

**Paul Jost
Narrator**

**Edward P. Nelson
Interviewer**

Morris, Minnesota

February 14, 1979

EN: Today is February 14, 1979. I'm talking with Paul Jost, Vice President, Cooperative Power Association. My name is Ed Nelson.

Mr. Jost, what is your occupation?

PJ: Farming here.

EN: What kind of farming does that involve?

PJ: Oh, general farming—crops and some livestock.

EN: Have you lived in this area a long time?

PJ: Oh yes, I've lived here—well in this area here, since we've been married, about thirty years, and I was born just down the road here next to Morris.

EN: How long have you been involved with Agralite Cooperative?

PJ: Nine years.

EN: And is that as a member or on the board or...

PJ: On the board. Oh, I've been a consumer of Agralite for nearly thirty years, right here in the same place.

EN: What area does Agralite serve, the counties?

PJ: Well, it serves Swift, Big Stone, parts of those counties—Pope, Stevens—maybe some of Traverse.

EN: Does the powerline cross Stevens County or your member area?

PJ: Somewhat, yes.

EN: How long have you been involved with Cooperative Power Association?

PJ: About five years, four years.

EN: And were you vice president all this time?

PJ: No. Probably three of those years.

EN: What does your job as vice president entail? What responsibilities do you have?

PJ: Well, I guess the main responsibility of vice president is replacement of the president when he's not able to attend the meeting. Then you chair the meeting, and you take more of a leadership role, naturally. We do have them, in turn, serve on the executive board. Because of the fact that I am a vice president, that function there is, I've had some more responsibilities, you know, other than just being a regular director.

EN: Were you involved when the planning was going on for this 400 plus or minus kV line project?

PJ: Not really. No, the plans were all made before I become a CPA director. Although, it was right in that time, you know, when— I'm not sure whether they were completed or nearly completed.

EN: You weren't in on the planning stages and voting on whether or not to approve the project?

PJ: No.

EN: Did Agralite have a role in the planning of the project?

PJ: Oh, yes, they had a director on there. All of them have had. I succeeded him. He retired off the board and they selected me to replace him.

EN: I forgot to ask Charles Anderson this morning, but could you give a little background about Cooperative Power Association—when it was started and how many members there are?

PJ: Oh, Cooperative Power really kind of had a start out here in west central Minnesota. It was Ray Greechen and Runestone and Agralite, Montevideo. They started talking power supply about—oh gosh, I don't know—1950—early 1950s. Then as more co-ops came in, it actually took in more territory—more of the State of Minnesota—and some co-ops dropped out.

You see the power in this area here—this is an area served by the Bureau of Reclamation. It used to be totally at that time and there was kind of a vague, designated, kind of a historical boundary where the Bureau served and where they didn't serve. And they changed that a couple of times before they really decided—before they really made it permanent and that entered into the CPA organization too.

Actually some of those co-ops were not in the market area of Bureau power—about seven or

eight that are—that at that time was the reason that these other co-ops backed out of CPA. Montevideo and Traverse Electric were once part of CPA and Nobles co-op down in the southwestern part of the state. Well, Montevideo and Traverse, they stayed out permanently, but Nobles for some reason or other chose to come back into CPA after being out a few years. So they're now again part of CPA.

For the in-market people and the out-market people that's been kind of a point of contention within CPA over the years, because of the different pricing of the two sources of power. Naturally the people within the service area of the Bureau got the advantage over the other people. But that was a decision made by the United States government and the senators or whatever, whoever. We used considerable political pressure, but I guess it was just our good fortune that we did end up with the Bureau power, where the rest of the organizations in CPA don't have it, but there are some of them that do have partial Bureau power.

Naturally we outgrew our source of power, so we went in with Dairyland [Cooperative] over in Wisconsin there. We were committed to fifty percent of the output of that plant and we since outgrew that. We've been buying power.

Then this plant, this UPA/CPA venture, the two co-ops decided to go jointly into this plant up in North Dakota and built transmission lines, which is referred to as the CU Project. But prior to the final decision there was several options open to our discretion. Those involved different variations of hydropower from Canada, which would have been the Manitoba Hydroelectric, or atomic power or a plant in Minnesota with rail pull or these plants that we did finally choose to go with. That's the mine mouth plants. So that pretty well brings you, in a brief statement, up to date on CPA.

EN: Why didn't they go with, first of all, the rail transporting of coal to a plant near the load site? Do you know?

PJ: Well, their thinking primarily was—once they got the plant built and the line built they figured that the risk was pretty well over. They thought that—their thinking at that time of course—they knew nothing of the resistance they would have eventually faced—but at the time the decision was made, it was primarily based on the insecure dealings with railroad people—the fact that you might be confronted with a plant here in Minnesota without coal supplies. A plant of that size would require a considerable amount of coal. So we figured that—or whoever made the decision figured that the mine mouth route was the way to go and transmit the power into Minnesota with a DC line. It would carry more power with fewer towers and fewer conductors. That was really the prime reason for going that way. I think that did figure out a little cheaper too.

[Brief interruption]

EN: You mentioned hydro was considered—would that have been a local source or was that to have been—?

PJ: No, that was the Canadian Manitoba hydro. Of course that would again involve

transmission. That was the secondary decision. I mean that would have been one of the decisions—one of the alternatives, but that was an exchange basis power. So if Canada would prove in later years that they would be short of power, we'd have to return that much power, see. So that didn't look too inviting at the time. It still doesn't, I guess, really.

EN: How about nuclear—was that considered?

PJ: Yes, we had considered nuclear.

EN: And what happened there?

PJ: Well, this was much cheaper at that time. And this was still cheaper than the Canadian power. The original figure was cheaper than the Canadian power. This was the cheapest route, the cheapest power, the least amount of disturbance and what we considered the most reliable source of power that we could bring into Minnesota.

EN: I've heard someone in the opposition say that, oh, they could have kept buying the power. Was that an option—could there have been—like from NSP?

PJ: We could have bought, that was probably the fifth option. But we had no guarantee, there was not a—you know, that buying is only contractual for a limited amount of time ahead. And you're somewhat at the mercy of another utility when you're buying power from them and you need the kind of power that we realized we were going to need down the road. So that was—probably the insecure fact of dealing with the private utility—buying power—being at their mercy was the main reason why we choose not to go that route. Although we do buy blocks of power from other states and various others right now, that we knew we were going to need before this plant was on line.

EN: Will you be selling the electricity from this line or will this just be to meet your own needs?

PJ: At certain times of the year, we'll be selling power from these units.

EN: So the...

PJ: Particularly Unit 2.

EN: The line will add income to the cooperatives then, later on, other than just for your member utilities?

