

**Gerald R. Ford Oral History Project**  
**John Engler**  
**Interviewed by**  
**Richard Norton Smith**  
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Smith: First of all, thank you so much for doing this.

Engler: Well, thank you, I'm happy to sit down.

Smith: I want to talk a little about you and your entry into the big ring, if you will. You were a leading member of this whole generation of Republican governors, conservative Republican governors, who nevertheless were seen as creative in their conservatism, as problem solvers. I don't know whether pragmatists is a misnomer or a pejorative, but in any event I would have thought that would have been very, very much Gerald Ford's style; very reflective of his approach as well. Tell us about your life before it crossed paths with President Ford.

Engler: My first meeting with Gerald Ford that I can recall, where I actually had a chance to sit and talk with him, was when Elford [Al] Cederberg, one of his colleagues from the Congress, brought him to Mt. Pleasant, Michigan to speak to a little Lincoln Day dinner for Isabella County. It always struck me, the humility of the leader of the Republicans of the United States House of Representatives out on the road. And, of course, it was only later – I was a rookie state representative, it may have been my first or second term, so I'm in my early twenties in office – and I'm meeting this leader of the Republicans, who's been in Congress a long time. I was born in '48; so roughly at the time I was born, he goes there.

Years later we meet and he's good friends with our congressman who has been there a long time as well. Then I learned how many days he spent on the road and traveled, then – even in the '70s it wasn't as easy as it is today – and he'd been doing this for many years before then. What dedication and what sort of attention to detail. It gave him almost an encyclopedic knowledge of the country. But he was interested in Michigan because we were in Michigan – I was in the Michigan legislature.

Over the years, it was that sort of thread. I wasn't in his congressional district, although I had Montcalm County, which is down in Greenville, kind of in his backyard. And so that sort of started, I guess, an awareness and a recognition of who Congressman Gerald Ford was. Then, of course later on, I became familiar and acquainted and friends with many of his friends, who had been longtime supporters. So I felt like even though we weren't, on a personal level, chumming around, that I was friends with a lot of his friends, and I knew a fair amount about him.

Smith: Of course the flip side of that extraordinary dedication, as you say, to his job and to the party nationally, was that it left Mrs. Ford at home with the kids.

Engler: Yeah, so it was a challenge, yeah.

Smith: Political wives have never had it easy.

Engler: No, although, it's remarkable. Back then, I think - something that has been lost today - is they moved to Washington. I mean, the story was the family picked up, it was not considered a problem back home. You were elected to go serve in Washington in the Congress, so you and your family went down there to this new job site. And you weren't expected, then, back home every weekend; you weren't expected at every function. You were expected to stay in touch. You were certainly expected, as they did when there were recesses and they were sort of reliable, you could count on this period of time being done.

The Congress didn't try to stay in session throughout the entire summer. So you could, at the end of the school year, and at the end of the congressional session, go home for the summer, be there, be with your constituents. Go to the county fair in a rural district, do other things that you had to do to stay in touch, and you came back.

One of the things that much has been written and said about is the fact that because you were living here, wives became friends with other wives. Members became friends with other members, regardless of party. They knew each other at a level which developed the kind of trust and the ability to rely on somebody's word. And you didn't have to have it in writing. It didn't have

to be some ironclad guarantee. If somebody said, "I can do that. I can support that," you could, in fact, count on that being done.

Smith: It's interesting, and a number of people have said that that is certainly a major contributing factor to the mood in this town, the lack of trust, the lack of knowledge, I suppose, that the two parties have toward each other. Alan Greenspan said one of the factors is the jet plane. And by that he meant members of the West Coast could get home a lot easier than otherwise, and they were, accordingly, less likely to bring their families to town. President Ford used to say it was much better when the staffs were smaller.

Engler: That's right.

Smith: And when you didn't have to spend all your time raising money.

Engler: I completely agree with that. The money raising has become an obsession because the campaigns are so expensive, and at least until a recent Supreme Court ruling, there were certainly lots of efforts to limit how you raised money. In effect, making it harder, making your dependency on outside individuals, or in some cases, outside groups, much greater. And that, I think, then leads to a problem of people's independence and ability to approach issues.

So there is no question that that's all changed. We sort of have to play the hands we're dealt, it's hard to go back and unscramble all of this. But I do think we actually are coming a bit full circle. Now you're seeing some of the Internet fundraising giving candidates an ability with an appeal to reach a broad audience. The problem with it is that sometimes that appeal has to be so simplistic and so blunt that there is no nuance or subtlety. I think one of President Ford's great strengths, and something that I identified when I became governor, was the fact - and this was certainly well after he'd been president - but he spent all those years, he'd been on the Appropriations Committee, he knew the Defense budgets inside and out, he knew about social spending. He knew really an awful lot. And of course, that remarkable moment when he, as president, actually presented his own budget.

Smith: It will never happen again, will it?

Engler: It will never happen again. And not because somebody maybe wouldn't be smart enough, but they would not have put in twenty years of service to learn all that. And it does take learning. One of the real crippling things of term limits around the country, frankly, is that in these state legislative bodies we are not letting people build the kind of knowledge base that's really important. And actually it's harder today because the complexity of all these programs is so much greater. So, at a time when it's harder to learn, you've now got less time to do it.

Smith: Kind of a misplaced populism?

Engler: Well, I understood the frustration because in the early nineties when that really came to a boil and much of the term limit movement started, they were all shooting at Congress. Because for forty years, the majority never changed. President Ford, nor anyone else, had realized their dream of being a Speaker in the House. There was one party rule. And so the frustration, all into Washington, ended up impacting state legislatures all over the country. And as a result, you have the unfair situation in the State of Michigan House of Representatives where the term of service is only six years. There are very few people coming in off the streets in six years who - maybe could master the school aid formula if they worked consistently - but they are not going to know about Medicaid, they won't know about the prison system, or the highway system.

Smith: Remember, at that time you also had the Ross Perot movement, which was a real uprising, trying to get the political system to focus on the deficit. And it's interesting, two years ago the National Governors Association for their centennial meeting, asked me to moderate a session. There must have been forty-five or fifty current and former governors. And, in essence, I asked them "What's the one thing you would change?" Everywhere a hand went up and it was all term limits, for all of these reasons. Makes perfect sense.

