was another Asian American, just like today, these last few days, very much involving the Secretary of Energy. So the donation always gives you some problems. People always fear that people who give you money probably get some direct benefit.

But we have been very, very careful, always. But still, I was very much affected by those donations and contributions, personally, even.

Nathan: These are strange leaps of logic.

Tien: Yes, yes. Well, but, you know, once you are in the newspapers, public, you cannot even argue anymore because the image, perception has already changed. So there are many, many interesting things. What we have talked about is all about Asian American donations. We got a lot of them. But other donations--that was very good, too. I mentioned some of them. For instance, like Goldman--$10 million for the School of Public Policy. Before, $10 million Dick Goldman and his wife at that time, also donated $6 million during my last year.

Nathan: Yes. I think you--

Tien: Yes, I mentioned that before, so I won't say any more on that one, yes. A lot of very fantastic, very rewarding feelings, such a strange experience--like the last story. And also the story about this Mike Mahoney.

Nathan: The man who didn't even go to Cal?

Tien: Yes, yes, yes. He gave a lot of money. Those things make you feel very, very good.

**More on the Berkeley Pledge: Incentive Awards**

Tien: Let us take a look. Also the funding for the Berkeley Pledge. We did very well for that. Berkeley Pledge is a great model. Just recently, I don't know whether you read that, the U.S. Department of Education sent a team to visit, and they mentioned that the Berkeley Pledge is a model program for the country.

Nathan: Wonderful.

Tien: Also, the Incentive Award. I think I perhaps mentioned that before. The Incentive Award started in my tenure. The Incentive Award actually started with $50,000, an anonymous gift. Someone said, "I'd like to donate some money so the university can do something to improve San Francisco public schools"--because San Francisco public schools had been deteriorating.
Good morning. At the bottom of page ten you have already talked about your style of fundraising, unless there’s more that you want to say about it.

Or we can go right on into more on the Incentive Award?

Incentive Awards, fine. I mentioned that Incentive Awards was one of the most successful outreaching projects we have ever had, and also a very good mechanism to mobilize the whole community. The basic idea came from an anonymous donor who provided $50,000. We tried to see whether the University of California could devise some incentive system to encourage urban city public school students for advanced studies, like at Berkeley.

We have Maryellen Himell. She was very much interested in that idea. She actually knew this anonymous donor and took him to come to talk to us. We created a temporary position for Maryellen to work on this, because it was only $50,000—like, six months for the project. Then we devised a system that subsequently became so successful. Right now, they have more than a $10 million endowment. Maryellen is now a regular employee, special assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate Affairs, Director of Development, Undergraduate Affairs, and working on undergraduate education development and fundraising.

At that time, in the beginning, ten San Francisco public schools. We wanted to start with a limit to one district so that we wouldn’t have to diffuse our efforts, so for the City and County of San Francisco. In the beginning the base was ten public schools. For each school we provided a four-year scholarship, $5,000 a year, $20,000 for four years.

The recipient has to be not only academically outstanding but also has to have overcome tremendous hardship, be it social or physical or racial, whatever. That person has to demonstrate that he or she had gone through and overcome all those hardships but still achieved in both academic and school leadership activities.

We limited each school to one person. That just really captured tremendous imagination of the school officials and students. We started with ten schools, then we actually expanded now, and now they have eleven. We organized an Alumni Club; some of them already graduated. This I think started—if I remember correctly—in 1992, around that time. So we already have had several graduating classes. They all come back.

There are a number of things. When they come here, freshman, sophomore, junior, every year they received $5,000 a year scholarship. But we do require them to go back to their own high school to talk to the
counsellors and students about their experience, to generate more interest to achieve academically and for advanced careers.

We also have organized all those Incentive Award students, scholars, together, so we have an annual meeting so they feel it’s kind of their network. They have a group identity, and so it just went extremely well. We have an annual banquet. This year it is also in June sometime, every year, usually attended by five, eight hundred people. Very big, many tables, usually in San Francisco. We made a video of all ten, now maybe eleven. We added one other school in our recipient list—how they overcame their hardships and what’s their life history, how they achieved. And then we also sometimes have a more senior, formal recipient to give lectures to, say, after they received an award, now their life would change completely.

So after this, a few times, we had also media—you know, Channel 7 and others—television coverage. And then we got people donating money for this. Some people said, “This is a great idea.” Some of the students come from very different backgrounds. Some poor, white students, immigrants from Eastern Europe. Then we have a Southeast Asia refugee family, and then we have an African American, a Hispanic American.

We have also physically disadvantaged people; they also receive awards. They also have had to overcome tremendous hardships. So this is going extremely well. It shows if you have a good idea to capture people’s imagination, to stimulate interest, it just has limitless potential.

Now, the Incentive Award then became part of our Berkeley Pledge program. You know, the Berkeley Pledge, I mentioned before—that’s a much larger scale. The Incentive Award is part of it.

We build on now the Berkeley Pledge. We work with many districts. We started with four school districts in the Bay Area; now we have expanded to other districts. The Pledge is a little bit different from the Incentive Award, not only giving scholarships for high school graduates but we also now have faculty and students, undergraduate and graduate students, working in neighboring schools.

We also advise them on the curriculum design in the public schools, and also teacher training, counseling, even provide some help in terms of school overall operation, management, and so on. I don’t remember how many schools now. We used to have twenty-four schools hooked up with Cal Berkeley. Many students like it. I went to quite a few functions.

I remember very vividly the City of Richmond here in the East Bay. They have an elementary school, the Washington School. It used to be very poorly equipped, really badly operated. In many ways, the level was going very down. Mostly that is populated by minority children. But when we said the Washington School was going to be part of the program, without even actually doing anything, we already stimulated interest on the school’s side and also on the parents’ side and on the community’s side.

They all volunteer. Even an industrial community, the City of Richmond said, “Now, since Berkeley, the University of California Berkeley is going to come in to help us, we shall all pitch in.” They actually donated some money. And many parents in many
ways—they had given up on the school before, and now they say they’ll come back. They say, “Well, we can help come in to decorate the classrooms, the hallways, the washrooms and make it clean, make it very pleasant.” The school officials also started to give some seed money to encourage this. I remember when I went there to initiate this program cooperation, I found the school already had changed so much, completely, because of this idea.

So that’s another part of the Berkeley Pledge. The Berkeley Pledge has five major programs. That’s only one of them. There are many others. The Berkeley Pledge was initiated by me in 1995. I think at that time, after SP1 and SP2, I wanted to make sure we had something really going to outreach to the disadvantaged communities and kids before I step down. So 1995, and I made sure by 1997, in two years, the Berkeley Pledge really laid a good foundation, and then I felt much better when I stepped down as chancellor.

So those are some examples of outreach. And also the Berkeley Pledge has become a good fundraising vehicle. That’s for the outreach part, yes.

Nathan: Yes, that’s fine. I have a couple of small questions.

Tien: Sure.

**Significance of SP1 and SP2, 1995**

Nathan: Could you tell me again what SP1 and SP2 were?

Tien: Okay. SP1 and SP2 I think it was 1995, if I remember correctly. The Board of Regents passed the SP1 for university admissions and hiring. Race or any gender and other identification can never be used, in any consideration. So that’s SP1. SP2 is for contracts, contractors, also cannot be used for any contractors.

Nathan: That wipes out affirmative action?

Tien: That’s right, that’s right. And that’s before the 209. That’s one year—I think 209 was 1996. SP1 and 2 was the University of California special resolutions. That wiped out the affirmative action. Then the state ballot, that was 1996.

Again, I want to say we never used race as a predominant factor for admission. We used race only as one of the ten factors in admission and awarding, because when you get to that borderline, you have so many different factors. I’m supporting that idea. In fact, that’s actually allowed from the federal civil rights initiative. But when those resolutions passed, we had no choice. Like in the law school and freshman admissions, minorities dropped tremendously, yes. So that’s SP1 and SP2.

Any other?
Nathan: One question perhaps. When you do the outreach to the high schools and when the winner in each school is picked, is there an assumption that he or she will come to Cal?

Tien: In this case, yes, because the Incentive Awards are for people studying at Cal, and so if they come to Cal, they would get this, if we select them. Some of them don’t come to Cal, and then we have to have alternates, for each school. There’s only one for each school. Usually we interview three or four very top, the best students, and then the committee selects one. If that one doesn’t come, then we go to the second one, yes.

Nathan: It’s such an exciting and constructive thing.

Tien: Yes, constructive thing, yes, that’s right. In fact, many of the supporters—they are opposed to affirmative action, but they really support this idea. That’s a nice thing to mobilize people from all sectors, and not divisive. This is more integrative.

Nathan: That was really very important.

Tien: That’s right.

More on Cuts in State Budget Support; Setting Priorities

Nathan: Would you care to say anything about the level of state support for the university between ’90 and ’93?

Tien: Yes. Oh, yes. Actually, from 1990—I became chancellor in 1990, July 1st. I mentioned that in the fall, we suddenly were informed about budget cuts, tremendous cuts, and when we got to 1991, ’2, ’3, ’4, we had consecutive, major cuts. Of course, at that time the state economy was going bad, so we could understand. But still, of course—I won’t touch that part. It depends on how we focus our priorities.

For instance, I remember at the same time, we expanded tremendously our prisons. We built more prisons than more universities. We supported on a per prisoner the expense, the state put in much more than public university student support, much more. So those were the priorities.

When I joined Cal in 1959, about 80 percent of Berkeley’s budget came from the state. When I got to 1990, I became chancellor at that time, we still had about 53 percent, 54 percent from the state. By the time I stepped down in 1997, our state portion shrank to about 35 percent. So it’s one-way, monetarily decreasing. But right now it seems the state economy is going quite well, so I think we’ll probably stay at that level for a while. But still what’s worrisome is this trend, over the forty years, from more than 80 percent now down to 30-some percent.

That necessitates a number of things. First we have to do more outside support. That’s why we have all this fundraising. We also increased our tuition fees for students, but that portion is quite small. It’s about 10 percent, 15 percent of our overall budget from the student fees or tuition, so quite small. But still necessary to make a difference.
Then we also have to really control our cost effectiveness in management efficiency. During my chancellorship, we reduced, approximately, both staff and faculty by about 10 percent. They were reduced, yes. That’s many affected by the early incentive program, VERIP, Voluntary Early Retirement Incentive Program. So that was the state support.

It is still important, but we are getting right now only one-third in our budget from the state.

Nathan: Do you foresee any increase?

Tien: I don’t think we’ll get any increase because the trend worldwide and also proven over time, it’s one way: going down and down. The question is only whether it goes down slower or faster or when we will reach a kind of minimum. Right now for the public university and private university—the difference is relatively small because we don’t receive that much from the state. For instance, compared to Stanford—Stanford doesn’t receive any major state money, but they do receive some from the state on scholarship financial aid, yes.

Competing with Private Universities for Federal and State Money

Tien: Stanford and Berkeley, we both compete, rely a lot on federal money for research and project grants and so on. At Berkeley, that comes to about 30 percent, almost one-third. Stanford also relies on that a lot. The only difference is Stanford’s tuition is much higher; our tuition is lower. Our tuition only counts a portion, 10 or 15 percent. Stanford counts maybe more.

But overall, if you compare, Berkeley relies on federal and state; roughly about 60 percent of our budget comes from federal plus state. If you look at Stanford or Harvard or Caltech the same, they rely on federal and state about 40 percent. The difference is between 60 and 40 percent. We call so-called public and private universities especially the needy ones, the line is relatively blurred right now. It’s only the 60, 40 percent difference.

Nathan: Does this have consequences for Berkeley to have to raise funds continually?

Tien: Yes, oh, absolutely. A lot of consequences on Berkeley and relationships with other universities. Again, when I joined Berkeley in 1959, at that time we had an unwritten “gentleman’s agreement” between Berkeley and Stanford. That said the University of California would never raise private support because that would compete with Stanford. But then Stanford, in exchange, would provide tremendous support to Berkeley’s receiving more state money through the Assembly and Senate, through state government. That was the agreement.
**Negative and Positive Aspects of Private Funding**

Tien: But now we don’t follow that. We compete for the same amount, in the same communities, trying to get more money. Not only that, now Berkeley’s fundraising is competing with UCLA’s fundraising, and Irvine’s, and even UC San Francisco, so it is becoming very competitive into the private community.

Also, private funding creates new issues: the independence of the university, the autonomy of the academic operation. This happens all the time. When you get very large, especially commercial organizations’ support, like corporations and so on, then the question is raised whether we are still independent or whether we are unduly influenced by some other business concerns. All of these are big questions.

Also, there is a question raised about very wealthy alumni with big donations: do their children get treated differently, like private schools? Because of fundraising, I think a lot of issues facing the university changed.

But, on the other hand, there are many positive things of fundraising, so there are always balances. The most positive aspect I find is making the university more responsive to the community, more sensitive to the community’s concerns. We are much more careful because if we have a bad image, for instance, if we abuse or misuse our financial resources, nobody will donate money if you are corrupt or not efficient. Perhaps there is some push to make the university better run, better operated, and so on. So there are many good things.

Another positive aspect is making the university reach out to the community. We have to always listen to their voices. In the past, the university was more like an ivory tower. Now it’s much more a part of the community. So I would say, on balance, fundraising for the university is a very, very positive exercise.

##[22B]

Nathan: That’s a very interesting kind of balance.

Tien: Right.

Nathan: You’ve already said that the trend for state support is going down. That means that the other support has to rise?

Tien: Yes. And there are only two areas that can make a big difference. One is to get more resources, especially from the community, from your alumni and friends and corporations. The other is to cut expenses, expenditure control. I must say the university is not doing as well as many American corporations during the 1990s. The American economy is going well, mainly because after the 1980s, with the Japanese competition, American corporations have tremendous awareness about cost control and making themselves more efficient. That really helped our prosperity right now. Our American corporations are run in a much more efficient manner than many other corporations in other countries.
The university, the same thing. We have to do much better cost control. Our bureaucracy is still too large. I think there’s still a lot of room for improvement in cost control. If we can cut our costs and increase our resources, the university will continue to do well, Berkeley.

Nathan: Are there specific areas in which you would like to see the university perform better?

Tien: Of course, there are many, many areas. I don’t know which areas you are—

Nathan: I was wondering about, just very roughly—of course—the question of tenure. How do you get the best intellectual effort in an efficient way?