PJ: Well, we don't look at it as income. We look at it as a possibility of keeping down our cost for power, you see, to our consumers.

EN: I see. So whatever you sell, you can reduce your costs—

PJ: Reduce our costs—see, that's used to reduce our cost for our power. The more we can run that plant up there, the cheaper, obviously, that power's going to be. Because the base cost is

there. That's going to be a big percentage of the overall cost of electricity coming off that plant—any plant.

EN: Is that one way that a cooperative would differ from a private corporation?

PJ: Oh, I'm sure it is. I'm sure it is. Because they don't generally give the benefit to the consumer if they do have cheaper power, you know. It doesn't go to the consumer. It goes to the stockholders.

EN: In the form of the reduced rates?

PJ: No, in the form of shares, dividends on their investment.

EN: Oh...

PJ: I'm not an expert on private utilities, you understand. I mean, that's not my—that's generally what happens in any private corporation, whether it be a utility or whatever it is.

EN: When you started working with the Cooperative Power Association—or even before that—did you know where the line was going to go? Did you know that it was going to cross your service area?

PJ: I guess at the time that I came into the CPA, which was probably prior to the routing, and I guess I knew as soon as anyone did where the line was approximately going to be routed. I mean that was the original routing and it was in our service area. It hasn't really changed that much. It's still approximately where it would have been before.

EN: As a farmer and director, did you anticipate that there would be opposition from people on farms whose land would be crossed?

PJ: Not really. Well, sure, eventually it became obvious, I mean, but originally right away at first, no, we didn't. But then it wasn't long that we realized that we were confronted with a situation unknown to the industry.

EN: What do you mean by that? That it was something new?

PJ: Well, I used to ask people at the meetings: How much of this resistance did you really anticipate to start with? Isn't there a certain amount of resistance that you would just consider a normal thing?

“Yes.”

You know, and then to become aware of the fact that it was really a mass movement. It didn't really—that didn't really come about until oh, I guess—the realization of that fact didn't come about for one to two years, three years. Because we live in this area here, where the powerline is, I know some people that have towers on their land. But that line was very difficult to sell to the

rest of the group of people. Actually—it hasn't been known to them—they hadn't realized it until not so long ago—that's when they first realized that it was a problem here.

A lot of people didn't understand farmers. It grew, it grew and just kept snowballing. Oh, I think there was some untruths on both sides but, originally a couple of people I could—without naming names—did—I think—were responsible for making some statements that naturally the people—we didn't—the utilities didn't counteract any of those statements—and people began to believe them. We lost their trust—if we ever had any—and consequently, anything we said had no credibility. The few people that were speaking out in opposition to us they seemed to have had all the aces in their hands. And I'm not blaming those two people. I mean, maybe they were sincere in what they were doing.

I'm just saying that our people—we didn't counteract that. We didn't go out there with the right personnel to say, "Listen here. We got a legitimate project here. This is not something that is going to take your land away." We didn't do that. That was the problem.

Plus the fact that there were a couple of those people telling us things that I don't think had any validity at all. And it's proven since that they didn't have. Consequently, they're not active any more.

EN: Did the local cooperatives have a role that they were supposed to perform as far as informing people what the line was going to be and where it was going?

PJ: When you say supposed to, I can simply answer that 'no,' but they did play a role of—what they did see—we did see the need here. So we did attempt to play a role that was somewhat of the approach that I'm speaking of. I mean a more mild tone to it and trying to see through the opposition's eyes as to what they were really telling us. Of course at one point in all this ruckus, I don't think anybody—they wouldn't have reasoned with us anyway. I mean they would—at that point, nothing would have sounded, you know, right. But then prior to that—when it was first getting started—I think we could have—we perhaps could have avoided a lot of it.

See when we decided to go out from underneath the grandfather [clause]—we were grandfathered in going across Grant County there. Why all of a sudden our management decided to go under the State of Minnesota? Well, there maybe we made a mistake. Maybe we could have dealt with those people—locally, individually. Who knows though—you know, that's hard to say. At that point, the opposition was building up—but surely it wouldn't have been any worse than this.

EN: Do you know why they decided to change from being grandfathered out of that to [going under] the siting law?

PJ: Well, I just think that they perhaps thought that that would be the route of the least resistance. That if the State of Minnesota was to intervene into these things and make some decisions instead of us making them, that would have been an easier route to go, and people would have accepted it. Plus the fact that they were being turned down for requests, you know. In Grant County there, the towns, the county commissioners were supposed to give us a

construction permit and they were passing all kinds of ordinances saying that ‘you can’t do this, you can’t do that.’ “We don’t permit high lines and all this crossing our county.” So I guess maybe they thought that it would be next to impossible to ever get a line across there—going that route. Maybe that is the fact and maybe it’s not. I don’t know. It wasn’t pursued the other way, so who knows what would have happened.

EN: Were easements being obtained before the decision was made to change the routing?

PJ: I don’t really know if they were or not. There may have been some easements in Traverse County.

EN: And they hadn’t met resistance until Pope County?

PJ: Not that much. No.

EN: Not in Grant County?

PJ: No, not that much. There was one person that lived in Grant County that had a lot to do with that—well, maybe a couple that had a lot to do with that—there in Grant County. See, then the health concerns came up, concerns with the health effects and that, started creeping into the program and that all started adding fuel to the fire.

EN: What do you think people were reacting to in the first place?

PJ: I think as far as I can gather from looking at it from my vantage point is that they— First of all, it didn’t take long to realize that the line was not being routed over these wildlife federal game areas, state areas, which naturally I can wholeheartedly agree with them, that that line is not safer by any means and once they saw that—you know, that seemed to have stirred them up more than anything. That added to the fact that they didn’t want the line anyway and when they—once they saw that—why that really— If we just stopped there at that point and said, “Listen, we’ve got to make some corrections here.” I mean, “we’ve got to alter this study that we had made that routed—” Really this line route was done by these consultants. They were the ones that went around to all these avoidance areas. That’s what they were—their practice was in designing other lines and naturally that’s what they did here. The State of Minnesota and the federal government—that’s what their wishes were—that’s why they were called avoidance areas. So they went around them.

I think at first, those were probably the two issues that bothered them more than anything. The wildlife and the fact that they were just scared of the line. And probably somewhat their reacting to requests made by CPA/UPA, the people felt as though they weren’t being dealt with right—they were being told instead of asked. I don’t know if that was—but I’ve heard that being a pretty loud gripe.

EN: Okay, did you, as a member of the board of directors, receive comments and criticisms from the members of Agralite?

