

MARTIN SPECTOR

—
Mame Warren,
Interviewer

Warren: This is Mame Warren. Today is the 29th of January, 1997, and I'm in Coral Gables, Florida, with Martin Spector.

Now, do you go by the name Martin or Mike?

Spector: My nickname is Mike.

Warren: How'd you get a nickname of Mike?

Spector: I just don't know. Now, my son is named Michael, but he's not junior. He's really Michael. I have two nicknames. One is Mike and the other is Spec.

Warren: Well, when you sent me that article and it said you were called Mike, but it didn't say why you were called Mike. I guess you didn't know why you were called Mike.

Spector: I just don't know.

Warren: So you grew up in Staunton?

Spector: Yeah.

Warren: How did you decide to go to Washington and Lee?

Spector: Well, a friend of mine, a close friend of mine, Robert Fulwiler went there the year before I did, and he just came back, and I just wanted to go to Washington and Lee. I didn't even try to apply anywhere else. That was it.

Warren: What did you know about Washington and Lee that attracted you?

Spector: Nothing. I really knew nothing about it, and in those days I think I was probably the third or fourth person who had gone to college, and Staunton in those days was a small town about probably less than ten thousand. And so Bob Fulwilder said, "Why don't you come up and look it over." You know. So I went up and looked it

over. I play the violin, or used to play the violin, and Bob Fulwilder was – we had an orchestra while we were in high school, and Washington and Lee had a Glee Club called the Troubadours, and they put on shows. So naturally, that helped to attract me there, but even if it hadn't been the Troubadours, I still would have gone to Washington and Lee.

Warren: Do you remember the first time you went on campus, what you thought of it?

Spector: I just thought it was gorgeous. It was terrific. And I went over and saw the recumbent statue of Lee. You know, everywhere that you walked, everybody said, "Hi, gentlemen," to you. It was so friendly and was just fine.

Warren: Did they actually say, "Hi, gentlemen"?

Spector: Yeah. They did.

Warren: That's what I've read, but I never heard that. Now today we all just say "hi."

Spector: Right. They used to say, "Hi, gentlemen." The "gentlemen" seemed to be part of the "hi."

Warren: Really? Wow. That's very interesting. So did you adopt that right away?

Spector: Oh, sure. My first year, when I was a freshman there, I took my five subjects, whatever, you know, with the curriculum and so forth and so on, and I decided that – my family lived in Staunton. My father had a small department store there, and we weren't – we were just very moderately fixed financially, so I thought it was a waste of time to be there four years, so I went over to the University of Virginia and took a summer course there, and then when I came back to Washington and Lee, I took seven courses. They let me take them because I had a B average, and I finished in three years.

Warren: I saw that in the yearbook.

Spector: That was the reason why. I just thought I'd save my folks money and I'd get out faster, you know.

Warren: Aren't you clever.

Spector: No, it's not that. It wasn't clever, frankly. I should have studied and gotten on the Honor Roll and everything, but I was enjoying it up there, and I was not only in the Troubadours, but I also was in the band. They had a school band. In those days, football was quite the big thing, you know, and athletics, so that was my extracurricular activity, was either in Troubadours or with the band.

Warren: Did you act in Troubadours?

Spector: No. I played the violin in the orchestra.

Warren: There was an orchestra with the Troubadours?

Spector: Oh, sure.

Warren: Wow. We don't have that anymore. That's exciting.

Spector: We used to put on shows that were real good.

Warren: Somebody who was involved in the Troubadours who I'm real interested in was Miss Annie Jo White. Did you know her?

Spector: I knew her but just the name, you know, just like Cy Twombly and any of these older names and everything, but I never had any particular contact with her, but I'm sure I knew the name.

Warren: Was she still involved with the Troubadours by the time you got there?

Spector: I really don't remember.

Warren: She was involved in the founding, but I think probably she was close to retirement by the time you got there.

Spector: I don't recall her being active in it. As a matter of fact, I don't even know who was the director and so forth.

Warren: And where did you put on the plays back then?

Spector: I don't recall.

Warren: I'm trying to figure out where it would have been back then.

Spector: Was the Doremus Gymnasium in existence then?

Warren: Yes. Maybe it was there.

Spector: I'm trying to think. That was the only – and of course, that's where they had the basketball games and Fancy Dress.

Warren: And I know there used to be some kind of small auditorium in Washington Hall that's gone now, and I wondered if maybe it was there.

Spector: No. Well, I'm sorry. I can't tell you.

Warren: That's the kind of thing that slips through the cracks in the yearbook because everybody knows where they were doing it, so they don't bother to write it down.