Engler: Both Governor Blanchard and I were there and each addressed that very issue. We both said term limits because we both had seen it in Michigan. It really is the case. The other thing I think when I look at Gerald Ford and his preparation for the presidency - think of what he knew when he was thrust

into that office compared to today. I mean, Senator Obama's career would be but a brief moment in the long preparation that President Ford had. And you could argue, President Bush had six years as governor. That's an important difference I would argue, because you actually are in charge. Even in the state - some people say, "The governor is weak in Texas, it's constitutionally weak." Well, you're still viewed by the people of Texas as the person in charge. So you've got administrative decisions.

Smith: You still have to work with the legislature.

Engler: Exactly. So that's a different thing than being - let's lay back for a few years and then we'll be in this executive branch.

Smith: It's interesting because we start with Ford, when he became president. And we certainly saw it with Bob Dole. Subsequently we've seen it with other people. We've asked Walter Mondale about this. What is it about the congressional function, including great success on Capitol Hill, that almost disqualifies [presidential] candidates? Obama is obviously an exception. But he never intended to stay in the Senate. John Kennedy, fifty years ago, couldn't wait to get out of the Senate. What is it about the legislative function - is it the lingo that people speak? Is it the fact that you're dealing with a constituency of a handful of people, often behind doors, as opposed to the more theatrical aspects of presidential persuasion? What do you think are the elements? Because you're right, in terms of the qualifications that say, Ford brought, the knowledge of government was unparalleled. But it was unbalanced by, for lack of a better word, the theater - or the self-dramatization.

Engler: Well, and today all of that has been of higher value, that's all perhaps off the chart. We certainly in our history have had presidents who, when you look back at the old tapes - and that's all relatively recent, but even some of them, the others, just the pictures - it was a totally different thing. I think in modern times, though, it is simply that there are so many barnacles attached to being there. You actually have to vote on things when you're in the House and the Senate. You have a record and you can't make it up unless you've only been there but a brief blink of an eye. And then you kind of slough it all off. If you

look at President Obama's United States Senate career, there were really about 150 days. That's about all when you look at how many days he was actually there, in session.

Smith: But apparently he was there long enough to know he didn't want to stay there.

Engler: Well, yes, and he had an opportunity to leave and he was a senator. He was still – if you are there a day, you are a senator. And so he could say, “Of course, I'm a senator, I'm well-prepared.” I think that looking ahead – you saw it was an odd election. A senator could win only because both parties had nominated senators the last time. So, a senator was going to win. Put a senator against a governor and we'll see in the future. But I'm intrigued about how politics works, of course, having spent thirty some years in elective office – won ten straight elections. And I'm not, perhaps, the likeliest candidate to be winning elections, but I always felt that once somebody can get there, their record and their performance then becomes sort of the measuring stick. And that probably, then, does trump.

Maybe that becomes a part of image, but it also does, I think, trump a lot of other things. And I think for President Obama it's way too early to look at 2012. But when we get there, whether he had a lot of experience or not, coming to the presidency, it won't matter at all – he's got a four-year record as president and that will be the issue and where he would hope to go if he had a second four years.

Smith: I remember saying right at the time of the inauguration, when understandably the nation's sense of pride was greatest, I remember comparing him to JFK in '60. The day before he took the oath of office, John F. Kennedy was best known as the first Catholic to be president. But I guarantee you the day after he takes the oath of office, that won't be the defining element. And I think the same thing with Obama, although there are elements in the press that want to keep defining him that way – I suppose because it's an easy story, an obvious story.

Engler: I think there is also sort of an ideological aspect to this, because if I can define myself in a way that focuses on my uniqueness, maybe I can separate it from my record in performance.

Smith: Interesting.

Engler: And therefore, who would want to be part of spoiling the great history story that we're playing out here? I always thought in the case of President Kennedy, and again, I was in high school at that time, so was not nearly as familiar. But it would have been a very different election in '64 if he were running for re-election, given some of the setbacks he encountered in those early years. The tragedy of his assassination and then the rise of Lyndon Johnson, changed the complete dynamic of the campaign.

Smith: You talk about John McCain, who in many ways, found himself in an identical position to Bob Dole in '96, i.e., being nominated by a party that was frankly, less than enthusiastic about the choice. And in some ways, I would say, between '88 and '96 – and Dole will say now that he shouldn't have run in '96, that '88 was his year, and so on – and I thought in '96 he seemed less authentic.

I always said, "The great thing you have is this kind of unpolished, Trumanesque, plainspoken quality. It's pure Midwest. People may or may not agree with you, but they think you are telling them what you think is the truth." And one sensed in '96, anticipating McCain in 2008, you had a candidate that felt uncomfortable with what the situation required. That he was chasing the caboose as the Republican Party moved ever farther to the right, particularly on social issues. And you could trace that all the way back to '76.

In effect, that's almost where this begins, with the Ford/Reagan challenge. Ford thought he was - and he was - the most conservative president since Calvin Coolidge. And he could never understand why people thought he wasn't conservative enough. But it was a different kind of conservatism, wasn't it?

Engler: It was, and it was also inside/outside even then, I think. Because here is the consummate insider. And so how could he have possibly have retained his authenticity if he's been part of this problem for so long – discounting completely all of those years he was a voice, not in the wilderness, perhaps, but certainly in a party in the wilderness in the House of Representatives? They were in the minority all of that time.

Smith: Plus, remember, he is the insurgent who knocked off Charlie Halleck.

Engler: Absolutely.

Smith: And, of course, in '48 he was the Young Turk who took on Bartel Jonkman over the issue of isolationism.

Engler: There is no question. I mean, it's just the history up close. That's why I think we'll always need our historians because you do need to have the passage of time to be able to look back and put this in perspective. And that absolutely was lost. Of course, you had the other – do we need to say the word – Watergate, was swirling around and that obliterated so much else that we never had a chance. I was actually on the ballot in those years in '72 and 4 and 6, so, the '74 election was one of the roughest elections anybody running as a Republican ever endured.

I always felt, it was interesting, that this was a unique election in a couple of respects. It said a lot about the Republican Party. Because the Republican Party was so angry at itself that it punished lots of Republicans and it didn't do it directly, but they did it out of disgust. They just stayed home. And we never would see that kind of reaction to other transgressions – let's call them – should they happen out there. So you had, in other parts of the country, in gubernatorial or even congressional elections, kind of amazing misdeeds that were reported, but seemingly of no consequence to the electorate when they went to vote. But Watergate was such a searing experience for the nation; the first president ever to resign, and then the pardon.