PJ: I had a friend over there. This was oh, a couple of years ago—about three years ago now. It was about this time of the year too. Maybe four years. North of Cyrus, I know a fellow—I've known him at least thirty years—and he called me up about the time they started surveying out there and asked me what—you know, he, at that point I guess, he discovered that I had something to do with that powerline, because I think I was down in the Cities one time and he—and I ran into him and he was down there protesting. So then he realized that I had something to do with CPA.

He set up a meeting in Morris one night in the Sun [unclear] and there was about four or five, maybe six people there. He was one of them. My wife and I went in there and we just talked powerline that evening. And, you know, that whole thing was—those people at some time or another got the idea that they could stop this line, which was really unfortunate. Even before they even got started on the construction. So that evening, I told them there were a couple of things that I just couldn't help them on. I couldn't help them stop the line and I couldn't help them move it. I mean, you know, move it to another area. I said outside of that I'm willing to discuss anything, you know, minor route changes and things like that or discuss the health [issues] or anything. I said I was willing to try to set up meetings with the CPA or UPA, engineers or whatever kind of people it would take. I mean we'd get together.

Well, we had that one meeting and yes, they felt that was fine, only they still—well, then after a while, I realized that if that was continued on—their main intent was then from their point was to use me, see, I mean, you know, kind of as a go-between to help them stop the line. Well, at no time did I ever—so then consequently the talks broke off. Because I didn't want to be used. I mean I was willing to go there in good faith, but I wanted them to be in good faith, too. So—I could see that it wasn't happening that way, so I broke those conversations off, but that was a good meeting. I mean we could have—if they would have not came there with the idea that they were going to use me to try to stop that line—that would have been a wonderful opportunity. They could have worked right into CPA that way through me. I don't know whether I was vice president at that time or not, but even so I—like I say, I realized that, it appeared to me that I was being used so I—there was other efforts made similar to that too—not by maybe any directors, but I think Charlie Anderson made some efforts like that too with some success.

EN: When they were constructing a line for tower placement and minor changes were you involved in that or was the placement of the towers set?

PJ: As directors we had nothing to do with that. That was—Dave Burns and—no, Commonwealth Associates. They pretty well routed that line. I mean they had the—that was their obligation. I mean that was their duty to work the line out after the state had finally, eventually, you know, designated the route.

EN: A criticism that I heard was that in some cases they could have moved the line—to a section line or something to make it easier for people to farm around, but because Commonwealth wasn't aware of the problems out here, that didn't happen, that they put the line where they wanted to without regard to the farmers' needs. Do you think that happened or....?

PJ: I don't know whether that happened or not, really. In order to answer that question I'd really

have to be speculating as to rumors that were—that I was able to gather from various people. That may have happened—some yes, it may have happened. I think originally we were told and the farmers were told that that wasn't—the spacing of those towers—wasn't cast and dyed, that they would be—they had tolerance, that they could have moved several hundred feet one way or the other—in which case they could have ended up in a boundary line or a road edge or whatever makes it easy for the—you know—and if there was...

[Tape interruption]

EN: I thought when you were talking before about communications and maybe you had gotten involved in that later on then when individual farmers had come to you?

PJ: Not me, no. They never did come to me about their problems. Because, you know, I was just—I'm—like you realize, vice president really doesn't function in that capacity that a president does and—through all those times, I mean I wasn't in contact with—by any individual from the line route.

EN: You mentioned health and safety questions, that you talked about that during the meeting. What were the fears at that time and have they changed? Do you know if they are talking about the same things?

PJ: I really think the fears of the health problems—I noted a definite change in the tone of those people's discussions and their comments after the California trip that we took out there with the news media people, some powerline route people, some CPA/UPA—I was one of them that went out to the West Coast along with many others and I think when the people went out—you know, the health issue was rather strong right at that time. And the science court thing was first introduced and we had been recommending this trip—when I say we—I mean Agralite and Runestone had talked loud and clear about this trip that it was almost a must. We thought that we couldn't avoid taking people out there. That line that was almost identical to what we were building and had people—it had been energized for about seven years at that time already, so finally we got the trip off the ground, after it got to an acute stage. You know, things were really looking blue and UPA/CPA decided that that's what they would do. So it came before a vote of the board and then they voted it—they approved that it—they made that approval and who should go and... See the whole—a lot of the trouble with this project is that UPA is building it and they're the constructing agents and it goes through CPA's territory—mainly, Runestone, Agralite and whoever. Well, you see that creates problems, because we're locals, sensitive to the people while they're not in the service area. They're miles away so that naturally created a problem.

And then plus the fact that UPA and CPA are two co-ops, so there are two sets of management and staff people—all the way down the line. I've always been an advocate of the fact that it was designed wrong to start with. It should have been one project board, one manager and then they would have dealt with one manager, they would have dealt with one set of board [directors]—we would have been always on top of it. We could have dealt with these issues.

This is mainly—one of the main problems that go way back in Day One, I'll grant you that our

administrator will never loan funds to another project with this loose fit leadership that this project's got. I'm not criticizing, but it's just a communication problem. The right hand a lot of times didn't know what the left hand was doing. That tied with the fact that they're working in our service area. That all has something to do with it because we were begging them to get out and talk with these farmers out there and approach them in the right manner. "Hell, we don't have to do that. If they don't want to let us build this line, we've got eminent domain." See, now it's coming back to haunt them. I mean this is my gut feeling about this damn thing. I'm not taking the blame off of those people out there and putting it on the shoulders of this project, but I think it's some of both. Really.

EN: CPA then was responsible for the plant...and [unclear]

PJ: Yes—plant and mine.

EN: Why did it work that way?

PJ: You tell me. They are responsible for building everything. They're responsible for construction of the plant too, because of the fact that they have already gone through one project. They are more experienced and have more experienced personnel on their staff already, so the thought was that they'd actually be the better of the two to do that. Whether they were or whether they weren't, I don't know. But because we were paying for fifty-six percent of the cost, yet they were constructing agent of the plant and line—that created a problem too.

EN: Because the line goes through your service area. Did the local co-operatives generate any of their own electricity?

PJ: No, we had an all power requirements contract signed with CPA. We turned all our generation over to CPA when we went into CPA. We have a limited—a little—very little generation at Agralite and that was turned over to UPA and then that serves as a somewhat standby in the [MAP] Pool, see, so they get credit for that. Five megawatts, six megawatts whatever it is. I'm talking in the Pool and credit for that much capacity. That's another whole ball game by itself. Maybe you're aware of how it works and how it...

EN: I'm not sure.