Spector: Right.

Warren: So you were there during the Roaring Twenties.

Spector: Yep.

Warren: Was it roaring in Lexington?

Spector: Yeah. We did a lot of drinking, moonshine whiskey.

Warren: Will you tell me about that?

Spector: Well, I'll tell you, it's lucky we survived it. It just seemed to be the thing to do. You either went out of town on weekends, you either went to Lynchburg, you know, or to Charlottesville or Staunton, and it was – you know, as I look back on it, there isn't anything, with the exception of the Troubadours and playing in the band and rehearsing and so forth, that stands out in my mind of anything. Somehow or other it was just such a friendly place where it all seemed to be – I don't know, it was just real good, and my memories are just very fond. The teachers were great. Fancy Dress, of course, was the big thing then, you know.

Warren: Oh, I want to talk about that, too, but I want to find out more about this bootleg. Was there really bathtub gin?

Spector: It wasn't gin. We drank mostly whiskey. We'd go out in the mountains or these farmers would come and bring it in. We'd buy it in half-gallon jugs or gallon jugs. It was corn whiskey.

Warren: And there were stills out in Rockbridge County?

Spector: Yeah, sure.

Warren: Did you ever go out? Did you ever go get it?

Spector: Sure. I've been out—I went out a few times. I remember one time we went to this place, and this little kid was the son of the farmer, I think, the man who made the whiskey, and we said, "Well, how do we know if this whiskey's any good?" He said, "Oh, it's real good. We just made it yesterday." [Laughter]

Warren: Did you have a car? How did you get out to get it?

Spector: No, I didn't have a car. A couple of boys had cars. There weren't many cars. I didn't have one, and, you know, to go back to Staunton, I used to hop rides, stand down at the end there and someone would pick you up, take you maybe halfway, and then—

Warren: Was hitchhiking popular then?

Spector: Oh, yes, very.

Warren: That's how a lot of people got around?

Spector: Sure. I wouldn't any more think of picking up a hitchhiker now than anything, but in those days, that's the way it was. Staunton was only thirty-five miles from Lexington, so it wasn't much.

Warren: That wasn't too far to go at all. So you mentioned Fancy Dress.

Spector: Yeah.

Warren: How'd you get a date for Fancy Dress when there weren't any women around in Lexington?

Spector: Well, I played—we had an orchestra in Staunton called the Azuzus. It was named after the Azuzu Ginger Crackers, and we played, oh, as far north as Warrenton, and we played at the Camerons [phonetic] and so forth and so on. And in my fraternity—I was ZBT—there were a lot of boys from up North and so forth there, a lot of either New York or Pennsylvania and so forth and so on, and those were the girls that we knew. I mean, a girl I used to date went to Johns Hopkins—what's the other school?

Warren: In Baltimore?

Spector: Yeah.

Warren: Well, there's Johns Hopkins and University of Maryland and Goucher.

Spector: Goucher.

Warren: That's the women's college.

Spector: Goucher was the gal that I date, and I had her down for a couple of the parties.

Warren: And how would she get there? That's a long way.

Spector: Came by train. Oh, sure.

Warren: So can you remember Fancy Dress? What was it like?

Spector: It was terrific.

Warren: Tell me about it.

Spector: Well, it had – Jan Garber played there and – I've forgot whether the orchestra from North Carolina, there were two. It wasn't Kay Kaiser. Hal Kemp. I don't know whether it was Hal Kemp or Kay Kaiser, but I remember distinctly that Jan Garber played there, and it was just a good time.

I wish I could be more interesting, but, you know, I don't want to make up anything.

Warren: No. No. I don't want you making it up, but I like a good story. A good story is a good story.

Spector: It really was an uneventful three years. I never got in trouble. I was never suspended. It was just – I liked my teachers, you know.

Warren: Were there any teachers that you particularly remember?

Spector: Yeah. Well, the one I remembered mostly was Dr. Farrar, because I took all his German. I took three years in German with him. He was just a wonderful gentleman. Dr. Easter was the French teacher, and Dr. Latture was the Spanish teacher. Languages were very easy for me. The only thing I had problems with was math, I

mean with algebra – not algebra, calculus and that stuff. It was tough on me. And the dean we had – what was it? Geology. I had an academic career, mostly. I didn't know what I was going to do. I had no thoughts or ideas what I was going to do after I got out of college. I mean, I was seventeen years old when I went to Washington and Lee, and I was twenty – I was the youngest one in the class because your age is calculated from your last birthday, you see, and finals was like the first of June. So I was really nineteen when I graduated.

Warren: Oh, my gosh.