Smith: I want to come back to that in a minute because it's a huge topic, but let me just bounce an idea off of you. It goes back to what we've been talking about; Ford's origins as an insurgent and his subsequent identification as an insider

who paid a price for that. The older I get the more I believe that the single biggest factor over time in politics, even more than ideology, is generational change. That it's almost like an escalator, and you've got your time, and then before you know it, you're past your sell date. And ideology factors into that, cultural factors factor into that - what do you think about that in terms of the element of generational change?

Engler: Well, I think there's a lot to that, although it is important to say it as you're saying it. It is generational, but it may not have to do with the generation of the candidate. Reagan - the older candidate became, in effect, the younger candidate because this is the leader of the sagebrush rebellion who rides in from the West. And this is very new, this is small government or minimalist government, in tenor. Now in fact, not so at all.

Smith: At least eluded once he got to Washington.

Engler: Sure, and a great practitioner. I think Gerald Ford was as much a practitioner of politics being the art of the possible as Ronald Reagan. But Reagan, being fresh, it was assumed that the deal he cut was a good deal. Ford, being the insider, it was assumed that the deal was an inside deal, that the fix was in.

Smith: And let's face it, for all the people who were pining for Ronald Reagan, first of all, there's only one Ronald Reagan. Ronald Reagan is not coming back to save you. Secondly, there are some selective memories. People, particularly the Tea Party crowd, sort of identify with Reagan and suggest that Reagan would be one of them. It's part of Reagan's genius that he, in effect, posthumously, can be seen from that wide a range of conservatives as one of them. But this was a guy who put Richard Schweiker on his ticket in '76 because he wanted to win. This was a guy who apparently was willing to put Gerald Ford on his ticket because he wanted to appear moderate enough to...

Engler: I just started the Craig Shirley book - I don't want to get off track, but it is a fascinating book.

No, but I think that's right, I think that people would not - there was the public Reagan - this marvelous communicator - who, I think, did a very good job of always explaining where he thought the end zone was. But at the same

time, out on the field, he was running an offense that said, “Look, keep the ball, we’ve got to keep making first downs. We’re headed toward the end zone.” And I think that was a gift, a just flat-out genius that he had, that he understood that. I think that is very hard for many of us, and certainly myself included, to really be clear enough directionally. “What’s the goal at the end?” Even if you’ve got a good, confident sense about where you are and where you are trying to go and how much you’ve done.

Smith: It’s almost as if he communicated perfectionist ends, but he had a pragmatic means to get as close to there as he could. And as he said, “If I can get 80%, I’ll call it a victory.”

Engler: That’s right. That’s exactly right. And I’ll go back and start working tomorrow on the remaining 20. And you believed that he would, even if tomorrow there were other priorities which meant that that pursuit of the 20 had to be held in abeyance for a period of time while I move these other balls down the field. And I’ll say this: he had also a very broad vision of what that field looked like; whether that was an international or domestic policy.

Smith: And was that a result of the fact that he’d been at this now – I mean, it was a movement. He had a loyal following which he developed over all those years, out on the road for GE. I can remember him New Year’s Day, always hosting the Tournament of Roses Parade. He had come into our living rooms for a generation. We felt we knew this guy, we liked him. We were comfortable with him. You can’t put a price on that in terms of political appeal.

Engler: And remember, it was so much easier back then because - what were there – three major networks? If you were going to turn it on, your odds of finding him were much greater. Somebody could be dominant today on one of 1500 channels or something and that doesn’t mean there is very much dominance. So you end up – I was just reading a Walter Cronkite obituary and it was talking about how many homes he was in in the nightly newscast. And today, you can lead and you aren’t in nearly 25% of the homes that Cronkite had with a much smaller nation back then.

Smith: Plus, Cronkite himself used to talk about the day news changed. It was in '77 when Elvis died, and CBS did not lead with Elvis' death as the lead story that night. I think everyone else did. If you want to know the day when we began to succumb to a kind of celebrity journalism... Cronkite prided himself – he said people used to criticize him for being “Washington-centric.” And if you go back and look at those old news clips, two-thirds of the news that Cronkite [reported] was from committee hearing rooms on Capitol Hill. That was his definition of the news. Now look how far we've gotten away from that.

Engler: Absolutely. And we don't even do the minor league training anymore. Because when I went in 1971 to the state capital in Lansing, of the three major Detroit stations, two of them had permanent bureaus; the third one had a crew that was mostly assigned there, had some other duties; and all major papers had reporters that were there. Today, there is virtually nobody covering the state capital anymore. And so you don't get, in the states, that kind of political coverage to understand even how then it all might rise up and what that coverage is about. So the information about the political process and decisions that are being made almost doesn't exist.

Smith: Again, it's counterintuitive. Remember, it's a very painful argument if you follow it to its logical extension. Sixty years ago we were famously told by Murrow of television's possibilities. Television was going to transform our culture, it was going to bring us together, this instrument can illuminate, it can elucidate, it can elevate the public discourse. Well, we all know what happened to that.

Subsequently, we were told the Internet was going to do all of those things, and then some. It seems to me you can make a strong case that, at the very least, people have access today to more information than before, which does not mean they are any better informed as voters than our parents or grandparents were. And, in fact, the increasing fragmentation of the audience poses a challenge even to the bully pulpit. Because the president can get up and can give a great speech, and before it's over, people are Twittering, and the blogs are doing real time analysis, if you want to call it that. In many

ways, the traditional, persuasive role that Harry Truman identified as the core function of the president is much harder.

Engler: In fact, I heard it suggested that the technology is now there. You could literally, instead of trying to respond to a State of the Union Address in a kind of traditional way, you literally could take a clip from the State of the Union as it is delivered – a clip aside, do a fact check, and then have a response that was an integration of video clips and sort of a factual rebuttal on certain points. Tonight this was said, these are the facts. And it is kind of interesting, it is so instantaneous, and so there is no time to reflect on both what was said, or the compulsion to do a response, even. Is it even necessary on the spot? So it's not really a response because you have to write it ahead of time, so it's an alternate viewpoint, but is that even...? I wonder about that whole process.

Smith: And remember, poor Eric Sevareid used to be criticized for offering instant analysis. Well, now you've got thirty million people who are offering instant analysis.

Engler: That's right.

Smith: There's no doubt that in a sense we have democratized the process, but I think with unforeseen consequences.

Engler: Even the founding fathers with the idea of a House of Representatives and another chamber that's the Senate - one institutionally restricted to move a little slower, one that may be more responsive to the mob, to the crowd.

Smith: You bet. And remember Washington's wonderful analogy – because Jefferson wasn't there and from a distance he thought this reeked of the House of Lords. Washington used the analogy of a cup of hot tea, and you pour it in the saucer to cool it. And the House is the cup of hot tea, and the Senate is the saucer.