PJ: But anyway I'm not really that well briefed on that, not so as I'd want to go on record on that issue, I mean on that certain phase of the operation. But anyway there's another co-op—Jackson's—it's got a small generation plant like we have at Benson and then Mott Lake which is a small village that had generation and they chose to go with utilities with the REA, so they shut down. They went with, you know, whatever distribution co-op, the one is serving down there, but, anyway, the one that is serving the village of Mott Lake—which is not uncommon because many small towns—they're not many, but a few small towns throughout the area are served by the REA—

EN: One thing that I've heard is, again from the opposition, is that small decentralized plants would be better in that maybe the local cooperatives could each build a generating facility. Is

there anything wrong with that premise or...?

PJ: Well, we had that—I think we went through that. Benson is a very good example and that power down there was, at that time, about six cents a kilowatt, to the consumer it's five something, and as soon as they got the bureau line in and through, the cost of power dropped—was cut right in half—less than half—because that plant was too costly to run. It was a fuel fired plant, a diesel plant and it's just too costly to run. Now if they choose to go that route, they'd have to find something that was much more economical than burning diesel plants. Something else would have to be in the picture.

EN: So it was much more economical for the local cooperatives to go together on a large project than a small?

PJ: Oh, yes. You see at its inception point, why, they bought power from Ottertail Power and from the City of Benson and various sources of power—that was before they went in with CPA. Everywhere—anywhere they could get power they bought it. And it was higher at that time than it is now. They were really eager to get it. Happy that they could get it.

EN: Were you involved in any of the hearings or information meetings for the siting and routing of the line? Did you...?

PJ: I was asked to serve on the citizens' committee, but I choose not to because of my close affiliation with CPA. I think each representative selected one in the area. I'm not familiar with just how it was done, but I know our senator here asked me and I then recommended someone else. He then asked him and that guy served on the committee. But I only attended one meeting in Alexandria, as an observer, and that was my extent of my involvement with that.

EN: What were your impressions of the meeting? Was it allowing citizens to have input or...?

PJ: Well, that particular night there was a doctor from—I don't know whether he was from Morris here or from down at the University [of Minnesota—Twin Cities]. I think it was the University. He had a little project, a miniature powerline thing set up, you know, and he was demonstrating the effects of ozone. Of course, his theory was that there was no problem with ozone, and he got quizzed rather heavily that night by a couple of people. Josephson, at that time, was still on that bandwagon. But I think that—my impression of that demonstration, that we had there, was that he was absolutely right. Of course, I might have been biased too, but that there were not any health effects from ozone.

Well, it wasn't long after that they got off of that kick anyway—I mean, the ozone kick. And I guess there is some health concerns yet around but I think that's mainly because they may have missed out on the benefits of the California trip, because there was sufficient evidence there that indicated no health. Actually those people out there laughed at us for coming out there. Really—“What in the hell are you people doing out here? Worrying about that health problem?” Because there was a house and it wasn't 300 feet from the center under that line and that's exactly—they came out of that house. It was about five o'clock and he was home from work and he and the Mrs. and the kids came out and they saw all these people, you know, and of course—I think they

hadn't been probably tipped off to this crowd coming there, but actually their very words were: "What are you people doing out here? We see no problem. We have no problem with this line."

Well, of course, folks and few more were standing around and they heard that, and I think about then, that they began to have a few doubts about their theory at that point. Well, there had been numerous studies up to that time, you know, indicating that there wasn't any problem. Of course the Russian studies, I guess, somewhat indicated there was but how founded that was we—that's something else.

EN: Did most of the people who went on the trip were they convinced that the line was safe or were there others that still doubted...?

PJ: I think by and large they all accepted the fact that there really wasn't that much—shouldn't have been that much concern about health from that line. There was a few people probably that still in their own mind, want an absolute, you know. Some people talk in terms of absolute safety. Why then, you know, it's pretty hard to satisfy that type of person. Any place you go—I mean, there's nothing you can really do about that.

EN: What was your impression or view looking at the science court? Maybe if you'd, first of all, speak for the utilities. Why didn't it seem to ever come about?

PJ: I viewed the science court— Well, okay, I'll speak for the utility. I think they viewed it as—it seemed to flip-flop from one position to the other. First of all, the opposition was all for it. Well, then they were assuming that we wouldn't be, so we had a—you know, we came to a decision being individual—each board I think, came to a decision that, okay, we'll— No, I think our first thought on it was no—that it had no point to serve. Well, then we flipped. We decided that, well, nothing worse can come of it, so let's accept that and let's go through with that study. Well, then they realized that probably as long as we were willing to be subject to this study probably there were no health issues.

Now personally I felt that those people—they wanted to use that to stop the line. That was an effort by the opposition to kill that line cold. Well, when they realized that we were willing to go along with it, of course they wanted this moratorium built in with it too. See, they wanted to stop the building of the line.

So since it's mainly a study, a hearing, but there's no solution to be drawn from a science court. I gathered that on that basis. I, personally, don't see where anything could have been gained. It's just a kind of a hearing with some expert people there. I don't think—there's input from—it wouldn't have been input from the protestors, but other sources of expert people. But, still, there is no trial, no judge—I mean, to judge whether it would be right or wrong. But from those findings, I suppose the governor was supposed to react or the courts or whatever.

EN: What about efforts to mediate the dispute? Are you involved with maybe Josh Stolberg?

PJ: No—no, I wasn't. I never met the man.

EN: Do you know if anyone on your board met with him or was that up to the managers or...?

PJ: I don't think— Actually the president of the—well, I know I didn't. I don't know that the president did. I don't think the president did either. I think that was mainly management or selected people from the staff that would meet with him.

EN: Who was it—the board of directors, the officers of the board of directors, the managers—who made the decisions on how to handle this or that when the confrontations occurred, when do we put a lawsuit here or there?

PJ: That was all handled by our legal staff. Occasionally there would be something that would come before the board that would be asking for authority to deal with some individual isolated thing, but no, I don't really quite understand what cases you're probably referring to. I mean obviously all of the highway patrol arresting people and whatever arrests the sheriffs made, we had no jurisdiction over any of that. That was done without any of our consent and likely was necessary. I mean it wasn't—

EN: I guess the case I'm referring to is that there was a half million dollar lawsuit on a number of farmers. I've heard it charged that, well, that lawsuit was just to 'center in on some people so that they would quiet down and maybe we could get this protest under control.' I guess I assumed that that decision to bring those charges came from somewhere within the cooperatives.

PJ: That may have been, you see, since UPA was the constructing agent, they did have some authority to act on problems.

They didn't all come before the CPA board. I don't know whether the UPA board required that they meet on them or whether they authorized management to proceed in those kind of situations. I couldn't answer that.

EN: Did you personally agree with the way some things were handled in dealing with the confrontations of protestors?