Spector: I'd be twenty the eighteenth of June. And I remember my mother and dad were up there, one guy on each – we were standing there. One was six feet four, and the other one was six feet three, and here I'm five feet seven, you know, and not only was I the youngest, but I was the smallest. My mother said I looked like a baby up there. [Laughter]

Warren: But I'll bet she was proud of you.

Spector: Oh, yeah, sure.

Warren: So you're talking about professors that I don't – other than Rupert Latture.

Spector: Yeah, well, he just died recently, the last year or two.

Warren: Yes, he did. And I remember him very well. I remember him. I'm very sorry I never got to interview him. I think that would have been most interesting.

Spector: He was the founder, I think, of ODK.

Warren: He was in the group who came up with the idea originally.

Spector: He had a course in sociology, and it was just a breeze for me. I remember, you know, the way they used to work, the professor would come in, give you the paper, then he walked out. He gave you the questions. And so you had from nine until two o'clock, you had five hours. I must have written thirty pages, and I just knew that thing just as cold. This was at mid-session. So I was walking down the main street – what's the main street in Lexington?

Warren: Main Street?

Spector: Main Street. And I see Dr. Latture, and I was with this girl, and I was under the – I was pretty high and had a few drinks. "Hi, Dr. Latture!"

He says, "Hi, Spector. How are you?"

I said, "Did you get my paper? Have you graded my paper?"

He said, "Yeah."

I said, "Did I get a hundred on that?"

He said, "What makes you think you should get a hundred?"

I said, "I knew that baby cold."

He says, "Well, I gave you ninety-nine." He said "I never give a hundred."

So this gal I was with, she thought I was brilliant. That was the only one that I got an A in. All the rest were Bs.

Warren: Well, that was good timing, to run into him at that time. Was he a good teacher?

Spector: Yeah. He was excellent. They were all good teachers. I tell you, you know, sometimes you go – I hear from not Mike in particular, but I've got a couple of grandchildren, they don't like this teacher. I told them, "I liked every one of my teachers. I thought they were just absolutely excellent." I just never had any unpleasant incidents, never had anything that was other than just fun and joyful and so forth. So you can see why I feel the way I do. It was just great.

Warren: It seems to be a pretty special place. One of the things, I think, that makes it unusual is this honor tradition, the Honor System.

Spector: Oh, sure.

Warren: Was that new to you when you got there, the idea of an Honor System?

Spector: Well, I'd never heard of the Honor System, but it just so happens that my mother, who was the great – my dad was busy trying to make a living – she always insisted that you tell the truth. I remember she said, "A lie, you have to remember what

you said. You tell the truth, you never have to remember what you said." So I was brought up to tell the truth, and then, of course, at Washington and Lee, it said you don't lie, cheat, or steal. Well, there was never any occasion I was even tempted to cheat on a test or — I just, I don't know, and it's the same way. I'll tell you, I've run our business for forty-eight years. I mean, we treat our customers and we have — I'm telling you, the business is terrible now. I mean, there's so much competition and they're falling like flies, I mean, our competitors and so forth and so on. But we have a good name, and that's more important to me than wealth and so forth.

I never was particularly interested in becoming a rich man or anything like that, because I've seen too many people who were rich and spent their money on doctors and psychiatrists and everything else, and here I am, I'll be ninety-two in June. The Lord's been good to me. I've been married to the same gal for fifty — March first will be fifty-four years. I have four children, and fortunately they're all in good shape, I mean, healthy and so forth. And every week I pick up the paper, somebody else I know has passed on and so forth, but it doesn't depress me. I just keep on telling me how lucky I am. I'm going to join the Hundred Club. I want to make it to a hundred at least.

Warren: Willard Scott's waiting for you.

Spector: But I just think that Washington and Lee, it's just a unique place. When I finished college — I mean, when I finished Washington and Lee, I didn't have a profession. You know, I just [unclear]. So my father had this small business, and I'd worked around in the store all these years, you know. That wasn't for me. So my mother says, "Well, you've got to be either a lawyer — you've got to have a profession, either lawyer, doctor." Of course, nowadays it's an accountant also. So I said, "Okay. I'll take law." So I went to the University of Virginia. I went over there and spent three years at the University of Charlottesville, had excellent teachers, too, there. It was fine.

But my loyalty, my first love was of Washington and Lee. So I never participated in anything over there except that I played, had an orchestra and played for dances and

so forth, got – I think once – I don't have to tell you, you've talked to a lot of alumni. There's something about Washington and Lee that you can't describe. It's an intangible thing. It's just a love and desire. I mean, I've tried in my modest way to contribute every year to the university, and I feel that I'm helping others to come along and so forth, and I think that's what life is all about.

