

Timothy Naftali

Hi, I'm Tim Naftali. I'm the Director of the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, and I have the honor and privilege to be interviewing Stephen Zetterberg today. It's January 23, 2008. We're in Claremont, California. Mr. Zetterberg, thank you very much for joining us to participate in the Richard Nixon Oral History Program.

Stephen Zetterberg

Well, this is interesting.

Timothy Naftali

I'd like to start -- actually, I'd like to go back and give people a bit of context before we discuss the politics of the '40s.

Stephen Zetterberg

Okay.

Timothy Naftali

You were at Yale --

Stephen Zetterberg

Yeah.

Timothy Naftali

I believe, at a time when there was a debate among young people about the intervention in World War II --

Stephen Zetterberg

About the --

Timothy Naftali

Intervention in World War II. Do you recall at Yale the American First Movement? Charles Lindbergh came to Yale in 1940. I believe you were there at the time.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yes, yeah, I was there. 19 -- I graduated from college here in 1938. Then I spent a year in Washington, D.C., and then after that I went to -- I was accepted at Yale and went to Yale Law School.

Timothy Naftali

Can you tell us about what you recall of your experience in Washington, D.C., what you did for a year?

Stephen Zetterberg

One of the most difficult things was to go and meet the President. He had such strong hands that he almost broke my hand when I was an intern in government at the National Institute of Public Affairs. And they had a line of us -- a Congressmen lined us up, and I remember the President saying, "Well, Mr. Congressmen, here are your hospital interns." Then we went through the line, and I still remember that grip, it was really terrific. I felt lucky to get my hand back.

Timothy Naftali

Well, and for the record we ought to say we're talking about President Roosevelt here.

Stephen Zetterberg

Hmm?

Timothy Naftali

President Roosevelt.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yes.

Timothy Naftali

Franklin Roosevelt.

Stephen Zetterberg

Franklin Roosevelt. Yes, he was very strong with his arms and hands. I remember that.

Timothy Naftali

So tell us what it was like for a man from the West to go to college in the East in 1939. I mean to go to law school in the East.

Stephen Zetterberg

Oh, there's a different geography for colleges, I think. They don't have the same configuration that we have in maps, and I just applied after I'd been to Washington, D.C. for a year, and they accepted me, so that was a fun thing to have happen.

Timothy Naftali

After law school, what did you do?

Stephen Zetterberg

After law school, I went for a while -- I was a junior officer in the National War Labor Board in Washington, D.C. This was, of course, during war time, and I had charge of cases that were coming through and would be helping the people who were doing the questioning with their questions and so on. That was kind of an interesting time, yeah. I -- how long did I stay there? I came -- the thing that hit me and really made me change my life was on the morning of the Pearl Harbor attack. I was on my way to law school to do library work, and that sort of really hit me right in the stomach, that things were going to change now, you know. Again, I was in Washington for a while, and then I went out to California. I was offered a job -- I worked for a while for Senator Scott Lucas, both, I think, before and after my graduation from law school, and he offered me a job of secretary of the minority, or of the Democratic Party in Washington. That would have been a good job, but I wanted to go out to California and sort of get started. I was trying to readjust my mind to what's happening with the war and so on.

Timothy Naftali

Do you remember some of your classmates from Yale Law School?

Stephen Zetterberg

We had -- yes, I'm trying to get their names and their memory. I still correspond with a good number of them. I'm trying to think if I can pin the face to the name. Well, for one thing, my one classmate is an attorney here in town. He used to be sort of a cowboy up in the mountains. I said, "You ought to come on down here and practice law." And he's a -- it's very nice to have him here. That's -- -- let's see, who else? I haven't named any names. His name is Stafford, Robert Stafford. Then, of course, some of my classmates have died. I had -- one of them was a secretary of state or assistant secretary of state. I'm trying to think of his name now.

Timothy Naftali

Was Cyrus Vance was one of them? That was a pretty famous class you had, and it was a very -- it was a famous class -- that this was a famous class at Yale.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yes.

Timothy Naftali

But I asked you because of the -- there was a debate among Yalies as to whether the United States should enter the war.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yes.

Timothy Naftali

This is before Pearl Harbor, and you were there for that.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yes.

Timothy Naftali

And I was interested, given the amount of political engagement you would have the rest of your career, the extent to which that debate over whether the United States should go into World War II had figured prominently in shaping your ideas about politics and being political.

Stephen Zetterberg

Well, I think mostly that the war hit like a bomb, and people sort of spread out, you know, and went their own ways. A lot of people didn't finish law school at the time and went into the service, per force. What I'm saying is, I think most of that kind of debate was an individual debate for each person, what to do and how to do it. You see, I didn't know what was going to happen to me. I had a draft board, and I eventually got on the draft board thing.

Timothy Naftali

Tell us about Scott Lucas. What was he like?

Stephen Zetterberg

What?

Timothy Naftali

Lucas, tell us about Senator Lucas, please.

Stephen Zetterberg

He was a lot of fun in a kind of a separate kind of way. I had to sign a lot of his letters, and his secretary had to sign a lot of letters, and he told me once if he had to sign all those letters, he wouldn't be a senator. He was -- oftentimes, he was down at the departments, but I knew what he was really doing. He was playing golf --

Timothy Naftali

Oh!