PJ: Well, like I stated before, I had my own feelings about how they approached the people because I had a very difficult time understanding how those people were reacting the way they did. I mean being a farmer like I am, and somewhat trying to put myself in their position and seeing how they were reacting, then from that I drew the conclusion that perhaps they just were being approached in the wrong manner. I think that there wasn't enough discussion across the table with reasonable people, because I think there are a lot of reasonable people. I think I'm a reasonable person to deal with on problems like this and I think that was lacking.

Plus there's a few people I could name, that I grant you, would not have sat down and it would have been time wasted to sit down and talk with them, but I mentioned that meeting at the Sun but I did come away with some respect for a couple of people. Scott Jenks—I do think that they were reasonable people. They were in a situation where I don't really know how I would have reacted if I would have been in their same boots. But I did think they were reasonable and in time they wanted to come to a settlement—but there was a lot of people living in fear up there. They

didn't dare settle, even after they realized that it was just too much for them to fight anyway. So that situation became something that they had to deal with. Maybe out of fear for their neighbors or whoever it was.

But I think by and large those people should have been dealt with in a different way. Ted Lennick has made that statement now finally after— You know, he realizes that the way he was looking at it was 'we got Point A, we got to go to Point B, we shouldn't have any trouble getting over there regardless.' We'd just do it and ask questions later. The way it is now, I realize that he should have known better. I'm repeating, but I'll repeat myself again. We were the people out here that knew the situation. We lived with the people. We understood their feelings. We couldn't sell the rest of the board on it. We just could not bring them to the realization that we had a problem here. "Oh, that will blow away—that will blow away." That was their thinking.

EN: What about need for the line? How does your local cooperative first of all figure that there is a need for more energy—that there's going to be growth?

PJ: Well, this is done through load forecasting—two-year, five-year, ten-year work plans that we have based on load projections, based on past history, and, you know, in our own co-op. Now we obviously know how much increase of energy we use every year. So when you've got the amount of energy used, you've also got, you know, demand to build to get the energy—I mean a plant. So then, we, in turn, submit that—nineteen co-ops submit that information to CPA.

Now then they make a study then of projected needs and this goes on—it's constantly updated. You put out a ten-year work plan this year and a couple of years from now you're revising it, see. You're always kind of—you're always on top of that situation. You try to have something to constantly work with. It isn't something you make—a five- or ten-year work plan—and then file it away and go back and look at it five years from now. It's something you constantly work with.

We just got a big study here. I'll get it when the interview is over with. It was passed out at the last meeting, a ten-year work plan and it's documented with all the bulk substations that are going to go in, the transmission line that we anticipate needing based on where the loads are going to occur, and this is all very systematically done. It's not something that is just helter-skelter—hit or miss thing. It's done in a businesslike fashion and all utilities operate under that same premise.

Now I don't know, but that really hits a sore spot with me. I think that's where those people— We had all the information. We had the data and they were just assuming that we didn't need that power. That was one thing that kind of riles me. I could not, at that point in time, agree with those people out there. A few of them said, "They don't need that power." What? They have no reason to say that. They have nothing to base their thoughts on. Just because they can turn the switch on and they get power, yeah, but they can't get that power ten years from now if we don't keep building more capacity. You just can't keep taking out of sources without putting back in and replenishing.

EN: What are your main causes of load growth in this area? Let's see, you're not around the lakes? That would be Runestone, right?

PJ: Well, I think it's mainly agricultural input to their operations here. Up the road, we've got a big hog set-up. The guy's built two great big hog houses. He's producing more hogs there than half the township did fifteen years ago. Also everything you buy in the store today has an electrical motor or something like that. There's nothing you can't buy. It's constantly putting an additional load on our lines. The corn rinds, set-ups, irrigation. There's not anything that's done in—

And this is not just an ordinary source of energy—electricity. It's a technical source of energy. You can automate it. You can do almost anything with it. You can't begin to meet the same needs with natural gas or anything else. It takes electricity to run these automated gadgets.

That's really the—those people up there—they've put barn cleaners in, they've put silo-unloaders in. They're constantly expanding—their hog set-ups are becoming more elaborate. Ventilating fans. That's where the loads are. There's no secret about it. There's no magic to be played here. I mean you've just got to have more sources of power.

EN: Have you noticed—I guess I'm assuming that the price has gone up in recent times on electricity.

PJ: That's a reasonable assumption, yes.

EN: Has that affected the load growth? Are people conserving more? Is that going to make a difference?

PJ: Not really. Because maybe if you have a load like that in Minneapolis or some place where you have to turn the air conditioner on or use electric heat, they can turn their heat down. But out here, when the farmer makes his decision to put in an automatic feeding system or—any place where they can automate—a turkey set-up or broilers or cattle set-up—they pretty well have already made the decision that they're going to use electricity. There's no way to cut back there.

There's no conservation program that you can build into something like that. You've got so many motors to run and got so many fans to turn on and that's it. So there really isn't any way to conserve on that. And as far as irrigation is concerned, well they can go diesel but that's not automated like electricity is, and if it gets dry they have to pump water. That's all there is to it, so they can't conserve there. We can turn our air conditioner off in the house, yes. But we can't turn the irrigator off.

EN: So theoretically it's easier to predict load growth in an agricultural area than it would be for a metropolitan area or a residential area?

PJ: You see, the residential areas, the metropolitan areas of our country are pretty well established and that's where the private utilities are serving. They could come out and in the rural areas, where the REAs are serving—the rural electrics—and that's where the expansion system would take place, see. So obviously, we're going to get most of the growth. Industry—they're moving out into our service areas and that's pretty well established now, you know. A

municipality or an investor-owned can't just come out here because we've got a big load out here five miles from the end of their service area. They can't come out here and take this like they used to be able to. They can't do that any more. That would become— To be served by the REA, which is somewhat a bone of contention of those people—what we really don't— There again the boundaries are pretty well—the territories is pretty well all established, and they say we're serving a lot more people other than real farm people. Very true but...

[Tape interruption]

EN: Will alternative energy supplies have any impact on the load growth, need?

PJ: It depends on what alternatives you might be referring to.

EN: Have any of the farmers in the area—you mentioned the turkey farm—have they talked about methane gas or solar power, wind power for this area?

PJ: I don't really— We might be on—this is my personal thought—we might be on the threshold of that movement. There may be an alternative source of energy that you can, in turn, use to generate electricity. I say that because I'm a firm believer that nothing replaces electricity for energy needs.

EN: Would the cooperatives be involved in anything like that—doing the research, setting up projects or...?