Warren: I wish we could really understand what it is that makes us all feel the way we do about Washington and Lee.

Spector: Well, you had the tradition of George Washington and General Robert Lee, who I think is probably the greatest man that ever lived in America. I've read everything about Robert E. Lee and, you know, you want to emulate him or you feel he's your foster father. I don't know. It's just wonderful. He was such a fine gentleman.

Warren: Was there a sense of him as a presence?

Spector: I think there was.

Warren: Were people really aware?

Spector: I think, somehow or other, unconsciously he was there.

Warren: I often wonder if it's because of that statue there that we all see so frequently.

Spector: I just don't know. And, you know, the campus is so pretty. It's a beautiful campus. As I say, I mean, it sounds silly, but I don't remember a single unpleasant incident the whole three years I was there. I enjoyed every day I was there.

Warren: I believe you. I enjoy every day I'm there. I understand.

Now, you had some pretty interesting classmates, at least in terms of Washington and Lee. They went on to be very interesting people. Were you, by any chance, friends with Ollinger Crenshaw? Did you know him?

Spector: Sure. Ollie was in my class. In other words, Ollie became a history teacher there, and he turned out to be a favorite of my son Michael, and, of course, when Mike came there, Ollie said, are you any kin to me, and Mike explained, he said, "That's my

dad." So I would see Ollie, you know, every now and then when I went up there, not reunions but just to go up there for Michael. I just thought he was a great guy.

Warren: I was just tickled when I saw that he was your classmate, because I'm curious what he was like as a student.

Spector: You know, he didn't impress me as being a brilliant student. He was just another good guy, a member of my—I don't even remember what classes we had together, you know, but I remember he was a tall guy, you know, and he was full of fun, too. Do you know Gannaway? Is he still alive? He lives in Lakeland. He was in my class, too.

Warren: I don't know that name.

Spector: Bruce Gannaway.

Warren: No. Tell me about him

Spector: Well, he became a minister. I think he became like a—oh, what do you call them—a bishop. He's been living in Lakeland for a number of years. I have a couple of stores up there, but I just don't get up there very often, but I saw him at the fiftieth reunion in '75. And then one time I was over in Tampa, I happened to be over there on a trip, and they had—not a reunion, but they had one of these meetings. Who was the president before Wilson?

Spector: Bob Huntley.

Spector: After Huntley.

Warren: John Wilson followed Huntley.

Spector: He did?

Warren: And now we have John Elrod.

Spector: Yeah. I've met Elrod. Well, then it must have been Wilson. So, anyhow, he was over there, and I had a real good time. I think I called Tom Touchton.

Warren: Tom Touchton. I went to see him.

Spector: Yeah. And I said, "Tom, can I come over?" I said, "I'm coming to Tampa." He said, "Sure."

Warren: In fact, I'm supposed to give you greetings from him. He was very happy to hear I was coming to see you. I'd forgotten that I was supposed to tell you that.

Spector: He's a nice person.

Warren: And another person from your class who distinguished himself was John Minor White. Did you know him? He became a federal judge.

Spector: Wisdom.

Warren: I'm sorry?

Spector: Wisdom.

Warren: Yes, you're right. Wisdom, yes.

Spector: Yeah. I know he became a judge. I really don't remember him very much. Was he '25 academic, or was he '25 law?

Warren: Academic.

Spector: He was?

Warren: He was in your class.

Spector: He's from New Orleans.

Warren: Yes.

Spector: I knew he became a judge, and very well known. I mean, he's had some big cases and so forth.

Warren: Very. Very.

Spector: Is he still alive? I believe he is.

Warren: I believe he is.

Spector: I think so.

Warren: In fact, I'm going to New Orleans in a few months for a conference, and I'm hoping that I'll be able to hook up with him while I'm there.

Spector: I think he's retired, but I haven't heard that he died.

Warren: No, I think he's still with us. I think he's still with us. But, you know, the thing that I was most intrigued by, when I looked at your yearbook was to see that Mr. Mattingly, Earl Mattingly, was a student.

Spector: Earl Mattingly, also the registrar.

Warren: He was the registrar while he was a student. How can you do that? I was mystified by it.

Spector: I don't know. I think what happened was he just wanted to finish, get his degree. He probably had interrupted or something. I don't know. But I remember that he was there going to school at the same time he was the registrar.

Warren: I thought that was fascinating. I couldn't understand how a student can be in charge of everybody else's grade.

Warren: But he was, you know, probably in his thirties. He wasn't a youngster.