Stephen Zetterberg

-- which was good. He was a really very nice person. As I said, he offered me a job afterwards, and I also got a job offered by the law firm that is the lawyers for the senators -- and not for individual senators, but for the senators as a unit -- but I didn't want to do that. I confess that I was really kind of interested in politics at that time, and when I went out to California, I became very active in the Democratic Party there. In fact, the reason I was running for Congress was that Jerry Voorhis, who I admired a lot, he was a Congressman that had very high rankings from the news people men. I really liked him. He was a getting rough time of it, and I thought I'd go out and maybe be able to help him. Turns out, I went out, and he gave me all of his files that led on to more work with the Democratic Party. I don't want to ramble on here, but it wasn't long before we had to search for a substitute for Jerry Voorhis, because they asked me to try and get him to try to come up to run against Richard Nixon. And he wouldn't do it. He had a job with a non-political organization, and he wouldn't come out. In fact, I was on a committee that was supposed to meet with him, and when he turned us down, he turned on me -- that is, the committee turned on me. And that's how I got involved with running for Congress. I was sort of a substitute for Jerry Voorhis, who they really wanted to run.

Timothy Naftali

Can I ask you about the 1946 campaign before we talk about the '48 campaign? You helped Jerry Voorhis, did you not, in the '46 campaign?

Stephen Zetterberg

Yes, but -- let's see '46.

Timothy Naftali

That's the campaign when Nixon ran for the first time.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yes, but I was really off to one side there. I was not a major figure in that. See I was still -- again, like I said I was trying to figure out what I myself would be doing, and I had a wife and some children at that time.

Male Speaker

Let's break for a minute.

Timothy Naftali

Thanks, Mr. Zetterberg, we'll just stop for a second.

Stephen Zetterberg

I got to get a --

Timothy Naftali

You need a --

Male Speaker

Sound please.

Stephen Zetterberg

Ready?

Male Speaker

And we're ready.

Stephen Zetterberg

Well, see I was in Washington at that time afterwards, and I was living with five other students, four other students, with myself. We used to spend time over in Jerry Voorhis office, and his assistant Tom Toberty [phonetic sp] used to take us hitting golf balls sometimes at night. And we sort of used Jerry Voorhis' office as one of our offices, as the -- we, as other interns that were in Washington. So, again, his campaign was running while I was really not yet focused right on his campaign. It's after he refused to go, he gave me all his lists and things of that kind to help me on the thing, on running.

Timothy Naftali

Did you think you had a good shot at defeating Congressman Nixon?

Stephen Zetterberg

Did I think I had a --

Timothy Naftali

A good shot at defeating Congressman Nixon. Was Congressman Nixon vulnerable in 1948?

Stephen Zetterberg

Well, don't we always think that the person on the opposite party is vulnerable. Otherwise we wouldn't be running against them. I really didn't see how he could be -- he was a very, very well known person, you know. One of the problems was that the place where we lived -- I moved to in Southern California -- was a place where a lot of soldiers were coming back, Naval personnel and so on, being discharged and finding places to live, and so a lot of the people that were going to vote did not know really what district they were in or anything. And that was one of the key factors, I think, that really made it very difficult for anyone to run against Richard Nixon, who had a -- he had a lot of publications and papers and so on, his work.

Timothy Naftali

Could you tell us what cross-filing was?

Stephen Zetterberg

Yes, cross-filing is you don't have to file just in your own party. You can file in the opposite party or, I guess, no party at all. So, we had the ballot at the time when I ran, that Richard Nixon appeared on the Democratic ballot. You've seen the --

Timothy Naftali

Yes.

Stephen Zetterberg

You have my dear -- a fellow democrat by a guy named J.B. Blue [phonetic sp], but it looked like it was Richard Nixon saying that. I remember going -- he did a lot of footwork on our campaign, hoofing it. I had a lot of people that were doing that. We didn't have much money, and I remember going around to people's houses, and they would bring out the ballot, which you were looking for one, and I was trying to find one today earlier. The ballot shows Richard Nixon on the Democratic ballot as an incumbent Congressman. A greater part of the Congressmen -- excuse me -- in those days were elected in the primaries, and oftentimes there was no real election in the general election because people -- there was one case up in the Central Valley where, I can't remember who it was, but he filed in the opposite party, and he won their nomination, but he lost his own party nomination refusing time because of the way this worked out. So the major stakes were facing you when you were in the primaries. Like the one person that lost his own nomination, you have to pay attention to that, too.

Timothy Naftali

Were you a reluctant candidate in 1948?

Stephen Zetterberg

You know, I've never been asked that question. I was not a reluctant candidate, because I was really had been working at the Congress and had been offered really very good jobs with Congress and worked in Washington, and I enjoyed that. So, I didn't really think that I was going to be getting involved as a candidate, but the committee that I was on was turned down by Jerry Voorhis, and so they turned on me because I was a handy target, and I was just starting the practice of law. So, in fact, part of the time there I was studying for the bar exam, as I remember. But, so this all came on later as sort of a natural thing that I'd been working in Washington, at least I think that that's what happened.

