

TRANSCRIPT OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT INTERVIEW

Interview with Mr. J. Avery Wittenberger
Former Reporter at the Milwaukee Journal

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county exec and setting up the office. Wittenberger feels that the county was fortunate that Doyne was elected to the office because he set the standards for the office. The issue was whether the executive position would

Side two
605 - 693

Changes have occurred in the type of person holding office of Supervisor. They now are professional (lawyers). In his time few were college educated. Later on Supervisors who were lawyers often used the courthouse for legal business, with the excuse that the supervisor position was part-time. Supervisors did not have individual offices until later on; the expansion of staff occurred later also. Positions eventually relatively equal to aldermen.

694 - 989

John Doyne. Had genuine interest in making the office effective; thought county government was the most important of local governments. He was able to sell the idea of county government to the public. He

the next day).

109 - 255

Powerful people outside of county government were Norman Gill and Leo Tiefenthaler (spokesman for the City Club). Greater Milwaukee Committee and Rudy Schoenecker had influence from the business community. White and Busby supported public projects on the Board (e.g. Busby sponsored the legislation that built County Stadium, GMC and Schoenecker supported the stadium also). GMC also backed the zoo project. Schoenecker would speak to the Board formally; lobbying also took place more informally. Labor unions also affected county government, especially under O'Donnell who was a brewer's worker and became a spokesman

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Milwaukee has one of the best parks systems in the country. Jerome Dretzka, Gene Howard also key. O'Donnell was instrumental in abolishing the Parks Commission which Wittenberaer felt was a good group to

have as protection for the parks system. County Board of Public Welfare effective in administering the welfare department and combining it with the institutions operation. Bill Coffey, Director of Institutions, was very influential with the County Board. O'Donnell continued Deane's idea of increasing accountability to the people