Tien: Yes, yes, yes. Okay. If I say what area should improve, I always forecast on four areas. As I said earlier, my very beginning, the first day, when they announced I would become chancellor, I mentioned four areas. One is faculty academic excellence, so I reiterate. This was my forecast, so I’ve never forgotten that. That’s faculty academic excellence. Now, for that—maybe I mentioned the four areas I’d like to see more improved. Some I didn’t complete or—you never complete everything, but to make progress—the first area was faculty academic excellence.

The second area was undergraduate and graduate experience, education, and so on. The third area was campus atmosphere, in a diversified and also congenial, very nice campus atmosphere. The fourth area is outreach to the community, including alumni relations, fundraising, and the relationship with communities and so on.

**Startup Costs: Human Resources, Facilities**

Tien: Now, the first area, I put down faculty academic excellence, always the number one area for the university. The second area is undergraduate and graduate student affairs. That is most important.

Now, for faculty and academic excellence, the first is you can have different categories. One is the talent: human resources, scholars. Then you have facilities, whether you can provide the very best. Sometimes they are related. For instance, in the 1990s, and I’m pretty sure that’s right now still the case, we saw a tremendous escalating of startup costs.

If you hired one faculty member, especially a senior faculty member, from some other university, it was not totally uncommon that you had to spend startup costs more than $1 or $2 million—some go as high as $5, $6 million—in order to bring one senior faculty member to Berkeley. We call that startup costs. That is becoming very high.

Even for junior faculty members, it’s not unusual to have, like, $500,000. The reason is, especially with people with a laboratory, you have to find space, you have to find facilities, you have to have startup equipment support, and so on. We found that faculty recruitment and retention was becoming much more competitive than, say, in the 1980s and 1970s. This is a national trend. So in order to retain your very best faculty members,
you have to work very hard. You have to make sure they have the good laboratories, they have good support staff, and others. So it’s very costly, and also very hard to compete.

We have not been able to compete at the same level as Harvard, Princeton, or Stanford. Their salaries are much higher than our scale. Also, they have much larger endowments than we have, much larger. That put us in a very disadvantaged position. So when I was chancellor, I spent a lot of time personally doing faculty recruitment and retention. Any major retention or recruitment, I was actually involved.

I remember many times I worked on—not even in my area—like, say, biologists or philosophers or physicians and mathematicians. When the chancellor tries to express a keen interest in a person in conjunction with a department faculty and so on, that interest usually has leverage and helps a lot. So despite the fact that we were in a very disadvantaged position and also at that time our budget was so bad, the image was not that good, we did quite well in terms of faculty retention and recruitment.

In terms of facilities, sometimes we not only, say, hired more people, we also needed to retrench. Some of the departments were not that strong or some units outlived their time. Berkeley cannot carry many weak units, so we also had to restructure many of them and make them as good as ones always ranked at the very top. So those are things we put a lot of effort doing, in my case—that’s the first one. Now, of course, our budget is quite good, generally. The economy is going well. I think we're in a more improved situation. But still we're in a very disadvantaged position compared to the leading private schools, because they have much larger endowments and so on, and also their salary scale is higher. So that's the faculty and facilities.

New Ideas in Undergraduate Teaching, Grassy Knoll, and $1.1 Billion

Tien: For the Undergraduate Student Affairs, for instance, we initiated an upper-division research assistant concept because many of the Berkeley students are the very tops in terms of scholastic standing and intelligence. We wanted to introduce some of the creative research experience in undergraduate affairs.

During my chancellorship, we initiated lower-division seminars, freshman seminars. It became a great success. I taught, and many vice chancellors, many leading professors, they all taught freshmen, many of them voluntarily, in addition to their normal workload. And because freshmen, many of them came to Cal, they found they went to a class with 200 students or 500 students. They didn't have any personal touch, feeling. So I felt for freshmen we really should get smaller seminars, informal kinds of teaching instituted. That was another major thing.

But all those require money, require additional support. We also tried to work on the curriculum with the Academic Senate and so on, for undergraduates. That's the second area.

The third area was the campus atmosphere and diversity. Every day I walked on the campus, so it's not just atmosphere but the physical setting. I tried to improve, for
instance, we have the Grassy Knoll. Now it's becoming such a popular place. In the center we tore out the temporary building. Do you remember that?

Nathan: Yes.

Tien: It was delayed, delayed. The temporary building became a permanent building. I was determined: we have to knock it down completely. In fact, I even went to the big tractor to demonstrate we're knocking down the temporary building and then got a much larger area for students.

Nathan: That's right in front of the Doe Library?

Tien: Yes. That's all the grassy area. That's another thing we tried in terms of campus atmosphere, physical setting. We tried to improve, like, even Sproul Plaza and so on.

The fourth area is university outreach and fundraising, communities. Again, I personally visited almost all parts of the state, trying to promote Cal. I traveled widely in the United States as well as internationally. All this required organization and also energy and money, funding, yes. That's a period when we had the worst economic or budgetary crisis, but fortunately we also increased a lot of private funding. Especially, many of the private supports are in the category of discretionary funds: I could use that for what's needed and not be totally restricted.

You read from the newspaper we already surpassed the $1 billion mark in our capital campaign. Originally, I remember 1990, when I became chancellor. We just finished the last campaign. Mike Heyman made it very successful. I think they reached way above what they originally set. If I remember correctly, originally they set, like, $280 or $300 million, but they reached $500 million or more at the end of the campaign.

In 1990, when I found that we had a budget crisis coming and it was going to stay with us for a long time, I decided immediately that we needed to start another fundraising. Usually people like to see a five-year period before you have a second one because a lot of donors just gave a big chunk of money. But we couldn't wait. We had to start planning and so on, so we started immediately working on it and went through a very elaborate process, consulting with all faculty, each department, what they need and so on.

Finally, we started. When we had our advisors or consultants, Marts and Lundy, I think they mentioned on the safe side maybe we could get $800 million because the last time it was $500 million, so $800 million would be something more reasonable.

But I for one always felt that we should stretch our goal, so that we would have a higher target, so everybody could shoot for that. I suggested that we should go $1 billion. Many people were very concerned as to whether we could reach that, ever, by the year 2000. We still have almost two years to go now, the end of 2000. At that time, the goal was $1 billion. Many people were concerned, so we had to work hard.

But by the time we made a certain level, about 1996, we started to announce our goal. I remember very well I wanted to stretch more because we saw it was going well. I wanted to stretch it to $1.2 billion. Many people were opposed to that, saying it's impossible and so on. And then I compromised. I said, "Okay, but we have to go beyond $1 billion. $1
billion is a nice number, but we have to say we're going even beyond $1 billion.” Finally, we settled on $1.1 billion.

And many people, again, were very concerned and felt we may not be able to reach that. Now, just a week ago, two weeks ago, now they announced we have reached $1 billion. Since we still have almost a year and a half or two years to go, this full year here and then next year, I think that without any question we can reach $1.1 billion. I think we may even reach $1.2 billion.

Planning, Timing, and Reasons for Resigning as Chancellor

Tien: When I decided to resign in 1997, one major question in my mind was whether our fundraising, because that was in the middle of the big campaign, whether we could reach our goal. But at that time, I was feeling very confident that we could reach that goal. Otherwise, I wouldn't have resigned. I would have carried that out.

Since I saw that that's the way we're going to make it, above it, then I thought it was a good time for me to resign so that my successor could easily carry this out, without undue disadvantage. So I felt very happy about this going, yes.

Nathan: The question of timing was very important?

Tien: Very important, yes. If I didn't resign at that time, 1997, I probably would have had to stay until at least the year 2001 because you don't want to resign at the end of your campaign. That's the last leg of your campaign. And so 1997, at that time, considering many, many factors, was the best time for me to step down. Many people guessed and had many different conjectures about what the reason was, because of affirmative action; I resigned because of other reasons. There were many, many rumors. But actually it was a combination of many, many reasons.

One of them was the fundraising. What would be the best time if I wanted to leave? If I didn't in 1997, then I would stay for at least another four years. Did I want to stay for four years? When I first became chancellor, people told me, "The minimum you should stay is five years; the maximum probably you should stay should not go beyond ten years." In fact, Mike Heyman told me, he stayed ten years, maybe that's too long.

David Gardner, he told me, now he says he may have stayed a little bit longer than he really should have because the last two or three years of David Gardner were very tough, too. So were Mike Heyman's. The timing is very important. So people told me, also Chancellor Al Bowker told me, "Five to ten years is the best." Seven years, when I reached seven years, I was just thinking, "This may be the real seven-year itch," you know? So I chose to step down at that time.

In looking back, I think that was a brilliant decision in many ways. Of course, any time when you make such a decision, you always feel uncertain because you don't know what lies ahead. There are many different options. But now, looking back, it was very, very good, everything, yes.
Nathan: Yes. Is there anything you want to say more about People’s Park, or have you said what you wished?

Tien: I commented probably a lot before. Of course, this is coming back recently because of Chancellor Berdahl's statement. Of course, there are many other versions. It generated tremendous discussion. So I prefer not to comment now because I think I would be a little bit sensitive, especially with my successor's still handling this particular issue.

Nathan: I see. We were speaking a little earlier about the atmosphere on campus. This would suggest your view on the value of convocations, and Charter Day celebrations?

Tien: Yes. At that time, as part of the campus atmosphere I tried to generate more things. That's why I think I reinstituted the convocation concept and also had campus family days and a number of things, trying to get the community together to celebrate and to interact with each other. Of course, we also, my wife and I, both were present in all activities; in the sports events, Big Games and all that. I think that was part of my plan, in fact, to make a welcoming campus atmosphere, especially in terms of the chancellor's involvement in all different aspects, especially among the student activities and concerns, yes.

Nathan: Were there other issues that might be of interest?

Tien: Yes.

**Personal Philosophy, Consequences, and the Image Business**

Nathan: Your policy on possible misuse of resources or financial irregularities in the university budget?

Tien: Yes. That's a very good point. Actually, one thing I found, that the university has changed a lot, especially public universities; that is, we have to raise funds among the private sector, our alumni and so on. That makes us much more vulnerable. Our image is extremely important. Also, even for our state funding, we are being scrutinized much more. We really have to become much more accountable. So the play rules, rules of the game, are different now.

Because of that, I kept emphasizing that for every level of manager and staff, we have to be very sensitive about any misuse or abuse financially of any university operation, because anything happening in the newspaper will damage us, not just particularly that issue, but also overall fundraising and so on. You cannot raise money successfully when you have a bad image. So this is a new ball game. I really tried very hard to keep every level of our staff to have very heightened awareness about this. We are in the image business. Not only the teaching and research but also the public image is so critical.

In that sense, I personally tried to be very frugal in many ways. I tried not to use any state money for refurbishing offices or even my residence or anything. When I got an increase
in salary--I thought we mentioned--$212,000, I actually donated my money for the university, the difference.

The reason was first, I found that money was not big enough to make your living so different. I always felt I lived so comfortably, compared to a refugee coming to the United States; for a long time, I went penniless. Now I was, like, living in paradise. So the extra money didn't mean that much. At that time, I just donated it all. I wanted to build a good image, and so that's the whole thing, I find, yes.

Nathan: Yes. I was wondering about specific policies that interested you, for example, use of cars, the car dealers who supplied vehicles?

Tien: Yes, yes, you're right. For instance, I didn't take a housing loan or compensation. When the university provides funds, they have a choice, whether you get just money, cash support, or you take the university's services. I actually just took the university services instead of getting a cash stipend because I felt that that's the best way to do it so there would be no complications financially.

I did set a policy on the use of cars. When I first became chancellor, I think our policies were very vague. In fact, we provided a lot of cars for many university people.

##[23A]

Nathan: In this connection you were really talking a bit about your philosophy?

Tien: Many may find I was maybe a little bit too conservative on that side. Maybe it's part of my background. I want to live in a very frugal way, so I feel a special constraint on using public money. We are in public education, teaching. I feel bad when I see us use those funds which might be utilized somewhere else, for students, for others, especially many of the disadvantaged people. I tend to be more conservative in many ways.

For instance, I didn't spend much money ever on University House or our own office and others. Many people even felt, well, it's a different philosophy. Some people like to have, like, corporate CEO-type of things: need plush offices, receptionist, or living quarters. I don't. It's different.

I think also the period is very different. During the early 1990s, we had such a bad budgetary crisis, historically the most severe crisis we ever faced. In that atmosphere, I think some prudence was necessary so that nobody would say we were wasteful. When the economy is good, everything is good. We have lots of money for everyone. Maybe that's okay. But I tend to be more conservative in that sense, yes.

Nathan: You mentioned, too, situations that may not be quite as clearcut as you're describing.

Tien: Yes.

Nathan: Business school Dean William Hasler wished to augment salaries with funds earned through the school's executive programs?
Tien: Yes. That's what I keep saying. There are many seemingly small issues coming to your desk every day, but you have to make some kind of decision. If we don't have some philosophy or some guidelines generally in our minds, we can easily slip into one direction without even knowing it. For instance, I mentioned about car dealers. This certainly, especially for many of our athletic coaches and directors and so on, also they used that for publicity and so on. That immediately got into a conflict of interest between the people involved and the dealers outside.

Also, the question also comes of undue influence by outsiders. The same thing is the augmented salaries for outside programs, although this isn't exactly programs. There's no question about, say, the business school salaries should be augmented because we're not in a competitive position. But then we had to find a way to augment the salary without making a tremendous disparity with other school faculties in, say, Engineering or the liberal arts and others.

Also, when we allowed them to augment their money from Extension-type of programs, then many people, instead of focusing their work in the university, they did a lot for the Extension so they could get additional income. This all happened. We had to be very careful.

Again, my goal was we needed to maintain, retain and recruit the very best faculty, but on the other hand, we had to be careful about the conflict of interest or also making it fair to everyone. We had to have some dialogue; otherwise, you could easily make decisions to do all those things. That issue, of course, was reported again. It's a little complicated. We even have had lawsuits in the business school case. People claimed there was mismanagement.

But I also want to come back to one point. I usually tried not to micro-manage. I delegated a lot of responsibility to vice chancellors and deans. I spent a lot of time, maybe 60 percent of my time, on external affairs in terms of fundraising, visiting different places, outreaching, and dealing with all the regions and the state and so on. So I delegated a lot.