Engler: Exactly. And so that's all at risk in one sense. How does the public or the policymakers, when it's all instantaneous – the last thing I think we want is to sort of move to a system where everybody has got their finger on a button casting their vote.

Smith: A plebiscitary democracy.

Engler: And to me it's a little bit that way. Even the act of voting - there are those who would like to - I think it's pretty fundamental to a citizen performing his or her duty in society to actually once a year, or once every two or four years, cast a vote, actually have to think about it, either obtain a ballot or go to a polling place. But if that becomes, in some future date, everybody sitting in their home inundated with emails or video clips and people pushing buttons...

Smith: But the symbol of this is those horrible focus groups on cable TV where they...

Engler: With the dials...

Smith: Oh, and you watch the line and you think to yourself - because I used to be a speechwriter - that's exactly what we intended. And they craft it to appeal to that process. What does it do to thoughtful, let alone nuanced, policymaking?

Engler: And I would say, what does it do to the ability to actually have a compromise, which takes into consideration that there are in fact, different interests? There is great antipathy toward people who lobby today, ignoring the fact that anybody who is on the PTA and goes and meets with the school board - they are lobbying. It's just at a different level. People lobby all the time. They lobby to get a road paved in front of their house, or repairs made. But they see that differently than say their state capital, or their nation's capital. But in reality, the policymakers there do have a bewildering array sometimes of interests. And there is a need to balance those off. But at the end of the day, there comes a point where you've got to stop balancing it off and make a decision. I worry greatly that we've got a country today where we can't ever make a decision on a big issue.

Smith: Shelby Foote, a Civil War historian, used to say, "The fact of the matter is, the Americans have a genius for compromise." It may be our greatest talent, it's how we got the Constitution, it's how we devised the nation. To be sure there are some compromises that turned out badly and had to be corrected later on. But, in effect, we were a pragmatic people. And most certainly that's not the trend. The trend of political discourse, if you want to dignify it as such, is enormously influenced by the media. The Internet which allows people

anonymity to engage in character assassination, and certainly not raise the level of discourse. Consensus is a dirty word. But it's the only way a country this large and diverse works.

Engler: That's right and I don't ever confuse the idea that consensus means unanimity, and I think that sometimes also gets to be a bit of a problem because it may be 60/40 this way this time. The next time it's maybe 55/45 the other way. You don't know, but it is the same process that I suspect that most families go through, and certainly families with children. There's a lot of give and take and compromise that goes on. And it's true in virtually every institution, especially why not in government where you are trying to represent literally everybody? There has to be, I think, give and take.

Smith: First of all, public policy is left out of the mix. The 24/7 news cycle demands a new storyline every day, and there are white hats and there are black hats, and there is very little in between. And it's all played as entertainment. The old horserace aspect has been superseded by this 24 hours a day. John Eisenhower once said something to me about his dad. He said, "Moderates don't have cults." And he was putting it in the context, if not so much of ideology, but style, as opposed to the Kennedys, for example. Now, moderate may even be a loaded term, but substitute pragmatist or problem solvers, or consensus seekers; understanding that a consensus doesn't mean surrendering, at least in principle, but respecting other people's principles and finding common ground. And that's what we say we want, but that's not necessarily what we're rewarding, and it's certainly not what the media is celebrating.

Engler: But I think that's why, to bring it right to today, why President Obama is in some difficulty. Because he claimed throughout the campaign that's what he was, was somebody who would bring people together. He was going to do things differently, and then you see the spectacle of how they put sixty votes together, sixty only Democrat votes in the Senate to pass the healthcare bill, and how you literally acquire the last votes.

Smith: It is ugly. But is it, I assume, and I'm not speaking for them, their comeback would be, "Well, we couldn't get any Republicans to seriously consider it."

Engler: Because it was too hard. Well, yes, it is hard. But as even, I think, Olympia Snow made this point, who would be one I think, who would be willing and has certainly said in the past, she's willing to work on some of these issues. Most of the major social changes that have been made – I think back to welfare reform that I was deeply involved with in the mid-90s – we ended up with significant bipartisan support, even though there were deep divisions at the beginning and even at the end, remembering that when President Clinton finally signed the third bill after two vetoes, even then he had people resigning from his administration in protest. But its center held on that and it was an accomplishment that was significant and I look at the last part of the twentieth century, and there is no bigger single social change that was probably positive and overdue than that one.

So you end up, I believe, with a process that can work, but people have to be committed to making it work. And in this case, today it's different on healthcare than it was on welfare reform. Now, what made welfare reform different is you did have a Republican legislature, because the Congress had changed after the '94 elections, and you had a Democrat president. So it was absolutely clear you had to work together. Today with one party in charge of everything, there are too many voices saying, "Well, hell, we don't have to work together. We can do it ourselves. Maybe." But as it turned out now, they couldn't.

Smith: Let me go back to '74. Were you in the legislature?

Engler: Yes, I was elected in '70 for the first time.

Smith: And you almost coincided with Watergate?

Engler: Right.

Smith: And people forget, but of course in early '74 Ford's old congressional seat was lost to a Democrat. He had just become vice president. Nixon was still in the White House, and apparently Ford had tried to raise the subject with the president, who was not eager to hear it raised. How bad was it to be a Republican in Michigan at that point?

Engler: It was not bad to be a Republican, but all the Republicans knew they were in a very bad environment. Because the thing about Watergate - it was so personal to President Nixon. It wasn't very rational to blame - I mean, the Republicans in Michigan didn't have anything to do with Watergate. In fact, we were behind the guy with the white hat - President Ford became vice president. But Michigan was a tough, tough environment then because two things happened: President Nixon's last judicial appointment, I believe, was the appointment of Congressman Jim Harvey to the Federal Bench, and then his seat was the first seat lost in Michigan's when in the next special election Bob Traxler was elected to Congress.

Then President Ford was nominated as vice president, and when he becomes vice president, then that fall, his seat is lost and the loser of that seat - a lot of people said, "Well, the Harvey seat - gee, he ran his longtime aide." It was a congressional aide, I think, that...

Smith: An insider.