PJ: Well, I understand UPA has got a project going on that's using chicken manure for a source of energy. Like I say, I think we're talking about a couple of different things here. I mean, I hear these people saying alternative sources of energy, but I think they're really talking about the next go around or the next one after that. I don't think they're talking about replacement of this electricity that we're expecting to bring into Minnesota with this powerline.

I think there's a little confusion. There are some people who are confused because they're not acquainted with the project, they're not acquainted with the situations and they hear these alternative sources of energy. When they hear that they seem to think that that's a replacement for this powerline. Now I don't—I think they're wrong. I think any reasonable person would have to agree with that. It's too late to bring in alternative sources to replace this powerline. Now I think the people that are shooting those insulators out—some way—some how—must think that that's possible.

But like I say, I think we're on the threshold possibly of working into some alternate source of energy. Not source of energy, but alternate way about getting this electricity. Locally—small units. That's an expensive operation too and that would somewhat— Central—just central generation has proven, you know, from the time prior to this plant that that was the way to go— central station power. So now they're saying, 'maybe not.' Well, I don't think anybody's got any figures on that yet to really base that on, as to how economical it would be to have local decentralized electric generation. Mainly I think that what's really bringing that about is that we haven't sold this powerline yet. It's really about—I think they feel they're being pushed into

something like that, because of the fact that this powerline is here and they don't want it, and they think that if they push this alternate source, they'll be able to replace that. They probably will some day. Personally I don't know how we'd ever get another permit to build another powerline in this country.

EN: I was just going to ask you about that. Are there any other lines planned and will this controversy have an affect on those?

PJ: Well, you're aware of the one going from Mankato to Delano—other than that there's a line in the northern states. Some Nebraska, Iowa people have got a line planned for down the west—just into Dakota from Canada down. And they'll do an exchange, a powerline thing like the Bonneville line out there. But other than that, I'm not aware of any.

People are afraid that there's going to be powerlines paralleling each other out there. We have a resolution on the books in CPA and Agralite that opposes any paralleling of high voltage transition lines within a reasonable distance. So if that has any affect at all on the future planning of power transmission lines, as far as we're concerned, that should tell them how we feel. Well, I've heard said that some didn't know that. Well, I guess maybe that's our fault, but we do have that on the books. We did pass a resolution to that effect.

EN: And that was passed after this all took place or...

PJ: Oh, it was passed, when this issue came up early in this problem. I'd say two or three years ago anyway, we passed that resolution.

EN: Have you been involved in other powerlines maybe going back to the REA days? I mean do you have some memories of if there was opposition to other powerlines before or is this something new?

PJ: Actually I don't. My folks lived on the—right down west of Morris there, and that area was served by Ottertail at that time. They didn't get electricity out there until about 1939, when the REA was, you know, the movement was just starting. Prior to that time, Ottertail wanted \$2,000 to come down and at that time \$2,000 was a lot of money, you know, to come half a mile. But as soon as the organization started to get—as soon as the co-op started, you know, to get REA electricity in this area, then their price dropped to practically nothing, and within a month or two they built the line down there. So consequently we got electricity in without— Maybe it was even cheaper than the first REAs were. So I know very little about the REA movement prior to my coming here and becoming a subscriber to Agralite—before I became a consumer from there. Then really I wasn't much more than the bill payer up to the time I become a director, but I guess that has nothing to do with my interest in it, you know, but that's my background on it.

EN: Why did you decide to become a director—to become involved in Agralite?

PJ: Well, I guess I always had a feeling that I wanted to do something in my community and I was asked by some friends of mine. A former director was getting passed seventy years old and he was up for reelection. I guess they just felt as though—they saw something in me that

would—that they probably thought I would make a good director. I was totally surprised that some of my neighbors would even consider asking me to be a director. But then I thought—well, if they think that much about me, I guess so. My wife and I thought about it quite a while. I didn't realize it involved this much time and was totally unaware of what was involved in it.

Like I said, I always had that urge to do something for people. I was in the war in World War II and got involved with a lot of people. I still have that desire, you know, to be a servant of the public. So I decided to accept it and I won the election.

From there on, one thing grew to another, and I realized when I got down there that—this after some time familiarizing myself with the program and the organization at Agralite—that this director who had been serving on CPA was— First of all, I hadn't the slightest idea who CPA was. I didn't know power supplies from Adam. As far as I knew, we were buying electricity at Ottertail or whoever. The bureau line through here, I thought maybe that was our total source of power. I didn't know we were affiliated with another co-op to get power here. But it didn't take long to find out the organizational structure, familiarize myself with it and I guess I was outspoken enough to be considered for the CPA director's job.

One thing grew into another and all of a sudden I got down to CPA and was still talking loud and making suggestions and getting my input in. All of a sudden, I'm vice-president and rather soon too. I wasn't there but two years, but it's hard to, in a body like that, to really get around and get your ideas across. You've got to have a lot of patience to do it. And naturally you don't win them all.

EN: The board is made up of people from all over the state?

PJ: Yes, farmers just like myself. I think with the exceptions of probably one or two, every person on that CPA board is a farmer. But that's not true with all distribution co-ops, because Dakota County co-op serves practically all residential area down there, that's around Farmington, in that area, so they don't have that many farmers on the board. But their CPA director is a farmer, though it so happens that of the nine on the board of directors down there, that five or six of those fellows are people that have been in business or employed by business or whatever.

There's not as many of people who have an interest there. That's another ball game there. That's a different thing altogether. They lack interest in the utilities. They view it as they pay their bill, and to heck with it. They could care less who in the hell Dakota County Electric is. That maybe is what's happening in some of these other co-ops too. Like Runestone—there's a lot of growth—more cottage and lakeshore homes and whatever. The original contact of personal director, you know, and to the co-op and to the people, that contact—that's about over with.

EN: Is your job as a CPA representative then to go there and, say, to initiate new projects or to provide input into, make suggestions that come from the management before the board or—? How does that work? What sorts of things do you do at meetings?

PJ: First of all, we have an executive board meeting prior to the meeting. At that meeting they

have a preliminary agenda. So then management has prepared this agenda of the various things that have to be acted on so they can function as a cooperative. Naturally they have to have the authorization of the board before they can do many things.

So then our function there at the executive meeting is to—I view that as being sometimes very critical, sometimes agreeable, but really there's where the things that make or break, see—I guess I've become very critical sometimes of things they propose or things they want approved, the actions they want approved because they—it's just a matter of me disagreeing with management a lot of times. They don't always—I don't always succeed.