Timothy Naftali

Could you tell us a little bit about Jerry Voorhis? What was he like?

Stephen Zetterberg

Jerry Voorhis was -- he used to lecture to us at Pomona College from time to time, and it was always very interesting to have him lecture. He, as I mentioned maybe, he was very well liked by newsmen and by most of his Congressional compatriots, but he was not really an easygoing person. He was really quite focused on his work as a Congressman, which is one of the things that was nice about him. So my contacts, personal contacts with him when I was in Washington were more with his secretary -- I think I mentioned his name a moment ago. He used to take us out golfing at one of those ranges hitting balls at night as a way of getting exercise or throwing a baseball outside the windows of the offices there where they were. So it was really kind of a nice community, not necessarily Democratic, but the guys that were doing the sort of junior work as we were doing was really kind of a community. I had at least one boy from my law school class was working for Senator Taft right across the hall from me, and we were friends. It sort of works that way.

Timothy Naftali

What were the --

Male Speaker

I'm sorry, Mr. Naftali, one second please [unintelligible]

Stephen Zetterberg

Something's wrong?

Male Speaker

Oh, no. Can we put that Kleenex on the table? Would that be okay, Mr. Zetterberg?

Timothy Naftali

Put your Kleenex over on the table.

Stephen Zetterberg

Huh?

Timothy Naftali

They want to put the Kleenex on the table so you can just reach for it rather than having to --

Stephen Zetterberg

Oh, that's a good idea. Yeah, thanks.

Male Speaker

No worries.

Stephen Zetterberg

Okay.

Male Speaker

Thank you, John, perfect.

Timothy Naftali

Perfect.

Stephen Zetterberg

Go ahead.

Male Speaker

One second, please, Mr. Naftali.

Stephen Zetterberg

I'm trying not to be too wordy with you.

Timothy Naftali

Please, be as wordy as you want.

Stephen Zetterberg

Okay.

Timothy Naftali

No, no, the point is that every recollection matters. What were the issues of the '48 campaign? What were the big issues at the time?

Stephen Zetterberg

There was really only one main, well, two main issues. One is what party you belonged to, and Richard Nixon, using that name informally, was a candidate on the basis that he was an incumbent Democratic congressman. And that was the biggest thing we had to fight. The funny part of it was, he had help, of course, from most of the editors, who were Republicans, but still, he never -- I don't remember him during the campaign ever mentioning that he was a Republican. You see, of course I didn't go hear a

lot of his speeches, but some of the people did. We'd go around to offices. We did a lot of hoofing it in our campaign. We didn't have -- we had a lot of workers, but we didn't have too much money, and you'd talk with the people, and they would say, "No, no he's a Democrat, see," and they'd show you the ballot. So your question looking for a ballot was really a very good question, because you can see on the face of it. I don't know whether this paper here -- I might just throw it out -- has a copy of it or not. I --

Timothy Naftali

We'll certainly look afterwards.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yeah.

Timothy Naftali

I'd like to put one in the museum.

Stephen Zetterberg

Okay.

Timothy Naftali

Tell me about -- how important was communism to the people of the 12th Congressional District?

Stephen Zetterberg

Oh, I think -- I don't remember anything about communism. This was a sort of a middle class district, you see, and I don't know that you really had anything that was tugging at your sleeves saying, "Hey, be a Communist." I don't really recall that.

Timothy Naftali

It was an issue in the '46 campaign, wasn't it?

Stephen Zetterberg

I'm not really an expert on the '46 campaign. Remember, I was back --

Timothy Naftali

That's right.

Stephen Zetterberg

-- in Washington at that time, but as -- I know generally, like a fog, you know, when it's foggy. There was a fog out there called a claim of being a Communist.

Timothy Naftali

Do you remember why Jerry Voorhis decided not to run in '48 when you came to him to ask him to do so?

Stephen Zetterberg

I know why he decided not to run, but I don't know whether that was really all of it. He told me that he had this job with -- a nonpartisan job back in Chicago, and he wanted to stick with that. He didn't want to continue, and we were really disappointed on that, we wanted him to continue to run. He was with -- I can't think of the name of the organization, but it was a -- anyway it was a nonpolitical organization. And that's when -- at that time, he gave me all of his political addresses, addressees, and material like that after I was wounded by the committee turning on me and getting me to run, you see.

Timothy Naftali

Were there more -- do you remember whether -- were there more registered Republicans or Democrats in this district?

Stephen Zetterberg

I would think at that time there would be more Republicans, yeah.

Timothy Naftali

And most of the media was Republican, right? Most of the newspapers were Republican, weren't they?

Stephen Zetterberg

Yes, but there were a lot of little small newspapers. I forget what the "Los Angeles Times" was like in those days. We would go over after Democratic meetings to the "Times" and talk with the reporters there and give them what momentous things we had done at the Democratic meeting, monthly meeting. But I don't know quite how to answer that, because I remember one writer, one editor, Monterey Park [phonetic sp] -- can't think of his name now -- was really very strong for working for me. And there was an editor in the middle area of a smaller newspaper who was very helpful to me in various ways. So I did have some help. "The Claremont Courier" was sort of staid, but they gave me some good coverage I know.