Engler: Very much an insider running against a pretty popular, long term state legislator. But then it flips when you go to the Ford seat. Vanderveen is a complete outsider, Bob Vanderlaan was the Republican leader of the Michigan senate. The fellow who had managed my campaign was Dick Posthumus, both in 1970 and then helped me again in 1972. So Dick and I had worked together. He was a couple years behind me at Michigan State. Dick then, by that time, had become the youth chairman because the other thing that was happening, which certainly backfired for '74's elections. President Nixon in '72 - that was the first election in which eighteen year olds could vote. Because of the age of majority, he was pushing that to burnish his credentials with the younger voters. And of course, that coincided with the Nixon plan to end the Vietnam war and all that kind of thing that was going on.

And most of us in '72 said the president had all this money, which now as it turned out everybody learned how it all came to pass, but all of this money was spent trying to run up the margin for the President and at the expense of Senate seats, of state parties, in some cases gubernatorial elections. So there

was complete fraying, I would say, of the relationships already with the Nixon team, the Nixon White House and everybody else. I can only imagine this, I've never actually read, but I'll bet the private, if they stayed private or - House leaders like President Ford would have been appalled at this money being spent on the presidential election when it was clear they were going to win the election. Nobody cared if they won fifty states or if they won forty-three states, what they did care about? If you've got this extra money let's help these House candidates.

Smith: Right, and of course, he wanted to be Speaker of the House

Engler: Absolutely.

Smith: He thought, this is my best chance, my last chance.

Engler: And it was. And so all of that - you go to '74 and we lose these two specials, Dick Posthumus is going to run for Bob Vanderlaan's seat. He was in that - that was his home area. And so he was already starting. Of course, Vanderlaan, would go to Congress. In fact, in the Vanderlaan office there were staffers looking for their places in Washington. They were a little bit, probably, like Martha Copley in Massachusetts this time. And I saw one comparison, Michael Barone, very astute on these things, talked about impactful elections and he said the Vanderlaan election in '74 and the Brown election this year, as two that really - when you think about one election sending a shot across the bow, or maybe a shot into the bow. Those were, each in their own circumstances, that powerful.

So Dick was spending all his time out there and he came back shaking his head, saying, "I think Vanderlaan is going to lose." And we're saying, "How can that be? This seat is so solid. This seat is so Republican. It's Vice President Ford's seat." He said, no. And so we started looking at local...and we actually - nobody thought this was going to happen. You didn't have ten people, I think. And Democrats at the national level put a lot of people in it. It became a little bit like Brown at the end. It was, "Oh, my gosh."

Smith: It's a wave election.

- Engler: Yeah. And then it wasn't even close, as I recall, or not that close.
- Smith: It must have, among other things, embarrassed the Vice President.
- Engler: Yeah, I would think so.
- Smith: Did you see him at all during his vice presidency? We found out subsequently, not only because of the unique circumstances – the tightrope that he was forced to walk. But apparently he really, really disliked the job. He just really disliked the vice presidency.
- Engler: Yeah, and that wouldn't be something where I'd have ever heard that because, again, he was so loyal and so circumspect, so institutionally correct. He would not have...so I didn't know that. I did see him. By this time I'm still there, but I'm still pretty junior, so I'm dependent on the invitations from other friends.
- Smith: Was there a statewide race in Michigan in '74?
- Engler: In '74 there was a governor's race. And it was Governor Milliken who ran. It was his second election. He had a rematch against Sander Levin and probably a good thing. It was a tighter election than he'd had.
- Smith: But he hung on?
- Engler: My closest general election was that year, too. We lost a lot of seats. We came back and we got pretty well wiped out in the Michigan House of Representatives.
- Smith: Really? Were economic factors involved as well?
- Engler: Not so much. I mean, we'd had a recession in the early '70s, but we were more on the mend. President Ford, one thing that he did, he vetoed a lot of bills. I mean, he really showed that you could manage the federal budget. He was doing some important things. He had a superb team around him, too. I always say if you think back of the people who worked for him and then went on to do other substantial things, you can't find a Cabinet collection that's as formidable as that team that Gerald Ford eventually had.

- Smith: But it also says something about him that he was comfortable enough in his own skin to surround himself with people whose egos or IQs might be greater than his. He had a Henry Kissinger and a Bill Simon, just for starters, or the pick of Nelson Rockefeller as vice president. That tells you something about the guy himself.
- Engler: He was completely confident. I think, again, he benefited immeasurably from being underestimated a lot.
- Smith: There are people who have suggested that he actually was shrewd enough that he made it work for him. That he knew he was being underestimated, and that he could, in fact, make it work.
- Engler: Yeah.
- Smith: That famous incident of getting up and doing the federal budget. Unfortunately, that's not the sort of thing that's translated to the general electorate. But when you stop and think about it, it's pretty impressive.
- Engler: And it was not lost on the Hill, I think. How empowering that would be for your budget director when somebody is trying to spend money in an area that it shouldn't be spent in, to say, "Look, I can't do this deal. You know full well the President understands. He knows."
- Smith: What was the reaction to the pardon in your neck of the woods? First of all, did it come as a surprise, the timing of it?
- Engler: The pardon? We were loyal, so we supported President Ford and I think most people had the sort of reaction that it's tough, and politically it's really tough, but it is the right thing to do. We've got to move on as a country. And certainly, he's had lots of after-the-fact vindication. I don't know if they would have been as kind to him if he'd been able to win the election. It's almost like since he lost...
- Smith: That's interesting. That's a very shrewd observation. He was lucky because he lived thirty years after leaving office. Poor Lyndon Johnson died the day before the Vietnam Peace Agreement was announced. But Ford said, "For twenty years, everywhere I go, people asked the same question." But when

the Kennedys gave him the Profiles in Courage Award, he said, “They don’t ask the question anymore.” It’s as if the imprimatur of the Kennedys wiped it out.

Engler: Amazing, but – yeah.

Smith: Were you at the ’76 convention?

Engler: No, I did not go there, did not go to Kansas City.

Smith: Are you glad?

Engler: Well, in hindsight, maybe. I must say, the people from Michigan are absolutely the worst people to ask about the ’76 convention, because there never was any question; everybody was on board with Gerald Ford. Everybody assumed he was the president, he would be re-nominated. Never even thought it was that close.

Smith: But you’d had a primary, remember at one point which was very hotly contested?

Engler: Very hotly contested. And just almost a shock that it turned out that Reagan walked away with a number of delegates out of Michigan. And this had implications oddly enough for 1980 and the Reagan term. That’s a different story, I think. But in ’80 people in Michigan were still, I would say, sulking over the Ford loss in ’76, and the irritation that this primary had likely cost the election. So none of the people really stepped up to be Reagan leaders. Kind of going all over the map you had Howard Baker as an option, you had George Bush as an option, and Reagan as a default option. And so he had these people from ’76. If you’re in ’76 and you are in Michigan and you are not supporting Gerald Ford, you’re probably not in the mainstream of the party. Now, I had some good friends who were, but they had a rebellious part of their spirit – they were sage brushers if you will.