How to balance that, yes. Some of the issues when we got down to the deans' level, it's very difficult for me, actually, I didn't even get involved that much down below.

**Relations with the Academic Senate**

Tien: I dealt with a lot of those things, but also I had to deal with the Academic Senate, in general. I had generally a very good relationship with the Academic Senate. We had monthly meetings. I went to talk to them, because I myself was very active in the Academic Senate, so I valued their input, the balance, the shared governance. I found it was really a very constructive policy. Sometimes we even disagreed on some major issues, but I think it is a very good setup for Berkeley.

Also the Budget Committee. Even yesterday we had a teaching award dinner, banquet. I saw two former Budget Committee chairmen. They were laughing. They said they
argued with me. "Do you still regard us as your friends?" I said, "Absolutely. I enjoyed that." You know, we can have our differences. We should, because my standpoint at that time was from the chancellor's view of the overall campus, and there were many, many different factors to consider.

The Budget Committee was much more narrowly focused about academic contributions, scholarship, and so on. That is one of the most important things, but sometimes you have to weigh other things. So we did have some disagreements, but I must say over all, I didn't even see any major encounters. Mostly we were able to resolve them in a very nice, cordial way. I think they appreciated that, too. We both appreciated that.

Nathan: And your activities in various Academic Senate committees?

Tien: Oh, very helpful. I was on the Committee on Committees. In fact, before I went down to Irvine in 1988, when I decided--I was actually offered the vice chancellor position at Irvine. I was also at that time on the Committee on Committees, the Berkeley Academic Senate. Chancellor Heyman and also the chairman of the Academic Senate felt maybe I should be chairman of the Academic Senate so that I wouldn't have to go to Irvine. But at that time I already semi-committed myself to Irvine, so I didn't accept that. So I have always had a very good relationship with the Academic Senate. I valued that a lot. I felt that was very, very important, yes.

Nathan: If you would like to, we can talk about some of the things that happen after you decided it was time to retire.

Some Causes for and Consequences of Retiring as Chancellor

Tien: Fine. Yes, yes, okay. I think maybe I can comment a little bit about the retirement part. I already mentioned the reasons for retirement. Mainly, I thought I had done seven years. I always thought five to ten years. I talked to everyone, in the beginning, afterwards, they always said that's the best time. It is very important to know when it's the best time to leave a post. At that time, there were a number of other issues.

First, of course, I had tremendous disagreements with SP1 and SP2 and Proposition 209, which did not help in terms of my decision to stay on because I just felt personally that was very bad. In fact, when we passed SP1 and SP2 in 1995, I at that time said five years. I was contemplating resigning the post because I felt this was so different from my thinking, especially with my own personal background.

However, after two weeks, I decided to stay. Immediately, I started to devise the Berkeley Pledge. My whole goal was I needed to stay on to help. There were many disadvantaged people. I should not give up on them. Although I felt upset, I as a person should not take the easy way out, and I had the responsibility, I should try to help even under this kind of new policy. Immediately, I pushed very hard to get the Berkeley Pledge well funded before I left, so that at least that was going on. That would be, like, my legacy, one of my legacies.
So that was in 1995. I stayed on. Also at that time, 1995, we just started our fundraising, so I didn't want to leave in the beginning of the fundraising, a big campaign. Again, I was trying to see if we could get our fundraising really on track, and then I could leave.

Also, at that time, 1997, I was sixty-one years old at that time when I was contemplating, "Am I going to stay on? That would be my last job. Should I find something more interesting?" That's a personal decision. Seven years chancellor. Stress on the family. I wanted to spend more time with my grandchildren, who were growing up. So those were the considerations.

Then I felt, again, with an effort like the big capital campaign, I needed to devote a little more time to make sure that this new field would blossom, yes. That would be, again, a legacy for me in my professional scholarship activity. But one very important one was my own scholarship activities, research activities. When I was chancellor--in fact, before that I opened up a new field we called microscale heat transfer. At that time, it was just going very well, expanding very fast. When I was chancellor, I still supervised graduate students. They were very much in demand.

So it was a combination of all the reasons. And then I said I would resign. It was not one particular event. We feel very strongly about Cal. We've been here forty years. At that time, people knew I would leave because I announced my retirement in 1996. I think it was September 1996, yes, so I gave a little more time for that. At that time, I was sixty-one years old, that's why I said it was just about time. Everything meshed very well.

After I announced my impending resignation, 1997, many people approached me with many different ideas. I had different options. I did contemplate some other opportunities, but eventually the university also offered me to stay with a distinguished professorship, and so I can continue on my research. Also, I got many offers to join the outside nonprofit and profit organizations on the board of trustees and directors. I accepted quite a few, became very busy. Actually, it's going very well. I find it was a really brilliant kind of decision, and the timing was right.

At that time, there were a lot of reactions coming from different quarters, alumni and many other people. I felt bad, but on the other hand, I'm still a member of the Cal family, and I never left here. Also, I made the decision that once I resigned, I would be away entirely. I would try not to be very physically present for one year.

I mentioned that when the rumors came up, actually Governor [Pete] Wilson called me from the hospital. He was undergoing a throat operation. We had disagreements on affirmative action and so on. I always had very cordial, good relationships with Governor Wilson. He supported me over the years a lot, so I felt bad when we had this deep disagreement, sometimes even public. But it didn't affect us.

So he heard about this rumor that I was going to resign because of affirmative action. That wasn't entirely true. He called me from the hospital. He couldn't even speak much, but we had a very cordial talk. He said, "Please don't resign. We always have had a good relationship." So that was very moving in many ways. I had many, many alumni call me. Some people even tried to persuade me not to resign. But I think, just like everything, it's something we'll get over.
My family was very happy. That was a family decision with my son and others. We all feel very comfortable, so that's good, yes.

Nathan: I see. We can go on, or we can stop now.

Tien: Maybe we can stop here, yes, yes.
[Interview 13: June 25, 1999] ##[24A]

Tien: I think the decision to retire in 1997, I did mention that before, yes.

Nathan: There may be more you would like to say?

Tien: Well, mainly at that time, as I said, I had been serving for seven years. Before I took the post, someone told me five to ten years—five years is the minimum; seven years may be a good time period; ten years may be too long—but never go beyond ten years.

Nathan: What would be the reason for that?

Tien: The reason is it takes some a few years to get your imprint, your ideas, so usually we say that will take about five years. As a chancellor, usually the first two years you are learning the job, you are trying to get all the ins and outs. Maybe you can enunciate some of the new vision, but you will not be able to carry it to a point which will have some impact. Usually, it takes three or four years, so five years is almost like a minimum.

But then, after you serve too long, say ten years or beyond, then whatever you do will be incremental. It’s kind of no longer very fresh with refreshing new ideas. Maybe someone else should come with a new vigor and new vision. In fact, many of the previous chancellors and presidents of the University of California told me, “Well, I may have served a little bit too long. If I had left two or three years ago, everything would be much, much better.”

So I was very conscious of that. Also, I always find to decide when to leave a post is a very important decision. Usually, people make mistakes on that. So 1997 I decided to retire. The reason is seven years, and also I was just turning sixty-one years old. If I tried to pursue some other interests, maybe that’s the only time. Also, I wanted to spend more time with my family and my research, my professional activity at that time.

Microscale Thermophysical Engineering and a New Journal

Tien: I was in the middle of pushing very hard a new field in my research. Right now, it’s going very well. It’s called microscale thermophysical engineering.

Nathan: Interesting. Thank you.

Tien: In fact, right now this is the hottest area in my over all activity, both in the United States as well as abroad. I just came back from Beijing and Japan, following this new field, expanding very fast.
So 1997 was the time I found the optimal time. Many people question my decision in terms of whether it was because of my displeasure about affirmative action: the passage of the SP1 and SP2, the elimination of any minority, racial consideration, whether that might be my true reason. I really don’t think that’s a major reason, but it could be a very minor one, because for any major decision you have many different reasons, and you try to balance all of them.

So that was the reason. Many people don’t believe that. They always feel I was doing so well at that time, “Why did you quit at the peak of your popularity?” But those are my real reasons.

Nathan: Good. May I ask you how, if you care to talk about it, you always managed to be on the cutting edge. How did you pick up on the idea of microscale thermophysical engineering?

Tien: That’s a very good question. Usually, it takes some time. I started that field about 1983. I served as department chairman, mechanical engineering, until 1981, and then I took a leave, a sabbatical, and I began to think about my research frontier, another cutting edge. That’s ’82, ’83. I was taking a sabbatical leave. I spent a lot of time thinking about this.

At that time, I analyzed the overall trend toward microelectronics. This was almost twenty years ago. I already saw at that time microelectronics as going to be a very big area. The other area is the lasers. So those are two major thrusts in the technology, and both involve what was call microlens scale—very thin film, small objects, like integrated circuits, very tiny.

And the other is microtime scale. In our lasers now we have one-trillionth of a second. We usually call it picosecond or femtosecond. A picosecond is the power of ten to the minus 12 \([10^{-12}]\) second. So we talk about one-tenths of a second, one-hundredths of a second, but this is ten to the minus 12 \([10^{-12}]\). Ten to the minus 12 \([10^{-12}]\) means many trillionths of a second. Lasers move into what we call short-pulse, short-time duration, high-power lasers. That’s the beginning of the eighties.

I said my own research involved heat transfer, so what would be the heat transfer phenomenon for that very short lens-scale or very short time-scale? And that’s what we call microscale. Microscale is a very small lens-scale and a small time-scale phenomenon.

So I started in 1982, ’83. At just about the same time, I was appointed as the Vice Chancellor for Research. That part of my pattern: I always work in administration and then I leave the post to have one or two years to have a research sabbatical, and then I rejuvenate my research. So in 1983 I became vice chancellor, but my research at that time was going very well. At that time, all my students—now they have become very famous, all around the country, at MIT, at Caltech—all the leading schools. They were my students at that time.

In 1985, I think I mentioned, I went to see Mike Heyman, Chancellor Heyman, and said, “I’d like to resign.” He told me, I remember vividly, he said, “Vice chancellor is a very powerful post, a very high-level post. Everybody likes to be a vice chancellor. Why do
you want to resign?” I said, “I have to do my research.” There’s a timing issue. If you miss that time, opportunity, you will not be able to build up as much. So I said, “This is the time I need to spend a little bit more effort in my research laboratory to firm up this new field, microscale thermophysical engineering.”

He said, “Well, nobody actually resigns on me unless I fire someone or I dismiss someone.” I said, “Chancellor, you don’t want to destroy my professional career. I’m a scholar. This is a very important period for me to go back to the laboratory.” Finally I resigned in 1985. I took a leave, again, working on this new field and built up a laboratory.

In 1988 Irvine asked me to go there as executive vice chancellor. That was a time I already had come back for two or three years, got my research laboratory back in shape and going, and so I took the opportunity at Irvine and moved my lab to Irvine. And then later on, I moved back, in 1990.

Even when I was chancellor, I was still working in this field, as I mentioned before. Right now, this field is really established, blossoming. Every university wants to hire a professor in this area, and every funding agency has put a lot of money in this area, so I feel very good.

In 1997, again, I felt after seven years administration—although I carry on research, you cannot do as much—so I said, “That’s the time I should resign.” And then after I left the chancellor’s office, I immediately set up a new journal.

Nathan: A new journal?

Tien: A new journal, called *Microscale Thermophysical Engineering*, an international journal.

Nathan: It’s called Micro—

Tien: -scale Thermophysical Engineering, the same field I mentioned. And now it’s going very well. If I were still in the chancellor’s office, it would be very hard for me to focus on that. So that’s the microscale. Right now it’s going very well, everywhere. I’m bombarded with requests. People want my students or postdocs or my laboratory in this area. This is the fastest area in my discipline, so that was very good.

Nathan: Is it time to look ahead to the next new idea?

Tien: Yes, but I don’t think I will. This area probably will still go for another ten years. Usually, we say any hot area will go that long. By then, I’ll be in my seventies. It will be hard for me to continue, so I have no plan at this time. I want to get this field first firmly established. This is maybe one of my research legacies, establishing this very important area in scholarship pursuit.
XVI  STEPPING DOWN

**UC Presidential Medal, Farewell Parties, Alumni Scholarship**

Tien: When I stepped down, of course, many people gave me a lot of encouragement. They arranged many farewell parties, President Atkinson awarding the first ever UC Presidential Medal. I was very deeply moved, yes. And the Alumni Association set up the Chang-Lin and Di-Hwa Tien Alumni Scholarship. Many, many people set up different things. It was a very moving experience. I didn’t realize, especially, I built up a lot of rapport with staff, faculty, students.

**Keeping a Low Profile; One-Year Leave**

Tien: Even yesterday, I was walking to the Faculty Club. I try to lie very low profile on campus because I do not want to interfere with our current leadership, the chancellor and so on, so I rarely go to the Faculty Club or on campus. But yesterday I had a lunch engagement. I walked through there. There’s an orientation, the summer Cal Orientation Program [CalSo]. Some students working in that whole area saw me. They started to say, “Chancellor Tien. Go Bears.” [laughs] I like that spirit, but I remind myself, “No, I’m no longer chancellor; I should not take any limelight,” and so on, so I responded enthusiastically, but then I tried to leave the scene. I don’t want to get too high profile.

But in general, the feeling was very strong, and it’s very hard for me, that’s probably the hardest part for me in stepping out of the chancellorship. I built up so many very strong bonds, affinity, relationship with many different constituencies. But I also reminded myself I’m no longer chancellor; whatever you do may impact on the current chancellor or present chancellor, my successor, so I want to go away, although it’s very hard because of a lot of friends and friendships.

And so I did take one-year leave. I went to the East Coast for the fall of 1997, went to Princeton, Cornell, Johns Hopkins, many other universities, giving lectures. And then in
the spring of 1998 I spent time at UCLA, also Caltech and Irvine, other southern California places.

I told my staff when I was leaving the chancellor’s office, I said, “When I’m chancellor, I will be doing 100 percent. I’m still the person leading the university and in charge of the campus. But once I step out, I will be completely disappearing. I will not try to influence my successor. If my successor calls me for any questions or for suggestions, I will respond. I will never volunteer anything for my successor.”