Timothy Naftali

Did you ever meet Herb Klein?

Stephen Zetterberg

Who?

Timothy Naftali

Herb Klein.

Stephen Zetterberg

C-U-N-N?

Timothy Naftali

No, K-L-E-I-N. He worked -- he was a journalist, and he worked for Nixon. Herb Klein, Herbert Klein. Name doesn't ring a bell?

Stephen Zetterberg

How do you spell his name?

Timothy Naftali

K-L-E-I-N.

Stephen Zetterberg

Herb Klein, that name sounds familiar, but I --

Timothy Naftali

It's okay.

Stephen Zetterberg

I can't remember.

Timothy Naftali

It's been a long time. But let me ask you then about the 1950 campaign. You ran.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yeah.

Timothy Naftali

You were the nominee in 1950.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yeah, but I was no longer pure. I cross-filed myself.

Timothy Naftali

Oh!

Stephen Zetterberg

I came in third, actually, among the candidates for that office. I was third out of five on the Republican side, and I felt kind of guilty at that, you know, because I felt very proud of not cross-filing when I first ran. But all during this time, we had -- we being Democrats -- had been working to try to get rid of cross-filing, because it was blurring up the politics of the whole state of California.

Anyway, that's more of a lecture than you wanted to have.

Timothy Naftali

No, no, it's very interesting! Do you know why there was cross-filing in California? Because I think it's the only state in the Union that had it?

Stephen Zetterberg

Yes, well, I think once you got into office, you used it as best you could. As I say, there were several people that lost their own party, several -- I don't know how many, but I know at least one -- who won the other party's nomination. That didn't work, and there were a lot of people who lost their own party, as I did, as I lost it too, also. Richard Nixon was a very powerful figure, and you'd have to try and figure out what kind of place this congressional district was. It was more middle class, and it had a lot of people coming in from the Naval and military service that didn't know from nothing about that. I remember having arguments with -- not arguments but trying to get people to see. Well, this person is a Republican, but, no, no, he's not. He's a Democrat. See, look at here, he's at the top of the Democratic ballot. We got that a lot, and our particular district was a good place for inflow for people from military. It's a little bit outside of Los Angeles, and I think if one did a sociological search, they'd find there was a lot of moving in during this time, postwar.

Timothy Naftali

Do you remember were you ever the victim of any dirty tricks?

Stephen Zetterberg

Was what?

Timothy Naftali

Were you ever the victim of any campaign dirty tricks other than the cross filing, which everybody seemed to be doing?

Stephen Zetterberg

Well, I considered the ballot a dirty trick. You know, I mean here's a powerful, well known Republican, and he's got me into a district where people weren't sure maybe whether they're Republicans or Democrats. And he was using this -- the campaign news story like the one you have was signed by J.B. Blue, but that was in fine print, you see, on his campaign. So people would argue with you, "No, he's a Democrat." That was the one biggest thing, at least I think it was the biggest thing that we had to fight, was that everybody thought that Richard Nixon was -- well, not everybody - - but there were a lot of Democrats that thought that he was Republican. [coughing] Excuse me, cold. Sorry, I got a little phlegm in my throat here.

Timothy Naftali

That's okay. We can stop, if you'd like, for a minute. By the way, did you ever find out who was J.B. Blue?

Stephen Zetterberg

All I know is he was a live person. He was a real person. I should tell you that we had some contacts with Richard Nixon in his law firm, and they were well, they were good contacts. You know, we had -- in other words, his firm, I never actually had anything directly with him, but his firm was like a lawyers' firm doing work as a lawyer. And he wasn't being a politician with law work. He was doing law work and had a very respectable record, which we honored also, you see.

Timothy Naftali

So you'd work with Bulee [phonetic sp], that firm, and Whittier.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yes.

Timothy Naftali

When did you first meet Richard Nixon?

Stephen Zetterberg

I never met him.

Timothy Naftali

Oh.

Stephen Zetterberg

I never met him. I had attended meetings when he was speaking, but --

Timothy Naftali

Why don't you take a break?

Stephen Zetterberg

Excuse me, just a minute.

Timothy Naftali

Go ahead. No, no, we'll stop.

Stephen Zetterberg

She didn't leave me very much of this red stuff.

Timothy Naftali

It looks good, though. Let me help you out with that.

Stephen Zetterberg

Here she comes. Okay, go.

Timothy Naftali

Okay, go? I wanted to ask you a few questions about being a Democrat in California in the 1950s. You helped create something, or you were involved at least, in something called the California Democratic Council. Do you recall that?

Stephen Zetterberg

Yes.

Timothy Naftali

Could you tell us something about that? What was the Democratic -- the CDC?

Stephen Zetterberg

It was a -- I won't say extra-legal -- but it was outside of the regular statutory party. I won't say that it was without statutory backing, but it was a kind of whirlwind that hit the Democrats there, actually helped them in the early days of -- after '46 and so on, even before then. I can't remember the exact dates, although I have it in the records here. It was a, based on clubs, the club movement. We still have a Claremont Democratic Club, but it's become more staid now. In those days it was a very active group. We had meetings in Sacramento that were actually more powerful and more immediate to try and meet the problems, post-war problems, based upon the club movement.