Smith: Now, that’s interesting. Even though that year the convention is in Detroit.

Engler: Absolutely. We all forfeited a chance to be in the front ranks here of the Reagan movement.

Smith: The flip side of that, thirty years later, and stop me if you know all this, but it's amazing how memories take on a life of their own. After the President died there was an effort launched to put a statue of him in Statuary Hall from Michigan.

Engler: Right.

Smith: And most people thought that was a good idea. Now, it meant, among other things, moving out Zachariah Chandler. I think the Detroit Historical Society or something wanted the statue and the [Ford] Foundation would pay for moving the statue. There was really no opposition, perse, but in the state Senate there were a couple of Republican senators who, it turned out, had been Reagan supporters back in the 70s, who just kind of prevented this from happening. And they weren't quite smoked out in the open, but behind the scenes, they were...I guess the governor was willing to go along, but not to take the lead, surprisingly.

So anyway, what happened was amazing. A wonderful story. The House was fine with this, and it came back and it was the end of the session, and there was a sort of politics of delay underway and there was an African-American senator from Detroit, who got up on the floor of the Senate, obviously a Democrat – and said, “Let me tell you something about what kind of man Gerald Ford was.” His grandfather had been Willis Ward, who was the football teammate and good friend, and of course, Ford had always told the story about, and so forth and so on. And this guy went on.

Engler: He was a longtime \_\_\_\_\_ in Detroit.

Smith: And what Ford had learned about race relations. Georgia Tech wouldn't play Michigan. They would not play a team with a black man on it. And it was a wrenching experience for Ford and he and Willis Ward became closer than ever about all of this. And it was the only game the team won that year. The only game the Wolverines won that year was against Georgia Tech. So anyway, Ward had absented himself from the game rather than forfeit it for that reason. And Ford had talked this over with his father because he didn't

want to play; he was in solidarity with his friend Willis Ward. Anyway, it was a remarkable story. And Ford wrote about it at one point.

But then this guy got up on the floor of the Senate and told this story, on his own, unprompted, from the Democratic side of the aisle; at that point literally kind of shamed these guys into silence and it went through. Gerald Ford did not care about monuments to himself, but I'll tell you that if there is anything he would appreciate, it would be – because that was home.

Engler: Absolutely. No, I had not heard that because I just assumed that they would take care of that and it was one of those things that nobody ever called me and said, "You need to help on this." I'm sure Peter [Secchia] and others back in Michigan were working on that. But I think that is a wonderful story, and I think that's also why there is something to be said for these long careers, as I think rare as they are going to be in the future. I think it's just not going to be the case. In fact, I think that's probably not very good.

Smith: What kind of associations and contacts did you have? You were elected governor for the first time in?

Engler: 1990.

Smith: '90. Did you talk with him?

Engler: I did. He actually campaigned for me. So he made some appearances for me, and I talked to him. He was, I think, very proud of the fact that I'd been able to win. One of the things that we did also, I guess prior to me getting elected, but I was involved, and we got Bob Griffin elected to the State Supreme Court, and that was always a good relationship. There was always kind of an odd relationship because in Michigan you had kind of a Milliken part of the party, which was kept small and quite insular, and then you had the Ford/Griffin – I mean, more of a – I think they were always more willing.

Smith: Was Milliken an inheritance from Romney, or was it separate from Romney?

Engler: He inherited, really. When Romney left, Milliken became governor, and then had two years before he had to seek election in his own right. And that was the '70 election and he beat Sander Leven in that one and then he won three

elections in the '70s, like I won three elections in the 90s, just twenty years later, actually, all the way across the board. But I only served twelve years; Milliken's the longest serving governor at fourteen years. But he always was surrounded by people who said, "Well, they did mention you in the ticket-splitter books, and Michigan was a ticket-splitter state," all kinds of that stuff was out there. So they never felt that you could win, in effect, if voters were going to vote for Milliken, then they were probably going to also vote for a Democrat to balance that off.

Smith: Is some of that attributable to the, in those days, relatively greater strength of organized labor?

Engler: Sure. And I think also just a sort of a view. Politics is a tough game. I mean, it's not easy. And I think then polling was becoming much more of a factor that everybody used.

Smith: It's more of a science than a.r.t.

Engler: And so I think there was a lot of maybe reading things into things that, whether they were so or not, you thought they were so because that's what this poll might have said. When I look back on that era, I just think the one that we feel very bad about is '78 when Griffin said he was going to retire. And then the Milliken campaign team, really the governor himself, worked on him to come back into the race. And this was at a point when Congressman Phil Ruppe was already announced for that seat and it ends up Griffin had a very poor attendance record in '78, because he was leaving, missed a bunch of votes. Carl Levin the city councilman of Detroit was running and probably Ruppe would have beaten Levin, but Levin beats Griffin because he's clearly lost interest. He doesn't even show up. It was an ignominious way for Bob to have to go out given all the many contributions he'd had, and the relationship with Gerald Ford, and the importance – I mean, Bob Griffin was the Whip in the Senate. He was a key guy.

Smith: One senses, and I don't know him, but one senses on the campaign trail a more diffident figure. He wasn't a natural in some ways.

Engler: That's right.

- Smith: He was better in office, maybe, than he was as a campaigner.
- Engler: Oh, I think that's right. I think a lot of us are probably that way, but I think there's no question – and, of course, they hadn't prepared because they were late starting. But this fell into the storyline ticket that way, we always felt that Ruppe would be fresh. Milliken would be the older candidate. In '78 if you put Griffin and Milliken back together again, if they are going to vote for one and not the other, we're going to get that vote. And then Milliken was running against the Democratic leader of the Senate, a good Irish-Catholic.
- Smith: Sitting here listening to you talk - the gift that politicians have for taking apart this process – not only the language, but the way they eviscerate all of this, I assume the conversations with Gerald Ford must have been like that. You hear the famous stories about Nixon, who could tell you everything – everything, the history of everything. Politicians who really marinate themselves in this stuff...
- Engler: By '78 though, I was busy myself because I had challenged a longtime sitting member of the Senate in a primary because I had decided after eight years in the House it was either up or out. I wasn't going to stay in a minority. So I had a primary which then made Traverse City - Bob Griffin's home and Bill Milliken's home - my constituency, as well. And I didn't have Governor Milliken's support in that primary, needless to say.
- Smith: Was that seen as a conservative, moderate divide? Were you seen as the...
- Engler: Yeah, I suppose. It was more of a...
- Smith: Or was some of it generational?
- Engler: I thought it was generational, for sure, because I'm thirty years old, with eight years in the House, running against a senator who is the number two ranking Republican in the Senate, but clearly beyond, I think, the shelf life in that body. The Michigan Senate, the Republicans in those days, had felt a real acute case of minority mentality, and you had a lot of other issues going on about alcohol problems and there were just some sad stories over there. And they had been there a long time, pretty ossified.