So I stayed with that. In fact, since July 1st, 1997, I have never been even once in California Hall, never, because I want to make sure I never unduly influence, even appearance-wise, affecting my successor. I didn’t even go back to any social functions until a year later. I selectively went, but now I don’t even go to the Faculty Club as much because, like yesterday, I went there, everybody said hello, and it still has the old feeling there; but on the other hand, I feel it would appear a little bit awkward for my successor, so I still follow that.

That’s a very hard part for me to hold because I miss a lot of friends, miss a lot of really good connections like students. I love to see them, to visit them, visit their classes, but then I tell myself, “No, you should not do this now; you are no longer the chancellor.” That was very tough for me to make that transition.

More on the Transition, Refocusing

Tien: The best way to handle those transitions is by going to different endeavors, so I spend most of my time on my professional activities I mentioned, and also I spend a lot more time on Asian American issues and also about U.S.-Asia relations. Those are my current focus after I stepped down.

Problems, Relationships, Continued Responsibilities

Tien: Now, let me see [looking at suggested list of question areas]. What has been the most fun for you? During my chancellorship, I really enjoyed my chancellorship. I like to make decisions. I like to solve very tough issues. I’m not someone who shies away from tough issues. I like to confront tough issues and try to make decisions. So I really find it’s a lot of fun. I learn a lot. If I hadn’t been chancellor, I would not have been able to interact with as many people outside of my field, like graduate students, GSI, graduate student instructors, even about proposed union issues. Although I disagree with the unionization, I enjoy interacting with all the GSIs. And I sympathize with their demands and plight and so on.

I enjoy working with our alumni. I think during my period, especially in the first three years, I had a very tough period, about the fire, about the kidnapping, about all sorts of
things happening, and also the budget. The toughest chore I find is always something perhaps more politically oriented; I mean, it’s outside forces.

Internally, our campus, I enjoy everything. But when I deal with, say, political forces like the regents and the governor and the state assembly, that I find very tough because they have a different agenda from my standpoint, and sometimes I just felt we were somehow not appreciated or our mission was not perhaps in the forefront of their minds. So that’s a very tough task. An example is the decision on SP1 and SP2. I feel very, very deeply for that particular thing.

How to work with the regents individually and as a group? Actually, I worked with the regents really well. I think they are all very devoted, kind human beings. Sometimes they have different agendas, different views because they come from different political segments. But I maintained a very good relationship with all the regents. I cannot even name one with whom we’re not on very good terms, although we disagree sometimes on some very weighty issues, including Regent Ward Connerly. We are on very good terms, but I disagree strongly with his view about abolishing affirmative action.

The governor—also we maintain a very good relationship, except we disagree.

Nathan: Wilson?

Tien: Wilson, yes, Governor Wilson. Even with the current governor, Gray Davis, at that time he was lieutenant governor. We maintain a very good relationship. Again, I disagree strongly with Pete Wilson’s stand about abolishing affirmative action. Many people were surprised I took such an open, strong stand. My staff, many of them advised me I should not take such a kind of open disagreement. But I feel this is kind of an issue of principle, so, and I don’t regret, in fact, I feel very proud of my position.

So I continue with my graduate students and other responsibilities. Other responsibilities: mainly, I’m very much involved in Asian American issues, and also I’m very much involved with U.S.-Asia relations in general because I feel I can serve better in those areas also.

Okay.

Nathan: Now, would these be essentially political or professional?

Tien: Some of them are definitely political. On Asian American issues, I’m always a strong advocate for how to raise the Asia Pacific Americans’ social status, and the political status. Right now, considering recently both the spy issue and many others, Asian Americans have been a little bit typecast in a very unfair fashion, so I spend a lot of time working on that.

Even for the presidential campaign, we try to heighten awareness of the presidential candidates about Asian Americans. As full Americans, they should enjoy like every other American. But unfortunately, sometimes because of race or color issues and different culture, that’s an issue, so I spend a lot of time on that.
The other issue I spend a lot of time on is U.S.-Asia. I try to foster right now U.S.-China relations. It’s at a low point. How can we promote mutual understanding more? I’m right now chairman of the board of the Asia Foundation, which is a very reputable foundation with thirteen offices in Asia, and trying to promote the ideas of American founding principles—freedom and democracy, economic transparency, legal firm work for Asia, for developing countries. So that I’m spending a lot of time on also.

**Wishes for the Future**

Tien: So that covers some of the things. My wishes for the future, Berkeley campus and the university: I would like to see Berkeley maintain its reputation as the leading research university, but most of all, I think Berkeley has to stand for opportunity for all, for everyone. We should not just become an elite university for an elite class, for instance, people who can afford it and so on. We should make Berkeley the very best university. Everyone, regardless of their financial, economic or ethnic or racial status can come and can achieve and so on. In that sense, it may be different from many of the private universities.

##[24B]

Tien: So that’s my wishes for the Berkeley campus in the future, and the university. It should be a leading research university, but open access to all, all, especially for underprivileged segments of our society to bring them some hope. That’s the American dream just like myself, coming as a refugee, and we can achieve it.

Also I have another hope, my three points for Berkeley: leading research university; number two, open access to all, particularly underprivileged people; number three, I hope the campus becomes more humane, not just with professional excellence but also having a human touch, with everyone more together. So that’s my feeling. That’s what I was trying to do during my chancellorship: inject some human touch in this very complex, big campus. That’s my wish for Berkeley. I think I did contribute a little bit towards that direction, but I’d like to see us do more.

**Invitations, Writings, Ties to Berkeley**

Tien: Let me see. I think I answered; about my future, I still enjoy visiting and teaching at other universities in the U.S. and overseas, but on the other hand, I don’t think I will make any permanent move. I’ve been at Berkeley for forty years. This is my fortieth year. Forty years. In fact, Berkeley is the only job I have ever had in my whole life, permanent job, forty years in one place. So I will probably stay here.

People are trying to get me to other universities, other foundations. After a lot of soul searching, I feel I should stay at Berkeley, perhaps finishing my career in this place; of course, that doesn’t mean I’m not going to do anything. I will continue to do many other
things, yes. I do writing, both professionally and also public interest issues, so after I stepped down from chancellor, we published some books in my own professional area, but also I wrote some columns for the newspapers and so on.

Some Awards and Distinctions

Tien: I of course did receive a number of other awards. Every year, I receive some awards and distinctions, honorary doctorates and other awards from different universities and professional societies. So those are some of the things I’ve just been recently awarded. Of course, I joined the U.S. National Science Board. Actually, President Clinton nominated me last October, but the U.S. Senate was so busy on something else, they never had a chance to confirm President Clinton’s nomination. Then in January, every year, if they didn’t confirm, he has to renominate, so he renominated me last January for the post, and finally I got confirmed by the U.S. Senate. Of course, they have to do a lot of paperwork, financial as well as the background check, so I got confirmed last month, in May. So that’s another thing I have to work on.

And last year, of course, I was spending a lot of time in Hong Kong as chairman of the Hong Kong Chief Executives’ Commission on Innovation and Technology, trying to broaden Hong Kong’s economic base, including innovation technology, high-tech area activities, high value-added enterprises, instead of what they have right now, relatively narrow: real estate, second-hand trading, financial services. So I’m spending a lot of time on that.

Learning from Mentors

Tien: Well, that last line [in the suggested outline] is the names of the people who have been important to me as Berkeley professor and chancellor. Forty years ago, 1959, when I joined Berkeley very young, I was only twenty-four years old, I think the person that shaped me the most was Professor Ralph A. Seban, S-e-b-a-n, who was the division chairman at that time, who hired me and who was a very senior scholar in my field. He really helped me a lot. Also, he established an integrity, high level, high degree, in terms of professional integrity, honesty in research, in scholarship. Really, I learned a lot from him. He, of course, later on became department chairman, and I became division chairman and so on.

But the one who really had a tremendous impact, maybe changed my life a lot, is, I would say, David Gardner, President David Gardner, who was very instrumental in getting me selected as chancellor, gave me the opportunity to serve. Because being a minority, and in engineering was very unusual background for a chancellorship, and I think David Gardner somehow realized, recognized my potential. He pushed and tried very hard to have me realize the chancellorship’s challenge. I learned a lot, although I disagreed with David during his last few years, but I always respected him. He is a fantastic mentor. So that’s for chancellor. Also Professor Ernest Kuh, K-u-h. He was dean of engineering.
We worked many years together, and he helped me in many, many ways. When I went up, I learned a lot, of course, from Mike Heyman, Roderic--Rod Park. I worked with them as vice chancellor. They were chancellor and vice chancellor at that time. They gave me, I learned a lot from them, administration, university administration.

Before I came to Berkeley in 1959, my research advisor, Professor S. L. Soo, S-o-o, at Princeton, really inspired me about how to handle the creative or innovative scholarship. He passed away last year at Illinois. He moved from Princeton to Illinois, so I'm right now helping establish a memorial fund for him, in honor of my research advisor before, Ph.D. advisor, S. L. Soo. In fact, I just made a sizable donation for that fund.

In my personal life, the one who most impacted me was, of course, for the last almost forty-five, fifty years is my wife, Di-Hwa. Of course, before that, my mother, my father really had a lot of influence, especially considering my other life was relatively tortuous in the early years because we moved. As refugees, we moved different places, different environments and so on.

But now I'm just so happy about my family. My son and my two daughters, and now we have three grandchildren. My daughter, Phyllis, just gave birth to a beautiful granddaughter, Alexandra, only ten days ago.

Nathan: Congratulations.

Tien: Yes, very good. So they are all doing very well, not only professionally but as human beings, everyone, so very, very good. I think that ended up very well.

More on Recent Awards

Nathan: Beautifully. Were there any awards that were particularly significant to you?

Tien: I think all awards to me, like the Presidential Medal and others, they are all very significant to me. I also received the last few years many honorary doctorate degrees, from the U.S., Canada, abroad, and so on.

In fact, just recently, someone notified me that one observatory in Asia will name a planet after me--yes, yes--in the sky, in the universe. But it's a very tiny, tiny sun. In astronomy there's a rule: if you find any new planets, you are entitled to name those planets in honor of people you like. For instance, the oldest, largest observatory in China, Purple Mountain Observatory in Nanjing, they informed me that they are honoring me, but the process will take still some time because they have to go all the way to the premier, the prime minister, to get approval naming the planet they discovered. They plan to name a planet in honor of me.

Nathan: Will they use your full name?

Tien: Yes, Chang-Lin Tien, yes. Last night I went to the Chabot Observatory. They also announced that they are going to name the auditorium of the Chabot, it's a new, $70
million project; they're going to name the science auditorium in my name, Tien
Megadome Theater. There's a number of things people name after me right now. But I
feel a little bit overwhelmed by those things. I feel I'm a very ordinary person. I didn't do
anything much, just did my share.

Nathan: This is really exciting, both professionally and as a human being. People understand you.
What a wonderful gift that is.

Tien: Yes, yes, yes. I feel very good generally. People in all different walks of life, we get
along very well together. So both in the States as well as abroad, people are very kind to
me.

[End of interview]
I'm sitting here with Di-Hwa Tien in her home in Hillsborough, California. It’s May 8, 2003, and this is our first interview.

We usually like to start at the beginning of your life, so tell me where were you born and when you were born, and sort of the circumstances?

All right. I was born in Beijing, China. I left Beijing when I was one year old, maybe less than one.

What year was that?

Nineteen thirty-six.

Okay. And where do you fit in the family? And what—

I’m the third one of nine children. [laughs]

Tell me this—you had told me before when we talked—but tell me a little bit why you moved from Beijing and where you went.

Yes, yes. You want me to talk about my father side and mother side?

Yes, whatever you’d like to talk about.

My grandmother had four children. My grandfather is a Chinese medicine doctor. And he died when he got typhoid disease because he saw patients who had typhoid. He got it, then he died at very, very young age, when my grandmother was twenty-eight, and lost her husband. She had to bring up four kids, two girls and two boys, and my father was the youngest.

And what’s your father’s name—if you can spell it for me?

R-U; J-E-N; L-I-U: Ru-jen Liu. But my grandmother was very strong-willed person. At that time girls were supposed to stay at home, but boys, she just let them go out to study—not in a school—they were sent somewhere to study and they went out to try to find a job. Turned out both my uncle and my father, they did very well. My uncle was like a governor in one of the provinces and also he was a big army commander.

Okay. And was this under Chiang Kai-shek?

Yes.

Okay. And how about your father?

My father was also a lieutenant general army commander, also under Chiang Kai-shek. Actually, they originally, in the early years—from dynasty to Republic, worked for
another leader; they have all the—what do you call those?—warlords at that time. My father belonged to the Northwest army. At that time it did not belong to Chiang Kai-shek yet. His boss was named Feng—the last name is Feng—General Feng. And then, I think he got defeated, and he (General Feng) transferred all his army to Chiang Kai-shek’s army. So, my father was just part of that—[laughs]—he worked under the Chiang Kai-shek government. My parents met each other, not like the old-fashioned way. My father was an army commander. My mother was very liberal. At that time, you know, that was never heard of.

LaBerge: This is early 1900s?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yeah, that’s right. Early 1900s. My mother was in school, she went out to the platform in the school and gave a speech. That speech was supposed to be very radical at that time. The Chiang Kai-shek government was concerned about the Communist Party. They thought my mother was a Communist and arrested her.

LaBerge: They arrested your mother?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes! Nobody knew my mother. [laughs] It just happened that my father was in charge of the area, so he met my mother, so that’s how they knew each other.

LaBerge: I see. Was she put in jail, or anything like that?

Di-Hwa Tien: No, not really. Just like the students at Cal—sometimes they protest. [laughs] Yeah. That’s how my parents met.

LaBerge: Oh my gosh. What was your mother’s name?

Di-Hwa Tien: Wang Shin—S-H-I-N; C-H-O-U.

LaBerge: And Wang is the last—?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes. That’s never heard of at that time, the way they met.

LaBerge: So—marriage wasn’t arranged, or anything?

Di-Hwa Tien: No, that’s why I mentioned to you, this was not usual in China—[laughs]—at that time.

LaBerge: Yes. But that’s very interesting to know that about your background.

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes. And then my mother’s side, they are from a very well-educated family. My grandfather on my mother’s side worked for the Qing [Ch’ing] Dynasty, he was also in government, worked something like county governor equivalent, something like that. He passed away when my mother was still very young, like in the high school or college.