Warren: Well, from his picture, he looked older than the rest of you. So he was. Did you know him very well?

Spector: Well, I know him just like I know anybody else, sure.

Warren: So who all was in ZBT? Tell me about your fraternity. What was that like?

Spector: Gosh, I can't even remember. Eddy Felsenthal was from Memphis, and a fellow named Goodman was from Memphis. Louis Joel was from Jacksonville. Sam Bucholtz was from Jacksonville. Several others whose names I've forgotten were from New York and so forth and so on, up North. And there was the boy who was from—I can't think of his name now, he was from Chicago. We had quite a cosmopolitan group. There weren't many, I think there were only eight. There were four of us, Bernie Wagner, myself, Charlie Schloss, and Eddy Felsenthal. I think there were about eight, or eight or ten in the fraternity when we were taken in, the four of us.

Warren: So was your fraternity real important to you?

Spector: Not particularly. The first year, of course, I stayed in the dormitories, but the next two years I lived at the fraternity house, and it was fine. I got along great.

Warren: Is that where the parties happened?

Spector: Yeah, we'd have parties there. Now I'm thinking of – Eddy Matz, he was from Louisville, Kentucky. Now, I'm thinking – I haven't thought of it in fifty, sixty years.

Warren: You're doing great.

Spector: Well, I'm not.

Warren: So where was the ZBT House?

Spector: The ZBT House was across the street from the Phi Psi house on Main Street. And I remember John Hammond [phonetic], who married Mary Martin, was a Phi Psi. He lived right across the street.

Warren: Really?

Spector: Yeah. He's dead now. He died year ago.

Warren: The famous Mary Martin?

Spector: Uh-huh.

Warren: I'm telling you, Washington and Lee men are everywhere.

Spector: Well, like Stemmons was a football player there, and, of course, he made a fabulous fortune in Texas, and they named the Stemmons – what is it, a thruway or whatever it is, after him.

Warren: I'm going to go talk to him next month.

Spector: You ought to get a big donation from him, because he's loaded. [Laughter]

Warren: Well, I'm just intrigued by him. There are lots of stories about him as a student, and I want to go and try to capture his version of them. I think it's really important to get people's own versions of their own story.

So another thing that you were there for that I think might have been pretty exciting, was the Mock Convention in 1924.

Spector: Oh, sure.

Warren: Did you take part in it?

Spector: No, I didn't take part in it, but I was there for it.

Warren: And that was the year you all –

Spector: John W. Davis.

Warren: You nominated one of your own.

Spector: Right, from Charleston, West Virginia. I think he was from Charleston, but I know he's from West Virginia.

Warren: Tell me about that. What do you remember about that?

Spector: Well, it was just terrific. I mean, here I'm eighteen years old, I wasn't even old enough to vote, but it was very, very exciting, and I watched the – all through the years. Whenever they had them on television, I've watched the Mock Conventions, and if I remember, if I'm correct, they picked the winner practically every time.

Warren: Almost every time. But I just think that must have been particularly special in 1924.

Spector: Yes, sure.

Warren: Did you all talk about that he was a Washington and Lee man?

Spector: You know, I don't remember that kind of thing.

Warren: Yeah. That's a long time ago, but I just think that must have been so exciting. I went to the Mock Convention last year, and I just loved every minute of it. I thought it was so exciting.

Spector: Well, it's real professional. I mean, it could be for real instead of a mock. That's how good it is. It's done very, very well.

Warren: Save a lot of money if they'd just let the students do it, wouldn't they?

[Laughter]

So the president when you were there was Henry Louis Smith?

Spector: Yeah. "Leftie Louie."

Warren: Tell me about him. I'm intrigued by him. I've been reading a lot about him.

Spector: Well, he was a wonderful speaker.

Warren: Was he?

Spector: Oh, yeah. He was terrific, and all I could say is that he was great. He was wonderful. Perfect.

Warren: Did you get to know him personally?

Spector: Not particularly, no. There was no reason to know him. I mean, I won't say there was no reason, but I don't even know whether he knew my name. In those days, I think the student body was about three or four hundred. It was, you know, very small.

Warren: I've heard people who graduated more recently talk about just how personal the relationship was with the faculty because there were so few of you, and the ratio, the student-to-teacher ratio, was so small.

Spector: Oh, sure. It was like ten or twelve. Oh, yeah. It was great.

Warren: And sometimes they talk about going to dinner at their teachers' houses. Did that happen when you were there?

Spector: No, I don't recall ever having dinner with them.

Warren: I wondered if that might be a more modern thing.

Spector: Yeah.