It's called the California Democratic Council, the CDC. They were really a lively group of Democrats and fun working with. Their conventions were more unconventional than the regular party conventions. I'm trying to think of an example. I remember, when I lost the Democratic nomination, they still appointed me as a member of the legal organization, which was the Democratic Convention was supposed to meet and do things. Actually, they came up with a little more freedom than they had under the party. I wonder if I could maybe give you an example. I remember when the regular party was meeting in Sacramento, they had a meeting of the committee that made the platform. They were up and, you remember the Rotunda? They were on the inside of the Rotunda, and several of us got assigned an office that was right opposite their door. One of them was Dyke Brown, for example, was a Yale graduate. And he was mostly -- did a lot of work on the formation of the Ford Foundation.

It was good group of about five people. We got about at least four typewriters, and the door was locked to the committee making the platform. So we would sit there, and we assigned different topics just out of the blue. There were, I think, four of us. One of them was a defeated assembly candidate. And then Dyke Brown, I remember, the one who went to my same law school and worked on the Ford Foundation. We would type little things out by hand and stick them under the door and wait to see if anything happened. Well, after a while -- I should say, I think that person who was chairman of that committee was George Miller, Jr., a very good person to do this kind of thing in the regular form. We would stick it under the door and heard nothing. Finally, after we'd done a lot stuff under the door -- I think there were four of us doing this -- they sent a note that said, "Will you please hurry up? Will the drafting committee please hurry up? We're getting ahead of you." So we were, in effect, sabotaging, or creating, the program of the Democratic Party, at least making it possible for them to have something to chew on. That was really a fun thing, and it worked.

Timothy Naftali

Do you remember any of the issues that were interested in, that you were pushing at the time?

Stephen Zetterberg

Oh, I could dig it out here of the letters, but, of course, one of the first of them was the cross-filing, get rid of that. I remember, even when I was in Michigan, where we had a summer place, I would go over to the library of the court and try to study how to get rid of cross-filing. There was a lot of that, but --

Timothy Naftali

I think that happens around '54.

Stephen Zetterberg

We were really, I would say, like a group that were sort of like Stevenson and like, actually, like the later President of the United States. We were pushing, I think, for new faces and new people.

Timothy Naftali

Let me ask you about a few of the new people. I guess Pat Brown was one of the new people, right?

Stephen Zetterberg

Yes, he was very experienced, and -- I worked very hard on the Pat Brown campaigns, and he was a lot of fun to work for. I remember I had a meeting that had been called by me through his secretary to meet on health care issues. I got there a little early and going down the halls of the just below the Rotunda, and Pat Brown went by. He says, "Why Stephen Zetterberg, what are you doing here?" I said, "I have a meeting with the governor here very shortly." I remember after that at that meeting he gave us \$50,000 extra money to get staff to work on the issues that we were working on. He was a really fun person to work for, anyway.

Timothy Naftali

Can you tell us about Jesse Unruh?

Stephen Zetterberg

Big Daddy?

Timothy Naftali

Yeah.

Stephen Zetterberg

They called him Big Daddy. He was -- you and I would think of him as more of a boss type, but he had a lot of good solid Democratic religion, if you pardon the expression, and was very good. But he was considered sort of a -- he was not the type of person that Pat Brown was, for example. He was not really outgoing in that way, but he was a very able person, I think.

Timothy Naftali

Do you remember anything from the 1960 Presidential campaign, what happened in California?

Stephen Zetterberg

The what?

Timothy Naftali

The 1960 Presidential campaign, when Nixon was against Kennedy. Do you remember the campaign in California at all?

Stephen Zetterberg

I'm trying to. I probably have it in my file here, but I didn't bone up on that, the 1960s.

Timothy Naftali

That's okay.

Stephen Zetterberg

Just a minute.

Timothy Naftali

You can take your -- sure.

Stephen Zetterberg

I'm not looking for -- I'm not pinning the -- you have a question about a focus on a particular date of time, and I don't have that -- sorry about that.

Timothy Naftali

Well, maybe I'll ask you this way --

Stephen Zetterberg

Go ahead, you were leading me another way.

Timothy Naftali

Rather than talk about a date, did you ever see John Kennedy give a speech in California?

Stephen Zetterberg

Oh, yeah, yes, I did. He was really something to listen to. He was really good. I remember going into Los Angeles to hear him give a speech, and I really liked him as a candidate and as a public figure. I thought he was really good.

Timothy Naftali

Do you remember anything from the campaign between Richard Nixon and Pat Brown for governor of California in 1962?

Stephen Zetterberg

Let's see, what' happened in that election? I'm trying to remember what happened.

Timothy Naftali

Well, the thing that you might remember is that the CDC became an issue.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yeah, the California Democratic Council.