LaBerge: Okay. And so your mother went to high school and college?
Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, but she didn’t graduate from college—just married my father. Because my father was really working hard to win her. [laughs]

LaBerge: Okay. So, you were born in 1936. And where did you move from Beijing?

Di-Hwa Tien: In 1937 a Sino-Japanese War was started. Actually, my father also was one of the first few to start fighting with the Japanese.

LaBerge: Oh, really? Is that why you moved?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes. That’s why, in Mainland China, I never stayed in one place for over a year—always traveled with my father and we always [were] in the front line. Not like everyone else, they all went to Chongqing [Chunking.] They stayed there, but we never did, we always followed my father around.

LaBerge: What do you remember as a child? Do you remember seeing fighting, hearing fighting?

Di-Hwa Tien: A little bit. So I remember I was always scared of Japanese because they have more advanced weapons than Chiang Kai-shek’s army at that time. Yes, I think we left Beijing when I was one because of the war. Ever since, I just traveled with my family all over the place. I never went to school until fourth grade.

LaBerge: Fourth grade, okay. Was that common?

Di-Hwa Tien: Probably. My parents hired someone to teach us at home because you don’t always have a school when you travel all over the place.

LaBerge: So you and your brother and sisters had tutors?

Di-Hwa Tien: Tutors, yes, we were used to tutors. [laughs]

LaBerge: So by the time you went to school, did you already know how to read and write?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh yes, but I really didn’t know the school rules—you’re supposed to line up and do this and do that—I didn’t know. I was really scared the first time I went to school.

LaBerge: Also, if you were at home with tutors, then did you have friends in the neighborhood, or just your brothers and sisters?

Di-Hwa Tien: No, just brothers and sisters.

LaBerge: So that would be new to go to school, meet all these new children, too, and have to socialize?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, that was a different story.

LaBerge: Yes. So where were you in fourth grade when you started school?

Di-Hwa Tien: We were—at that time already, the Japanese surrendered. We got to go to Henan province, and Kaifeng, the capital of that province, and then we started to go to regular
school. So we didn’t have to fight with—my father didn’t have to fight with the Japanese anymore.

LaBerge: And then did you stay there for a while?

Di-Hwa Tien: For two years, until maybe fifth grade. Then we went to Nanjing, at that time it was the capital of the Chiang Kai-shek government. And then we stayed there for one year, and then at that time had already started—the civil war, we call that. And then we went from Nanjing to Shanghai. So my mother bought a house, everything ready, we thought that was the last stop, we’d never move again, that was what my mother said. [Sighs] And then it would turn out that we only stayed there for four months, so we had to go to Taiwan.

LaBerge: Was that 1949?

Di-Hwa Tien: Nineteen forty-nine, yes.

LaBerge: During World War II, was your father—my history isn’t very good—was he involved at all—I can’t remember what—if any of the Chinese military were involved in World War II.

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh yes, all the army, they fight—the whole country fought with the Japanese.

LaBerge: But then it became a civil war in China?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, right after the Japanese surrender, Second World War, we started civil war. But I know everybody was tired of it. All of the soldiers get very tired of fighting with your “own”—you know, you fight with your “own”? [laughs]

LaBerge: Yes. It’s just like your own family.

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes. Even though a lot of our friends, they are Communist, we didn’t know: they never really told us, but I mean my parents’ friends. Not my school friends.

LaBerge: Oh, that must have been very difficult?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, yes.

LaBerge: What do you remember about leaving Shanghai and getting to Taiwan, either the trip or the changes?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, I was young. Every time we were on the move to somewhere, I always got excited [laughs] because we were going to a new place. But I remember a lot of people, they tried to get out of Shanghai, but we didn’t have that kind of worry because [my parents] chartered the flight with the whole family, went to Taiwan.

LaBerge: Could you take your belongings with you?

Di-Hwa Tien: They even chartered a boat that took all the belongings.
LaBerge: Okay. Because that’s different—what I read about your husband’s family, they left without anything, didn’t they?

Di-Hwa Tien: We took everything, my mother told the people that helped us, “Good things, don’t take it, maybe we come back soon,” but we never did.

LaBerge: Yes. Well, what did you find when you got to Taiwan, the house, the school?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, the house was totally different. We all went to Taiwan without preparation and everything. We had to stay with friends, I think it was in a school, because my family was a huge family with ten children. There were a lot of people, they helped us—I hate to say “servant,” but—[laughs]

LaBerge: But that was common. How could your mother raise ten children without help?

Di-Hwa Tien: [laughter] Yes, a lot of help. So we had to buy two houses next to each other because there was not enough room in one. Also, they all had the Japanese style house. I stayed in Taiwan for ten years. I left in ‘59.

LaBerge: So when got there you were about thirteen or so? In high school or…?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, actually I never finished sixth grade, just went to Taiwan.

LaBerge: Well, tell me about the schools that you went to then when you were in Taiwan.

Di-Hwa Tien: Everybody had to speak Mandarin. That’s why I never really had the chance to learn the Taiwanese dialect. But Mandarin was easy for me. I speak Mandarin anyway, you know in Beijing, in the northern part, they all speak Mandarin.

LaBerge: Yeah, but do you speak another—?

Di-Hwa Tien: No, no, not like him, Chang-Lin, he spoke several dialects.

LaBerge: Maybe because he had to learn it just to survive?

Di-Hwa Tien: Because his family, they spoke a different dialect. My family, they speak Mandarin. Also he went to Shanghai. He studied there for many years, so he learned Shanghainese.

LaBerge: Okay, so in school, it was Mandarin that you were taught in, and that’s what you spoke?

Di-Hwa Tien: Always Mandarin, except when I was in Shanghai, somehow I went to a school where they all spoke Cantonese. I didn’t understand a word. Every time I went home, I cried. I said: “I don’t know what they’re talking about!” [laughs] I had a hard time. I studied there only four months. We went to Taiwan and I was so happy. [laughs]

LaBerge: How did you learn English?

Di-Hwa Tien: Well, in Taiwan, in high school, they all taught you ABC’s, and we learned how to read English. That was in college, I think, rather.
LaBerge: But not to speak it?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, no—then when we came here.

LaBerge: So you had never spoken English before you came to America?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh no—no, no. [laughs]

LaBerge: Oh my gosh, that is amazing.

Okay, well we’re going to stay here in Taiwan. We’re not going to come here [to the U.S.] yet. Tell me about what you were interested in school, like what subjects, and any people who were influential in your life, besides your family, or in your family—were there uncles or aunts? Did you get to know your grandparents?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, my grandmother, I still remember a little bit. She liked me. I was her favorite.

LaBerge: Oh, okay. [laughter] Which grandmother is this?

Di-Hwa Tien: My mother’s side.

LaBerge: Did she come to Taiwan with you?

Di-Hwa Tien: No, she passed away, a long time before. I was very young maybe seven, eight years, but I remember vividly, a little bit. They always told me about her.

LaBerge: Well, did she live with you or just live nearby?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, she lived with us. That’s why we’re so close. Because my grandfather died a long time ago, she always stayed with my mother. Later on, she stayed with my mother’s brother, my uncle, and then she passed away.

LaBerge: By the time you got to Taiwan they were all passed away. But what about your uncles and aunts, did they come to Taiwan also?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh yes, everybody, so we don’t have any relative in Mainland China; we all went to Taiwan.

LaBerge: And what did you like in school?

Di-Hwa Tien: I liked history, always, that’s my favorite subject.

LaBerge: Was there a difference in how boys and girls were treated, or encouraged, or—?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, we went to all-girls’ school—boys and girls are in different schools—until college.

LaBerge: So did you have gymnastics, or sports, or anything like that?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, I’m really not very good! [laughter] That’s my hardest subject.
LaBerge: What about music?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, we had music, yes. The sports, oh—you cannot graduate, so you had to know certain things, right? Oh, I have a hard time. [laughs]

LaBerge: Well, what kinds of things did you have to know?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, for instance, like swimming.

LaBerge: Pass a swimming test?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes—I can’t! [laughter]

LaBerge: Oh dear. So you went on to college. How usual was that for a young girl to go to college?

Di-Hwa Tien: For instance, in my family everybody went to college, you know, my mother was very liberal. [laughs] I went to college later on, because in Taiwan it’s not like here. Every year you have entrance examinations, so according to your grades, they will decide your first choice, second choice, third choice? I didn’t make my first choice, I went to a private university. That college was mainly boys, very few, very few females. It’s a private college.

LaBerge: What’s the name of it?


LaBerge: So, this was your first time going to school, then, with boys?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, first time.

LaBerge: What were you studying?

Di-Hwa Tien: Literature. That’s the reason why, you know, because my mother’s side is always very strict, but even she is not—[laughter] That’s the reason why they allowed me to go out with Chang-Lin, later on, because they knew him. Since I already had gone to the co-ed school, if I met some other boys, they don’t know, they are worried. Might as well—Chang-Lin is much better, they feel much more comfortable, that’s why they allowed us—yes.

LaBerge: Let’s talk about that, how you met.

Di-Hwa Tien: Chang-Lin? Yes, he was my tutor. Actually, his brother was my tutor.

LaBerge: What did the brother tutor you in?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, math, everything, English—

LaBerge: Oh, math and English, okay.
Di-Hwa Tien: The brother went abroad. He tried to find a substitute, and that was another brother. And then he came a few times, but he didn’t want to do it. Then he came—Chang-Lin, ah? Then it turns out we liked him a lot. He had been tutoring me for many years. Actually we were about the same age, but my sister and I thought he was good, whatever he told us, we understood much more. [laughter]

LaBerge: So, he taught you and your sisters?

Di-Hwa Tien: And my sister, and later on, some other sister, I don’t remember now.

LaBerge: So would you have like a little class, like three of you together with him?

Di-Hwa Tien: No, just two—me and my sister.

LaBerge: Okay, so two of you plus—for instance, how often would he come during the week to tutor you?

Di-Hwa Tien: Maybe once a week—I don’t remember—[laughs]—maybe once a week.

LaBerge: And you were about how old? Fifteen or sixteen?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, fifteen, high school, like ninth grade.

LaBerge: And then when did you start sort of going out?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, after the first year, my first college year.

LaBerge: Okay, so that was like about—you were how old?

Di-Hwa Tien: About eighteen.

LaBerge: About eighteen. And your parents let you go out without a chaperone?

Di-Hwa Tien: No! No, they really didn’t want me to go out with any boy—that’s why my big sister said, “Well, she already went to the co-ed school, might as well let her to go out with someone they know.”

LaBerge: But you didn’t have to have a chaperone?

Di-Hwa Tien: No, no, at that time, all the students—had no other place to go, because Taiwan is such a small island. Only thing you can go to, just to the movie house, to watch a movie.

LaBerge: So that’s what you did?

Di-Hwa Tien: That’s what we did.

LaBerge: Were the movies in Chinese—in Mandarin, or in English?

Di-Hwa Tien: In English. Most were in English, like for instance, the 1950s movie Gone with the Wind, all those things.
LaBerge: Yes. So by that time, you could understand English.

Di-Hwa Tien: Not really, maybe a little bit.

LaBerge: So your family liked him and that was okay?

Di-Hwa Tien: My father always liked him. He always said, “Oh, he’s a good student.” [laughs] Actually, I was really hurt every time my father said about Chang-Lin, that he always made good on all the tests, so he could go to the National Taiwan University, and I couldn’t because I didn’t make it.

LaBerge: Because you didn’t pass the test.

Di-Hwa Tien: I didn’t pass the test with high enough grades for the first choice.

LaBerge: Yes, yes. So then, tell me what happened when he decided to come to America, when he was accepted at the University of Louisville—what did you two decide to do?

Di-Hwa Tien: At that time, in Taiwan, after you graduate from college it was very hard to find a job. Most of the people, they went abroad. That was his only—

LaBerge: Only opportunity? Going abroad?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, yes.

LaBerge: So, I can’t remember what year he went.

Di-Hwa Tien: Nineteen fifty-six.

LaBerge: Nineteen fifty-six. And had you just thought you were going to get married before then?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, no, no, no. Well, we just, you know—were already very good friends. Of course, I felt very sad he was going to leave. He said that maybe we should [get] engaged, but I didn’t even dare to tell my parents! You know, that’s very embarrassing, so we thought it better not to tell them. [laughter] I promised to wait for him.

LaBerge: So you don’t tell your parents and off he goes. But when did you think you’d see each other again?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, that’s right—I didn’t know, that’s why I felt very sad. We always just sort of wrote to each other, for almost three years.

LaBerge: And you never saw each other for three years?

Di-Hwa Tien: Almost three years.

LaBerge: My gosh.
Di-Hwa Tien: Yes. I thought, “Well, maybe we never meet again, but this is our fate, and we’re still together.”

LaBerge: How did it come about that you came to America and you got married? How did you tell your parents and how did you make those decisions?

Di-Hwa Tien: You know, everybody was going abroad to study at that time. This is obvious. But Chang-Lin did call my parents, but I didn’t tell my parents anything. He said maybe he was moving from the East Coast, he will accept a job at Berkeley. And I have my admission at New York University, and then I’m scared to stay there by myself. So, of course, I’ll come with him from East Coast to West Coast. Then my parents said “Well, you’re not married, you two cannot travel together.” So Chang-Lin called them, you know, he wanted to get married and then we could travel together to the West Coast.

LaBerge: And your parents said okay?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, well, you know, my mother knows, even though her parents could not decide for her.

LaBerge: Yes, yes, exactly. Tell me about the trip to America. Because from what I understand, you had never been on airplane, you didn’t really know English, so tell me about that.

Di-Hwa Tien: In the beginning, I said, “Well, Chang-Lin is here, I know someone is here, so I’m not that worried,” but of course, I was scared. [laughter]

LaBerge: Yes. How old were you?

Di-Hwa Tien: About twenty-two.

LaBerge: So where did you fly to?

Di-Hwa Tien: From Taiwan to—you know at that time they didn’t have a jet. It was very slow. They had a stopover at Guam, and then to Hawaii, and then to the U.S. The airplane I flew from Hawaii to San Francisco couldn’t fly for too long—they always have some kind of problem—there is mechanical problem, and then went back to Hawaii. So I went back to Hawaii probably three times.