And I see a lot of these fellows [other directors] though—they're not really—they could do what they do at home over the telephone. I don't approve. I think what's going to determine how successful co-ops are from now until doomsday is the fact that they have to have directors on there that are going to take an active part in this thing, besides just sit there and hold that chair down. It's a fact of life. You see, in CPA, we don't have an opportunity to select our directors. They're selected. We have to work with what we've got.

EN: Oh.

PJ: The directors come from the distribution co-op. We have really no control over who we're going to have as a director. I see a lot of directors from the distribution co-ops that would make a hell of a lot better directors than the person they send, but that isn't up to us. We're now redesigning our board structure somewhat and we're going into a committee organization more. Each committee has various duties in generation—and there are about four different categories of the business that each committee is going to then deal with.

It's the obligation of those directors to—that's going to determine how successful the directors are—it's how much they are inquisitors, really. That's their role. It's not their role to just say I agree with that, I agree with that. They've got to be inquisitors. Saying why? When? Give me the alternatives, this, that. If they don't do that, it's going to fail. We're going to have a co-op run by management.

Hopefully this will work. We're just getting into the training stage up to now. We're not—as an executive person I don't serve on any of those committees since we do serve at the top level. We're subject for reelection every June at our annual meeting, so we have five people serve on the executive board. Who knows, that could change too, but the other members of the committee, we appoint them. Just about every board member is on a committee. Three board members and one person from the staff and then one distribution manager, because they play a key role in the success of this operation too, because they are technical people. They are resources to draw from. Also because they work with it every day.

Now a lot of my time—since I do serve on the executive committee—I do spend a lot of time at CPA headquarters doing—dealing with these situations. Helping getting this organized and trying to get more input into this thing as a board member, so we don't want to manage the operation, but we just want to know what's going on. Naturally we hire management and he hires staff, hopefully the best people he can hire and what we want is to maintain board control. That's

really our desire. Maybe it's not always been that way, but that's always been our intent.

EN: So the organization should make the board a stronger voice...

PJ: Hopefully it will. But there again it won't if—there's some directors there that I hope to hell will wake up. I warned them at the meeting, I said, "There ain't going to be no top people setting up here at the head of the table, you know, when there's nineteen people in there." They can lie back, see. They don't ever have to be noticed or heard and the business will still go on. When they isolated off into an area that they are personally responsible for, they've got to come to meet up to the situation, that's what I told them. "Jost ain't going to be there no more, fellows, to take initial action on all this stuff and question these guys. It's going to have to be you and you and you." So hopefully it will go that way. Oh, I'm sure that a lot of the opposition has realized—but this is only CPA.

This has really nothing to do with situation. Even if this had been going perfect, there probably would have still been this powerline problem. This is an isolated thing off that, other than that—I don't think this really affected that powerline that much since we didn't have anything to do with the construction of it anyway. But for our own organization, you know, we just knew we had to do something.

EN: For future decision-making then this would be...

PJ: We're going to have to run that coal mine up there—well, somewhat because we've got a lot of money invested in it and the plants, because we've got a lot of money invested in it. We've got to get the most economical power out of that plant as possible. If we don't—see, we've got our own consumers out here, our distribution level we have to look after. Our concern is for them, that they get the cheapest power possible. That's really our goal through this whole thing. That's why we were originally organized, so we can get the cheapest power possible at the distribution level and at the consumer level—because he's the guy who eventually has to pay this whole damn bill.

EN: You mentioned apathy in the cooperative's membership at a lower level. Is that something that has happened? That the people who are members of the cooperative don't take an interest in electing their board members or...

PJ: It has really—just for an example—I just called our manager up in Benson, because they did have another district meeting last night. That's what these are—district meetings. They are to select a director from these various districts—only two will be selected for Agralite this year though. So I asked him how the district meeting went at Ortonville. He said, "It went great. There were twelve people there." This out of a district of about, oh, 500 or 600! Twelve people that elected that director! So we're having our district meeting right over here at Alberta tonight.

EN: Do you get a pretty good turnout at meetings?

PJ: Not that good. Now we had district meetings at every district this year to explain the rate increase that we just implemented—to explain that to them and get a little better feeling and get

feeling and feedback from the consumers and at Donnelly—that's where I also serve—in that area—so we had that district meeting up there and there was about fifteen people there, but probably key people though. I mean good key people that would get the word out and hopefully got something out of that meeting, so when somebody else asks them a question why they were able to give them somewhat of an answer. I mean so hopefully the word will spread that way. Well, now here, I don't know what they expect tonight. Our district meetings here—we've had three of them now and I suppose twenty was the most that attended. A few years ago there was probably—oh, there has to be ten—that's a quorum, so there was probably fifteen.

EN: So can one infer from this that some of the people opposed to the powerline could have had a chance to have input into this, but didn't at a local level—but didn't choose to do so?

PJ: Very true. Input—yes, through that representative that they was electing—strong or weak, whatever. They should have been there and helped decide who to send to that—to represent them. What I told Nancy Barsness was this—I told a lot of them that because they are really raising hell over there to Runestone and I said, “By golly, the responsibility somewhat lies back on you consumers. You didn't really care. The district meetings were rather mediocly attended and there lies your problem.” They allowed directors to serve up there that weren't even knowledgeable to serve. Now that's not really all the directors' fault. I think that some responsibility lies in the people. Now there's got to be an awareness.

We, as directors, realize that we've got a responsibility to generate interest in the area. We're going to try and do that here in Agralite somewhat. We're going to maybe initiate an advisory committee, different people. I have some people I go to occasionally and ask them what they think about this that or the other thing—call up over the telephone. But I want to get an active advisory committee set up in Agralite so we've got people that will come up and be active directors—that will be strong directors—that will be able to take that business and know what's going on rather than just sit there, you know. “Well, we don't know anything about what this business is like, so why can we argue with the management? They're working with it all the time. Yep, that's fine.” Well, that attitude is—you can't run a strong business that way. You don't really have to know the technical things about this electrical industry to make a decision. There's a lot of common sense built in this thing. That's what really originally designed it anyway—was just a lot of common sense. People that knew they wanted electricity. So now going around the second time—we're replenishing our electricity—and we're not having half the success as when we first went round.

EN: So the controversy then has contributed to some of these actions—particularly—it's had some positive benefits in this, one could say?