Timothy Naftali

Yes, Nixon said that the CDC was far left, extreme left, and tried to argue that Pat Brown basically took his orders from the CDC, and wasn't that bad for California.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yeah, so now -- Pat Brown was always his own person, but he didn't have that kind of a feeling towards CDC. CDC was a kind of an overflow of Democrats who were very energetic in trying to do things like get rid of cross-filing and so on, and I don't feel there was any -- I don't remember -- well, I'll back up. I remember one CDC convention in the state capitol when Pat Brown came, I remember, and I remember that we had -- I was chairman of a resolutions committee at one point there. He wanted to see what the proposals were flowing, what they were flowing. So he was sort of trying to quietly, I think, to aim the different issues in the way he wanted them to go, which is fine, you know.

Timothy Naftali

Ironically, Nixon in the 1962 campaign, would criticize Pat Brown because the CDC argued that Red China should be admitted to the United Nations.

Stephen Zetterberg

Oh, I hadn't -- that's one of those gorgeous shots with slingshots in the dark, yeah. I forget -- I don't think I ever talked with Pat Brown on that, anyway. As you probably know and read some of this, I was appointed. Pat Brown called me in after his election, with one of his secretaries and asked me what I would like to do. Would I like to be a judge? I said, "No, I only want to do something. I'm doing my law practice and my children. I live in Claremont. And we're living, doing that." I'd do something that doesn't pay, because I was trying to build a law practice too. We used to have the editor of our paper, Martin Weinberger [phonetic sp], who is still alive, used to go down and have lunch with Pat Brown quite often. I remember he would tell us where to go to eat. We'd go pick him up, and I remember we got in one place, and in the elevator there were two giggling girls carrying soda water and stuff. We went in with Pat Brown -- this is Marty Weinberger and Steve Zetterberg. The first thing he said once the door shut, he says, "Are you Democrats or Republicans?" They giggled and giggled, and they said, "Well, we're Republican." And he says, "Well, what floor are you going to?" They told them the floor. He said, "Well, I'm going to change your mind before we get there." That was the way that Pat Brown was, kind of fun that way, doing that kind of stuff.

Timothy Naftali

Why was he -- do you remember his campaign against Ronald Regan?

Stephen Zetterberg

I probably was involved in it, but that would have been a parallel thing with my law practice and all that. During -- at that time, probably I was on the Democratic State Committee and the Democratic County Committee, and I was working through that kind of a magnifying or the reverse of magnifying and for the Democratic Party at that time, but I guess maybe I didn't answer your question.

Timothy Naftali

No, that's all right. I just wanted to know if you -- because you had also witnessed another great gubernatorial election in California. How did, as you remember it, how did the Democratic Party change from the time -- when you were in college in Claremont and from the '30s until the '60s, the Democratic Party changed a little in California, didn't it? Did it change at all?

Stephen Zetterberg

Well, I was nonpolitical when I was in college here, basically nonpolitical. I was just doing work in my courses. I wonder, how can I answer that?

Timothy Naftali

Well, I was just wondering if you remembered -- it was a little bit before you went to college -- whether you remembered the Upton Sinclair campaign.

Stephen Zetterberg

I remember that like a floating cloud in my mind [unintelligible]

--

Timothy Naftali

That's fine, I just -- but that's why. You're one of the few that might remember that campaign. When did you -- what do you remember of Watergate?

Stephen Zetterberg

Of what?

Timothy Naftali

Watergate. Because you start -- when Watergate happens, you start -- you wrote again about the cross-filing when Nixon has his Watergate difficulty in the '70s.

Stephen Zetterberg

I'm sorry.

Timothy Naftali

In the 1970s, you wrote about cross-filings again. You wrote about it to the newspapers when Nixon had his Watergate difficulties.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yeah, I probably have that in here.

Timothy Naftali

Are there any other recollections that I haven't tapped from the '48 campaign?

Stephen Zetterberg

Well, yes, in a way, we tried to cover all of his speeches and to go. The person that really did that was usually the person who had been the Girl Scout leader, and that's the person whose mother started Casa Colina. That's a whole different story. I got involved with Casa Colina. Okay, I forgot what the question was.

Timothy Naftali

Well, I asked you if there was another anecdote from the '48 campaign you wanted to recall that I hadn't asked you about before.

Stephen Zetterberg

Well, my '48 campaign was a -- we would send Eva Smith, that's the daughter of Mother Smith, to listen to Nixon and report back to us. I had a lot of fun with meeting people in that campaign and going -- almost every night I would go out hoofing and walking, usually with at least one other person of the campaign. We would walk and ring doorbells and go in and talk. Secondly, there was the club movement, which you've mentioned, we would always try to attend the clubs. They were small clubs, like, and -- they would hold meetings in various houses, but people that came to those meetings were very politically oriented, and so that was a very interesting part of my campaign. I also, once in a while, was asked if I could make an appearance out of -- for example, I was asked to come up once to Central California and give a speech. That kind of thing happened to me from time to time.

Timothy Naftali

Did you -- did Harry Truman come out to California during that campaign?

Stephen Zetterberg

I can't remember. I'm sure he must have. I can't remember that. I remember him very well, but anyway --

Timothy Naftali

Well, tell us about how you remember him, please.