LaBerge: Really? And you were all alone?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, with, of course, the passengers—nobody I know. And Chang-Lin was worried, he thought I got lost. But finally, the airline changed the flight, and I went to Los Angeles. Chang-Lin asked his friend in Berkeley—at that time they were all studying in the Ph.D. program at Berkeley, and got them to pick me up in San Francisco. They went to the airport three times and couldn’t get me and finally I was changed to a flight to Los Angeles. From there I called him and then he picked me up at New York airport.

LaBerge: Wow. So, how long did that take you to get from Taiwan to New York? About a week or so?
Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, I left Taiwan like June the thirtieth. I arrived New York at something like July fourth—no, July fourth was Hawaii, and then I arrived in New York July fifth or sixth.

LaBerge: So you were planning to—you had a student visa?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes.

LaBerge: Is that what you had? And you were planning to go to New York University, but what happened?

Di-Hwa Tien: So I didn’t go to the university because Chang-Lin asked me to marry him. I thought it was a good idea to go with him rather than stay in New York all by myself. [laughter] I just came with Chang-Lin, and a month later we married, we just drove from New York all the way to California. We drove over three weeks—twenty-something days.

LaBerge: And where did you get married?

Di-Hwa Tien: New York Riverside Church. And I didn’t have any of my family, because it was very hard for them to come at that time.

LaBerge: So, who were your attendants, or who came to the wedding?

Di-Hwa Tien: I only had one classmate that’s from my side, and two other friends, my classmate’s sister and her husband, and the rest were Chang-Lin’s friends, and his relatives. [laughs]

LaBerge: So he had relatives in the United States?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, his two brothers.

LaBerge: So, what year was this? 1959?

Di-Hwa Tien: Nineteen fifty-nine.

LaBerge: Both there and when you came to Berkeley, how did you deal with learning the new language, and just new customs, and—?

Di-Hwa Tien: Just gradually. You know when you were young it’s easy to adapt.

LaBerge: For instance, when you came to Berkeley—well, tell me about, first of all, looking for housing?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, yes. At the beginning we were looking for housing near his office, Vine and Rose, around that area. We saw the sign “Vacancy,” but we went in and they said that it was already rented out, so we have to look at some other places. Later Chang-Lin found out they didn’t rent to the—you know, they called us “Orientals,” or the blacks.

LaBerge: But they didn’t say anything.

Di-Hwa Tien: No, of course not.
LaBerge: And did you have any idea that was the reason?

Di-Hwa Tien: We didn’t. You know, we were so young, of course we didn’t know.

LaBerge: Maybe it’s just as well you didn’t know then.

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, we didn’t know, we didn’t know. Later on Chang-Lin found out, because we were curious; we saw the vacancy sign still there.

LaBerge: So where did you find a place to live?

Di-Hwa Tien: We lived in—you know Milvia and Carleton? Just between Shattuck, Milvia and Carleton Street, we just found a place; we lived upstairs, in an old house rented like a duplex. The couple—I think it was an old couple, or else one pretty senior lady who lived downstairs and they rented the upstairs to us. I still remember—one hundred dollars a month.

LaBerge: My gosh. That’s another thing, you had to learn the whole new currency, everything was new.

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, I remember. And later on, we just felt living upstairs was not convenient—the following year, we tried to find some other place. We tried Ordway—1320 Ordway, in Berkeley, it was a one-bedroom little house. They asked for eighty dollars a month, I still remember.

LaBerge: And what would you do? He was—was he teaching in the engineering school [College of Engineering]?

Di-Hwa Tien: Uh-huh. I think probably he was the only young professor in his department. He was assistant professor at that time.

LaBerge: I read in part of his oral history, that he didn’t really want to come to Berkeley, that he wanted to go someplace else.

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, yes—because his two brothers were on the East Coast.

LaBerge: And he thought Berkeley maybe wasn’t so great?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, yes, yes. You know, also, when you are young, it’s kind of a lot of stress to be in a totally strange environment. I don’t blame him in wanting to go back to New York with all his friends, his brothers. But I liked Berkeley. The first time I arrived in Berkeley, I said “Wow!” I really was falling in love.

LaBerge: What was it that made you fall in love with it?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, the city was so quiet and nice. Not like now, it’s very crowded. The weather is so nice and the campus is beautiful. I always say Berkeley is the best campus of all the campuses that I have visited.
LaBerge: What did you do with your time, how did you make friends and learn English at Berkeley when you got there? Because you didn’t know a soul!

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, that’s right. [laughter]

LaBerge: And your family wasn’t here.

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, but my husband had a lot of schoolmates from Taiwan in Berkeley. You know, they came here—lots of them. Most of his class, they all came to the U.S. to study. They took the same flight, came here right after they completed one year required military training. You know, they helped me a lot. We always got together with them. I learned my cooking, also, by just watching them cook, because I didn’t know how to cook. I never knew how to cook! [laughs]

LaBerge: But that meant, too, you had to learn how to go to the grocery store, how to use the money, how to figure out all that stuff?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes. Seems to me, it was pretty easy to adapt at that time. The hardest thing was cooking, because my mother wanted me to learn, and I said, “Well, you don’t know how to cook, so I don’t have to learn!” So I never took her advice. Then after I arrived here, it was a big problem for me.

LaBerge: Yes. So did you learn how to cook Chinese food, American food, or both?

Di-Hwa Tien: Chinese—yes, I learned with Chinese, with all his friends, and they were pretty good.

LaBerge: And what about English, did you go to school and take a class?

Di-Hwa Tien: No, I really didn’t. I just went to a regular school.

LaBerge: Tell me about the regular school.

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, at that time, we came to Berkeley end of August, 1959. There wasn’t any school that I could go to, but finally I found one school, you remember the art and craft college? [California College of Arts and Crafts] At that time, somehow I didn’t get into that school. I don’t know what’s the reason, maybe because I was too late enrolling. And then I went to Armstrong College.

LaBerge: Which was right downtown?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, very close to Carleton Street. Oh, that’s the reason, because I could walk to there. I didn’t know how to drive. So, I just went to Armstrong College.

LaBerge: And what were you taking?

Di-Hwa Tien: Accounting, because what I learned in Taiwan, it was of no use. If you wanted to find a job at that time, many people learned accounting. So I studied about a year or so, and then I had Norman, then Phyllis, and then Christine, and I stayed home ever since.

LaBerge: So, you didn’t know how to drive. How did you learn how to drive?
Di-Hwa Tien: Chang-Lin taught me with Norman in the car. I still remember. We just circled around the Safeway—the parking lot—near Shattuck almost to Ashby. Down there before the big Safeway grocery store opened for business. We always went there on weekends when there were not many people, there were no cars and nobody there, so I was circling around! [laughs]

LaBerge: Hearing this, everything you were doing was absolutely new: learning how to drive—

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, learning how to drive, how to cook, and then later on having Norman. Oh, that was very hard.

LaBerge: That’s very hard. And did you have any family here yet?

Di-Hwa Tien: No.

LaBerge: Because it’s awfully nice to have a mother or sister or somebody who knows—

Di-Hwa Tien: That’s true, you know. I always tell my children: “I survived!” [laughs]

LaBerge: Exactly. And what about even health care? I know that Chang-Lin got it because he was a professor, but that must have been different kind of health care than you had had in Taiwan.

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh yes, for years when I had Norman, I went to Alta Bates Hospital. When Norman was not quite three years old, he had appendicitis. But the doctor said it was stomach flu, so they gave him penicillin shots. We almost lost Norman. And then a week later, the doctor said, “No, it’s appendicitis—already ruptured.” He stayed in Kaiser Hospital for ten days. At that time, Phyllis was almost born. That was December, Phyllis was born in January. I stayed with Norman in the hospital for ten days. I watched him. I didn’t want to go home.

LaBerge: So you were pregnant with Phyllis while Norman—?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes. And I stayed in the hospital. Chang-Lin sometime came and I went home to do washing and back again. That’s the time I really drove, because everybody was busy and I hated to bother anyone. [laughs]

LaBerge: Nobody else, and so it kind of made you learn how to drive?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, so I have to drive.

LaBerge: Well, that was very lucky, wasn’t it?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, at that time, there were not so many people and not so much traffic—it’s easy to drive on the streets.

LaBerge: But also lucky that Norman was okay, that they did figure it out, with such a little kid.

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, because now I know, wow, if any of my grandkids say their tummy aches, I just get scared. [laughs]
LaBerge: I bet you do, and to have them go get that appendix checked. Yes. Any other experiences like that with your other children? Any health trouble?

Di-Hwa Tien: No, Norman had a lot of this kind of unfortunate thing. Chang-Lin also played with him when he was young. He tried to just pull one arm, and then somehow dislocated his arm. Norman cannot talk at that time, only one-year-old. He kept crying, and I didn’t know what we were going to do. Finally a few hours later we went to the hospital and then he had an x-ray: dislocated—must be very painful.

LaBerge: Oh my gosh. But he’s fine now?

Di-Hwa Tien: He’s fine, he’s fine. Poor Norman.

LaBerge: The first child lives through a lot, anyway, don’t you think?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes. [laughs]

LaBerge: Because we’re learning on them. So as your family was growing, did you move into a bigger house? Was it easier to find housing? Do you remember when restrictions were lifted?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, actually, right. Berkeley is so nice—they changed faster than most places. At that time, we already had no restriction. I think it was 1962, we found a little house on Alvarado, way on the top. I still remember that we didn’t have money to buy the house, I mean the first down payment. I remember the real estate agent, he was so nice, he said, “You don’t have to pay my commission. I loan the commission to you, and when you have money, you pay me back.” So we did that. I still remember that house. It was $19,000. [laughs]

LaBerge: My gosh. And if you lived up on Alvarado you really needed to have a car, you can’t walk places. I know that—it’s on a hill.

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, I really had to drive. That’s the time Norman went to the hospital.

LaBerge: Yes, wow. Well, what about with your husband a professor and doing things on campus. What did you do on campus as a faculty wife, or were you so busy with your children—?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh yes, I hardly had any time to go out, really. [laughs] Like I never had anybody to help me, so I was just taking care of three of them. Actually before Norman was born, at school I had classmates; we talked, I think I learned some English from them. And also in the evening, we both went to Chang-Lin’s office, you know, he worked very hard. We stayed in the office, I studied my book and he was doing his work, and we always stayed until two or three o’clock in the morning. He worked extremely hard.

LaBerge: Oh my gosh, so hard. So you made friends in school, but then once you had your children—?

Di-Hwa Tien: Then I just stayed at home. Of course I have a few friends, you know they come to visit. For instance, in Chang-Lin’s mechanical engineering department, the faculty
wives, sometimes we visit each other—but everybody’s busy, they have their little children, too, we hardly had time—most of the time I stayed home with the children.

LaBerge: What about, like, finding nursery school or schools or activities for the kids?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, I went out to find all the schools. Oh yes, that is another story, Norman went to the nursery school; on the third day, someone just—they played together and climbed up something, like a bar or something. I think they played rough, Norman just didn’t know, maybe I protected him too much, he didn’t know that’s dangerous. Then he fell and the four front teeth were all knocked out. The teacher called me, he said, “Well, he knows Norman’s teeth are out, but they can only find one tooth, and then they don’t know, where the rest are—” So I just went to the doctor’s office—at that time, I already had Phyllis, and Phyllis was about a few months old. Oh, I went there, took him to the dentist. You know, all the four teeth were pushed inside. The dentist had to take out all of them. So after that, I was so scared. Every day I just took out the diaper and bottles and I took Phyllis to the car, we all went to Norman’s school to make sure everything was okay. [laughter]

LaBerge: What school was it?

Di-Hwa Tien: That’s the nursery school on Claremont Avenue.

LaBerge: It’s still there?

Di-Hwa Tien: Still there.

LaBerge: I think it is still there, yes. Was there anybody on campus who helped you to find a nursery school or some welcoming committee on campus or anything that helped?

Di-Hwa Tien: They do have that, but I was so busy with both hands full, that I just couldn’t.

LaBerge: So you just found everything by yourself?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, I did. [laughs] Of course, I have friends—I asked them, they told me about schools. It was through friends, they talked about those things, and then I just visited all the schools myself.

LaBerge: When did your family start coming to the U.S., and then you’d have somebody around?

Di-Hwa Tien: My sister, the number four, I’m the third one, the fourth one she came three years after me.

LaBerge: And where did she come?

Di-Hwa Tien: Also from Taiwan.

LaBerge: Did she come to Berkeley?
Di-Hwa Tien: She went to USC [University of Southern California] to study. At that time, a very popular subject, library science, she studied. For the females from Taiwan, most of them studied library science.

LaBerge: Now, all this time, was your husband traveling to give papers, or to conferences, or anything like that?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, at the beginning, every time he went to a conference, oh! I had a tough time.

LaBerge: You stayed at home?

Di-Hwa Tien: I stayed at home—no, I always stayed at home with the children. Yeah, I’m so scared. [laughs] I always had a big family, I am used to that. Ooh! Suddenly all by myself. [laughs] I was really scared.

LaBerge: Look how it turned out, and everything else that has happened!

Di-Hwa Tien: I sometimes just couldn’t believe that’s me. I am always a very, very timid person, not so brave, but I did, I did it all myself anyway. [laughs]

LaBerge: You certainly did. Now, I have heard a story, and I would like to hear it in your words, about your husband being offered a job elsewhere, and what your reaction was, and your influence on him.

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh yes, he still liked to move back to East Coast. Yeah, I remember that. But, I said, “Well, I really don’t want to go.” I said, “Here is such a nice place, I love Berkeley. I love the campus, I love the city—you know, I don’t want to go. If you want to go, go ahead.” [laughter]

LaBerge: So, he didn’t go?

Di-Hwa Tien: No. Actually he really liked Berkeley, too. Because I know he likes it, but you know when you have some other offers, much better, you have the temptation. But for me, I never think the better offer or more money is that important.

LaBerge: Yes, it’s more for kind of the quality of your life. Well, he won a Distinguished Teaching Award when he was very young.

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, 1962. I still remember. When Norman was only a few months old.

LaBerge: So did you go the ceremony?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, yes. That was in the Memorial Stadium.

LaBerge: Oh, really? Did you realize that was a pretty big deal?

Di-Hwa Tien: No. [laughter] It wasn’t a surprise to me. He always did a good job. Of course, I was very happy.