PJ: Hopefully it did. It has made me a stronger director because I've become aware of people's problems and more sensitive to their needs. Personal needs—more or less because we were always—you know, we were very effective in delivering power to them. But perhaps not always so effective in dealing with their little personal needs, you know, which you could only do to a point. When a fellow has got a problem out there, you know you can only deal with it— You can't get too selective with the guy or you'd have everybody else demanding the same thing. You've got rules to go by. We set up goals and working conditions and policies that we work by

and our crews work by and our management and guidelines for management. They have to stay within those guidelines somewhat. You can bend a little bit but basically— You know, being a CPA director, I've got a lot of advantage over just a normal director because I live with the problem. We ride back and forth with the manager and we talk, we visit—we practically—

It's really taking up about two thirds of my time, my life, my everything. I'm practically—I said on the onset that I was a farmer, but really I'm only a part-time farmer because of this obligation to the electrical industry, to my directorship. That's really what it amounts to—and we're going to see people that are, at times, going to be almost fully taken up with their obligations and responsibilities to the consumers. I think that it may cost some dollars, but in the long run it will probably be worth it. The consumer will probably be the better off for it. You can't lose owner representation in any project and that's what has happened in a lot of these co-ops because they've practically—they've left it to management—they hired a manager. Let him do it. Fine—but weak management doesn't always do too good a job. We find that.

EN: Is your—you don't have to answer this if you don't want to—is your position a paid position or are all the things that you've been doing—that's just your desire to do something, to be really involved in this?

PJ: Well, we're paid subsistence for—we call it per diem to attend the meetings.

EN: To cover expenses?

PJ: Yes, well, that's always been kind of a puzzle in my mind. The word 'per diem,' I think is practically, it phrases it wrong, because we do get a fixed fee to attend the meeting in Benson, the regular meeting. Our mileage is, you know, predetermined and that our check is made out and when we get there, we sign for that. We say that we've attended the meeting and this is for mileage and what we refer to as per diem. Likewise at CPA, our local distribution co-ops used to pay our attendance at CPA meetings. Only now, they've changed the rules down there. The board voted that the CPA should take over that obligation and so every director would receive the same per diem for every meeting. So I guess that covers that, I mean, unless you want—

EN: I guess I was wondering—you mentioned that it takes up two-thirds of your time. That kind of took me by surprise. You must have a lot of desire to work within the system to spend that much time.

PJ: I should probably— You triggered off another thought. Yes, I think basically my time could be better spent home here. I think financially I would be better off if I forgot about being an REA director. Financially, because I'm sure that my per diem does not cover what I lose or what—I've had to cut back on my operation here. I do have my son here to work the farm, otherwise I couldn't even think about it at all. It would be, why, it would be ridiculous for me to even consider it.

I leave here many mornings at six o'clock to head for the Cities to attend the ten o'clock meeting and I get back here at eight, nine, ten o'clock at night—or two day meetings or three days. Staying at hotels, whatever. You name it. But I'm sincere about my job and I work hard at it. I do

my level best for the consumer. I try to be honest with myself, and so consequently I'm able to be honest with somebody else.

EN: I guess that as far as questions or things—there's nothing on the sheet that we haven't covered. Is there anything that you can think of that might be worthwhile mentioning—areas we haven't covered?

PJ: Well, I touched a little bit on it—but it's really a soft spot in my heart—is the fact that what's going on up here at Runestone—and I regret that our senator from the Morris-Cyrus area kind of helped that along I understand. I may be wrong—

[Tape interruption]

—will work out themselves, without a lot of this intervention from the people, because they have got some good directors on there. I personally know that and I think they're very capable and they're new managers. They're very capable of coming out of that and I told Senator Stangeland that myself. I said, "Go slow on those people. I think they'll work out, a lot of those problems themselves without all this effort. You're going to fool around and damage that co-op out there some way"—I'm afraid of that.

I think that's true—one time he said to me, "And even if it is a co-op," I don't go for that. Because he should have known that it *was* a co-op—him questioning the fact that it *was* a co-op. Now I grant you that they were a little loose there to start with. I mean that they allowed these directors to serve on that and Joe Freeman was a pretty hard guy. But I think Joe got into that position because he had some directors who weren't very forceful. Those directors allowed Joe to run that co-op the way he did. I don't think he did a bad job of it, but he ruled it with an iron hand and he did things down at CPA that's really helped a lot of people. Got us a better deal out of CPA through our Bureau power that we were rightfully entitled to and Joe—he was a front runner in that effort and a couple of times got a couple of good night's reward for it. We all got rewarded. Our consumers got rewarded. We passed that right on to our consumer. I think if we get honest intervention from consumers in a constructive way, it will save the co-ops—all these distribution co-ops and merchandising co-ops. It will save us all, but it has to be in a constructive way—not destructive.

[break in interview]

It's not that—it's not a secret thing. We have like—the co-ops, here's why I go—of all the co-ops throughout the state—that organization was organized for the purpose of staying abreast with the legislation that would affect or hinder our co-op movement. Then in turn the national has an organization, NRECA—a very strong organization—nationwide. Something like eighty percent of the co-ops throughout the country belong to that. It's not compulsory. It's on a volunteer basis. It involves dues—a substantial amount of money to keep that organization going. I think it's worth watching. I mean it's not something I think that probably requires—sometimes those organizations like that tend to get a little too large. They get out of hand, but I think this so far has functioned very well.

We've got our own co-op finance corporation—our own financing. That will eventually take over, I think, most REA lending monies. So you see, the co-ops have really gone all out to help themselves. The problem is that they haven't told a lot of people what they were doing—I mean the consumer out here. That's mainly the big problem. We got way out ahead of our consumers.

They have national conventions. Maybe you heard about them, maybe you haven't. You know our co-op sends a delegate down to that. So there are business functions there and then that delegate he, in turn, votes on certain issues, resolutions and what have you. So, I'm going to be the delegate this year for our co-op and we're going to go Friday morning. I think that's basically a sound part of our business. But there again, it depends on how much input you get from the people you send to represent you.

EN: The statewide organization, is that the Minnesota Association of Electric Co-ops....I was wondering about that. I've run across that name and I wasn't sure what it...

PJ: Then we have a Minnesota Association of Cooperatives, too, which we are also a part of. But the electrical industry has their own strong arm of the state—and it's own organization. So oh, I could probably think about things, you know, I should have included but maybe I said more than I should have anyway.

EN: Do you want to make a summary or any final comments about the controversy, cooperatives....

PJ: Well, in closing I would just generally state that I realize that people have problems up there. I think that there's—really they may find it hard to accept it but I think there's people—referring to the powerline—the majority of them just realize that it's going to have to become a part of their life, I guess, living with that, it's not that bad, I don't think. You've got the [unclear] line running through here fifteen years ago and—with some opposition but—it's not nearly as bad as the picture was painted. There's not nearly that much land going out of production. By and large, hopefully, they'll accept it and the wounds will heal. Like I stated before, I think the co-ops, as through all this, they will become better organizations, stronger, more receptive to people. I don't think it's all a loss—it's been a lot of gain.

EN: Oh, thank you very much.