Stephen Zetterberg

Well, he was a very earthy sort of person. I have his memoirs up there on the shelf right above your cameraman's head. I really liked him as a person. See he was President part of the time when I was working -- I forget whether -- I worked twice for the senator, once before law school and then once after the law school. I was always -- we always liked Harry Truman, but that doesn't answer your question.

Timothy Naftali

Well, I actually wondered whether you had met Truman when he was just a senator and you were working for Scott Lucas.

Stephen Zetterberg

I don't think that I did. Of course, we foot soldiers would sort of know -- we would sort of emphasize with the people that we were really were watching and were very important in the country. And I don't remember anything like the Franklin Roosevelt grip. That's the only time I met him, but anyway, I'm sure we had a lot of -- well, working for Senator Lucas, we probably had a lot of different contacts with Truman.

Timothy Naftali

I wanted to ask you how the Depression, the experience of the Depression, had shaped your ideas of politics. Did it have an effect on you as a politician?

Stephen Zetterberg

Well, you must understand that I came from a Republican family, and they sort of tolerated my Democratic shift. And I remember -- I'm sure partly because of my work at Pomona College in the field of political science and also at law school -- that I got so that I was pretty aimed at the things that my parents just sort of would say, "Well, he's a good person to be doing that," you know, that kind of stuff. They never criticized me for changing parties, but anyway...

Timothy Naftali

Well, but weren't they -- to be Republican, that was the Hiram Johnson Republican, right?

Stephen Zetterberg

What?

Timothy Naftali

Hiram Johnson.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yeah.

Timothy Naftali

The progressive Republican, right? That the -- wasn't it Johnson?

Stephen Zetterberg

Yeah, the what?

Timothy Naftali

Hiram Johnson, wasn't he sort of the great California Republican?

Stephen Zetterberg

Well, yeah, he was also a very interesting governor, I think.

Timothy Naftali

And what prompted you to change? Why did you do this? Why did you change from being a Republican to being a Democrat? What happened?

Stephen Zetterberg

Well, I majored in at Pomona College in political science and history and things like that. You can't do that and still be a Republican, if you'll pardon -- I mean, you couldn't. I really felt like that was the only way I could go. I never did vote Republican. I've always voted Democratic, but my parents have never voted Democratic, I'm sure they never had. Then the law school where you're taking things apart, and you're going to go out and hit some real fire in terms of issues and so on, I don't really remember there ever being a Republican student who was being a Republican while he was a student at law school. The kind of issues we chewed on were issues that read -- well, some people thought we're really not a law school, we're a sociology school, I guess. Don't repeat that to my alma mater, the law school.

Timothy Naftali

Well, Yale Law School has that reputation of training people not just for the law.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yeah.

Timothy Naftali

Well, I asked you about that at the beginning of the interview because when you were at Yale Law School was a time when there was a great debate about whether the United States should enter World War II, and I had wondered whether New Haven was full of this debate at the time, at the college and at the law school. I'd wondered whether you remembered that. It's been a long time.

Stephen Zetterberg

I remember the climate, and I remember, I think it was Sunday morning, listening to the news. I went to the law library to do work, and Pearl Harbor was hit. I remember that quite distinctly. I had a growing -- well, I liked Franklin D. Roosevelt, and I liked Harry Truman, quite a different kind of person. And of course, I liked Jack Kennedy, but these people were people that had the same kind of general philosophic outlook that I had and that I had acquired partly at Pomona College -- although, maybe they wouldn't want to admit that -- and then also at the law school, because we sort of took things apart. I remember I had to put that in the framework. I had a roommate, who unfortunately smoked, but I couldn't do anything about that on the campus of the Yale Law School. He went off to Ohio, and then Ohio played Stanford, and he went to Stanford. When he arrived back he had dollar bills in his pocket and everything. We sort of -- he knew that he was going to be called on the next day or so, and he worked like a dog to get things ready. Now, this shows the difference between students and the faculty. We went into the big classroom, and he was, indeed, called upon in proper order, and he recited the facts of the case he was supposed to say. The professor said, "You, Mr." -- I forget his name now -- "you have passed your Scylla and your Charybdis, now sail!" And he had not the slightest idea what that was about. And that's the kind of doses that you got at law school there.

Timothy Naftali

I have to ask you this question, because I won't forgive myself if I don't. Do you remember playing with a Frisbee at Yale?

Stephen Zetterberg

Oh, you know about that. I've gotten calls on that, and they've attributed the knowledge of the Frisbee to me and some things.

Timothy Naftali

Well, see, we dealt with the less important questions first, and now we're talking about the really important question. Tell us about the Frisbee, please.

Stephen Zetterberg

The Yale Law School is an old building trying to be English, and your library is up on about the, way up at higher up. You'd go there and you'd study, and it was quiet. But then you'd take a pie tin out and throw it. The dormitories were down in various wiggly situations, so you could sail it around. And they had police there at Yale, and they're dressed like gentlemen, you know, coats and ties, and if you were looking at them and you're a visitor, you'd never figure they were police. I remember the policeman

came and watched us, trying to figure out what to do with us. My friend, whose name was Phil Singleton, at that time, we were throwing Frisbees around. Then the police got one, held it out and then let go of it. It went straight down. That probably puzzled him. I don't know, but I've had a lot of calls on that. They generally -- Mrs. Frisbee did call me once. I forgot what that was about -- the pie lady. So I've been, I guess -- what did, how did you run into that?