LaBerge: Or any of the other things? Because then he became Vice Chancellor for Research.
Di-Hwa Tien: Right, right, yes. And then he always worked very hard. He became the department chair.

LaBerge: That’s right, and did you have any more—

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, well then, I’m very busy. I always invited his students or his colleagues to my house. Wow, I had a hard time to cook. [laughs]

LaBerge: I bet you did!

Di-Hwa Tien: With all the kids—you know, I’m not a very good cook, but I had to cook—the guests will be here. The department always had visiting professors come over, and he had to invite them, also with some of his colleagues who are in the same field. So I had the guests come to our house almost every other week, during the weekends. Again, you know, I survived—now I think back—oh! [laughs]

LaBerge: By this time, where were you living?

Di-Hwa Tien: Well, we changed a house, to Grizzly Peak.

LaBerge: Okay.

Di-Hwa Tien: That’s a four-bedroom house.

LaBerge: And how about schools for your children?

Di-Hwa Tien: At that time, they all went to Berkeley High School, I mean Berkeley elementary school. At that time, it was Hillside—it’s very close. And then my son, Norman, when I think he was in second grade they started the busing.

LaBerge: Oh okay, and so where were they bused to?

Di-Hwa Tien: They were busing to Longfellow, that’s in the Derby and Sacramento area.

LaBerge: So, how involved did you get in the schools?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, yes. I always went, I always helped them if I could. But especially with the youngest—before—with the two other, Norman and Phyllis, I didn’t do much, but with Christine I did more. But I still tried to go on their field trips and help the teachers.

LaBerge: Well, you were busy. You were doing that, you were having the colleagues over—

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, yes.

LaBerge: Now, how are we doing? We’re going to change CDs. Can you do a little longer, or—?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, no, it’s—

LaBerge: Do you want to do it a little longer, or start maybe—I’ll come back another time, and we’ll do the chancellor years?
Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, no. Maybe we just do a little bit longer.

LaBerge: Okay.

Di-Hwa Tien: My friends, probably they will be here around twelve.

LaBerge: Okay. Well, five more minutes. We’ll finish—we’ll just kind of go up until—next time, we’ll start with when he became chancellor. Or no, maybe we’ll start with Irvine.

Di-Hwa Tien: Irvine, yes, yes.

LaBerge: Okay, after he was department chair, then he was vice chancellor for research. Did you have to do anything?

Di-Hwa Tien: For instance, since he worked for the chancellor’s office, I didn’t have to do anything, any entertaining, because all entertaining was official and handled by the university.

LaBerge: You didn’t do anything?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, because as a department chairman, you have to entertain on your own in order to maintain close relations with visiting scholars.

LaBerge: Yes, okay. What about other activities on campus, like sporting events, or the plays, or—?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, he loves all the sports.

LaBerge: I know that! [laughter]

Di-Hwa Tien: I’m only for Cal, nobody else.

LaBerge: So did you go to those games with him?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh yes, all the time. Since 1959, we always went to the Harmon Gym at that time to watch the basketball games, because he loved it. Before Norman came.

LaBerge: And then when you had kids, you could probably get the family pass, or did you do that?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh yes, when Norman was very young, he always brought him to the games.

LaBerge: And what about football games or anything?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, yes.

LaBerge: Everything?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, he loved that. But when he became chancellor, of course, we watched even more—almost every one.
LaBerge: Exactly, he was the biggest fan!

Di-Hwa Tien: He always liked sports.

LaBerge: Well, tell me about going to Irvine. How did you then decide that it was okay to go to Irvine, to leave Berkeley for Irvine?

Di-Hwa Tien: I really felt reluctant. [laughs]

LaBerge: Uh-huh. So how did you make that decision, the two of you?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, well, you know, at that time all the children are grown up. The youngest, Christine, she was already at Cal. So if we moved, that was the only chance we could move. Yes. We asked our friends, they all said, “Oh, you should go,” so we just went. Actually that was a very, very good experience for us.

LaBerge: And you were there two years?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes. Actually, I drove back every weekend.

LaBerge: To see Christine, see your friends, or what?

Di-Hwa Tien: It just—you know, I had been at Berkeley for so long, it was very hard to leave. [laughs]

LaBerge: So you kept your house here?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes. Actually we tried to sell, but we couldn’t sell—I don’t know what’s the reason. But I just decided—“Oh!”—take it off the market. Then later on we found out, “Oh!” he will come back, and we were so happy. We just came back right away. [laughs]

LaBerge: Well, at the Irvine campus, that must have been a whole new experience for you. You must have had some kind of duties.

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh yes. They have all the functions the vice chancellor should attend. Usually, the chancellor had some kind of function, they always included us, so we had to go. So I met all the new friends down there—they are faculty wives, they are very nice to me. To my surprise—I didn’t know Chang-Lin did such a good job, but they liked him so much, nobody wanted us to leave.

LaBerge: Now, why do you say, “To your surprise”?

Di-Hwa Tien: You know, because it’s a totally new environment—he never had any other job besides teaching. Of course, I worried. [laughs]

LaBerge: So this is a totally new experience for him?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, yes.

LaBerge: That’s right, he wasn’t teaching—or did he continue to teach?
Di-Hwa Tien: He did still teach, was still a professor.

LaBerge: And how about finding housing and all of that down there?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, the university, they have university housing for faculty. We just rented the apartment first, also through the university, and then we bought a condo on university land.

LaBerge: A condo or a duplex?

Di-Hwa Tien: A duplex. We just moved in only maybe two months or three months, when I found we were coming back to Berkeley. I was so happy. But not because of the chancellor position, but just to come back to Berkeley. [laughs]

LaBerge: Okay, you know, we’ll save that—the chancellor story, and being the chancellor’s wife, until the next time.
Okay, I am in the Press Room of The Bancroft Library with Di-Hwa Tien and it is September 2, 2003. We had a good interview a few months ago, maybe May, and we got up to when you were at Irvine, at UC Irvine, when your husband was vice chancellor there. So, tell me how the job of chancellor came about. Who called him, and what do you remember about how he was offered the job?

Oh, yes. I remember the one weekend, we never dreamed of those things happening, and we went out for a movie, and then we came back home. They left a, I think the chancellor at UCI, left a note on our door. Actually, we didn’t go through the front door; we entered through the garage, so we never knew.

You didn’t see the note?

No, no. [laughs]

Who was the chancellor at UCI?

Jack Peltason.

Jack Peltason. So, what did the note say, when did you find it?

You know, just that they decided to interview Chang-Lin, he was [in] the final few for the chancellor.

So, what was the interview like? I understand that you went with him to see the regents?

Oh yes, I went with him. Yeah, actually, you know, I am very reserved and a private person and since my husband said, “Oh, you want to come with me,?” I said, “Okay, I’ll go.” I don’t know where I got all that courage. So, I just went along through the interview, with like sixteen people. Luckily they didn’t ask me anything, otherwise—

What kind—do you remember what they did ask him?

Oh no, they asked him about his ideas on being the chancellor, and I remember vividly about the regents on the committee because he—they were concerned that he was only an academic person and also an engineer, professor. They [were] kind of worried that he couldn’t handle the other departments—for instance, the athletics department. But he said he likes sports; he played basketball when he was in the university in Taiwan.

Well, as it turned out, he was one of the best athletic fans we have ever had as a chancellor.

He always loved sports.

Yes, and they would always picture him at the games cheering the Bears on.

That’s right, that’s right.
LaBerge: What about fundraising, did they ask about that?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, they did. He said that maybe he had some advantage because, you know, in Asia, he had a lot of advantage in fundraising. Because, you know, we were educated in Asia.

LaBerge: So, after the interview with the regents, you must have gone home and talked about whether you wanted to do this.

Di-Hwa Tien: No, actually, I was really kind of nervous, so I didn’t talk about this, because that’s his job.

LaBerge: But it impacted your life though, too.

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, actually, I am very relaxed, calm person. I have been thinking, you know, if we are going back to Berkeley, I am not afraid because I was, you know, here for so many years and I know most of the faculty wives. Lots of my friends were in the Section Clubs, especially Joan Finnie or Patsy Mote, who both were wives from mechanical engineering and were chairs of the Section Clubs. I knew even more, so I really didn’t worry that much.

LaBerge: Well, what did you—and I know before you went to Irvine I know you were wondering whether you should leave Berkeley, you didn’t really—

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, I really don’t—I really kind of felt reluctant.

LaBerge: So, it was nice to come back to Berkeley?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, I am so happy. I come back practically every weekend. Sometimes, even, my husband was not with me. Several times I drove all by myself. I was young at that time.

LaBerge: To see your friends or to see your children?

Di-Hwa Tien: To see my friends. To see, of course my daughter [Christine]. I think she was either sophomore or junior at that time here.

LaBerge: Living in your house or—?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, living in our house. Actually, I also tried to—I thought maybe we could never come back again. So, I tried to sell my house. It was on the market for a long time, somehow just no offer was made. So, I took it off the market, you know, and pretty soon I found out, oh wait, we will come back. I was very happy. I still have our house.

LaBerge: But, when you came back though, you went back to the chancellor’s house, University House.

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, my house had been empty for several years.

LaBerge: Tell me about University House, and what kind of orientation or help did anybody give you. For instance, did Mrs. Heyman give you any advice, or did any other chancellor’s wife give you advice?
Di-Hwa Tien: I just came to visit, yeah, Therese Heyman, and she was very helpful. She explained everything to me, and then I started [getting] a little bit nervous. I said, oh, all the functions, what I’m going to do, you know, I am supposed to host a lot of functions.

LaBerge: Tell me, how did all that happen? Did a secretary or—did you have a secretary?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, they do have a staff to help because we entertain so many people, I cannot do it all by myself, and they all tell me what to do, and just the final menu and seating decision, I decide that.

LaBerge: Yes, yes, yes. So, who—tell me about your secretary and your staff, who they were and what they did for you?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, they had some—I had one staff person, and she always coordinated with the Development Office—at that time they called it University Relations. Colleen Rovetti was in the Development Office, and she is still here. We always called her. And they provided me all the guests’ names, you know, whatever they decide to host, we have a guest list. Yeah, I have to go over all of them, you know, I had to know everything, their background, what they like, what they don’t like. I wish that when they come to the University House they will all be happy.

LaBerge: So, would University Relations give you all that information, like a little printout of everybody who was coming?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes.

LaBerge: Oh my gosh.

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes. So I actually, I really enjoyed it. We, after seven years, we made so many good friends.

LaBerge: But, that’s not easy to all of the sudden do that, and meet so many new people.

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh yeah, yeah.

LaBerge: Who were some of the most—well, tell me an anecdote about some unusual guest or something exciting that happened.

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, I really enjoy the Big Game, you know, and at that time, the president of Stanford came, and he was born and educated in Germany.

LaBerge: Was this Gerhard Casper?

Di-Hwa Tien: Gerhard Casper, yes. And, you know, they came here, to the University House, and we had a Big Game lunch, and then he stood up and said, “Well, only I and Chang-Lin can say that both of us were born and educated in a foreign country, and both of us speak with an accent.” [laughter] I think that’s really neat.

LaBerge: Yes, yes. And then you must have gone there, too, to Stanford.
Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, yes. So, we knew a lot of their trustees, too. For instance, like Isaac Stein and Peter, Peter—

LaBerge: Peter Haas?

Di-Hwa Tien: No, Peter Bing. So, lots of people. And here we have so many really good friends, like the Haas family, they have been so nice to us. And the Goldman family, and like Gordon and Ann Getty and so on and so on. Don and Doris Fisher, they were very nice to Chang-Lin.

LaBerge: How about time, how did you help your husband when there were tragedies? Like, there were a couple of student deaths, and the fire, and I am trying to think of what else happened, and your very own break-in at your house. So, why don’t we start with the students? How did you help him with the students?

Di-Hwa Tien: I just do the best I can, and I just stand behind him with whatever the crisis we face, we have to face it together. Yeah, that hotel shooting and the break in.

LaBerge: For instance, did you get the phone call in the middle of the night or whatever?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, that’s when someone was breaking into our house. Yeah, I thought they were kidding, I just hung up the phone. I said, “Oh, it’s still early.” I didn’t know that somebody was already in our house, and then the police department called again, and said they are not kidding, this is a real someone with a machete.

LaBerge: So, what did you do that night then?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, I just—I woke up Chang-Lin, I said, “You better change, I am going to hold on the telephone,” because they told us that someone had to hold on the telephone. So, he got up and he changed and I hold on to the telephone, maybe more than two hours before the police knocked on the door, then we got out.

LaBerge: So, where did you go? To your own house?

Di-Hwa Tien: No, no, no, no. Just go outside. Then we found out that all the TV news cameras are all over University House.

LaBerge: And, after that, did you sleep at that house anymore, or did you go—?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, yes.

LaBerge: You stayed there, you didn’t move back to your house?

Di-Hwa Tien: They made us maybe move out for a month and then we came back.

LaBerge: While they put in more security, or—?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yeah, they changed all the alarm system. They now have a sensor. Before, only if you open the door and window, then will the alarm go off. Otherwise it won’t. So, we were
lucky. That’s why the lady just used a blowtorch and opened a hole in a glass door. So, she crawled in. She didn’t open the doors. That’s why no alarm [sounded].

LaBerge: Oh gosh. So, then you moved out for a month back to your own house, is that it?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yeah, because they want to try to find the fingerprints all over the place. They think it was maybe not just one person, but I think—I don’t know, so I didn’t ask.

LaBerge: So, I am trying to think of some of the other issues. For instance, one of your husband’s strong stands was for affirmative action. So, tell me about that and anything you had to do with that, or why he thought that, and how you came to that?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, I have nothing to do with that. He—we always believe in affirmative action. Some of the disadvantaged families really need a little bit of help. Because they tend to have, some of them, but not all of them, they have a big family. For instance, like my daughter’s kindergarten friends, I think they had like seven children in the family, but you know, the parents got divorced, and the mothers have to work, you know, the children just sometimes need a little help to succeed. So, I really strongly feel they really need help. My husband knows. He always liked to help the disadvantaged. That’s all his life he has been like that.

LaBerge: Well, he and you both experienced discrimination. I mean, you didn’t need help getting into school or anything like that, but you certainly have—

Di-Hwa Tien: For me, it’s okay because I came to this country and I got married pretty soon, but Chang-Lin, he had more experience with discrimination than I.