Smith: The subject comes up a lot in these interviews that there was just a different culture, thirty, forty, fifty years ago. That among other things, people drank a lot more.

Engler: A lot more.

Smith: It tended to be covered up, but it was just intrinsic to the political culture.

Engler: Well, it was. I mean you used to have - it was almost legendary in a couple of cases - but the Michigan legislature used to have a Monday night session where they'd work. People would come back at Lansing for a Monday night session, and Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday - and they would go back on Thursday night. But the Monday night session usually was the session that followed dinner somewhere. And that dinner often had a lot of liquid element to it. And so you got some pretty colorful speeches that night and sometimes those sessions would run on into the evening.

That actually was one of the changes after I became the leader. We kind of concluded we didn't need the Monday night. We probably, in our own way, also contributed to the - there were just too many issues arising out of that. In fact, we actually changed to Tuesday morning. So we said, "Let's do the morning sessions that will get people here." If you did the committee meetings, they wouldn't come until the session in the afternoon, so we flipped that. We'd meet in the morning and then have committees in the afternoon and it sort of worked. I'm way off of '78 and Griffin and even Ford, but to get back to those guys, I think that in '78, Milliken wins his third term then, the third election. Griffin loses, but President Ford, of course, he's out of office. But during this whole period and for a while there - and I know once he leaves office, he's doing some boards, he's doing some other things, because, in fact, he doesn't have any money from all these years in public service, but public income as well.

So I think he kind of went through, I would say, almost a quiet period in there. But then as he began to come back. And of course, in '80 you had the flurry at the convention, in one sense what that did do, it always struck me as a sort of restart of the public life of Gerald Ford. Because he was raised up and a lot of

good things got said about him, and from there he clearly was the elder statesman - going to be. And then when President Reagan was elected, he is the former president and we pay homage and he begins to take on this life which he then led until the end, I think. So I always was intrigued by, and it does go to a point you made earlier that people who have been around this game a long time, there is always a level of interest. What's so and so doing? What's this person up to? What's happening over there? What does this mean? And it's almost a shorthand.

Smith: He retained that, I assume.

Engler: Yeah, he did. He was very curious about things and wanting to know this or that. And of course, I was a bit involved during my legislative days with some of the Ford Museum because there were some state appropriations in that. We had a few other things that we worked on. And then as I became a leader in the legislature, was sort of directly involved in some of those kinds of things that surrounded the way in which we recognized the life and the times of Gerald Ford.

Smith: He took a lot of heat for going on some boards and doing some of the commercial things that he did. One thing that a lot of people never stopped to consider was that he had to raise all that money to build the library and the museum. And to him - I mean, today it's nothing - but whatever - nine million dollars he had to raise. Plus he was a real fiscal conservative.

Engler: He was, indeed.

Smith: He's probably the last president who was willing to spend whatever political capital he had through those vetoes in an effort to bludgeon the budget into some sort of...

Engler: And he knew how to put the pressure back onto the Congress. I think he was sophisticated in the way he did that. Of course, the other thing that maybe in response to his vetoes, I wouldn't say that gave rise, I would think more later it just was the sharper political divisions. But now you're stuck with these omnibus acts. Gerald Ford had a lot of vetoes because he got a lot of different appropriation bills. Today you don't get that. You get the whole thing late, in

one 1,200 page bill. And so, that really removes a lot of flexibility for the president. He can't say, "You've done obscene things here in the agriculture department, I'm going to turn that bill down," because that's just one of all the departments. The only one you can really break out is defense.

Smith: I don't want to point a finger at anyone, because I think history will regard Ronald Reagan very highly. And in fact, if you put yourself in Reagan's shoes you can understand exactly where he was coming from when he said, basically, I want a balanced budget, I want to win the Cold War, and I want to rebuild the nation's defenses. Again, if I can get two out of three, I'll settle for them and allow a temporary increase in spending, which they could have argued away because if there was a peace dividend, you could imagine taking care of it.

But twenty-five years later it's become accepted among conservatives that deficits don't matter. Now, you have a party trying to redefine itself as a party of fiscal responsibility. The Cold War is over, we won it so we no longer have the Soviet Union to define us as conservatives. If we cede the issue of fiscal responsibility, then what's left? Social issues.

Engler: Yeah, not exactly happy hunting ground for Republican candidates in the past. Although I do think there are a couple of things. First of all, I think Reagan's approach - one of the fundamental legs of the platform on which he stood, was economic growth, and the importance of that for prosperity and jobs. And I do think that that emphasis on competitiveness was a very powerful, very important, antidote to the sort of malaise of the Carter years. So, there's no doubt in my mind that that kind of emphasis, then, built the kind of economy, and whether that is measured through increasing innovation and deployment of technology, our ability to compete our exporting. Not nearly as far as we need to go, but we became more globalized and I think the world economy required that American companies step up or somebody else was going to do that. And that would be, I think, sort of an irretrievable loss for the competitiveness of major American companies.

So all of that, I think, created a situation which later on - and Reagan is doing it with Democratic Congresses, for the most part. He had the Senate for a

while, but he did not have the House. And so, when the 90's and the '94 election changes and you get a Republican House, even the slightest bit the fiscal restraint, coupled with now a stronger economic engine, balances budgets. We get to the point. So I would say, in examining the Reagan legacy, that the economic strength, the seeds of which were sown then, and harvested a bit later, led us to a balanced budget. Now where we go off track clearly is when we get to the end of the Clinton years, and I would think Clinton's tax increases - I think there was a real debate about did they contribute to balancing the budget, or did they at the same time, sort of weaken our economic strength prospectively. That stuff all has longer tails than get acknowledged.

Smith: And they could have done both.

Engler: And I think there is a good case that they did do both. Because I think in the short term, immediately, you get some more revenue, but I think it's at a price of future growth.

Smith: Right. Interesting.