Warren: I think that might be a more recent development. It probably is. So one of the big changes that we've had at Washington and Lee in recent years –

Spector: Well, I mean, to go there is mind-boggling, all the buildings and everything. Of course, the law building that Lewis built, you know, I remember when he gave the money. He had stock – he started Best – what was the name?

Warren: Best Products.

Spector: Best Products. I called up – who was the treasurer then?

Warren: Mr. Whitehead.

Spector: And he gave 150,000 shares at sixty dollars a share, nine million dollars. I called up Jim, and I said, "Jim, sell it." He said, "I did, Mike." [Laughter] I said, "Take the money and run."

Warren: Mr. Whitehead is a pretty shrewd fellow.

Spector: Is he still alive?

Warren: He sure is, and he's —

Spector: He's got all his china and all that stuff?

Warren: Well, he's retired, but he's still driving around in his Bentley, and he's very involved in the planning for the 250th anniversary.

Spector: Oh, wonderful.

Warren: He's making sure we do it right. He's one who, whenever anybody starts cutting corners or doing shortcuts, he says, "No, no, no. This is Washington and Lee. We've got to do it right."

Warren: Well, gosh. He and his — how about Washburn? Is he still alive?

Spector: He's still alive.

Warren: So those are probably the only two there that I really know anymore.

Spector: Oh, there's still a lot of people around you might remember. Do you know Frank Parsons? He was the assistant to the president for a long time.

Spector: No.

Warren: He's a real good friend of mine, helps me out a whole lot in my work. There are a lot of people still around. You know, people never leave Washington and Lee, it seems like.

Spector: I don't blame them. I remember there was a fellow who was — he was a Phi Eps, Stu Wurzbarger. He came back when he retired from whatever he did, I don't know, and he just loved to live in Lexington. Are there many like that, that have come to —

Warren: More and more. We're having a lot of people retiring there who are connected to the university.

Spector: I wouldn't mind going up there. I mean, not retiring. I'm already retired.

Warren: Come on up! We'd love to have you. We'd make room for one more, that's for sure. How frequently do you come to Lexington?

Spector: Well, I haven't been there for at least ten years. I mean, the way time flies, you know? John Wilson was here, though. When did he retire?

Warren: A year and a half ago.

Spector: On one of his trips he came down here. Is he still over in Blacksburg?

Warren: In Blacksburg. He retired in Blacksburg.

Spector: Yeah. He has a son there, doesn't he?

Warren: Yes. He has grandchildren there.

Spector: I just thought he was a very fine guy.

Warren: Oh, he sure seems to be.

Spector: I love those letters that he writes. He used to write these letters.

Warren: He's very eloquent. He was one of the first people I interviewed. He set a high standard. He's a very, very articulate person.

Well, when you come back to Lexington, it's a real different place now. We have women on campus. What do you think about that?

Spector: I'm in favor of it, but my friend Bob Fulwiler, who was my mentor, and he was a trustee for a number of years, he passed away a few years ago, he said, "I don't want you – don't you vote for –" He was one of those die-hards. I didn't want to argue with him, but I thought it was ridiculous. I mean, you can't stop the wind. You can't push back the ocean. Not only that, you need the money. That's the thing, if you're going to be discriminating against women. I was in favor of it. I mean, I'm glad. I did not miss not having – when I was at Washington and Lee, I thought it was great, just a bunch of fellows, you know, going to school, but I can very well see how it is now. I never will forget, my daughter Rozzie graduated from – she went to Washington University.

Warren: In Saint Louis?

Spector: Saint Louis. So we, my wife and I, we picked her up in the car, you know, with all the paraphernalia they accumulate. And that year, Powell was had become

Chief Justice, so they had a reception in Richmond, honoring him, you know. So I said to them, "Instead of coming straight to Miami, let's go to Richmond and go to this reception." So we went to the reception, and as she was shaking hands with Judge Powell, he said, "Where do you go to school?"

She says, "I go to Washington University because they wouldn't let me in Washington and Lee." So she said, "At least I had half of it." He laughed. He thought it was cute.

Warren: That's wonderful.

Spector: My other daughter went to Denver, and that's a lovely school.

Warren: Very pretty out there.

Spector: Have you been out there?

Warren: Yes. But you did have a son who went to Washington and Lee.

Spector: Yeah.

Warren: Did you encourage him to go?