Timothy Naftali

Well, Judith Shift, who is one of the chief researchers at the Sterling Memorial Library, she wrote a piece for the Yale Alumni Journal --

Stephen Zetterberg

Oh.

Timothy Naftali

-- where she talked about Yale and the origin of the Frisbee.

Stephen Zetterberg

Oh, well, she may have bumped into me there on that --

Timothy Naftali

She interviewed -- you are mentioned in this.

Stephen Zetterberg

Okay, that's probably where, yeah.

Timothy Naftali

And Daran and Paul both recovered this article. But just so people know, the term Frisbee comes from the pie company, right?

Stephen Zetterberg

Right.

Timothy Naftali

It's what, a Connecticut pie company?

Stephen Zetterberg

Right, yeah, Mrs. Frisbee called me once and told me that she was -- that we were the ones -- Mr. Singleton and I were the ones that really started that. Well, there were other students at the law school

that were throwing around, because it was kind of dangerous to hit a baseball there, you'd break a window. There was a certain limitation where one guy on the fourth floor ran toilet paper down to the john and flushed the john, flushed a whole roll of toilet paper down. But that's kind of an activity that's kind of fun, but you'd run out of toilet paper after a while.

Timothy Naftali

This was, after all, the Depression, you wouldn't want to run out of toilet paper.

Stephen Zetterberg

I told your colleagues before you came that I forgot it was a girls' weekend, from Smith College coming down to Yale and other places like that. They were assigned the bottom floor toilet, and I was in there on the toilet, sitting on the toilet. The door opened, and there was this guy with his girlfriend there. He introduced her, and I said, I remember saying, "Pardon me for not rising."

Timothy Naftali

Let me ask you about Mr. Singleton, who I guess was your classmate. Singleton, you mentioned his name, Singleton.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yes.

Timothy Naftali

So the two of you just decided one day to start throwing pie plates?

Stephen Zetterberg

Yes, I don't know how it got started or whose pie tin we used, but that was a way to try and get exercise when you were working in the library studying, then you'd go down and throw the Frisbee.

Timothy Naftali

Right.

Stephen Zetterberg

He's deceased now, but I've sailed across the English Channel with him and his wife and along the coast of Norway. Anyway, but he is deceased now. Anyway --

Timothy Naftali

Well, that's -- I was saying that's great. Both of you were the inventor of the concept of the Frisbee and Richard Nixon's Democratic primary opponent. That makes you quite unique in American history.

Stephen Zetterberg

Do that last part again.

Timothy Naftali

I was going to say that you're the inventor of the concept of the Frisbee and Richard Nixon's Democratic primary opponent. I would think that makes you unique in American history.

Stephen Zetterberg

Well, I never threw the Frisbee with him.

Timothy Naftali

Well, you might have won the election had you done so.

Stephen Zetterberg

You know that article,
I didn't write the last paragraph in that.

Timothy Naftali

Oh, yeah, that's the one about where they referred to McGovern, right? That McGovern --

Stephen Zetterberg

No.

Timothy Naftali

I think so.

Stephen Zetterberg

I wonder if I've got the right thing here.

Timothy Naftali

It's the New York -- it's the "LA Times" piece, I think, isn't it?

Stephen Zetterberg

No, it's the one that I wrote.

Timothy Naftali

Yes, and they added that --

Stephen Zetterberg

They called me up and asked me to write about that, and I wrote that -- the sacrificial lamb one? And the last paragraph talks about who might have won if thus-and-so happened. I didn't write that paragraph. The editors of the "LA Times" wrote that.

Timothy Naftali

What did they -- wow, oh? Well, that happens --

Stephen Zetterberg

Anyway, they said you might have won any -- it's in the somewhere. I can look it up right now if you need me.

Timothy Naftali

That's okay, no, that's all right. We'll look at it after we finish.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yeah.

Timothy Naftali

I thought it was a different article that you were referring to.

Stephen Zetterberg

There are two articles that are kind of similar, but one was like the Nixon campaign campaigns as one big one. I guess you've seen that.

Timothy Naftali

Yes, well, what we'll do is we'll look at them and put them in the archive, the copies.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yeah, huh?

Timothy Naftali

We'll, put them in the archive, the copies in the archives afterwards.

Stephen Zetterberg

Okay, yeah, I think I've got some copies here if you need them.

Timothy Naftali

That'd be great, I'm sure scholars will appreciate having them.

Stephen Zetterberg

Yeah.

Timothy Naftali

Well, Mr. Zetterberg, thank you for your time. This has been great fun.

Stephen Zetterberg

Well, you've reminded of some of my Frisbee foibles and stuff like that. I've enjoyed that.

Timothy Naftali

You're welcome. You've given us as much pleasure. Thank you very much, thanks.

Stephen Zetterberg

Thank you.

Timothy Naftali

Thanks very much.