Engler: And then, layer on that now suddenly 2001, 9/11 happens and we've got a global war on terrorism. And it turns out to be, because of the actual wars, both in Afghanistan and then Iraq, you end up with all these costs and that's not paid for, and then we start down this path. So we end up in the situation where I do think that the country now has to be much more focused on the entitlement burden that we've voted. And President Ford did not add to that. I would say, arguably, the Reagan administration did not. I thought we made steps on welfare reform in the Clinton years to pull it back a little bit more. You'd have to say that the drug/Medicaid expansion did add, but then the response to the near fatal financial collapse blew it up beyond all reasonableness. And now we've got to go back and that goes to our earlier discussion. We're so upside down the way we make policy today, it's hard to see a path forward.

Smith: During your governorship, did you see him from time to time?

Engler: President Ford? Yes, I did. The last time I saw him was maybe— I don't know how many months before he passed — Peter Secchia and I were out in California. That was on Peter's board of directors — Universal Forest Products. He had a board meeting out there, so Peter and I went over. It was a few miles over to go and see the President. And I followed through Secchia.

Smith: How was he when you saw him?

Engler: He was pretty good. He'd had some health issues, but that day he was getting ready — there was a Michigan basketball game coming on. It was in the winter. And he was in pretty good spirits.

Smith: There is a story: this goes to his fiscal conservatism, because he was going on about all these football games he did watch and everything else. He had this ESPN cable, or whatever. Someone who knew him well was disbelieving. Couldn't believe...

Engler: He wouldn't put Direct TV in or something?

Smith: That he would spend the money. Someone gave it to him.

Engler: Oh my gosh.

Smith: Now, that's a conservative.

Engler: I don't know if Lee was there that day, but it was just — he had this level of support that was just terrific. He was just a grand man.

Smith: Now the last time he came back to Grand Rapids was for his ninetieth birthday.

Engler: Right. That was when we went to the old house, I think. We did all that stuff.

Smith: You saw him that day?

Engler: Yeah.

Smith: And how did he seem?

- Engler: Great. I mean, one always wonders – I think Michelle and I were both there – you kind of wonder if he is wondering if this is the last time I’m coming back here? Or the next time I’m coming back.
- Smith: But a big crowd turned out. It must have been heartwarming.
- Engler: Big crowd, affectionate crowd. It was warm – he really liked it. He had a durable group of friends, too. Some of these old timers had lasted as long as he did. So I always admired that about him. One thing that – this is a very little bit of a memory – but after he becomes vice president, what’s his first trip? To come back and do that Red Flannel Days parade because he promised he would be there for that parade. Now he’s not the congressman anymore, he’s vice president of the United States. He still comes back. And that speaks so many volumes about that honor and duty ethic that was part of every fiber of who he was. “I told them I’d do that and so I’m going to do that, by golly.”
- Smith: Two quick things and I’ll let you go. One is, like him, you had experienced, obviously under different circumstances, but you had the experience of going from a fairly lengthy legislative career, in effect, to learning to be an executive. What’s the learning curve?
- Engler: I had a little intermediate step to help me out because I had seven years as the Majority Leader in the state senate. So I was actually running a pretty large operation there. And I used to joke all the time, as a Senate leader then, I had more staff hiring responsibilities and was able to assemble what I called a government in waiting. We always argued that we were a little bit more like a Parliamentary system -that we had a shadow Cabinet. And I was able to bring a lot of people from my Senate to the governor’s office. And so, it was really wonderful.
- But, like President Ford, I was able to bring a lot of people from my Senate staff to the executive office. And I had a whole host of people, my lawyer, for all those years in the Senate and then say twelve years as my lawyer in the governor’s office. She was spectacular. We had legislative relations people. We had department directors. My first budget director and treasurer were people that had been part of the Senate staff. So that was all part of that

preparation. But I think that there is nothing that really prepares you for being in that executive's job until you are there. Because, I mean, the day you take that oath, then suddenly what's happening in a prison somewhere is your concern. Is there a natural disaster that happens? I think of Frank Keating. He hadn't been governor very many weeks and that Oklahoma City bomber incident hit and transformed how people viewed him, how he approached his whole job. And that can happen to anyone. President Bush with 2001.

Smith: Last thing. How do you think Ford should be remembered?

Engler: Well, I think he should be remembered, almost just the way he is being remembered; as a very honorable man, a rock of integrity, a person with an encyclopedic knowledge of government, and somebody who, in two and a half years had a profound impact. And I'm one who doesn't believe that the short tenure of his presidency should be allowed to diminish the contributions that he made. And I am not talking to you about some of the foreign policy stuff as much as I am what he tried to do domestically, and the generation of leadership that he, in effect, launched, and the impact of all of those people.

I mean, if we look at the Ford legacies, post the Ford presidency, it's pretty impressive the profound effect that he's had on the American political process and on American governance. So I think he was clearly a transitional figure and it was a brief presidency, but I think an important presidency. And even though it was our first and only unelected president, we really had somebody there who made a significant contribution to American politics. And I do think that certainly having to take office and to help the country come back and steady itself after the first resignation of a sitting president, he'll be forever owed a debt of gratitude by the American people.

Smith: They saw that, of course, he was a passionate football fan, passionate Michigan fan. I never saw it, but I've talked to people who did - many years he'd find a way to be back in Ann Arbor just before The Game and he would go down and give a pep talk to the football team. And all of a sudden, it was the Gerald Ford you never heard. He was eloquent and forceful and passionate and he connected emotionally with every one of those kids.

Engler: Michigan doesn't have a tape of any of those talks anywhere in their archives?

Smith: I don't think so?

Engler: God, that'd be great. Wouldn't it be wonderful? I do know he was a great fan of Bo Schembechler's [former U of M football coach] and Bo Schembechler reciprocated, \_\_\_\_\_ and he was a Michigan man. And I'd love – one of the great jokes of all time when Peter Secchia got a band to play the Michigan State fight song to welcome him onto a platform. He's expecting the Michigan fight song, *Hail to the Victors*, and here comes the Michigan State fight song. It was very funny and they were forever doing those kinds of things. He was just a good, good man.

## INDEX

### F

Ford, Gerald R.

1976 Republican Convention, 20

first acquaintance with, 1–2

Nixon pardon, 19–20

presidential style, 18–19, 26–27

remembrance, 29, 31–32

### N

Nixon, Richard

1972 election, 16–17

### R

Reagan, Ronald

presidential style, 9–10

### W

Washington, DC, early culture, 2–9, 25–26