Spector: Yeah. You want to do something? He really didn't want to go to Washington and Lee. And he was one of these kids that just because his dad—he was that type. He would rather have gone to Michigan. We went to Michigan. We went to Bowdoin. He wanted to go where it was cold. He wanted to go where it was snow and everything. So I insisted that he apply to Washington and Lee. Well, anyhow, to just sort of do me a favor. That was like his fourth choice, believe it or not. The year that he graduated Coral Gables High School, up until that year it had had a very, very fine reputation, but somehow or other it had slipped a little bit, and the superintendent had told us, "Oh, we send boys to Washington and Lee all the time."

Michael was put on the waiting list, and his grades—he couldn't even get into—I remember Bowdoin was one of the places he wanted. That's up in Maine. So Fulwilder got on the phone, and he talked to him and gave him the sales talk and talked to Jimmy Farrar, who was the dean of admissions, and Michael got in. So he went to Washington

and Lee. He didn't want to belong to ZBT fraternity. I won't say he's a snob, but it's just stupid. Of course, he's changed. He loves Washington and Lee. He's very proud of it, you know, so forth and so on.

It's very funny – it's not funny, it's the truth. He almost busted out his first year. Second year he did better. The third year he made the Dean's List, and he graduated on the Honor Roll, and you know, they put their – I don't know if they do it now, still do put his name up there. So after he got his diploma, and we were walking down, he said, "You know, Dad, if I'd have studied, I could have made Phi Beta Kappa." I said, "Now you're telling me." [Laughter]

Warren: Well, he did learn something. He learned to apply himself.

Spector: Yeah. He's just tickled to death that he went to Washington and Lee, because he has a lot of friends. As a matter of fact, he lives in Puerto Rico, but he also has the place here in [unclear] but anyhow, I forget where he was at, Arizona or someplace – I think it was Arizona that he went out, and he was visiting there on business, and he saw one of his classmates that was there, and they just had a ball, he told me, and this has happened through the years. He's had some real good friendships that have developed from the classes.

Warren: That's one thing that impresses me so much, is that Washington and Lee network seems to be so widespread and how Washington and Lee people help each other out all through their lives.

Spector: Well, let me tell you, Michael has this nursery, tropical plants and stuff like that, that he grows in San Juan, and he was recommended – he needed an attorney. So he met this attorney, and they were talking and so forth and so on. So they had lunch or whatever it was, and the attorney had his father-in-law happened to come along. I think his father-in-law was a doctor. So he said, "Well, Michael, tell me, where did you go to school?"

Now, this is what Michael said, "I went to a little school up in Virginia. You've probably never heard of it," you know. He said, "Washington and Lee"

And this doctor, this Puerto Rican doctor, "I'm a graduate of Washington and Lee." I mean, this is—

Warren: They're everywhere. I've learned to say "Washington and Lee" very proudly.

Spector: Right.

Warren: In fact, I've learned more than to say "Washington and Lee," to say "W&L," because that's how you tell a real Washington and Lee person. [Laughter]

I just noticed on my list there's one thing I wanted to find out if you know anything about, and I'm going to flip the tape over before I do.

[Begin Tape 1, Side 2]

Warren: Now, I know this is a long shot, but you may know nothing about this, but I heard a legend that somewhere, and I think it happened in the twenties sometime, some students hijacked a train. Do you know anything about that?

Spector: I heard about it. I don't know, but they went down to east Lexington and took the train and drove it from there to Goshen or something.

Warren: Something like that.

Spector: I heard about it, too, but I think it happened while I was there, but it was probably during Hell Week or Fancy Dress week or something like that. It happened.

Warren: I think it happened while you were there. This one fellow who's a law student now believes that his grandfather was involved in it, or maybe it was his great-grandfather. And his grandfather—gosh, he must have graduated with you. No, he was 1924. He graduated in 1924. And he thinks that his grandfather was involved with it, but he's not sure, you know. It's just sort of this family legend.

Spector: I didn't know anybody. I heard about it, though, and it was a big joke.

Warren: Well, we can't find anything in the newspapers about it. It seems like that should have been real newsworthy, but Washington and Lee has a way of controlling things, too.

Spector: I had nothing to do with it. I know that.

Warren: But it does ring a bell with you?

Spector: Oh, sure. Absolutely. Now that you mention it, it happened.

Warren: What do you remember?

Spector: I remember that a couple of guys went down, down to east Lexington, and drove the train, the engine, up to Goshen or something like that.

Warren: And did they get thrown out, or what would have happened?

Spector: I don't know.

Warren: I wonder what they would have done to somebody doing something like that. You don't lie, you don't cheat, you don't steal. Is that considered stealing or is that just a prank?

Spector: That was a prank. How are you going to steal an engine? [Laughter]

Warren: Well, I think it's a wonderful story, and I sure would like to find out more about it.

Spector: You can't find out from me.