LaBerge: Yes, yes. Well, you even told me, when you first were looking for a house in Berkeley, you couldn’t—people wouldn’t rent to you.

Di-Hwa Tien: That’s right, that’s right. But, at that time, we were young. We didn’t know it was because of the discrimination, and then later, it just felt like oh, the house is still there, still available.

LaBerge: Well, what about going to Council of Chancellors’ meetings? Would there be a gathering for the wives of the chancellors, too? Tell me about that, and how you helped each other, the wives.

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh yeah, I hosted the wives. Whoever, for instance, if all the regents were meeting here in Berkeley, I am supposed to host. I just tried to find some program for them, and I still remember we took them all to Maybeck houses, or the [Julia] Morgan houses around Berkeley.

LaBerge: So, that was one of the things you did. You took them on a tour?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, right. Took them on tour, and always, we talked about, you know, all the private things. Yeah, I made lots of friends.

LaBerge: I bet, yes.
Di-Hwa Tien: We have several women regents, who are very nice.

LaBerge: So, at some of those meetings, would you be able to give each other help, and say, “Oh, you know, I don’t know how to deal with this. When the cook doesn’t have enough food or somebody doesn’t show up.” Would you share problems with each other and help each other figure that out?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh yes, and we would talk about, they call it AAU, Association of American Universities, they have like fifty-six research universities. All the presidents and their wives, we always have a twice a year get together, once or twice a year, I don’t remember. Yeah, we talk about everything. Not just within the UC system, but with the whole country. For instance, I became friends with Michigan’s president and his wife, and Chuck Vest, you know, that’s the MIT president, and also the Princeton president [Harold] Shapiro. And also the Harvard president and his wife, you know, all those, the Purdue president, you know, we all—all the wives, we all got together. So, we did have a program.

LaBerge: But even before that, you didn’t get any kind of training or—?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh no, no, no, no, no.

LaBerge: Nothing like that. You just walk in. So, tell me, who was your secretary?

Di-Hwa Tien: Mei-Mei Hong.

LaBerge: And did you hire her?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes. And then Nancy Horton.

LaBerge: So, she was your next secretary?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yeah, because Mei-Mei Hong got a better job, got promoted. [laughter]

LaBerge: So, would—you never made up the guest list, someone always gave you the guest list.

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, sometimes I suggest a few.

LaBerge: And what about, for instance, cooks and things like that. Did you hire all the staff or—?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, oh yes.

LaBerge: Oh, you did.

Di-Hwa Tien: Because at that time, you know, my husband, in terms of spending university money, he doesn’t like that, so we end up with, we hired a cook. Before, they always catered, that’s very expensive. When my husband became the chancellor, at that time, his budget was tight—

LaBerge: Yes, it was very tight.
Di-Hwa Tien: Three times the university has early retirement.

LaBerge: The VERIP [Voluntary Early Retirement Incentive Program], yes.

Di-Hwa Tien: You know, he always wanted to save Cal’s academic standing. He decided to go out fundraising. He has a strong personality, he won’t just let it go. He wanted to go out, make Cal strong. So, we always invited all the potential donors. But, he doesn’t want to spend a lot of money, so it ended up, we just hired someone to cook. Yes, we are lucky. She was a good cook. She has been with me for maybe three years. Before that, it was a young man, he was also very good. But, we saved a lot of money.

LaBerge: By doing that. By having your own cook, rather than have it catered every time, uh huh.

Di-Hwa Tien: So, because we have all the dishes. We don’t have to rent, you know.

LaBerge: And they are those beautiful dishes, the ones—the beautiful university dishes that have the pictures on it, or was it something else?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, no, no, no. We use all the less expensive ones. The university set was not large enough. We always—if we have one hundred guests, it is just not enough.

LaBerge: So, then if you hired the cook, then do you go over the menus? Are you the one who chooses the food and everything?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, yes, yes, yeah. They always give me like two or three choices, and then I just choose one.

LaBerge: That must be tricky depending on who is coming. If you know people who—is that one of the things they tell you, if someone is a vegetarian or—?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, yes.

LaBerge: Or kosher?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, we ask. We know. We know what they like, what they don’t like.

LaBerge: So, you really had to do homework. I mean, it was a job, it wasn’t just—?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, you have to know everything. Yeah, always before the guests come, they have to tell me all the lists, so I have to know who is here, and then we have something to talk about.

LaBerge: So, who were some of the foreign visitors you had?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, the foreign visitors besides in Asia, we had Helmut Kohl, the German chancellor. We had Ireland’s president, Mary Robinson, and then we had the Portuguese president, and also the Peru president.

LaBerge: Yes. Fuji—
Di-Hwa Tien: Fujimori.

LaBerge: How is that different? What kind of different arrangement did you need to do for them? Like more security or—?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, yeah. They always come to the University House to search first. That’s people from the State Department, because they have to be very careful.

LaBerge: So, you have to—that's a change, too, to have that in your life. Now, none of your children lived at home. They were all grown by this time.

Di-Hwa Tien: They were all grown.

LaBerge: So, that was—otherwise that would have been really hard I think. I remember hearing Mrs. Heyman having a high school child live there, and their friends coming. I mean, it’s a different thing.

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes.

LaBerge: So, anytime that you needed to have translators with you or—?

Di-Hwa Tien: No, no. They all speak English. Like, I had to entertain Mrs. Kohl, but only for a very short, short time.

LaBerge: But she spoke English?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes. Very good English.

LaBerge: What about just having private time, you and your husband. How did you find time?

Di-Hwa Tien: I tell you we hardly ever had any. Just twenty-four hours, you know; besides you have like six hours sleep, the rest was all busy. Except for later on, I said, “Oh, we needed to have some private time,” so my husband said, “From now on, Sundays we are not going to do anything.” But Sundays, you know, we always walked on the campus and Chang-Lin picked up litter. Chang-Lin always took pride in the campus and wanted to keep it clean. If we have time, then we went out to see a movie.

LaBerge: And when you weren’t having a function, did you—I had never seen the private quarters. Did you have your own kitchen, so you could cook for yourself?

Di-Hwa Tien: No, no, no.

LaBerge: You had to use the big old kitchen?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yeah.

LaBerge: So, would you cook for yourselves?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yeah, during the weekends or on a weekday, yes, if we don’t have functions, or if we don’t have to go out, occasionally I cooked myself.
LaBerge: But, in a typical week, how many times did you have a function or have to go out?

Di-Hwa Tien: Almost all of the time. We were all the time going.

LaBerge: That’s a lot.

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, well we—Chang-Lin really enjoyed it. He didn’t feel tired. They have been so nice to him, and me too. They have been so nice to us that we don’t feel tired anymore. Always very much just on the go.

LaBerge: For instance, when you get up in the morning, did you go down and get your own breakfast or—?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes.

LaBerge: You make your own breakfast?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes.

LaBerge: But then the rest of the time.

Di-Hwa Tien: Other than when they have official functions in the house, otherwise no, I cook my own breakfast or dinner. Sometimes I just get take out. If my children were here; at that time, I remember Norman was here. He was a postdoc electrical engineer. So, if he is home, I always get takeout. Just very, very close, you know. They have so many restaurants there.

LaBerge: So, you would go get it and bring it back, or would they deliver it?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, I go get it.

LaBerge: Did anybody, did people recognize you wherever you went?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, I hope not. [laughter] I hope they didn’t recognize me, I just never thought they would know me.

LaBerge: Because everybody knew your husband wherever he went.

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh yes, yes. You know, I always try not to really—

LaBerge: Call attention to yourself?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yeah, so I just assume they don’t know me.

LaBerge: What about giving speeches? Did you have to do any at any groups?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh yes. Yeah, I had to host, occasionally I would have to host a lunch for all the wives of council or board members.

LaBerge: You would have to give a talk?
Di-Hwa Tien: Yes.

LaBerge: Did somebody help you prepare, or did you just do your own?

Di-Hwa Tien: At first, I did it myself. And later on they helped me.

LaBerge: Yes.

Di-Hwa Tien: Yeah, but you know, I survived. [laughter].

LaBerge: You have a wonderful attitude about that. You have a wonderful attitude.

Di-Hwa Tien: I spoke several times. One is for Irving Stone, you know, he wrote a book. Jean Stone came to campus for an event. Because she asked for me to speak, “Since Chang-lin is not there,” I had to go. The University Relations office helped me with my speech.

LaBerge: So, first, what would you talk about?

Di-Hwa Tien: Oh, I would just thank her, but you know, she is so nice to us.

LaBerge: So, you had to step in.

Di-Hwa Tien: And also one time, I was really nervous. My husband’s out of town. I am so worried about speaking, but I have to do it. So, that is for Ted Turner. He came to give a commencement speech in the journalism department. We hosted a lunch at the University House, and then I had to speak. So, I did. That’s not much. Only just a little bit. I just turned to the executive vice chancellor.

LaBerge: Who was that?

Di-Hwa Tien: Carol Christ.

LaBerge: Carol Christ. Okay. So, she would step in whenever your husband was not there too?

Di-Hwa Tien: Sometimes some other people. It depends on what kind of occasion. Well, time flies, seven years. When he said he was stepping down, I was very happy.

LaBerge: Well, how did that decision come about? How did he decide to step down?

Di-Hwa Tien: You know Chang-Lin, he has always wanted a challenge, you know, he loves the university. He saw that he already pretty much did everything that—

LaBerge: That he set out to do.

Di-Hwa Tien: Yeah. And then—

LaBerge: He raised a lot money for the university in a bad budget time.

Di-Hwa Tien: Right, we have so many good friends, and everything he wanted to accomplish, I think he did. So, it was time for him to—
LaBerge: To do something else.

Di-Hwa Tien: That’s him. Always—even though, for all our life, besides the two years at Irvine, always at Berkeley, he was always doing some other things besides being the professor.

LaBerge: So, did he have in mind then what he was going to do when he stepped down for another challenge?

Di-Hwa Tien: No.

LaBerge: ‘Cause he went back to teaching, didn’t he?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yeah. He likes teaching. On the side, he went to Hong Kong to help them develop their science and technology. [He was appointed chairman of the Chief Executive’s Commission on Innovation and Technology in Hong Kong.] He is the one who started it, you know, because in Hong Kong they didn’t believe in all the high tech. You know, when he started, there was resentment, all the negative newspaper coverage, and after one year, everybody turned around. They were all going to do it [support innovation and technology]. So actually, that’s kind of—he felt good about it.

LaBerge: And it is called the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology?

Di-Hwa Tien: No, no. The whole Hong Kong.

LaBerge: Oh, the whole country.

Di-Hwa Tien: The whole region. The whole Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

LaBerge: And did you go with him and live there for a while?

Di-Hwa Tien: No, you know what he did. He didn’t want to miss his teaching. That’s his number-one love. He went there [Hong Kong] like once a month to chair a commission meeting. You know he is a very efficient person. He can make them [the commission members] do what’s needed—you know they had a committee doing whatever he told them to do. He went there maybe just one day, we stayed there like two nights and then on the third day came back. He did everything.

LaBerge: In three days, yes.

Di-Hwa Tien: Sometimes he went there in the morning, and then just called a meeting and then he came back in the evening. He did that a lot. It’s tough.

LaBerge: Oh, it is tough.

Di-Hwa Tien: It is very tough. Maybe, you know, that’s affected his health.

LaBerge: Could the jetlag and the constant—?
Di-Hwa Tien: I don’t know. But, that’s his love. He likes to help people. You know, he did this free, pro bono. But, so the Hong Kong Chief Executive is so nice to him. When Chang-Lin was sick, he came to the house to visit him.

LaBerge: So, flew over from Hong Kong to—. What’s his name?

Di-Hwa Tien: Tung Chee Hwa. So, yeah, during his illness, for instance, Peter Haas also came to the house to visit him. Oh, it made me, all the caretakers, we all were touched by his friendship.

LaBerge: Peter Haas in his own wheelchair?

Di-Hwa Tien: Yeah, it is so hard for him to walk up all the stairs, all the steps. He still did.

LaBerge: Well, it shows the devotion that he had to him.

Di-Hwa Tien: They really like each other. For instance, we were always very grateful to David Gardner, he was the president. He was the one to appoint Chang-Lin. And I was worried that we might do something wrong and disappoint him, you know, because Chang-Lin the first Asian chancellor. And he felt a great responsibility and was working extremely hard. It is better not to let all the people, I mean all the Asian community or David Gardner or the regents, let them down, so he worked so hard.

LaBerge: Well, he did not, he certainly didn’t let them down. Really, everybody fell in love with both of you.

Di-Hwa Tien: So I didn’t do anything. So, I just stayed behind.

LaBerge: He couldn’t have done it without you. He couldn’t have done it without you.

Di-Hwa Tien: Yes, that’s about it. That’s my story.

LaBerge: That’s about it. Any—when you get this transcript, if you want to add anecdotes or anything.

[End of interview]
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Includes interviews with Josephine Smith, Margaret Murdock, Agnes Robb, May Dornin, Josephine Miles, Gudveig Gordon-Britland, Elizabeth Scott, Marian Diamond, Mary Ann Johnson, Eleanor Van Horn, and Katherine Van Valer Williams.

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Harriet Siegel Nathan

University of California at Berkeley alumna with two Journalism degrees: A.B. in 1941 and M.J. in 1965. Wrote for the on-campus paper, The Daily Californian (“Monarch of the College Dailies”) as reporter, columnist, assistant women’s editor, and managing editor. Prepared President Sproul’s biennial report to the Legislature, 1942-44; wrote advertising copy; edited house journals; served on local and state boards of the League of Women Voters primarily in local and regional government and publications. As a graduate student, wrote for the University’s Centennial Record. Worked as an interviewer/editor at the Regional Oral History Office part-time from the mid-sixties; concurrently served the Institute of Governmental Studies as Principal Editor doing editing, writing, research, production, and promotion of Institute publications. Wrote journal articles; and a book, Critical Choices in Interviews: Conduct, Use, and Research Role (1986) that included oral history interviews in the analysis. Also with Nancy Kreinberg co-authored the book, Teachers’ Voices, Teachers’ Wisdom: Seven Adventurous Teachers Think Aloud (1991), based on extended interviews with the teachers.