Warren: And I sure would like to find some pictures of those stills out in Rockbridge County. Wouldn't that be fun, if we could find a photograph of that?

Spector: Oh, sure.

Warren: I somehow have a feeling that nobody was taking a camera along when they went out there.

So what do you think about the future? What should we be thinking about as we approach this 250th anniversary?

Spector: Well, I just think just keep doing what you're doing. I mean, I can't find anything to criticize. I can't say Washington and Lee should be doing this or they

should be doing that, or they're not doing this and so forth and so on. I was very pleased in the last alumni magazine. There were four articles in there, and the first one was that the Knight-Ridder, who owns Miami *Herald*, that they awarded Washington and Lee and one other school the journalism grant or something like that.

So I know the publisher, Dave Lawrence. There were four articles in there. I thought it was great. The first one was about Knight-Ridder. The other was about the man who got kicked out and gave them eleven million dollars. The third one was the student who went down into South America and was killed by these guerrillas, and the fourth one was that this alumnus was made president of the New York Stock Exchange. So I sent it over to him, and I marked them. I said, "Dave, here are four articles that you might be interested in." He thought it was, too. Well, you know, it's things like that.

Incidentally, the unit that I belong to, they started having a reunion about ten or fifteen years ago. I didn't go to it, but when they had the fiftieth, that I had to go, you know. I liked it so much. So that was in Elkhart, Indiana. Next year it was Zenie, Ohio. Last year was in Buloxi. This is the one in Buloxi.

Warren: This was a military reunion?

Spector: Well, it was my – it was the 118th Signal Radio Intelligence. I served overseas. This is the letter from – I think you might be interested in seeing it.

Warren: Oh, that's great. That's great. Well, I expect everybody pays attention to what you have to say around here.

Spector: No. No. I thought – in other words, I thought –

Warren: But they were interesting articles. I think the magazine is very well done.

Spector: I don't think I would have suggested it if the first one didn't refer to the fact that they got the Knight-Ridder, but he's a very, very fine gentleman, very community-minded.

Warren: So as far as you're concerned, you think we're doing okay?

Spector: I have no criticism whatsoever. I wish I were in better financial circumstances that I could give more, because it's always a pleasure to write that check.

Warren: Well, that's very nice.

Spector: No. I mean that sincerely.

Warren: But we're asking for your ideas at this point. You know, the 250th is a big deal.

Spector: And how.

Warren: We're only the seventh school in the United States to reach this point.

Spector: And how many are going to be there that are going to be ninety-three next year?

Warren: I think we're going to have to have a throne for you when you get there.

Is there anything more you would like to say? We've gotten through my list, and you probably know things that I didn't know to ask you about.

Spector: See, the whole thing is this – my stay there was uneventful. There wasn't anything earth-shattering. You know, we didn't have a war going on, and there wasn't any earthquakes and there wasn't any disasters and so forth, and so it was very, very placid, and nothing seemed to disturb us. We all enjoyed, I enjoyed going to classes. I never cut classes because I was unhappy or anything. And we always looked forward the weekend when we were either taking a trip or get tight, you know, have a little party and so forth and so on. But it was just a pleasant experience, and I enjoyed – as I say, I enjoyed every minute of it, and I felt proud to be accepted. Of course, you didn't even have to – I don't even know whether you had to even – I don't think they had SAT scores in those days.

Warren: Nope.

Spector: I mean, I just applied to Washington and Lee, and they said, "Come on in."

Warren: That's a very modern innovation now.

Spector: Right. As a matter of fact, the record association called National Association of Record Merchandising, they have a convention every year and they have scholarships, and I'm on the Scholarship Committee. I read all of these – as a matter of fact, I just finished – we're going to give twenty scholarships this year, and you know what the very disappointing thing is? I've been on it three years, and not a single one of any of the applicants have ever said that they wanted to go to Washington and Lee. Now, I've gone over a hundred – in other words, this year they had two hundred applicants. A man by the name of Mr. Owens, who was formerly a professor of education at the University of Pennsylvania, he goes over them first, and he picks the top hundred. Then there are a group of us, there's about eight of us. Then he sends us the top hundred and says, "Pick out the twenty-five, and then on February 6th, we'll have a – [Tape recorder turned off.]

Spector: You didn't have any of these drugs and gangsters and all that stuff. It was just nice guys.

Warren: Well, it was a different time, when things were a lot nicer, I think. I want to thank you. This has really been a pleasure.

Spector: Well, I thank you. Is there anything I can do for you here?

Warren: Well, I've got one more question, but we'll turn the machine off first.

[End of interview]