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INTERVIEWEE: CHANG-LIN TIEN
 Executive Vice Chancellor

INTERVIEWER: Samuel C. McCulloch
 Emeritus Professor of History
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SM: This is an interview with our Executive Vice Chancellor, Chang-Lin Tien, on April 17, 1990. And may I say that I want to congratulate you, Dr. Tien, on becoming Chancellor at Berkeley. I appreciated the response to my letter which I wrote to you, but we're all going to miss you very much. (chuckling) But you promised me this interview long before the invitation to Berkeley. And the question is what attracted you to accepting the offer to come to work under Jack Peltason?

CT: At that time it was a difficult decision for me. I had been with the University of California at Berkeley for twenty-nine years. After many years in the university administration, I actually decided to go back to full-time teaching/research; and they were kind enough also to give me an endowed chair at Berkeley, so I thought I would be settled completely. But after a one-day short visit of Irvine, it changed my view completely about the tremendous potential with the university campus here. And that's really the main reason why I decided to come down to Irvine to work with Chancellor Jack Peltason.

SM: Well, in many ways, it's the same reason that I came as Dean of Humanities before we opened. It's the challenge of making

a great university, and this is a challenge. Now, I did put down here, Dr. Tien, what do you consider our strengths and weaknesses, if any?

CT: I think there are many areas of tremendous strength and potential. I can say that before I came down to Irvine I did some research and found perhaps Irvine is a unique place in this time of history of higher education to make great strides. The state has been very supportive and the state, generally speaking, the economy and industry, are going very strong, particularly considering the next twenty, thirty, forty years that the Pacific Rim activity is going to be very, very crucial to the development of the state.

I think Irvine is located in a very strategic position to make this big move. And the community has been very supportive with high tech industry, high-level financial institutions, and a well-educated and wealthy community, and they all like to have a very strong research-oriented university in the community. So these are all very important areas. But also, I think Irvine has been benefitted by tremendous, sound planning from the very beginning, so it is a well-founded, general campus and the question is just now to make it grow to its full potential and strength.

In terms of weaknesses, I cannot say any. But I think, mainly, it is the growth issues. When we grow, we have to be

very careful not to overcrowd our space and the classrooms and will not affect our teaching, instruction, and offices.

SM: I share this office!

CT: (laughter) And also we have to be very careful in terms of our recruitment of the faculty, in terms of developing which directions of academic programs; so these are the important issues for Irvine to consider.

SM: Well, thank you for that very thoughtful answer and, I think, very correct answer. Now your immediate efforts when you came were to pull together an academic plan, I think, and an administrative plan. I know you roped in Ray Catalano to help you. Precisely what did you do and what has resulted?

CT: Yes. When I first arrived on campus, I set a platform of four areas that I would be working on. The first one is to develop an academic plan, the reason being that in a growing campus, to go into the 1990s and twenty-first century, we should have a good idea where we are and what we are aiming at. So that is a two-year exercise to get the campus together. But also I think an academic plan is important, in a sense, to get all the different segments of the community talking to each other and focusing on academic issues, so that everyone has some ideas about what direction the campus is moving. So the first thing is the academic plan. We have been quite successfully progressing in this area. I hope to have by the end of June,

before I leave Irvine, to have an academic plan for the campus.

The second area that I put forth at that time is to have a very good effort to diversify the campus atmosphere, so that would make all different groups of people feel comfortable, hospitable, in terms of both faculty, students, staff and campus activities.

The third area I put forth is the undergraduate education and the effectiveness of the teaching and also the curriculum reform. I am very pleased to, of course, say that the Academic Senate last April, a year ago, passed a landmark resolution about the general requirement for the undergraduate curriculum; and that, I think, will move Irvine to a very unique place.

And the fourth area I mention is to strengthen and further improve our relationship with the community's outside external relations. Again, I think the campus has been doing extremely well under the leadership of Chancellor Jack Peltason and Vice Chancellor John Miltner in mounting a very successful capital campaign. So those are the four areas, when I first arrived here about three years ago. I'm very pleased to see most of them have been going quite well.

SM: Thank you very much. I want to congratulate you on achieving what you have achieved in such a short time, really. Now, our next question you've really touched on. You want to improve

our affirmative action. You want to have the groups merge together, the faculty groups, the student groups and so on. But have you anything further to say about affirmative action and what you specifically really . . . I know you've done a lot and it's had a very good affect, and I must say that's why I was actually staggered when the Library Committee reported, because it seems to me . . . I've worked in all levels of the Library, from the first floor up to the fifth, and Cal Boyer has done a great job with this affirmative action. And I know you've been in back of it. So I'd like just a few comments about anything extra you have to say.

CT: Yes, I think at this point of time, it is important to do everything possible in the diversity area. Chancellor Peltason did appoint a think tank on diversity and we have the final report being constructed and should be reported very soon. That covers five areas: faculty, staff, student, campus life and curriculum. I think, in the overall viewpoint, we have done remarkably well in the diversity area of affirmative action. This is important, particularly in view of our very diversified student body now--over 50 percent, reaching now over 60 percent in the freshman class--so I think we need to do even more. I must say I'm quite satisfied with the effort we've made. In terms of faculty recruitment, in terms of staff, and also in the management positions--all those areas--I think the campus

atmosphere has, indeed, improved quite significantly in this area.

SM: Well, you ought to be congratulated on this area. We've come to realize how important it is, what you've been doing. And when I interviewed the Director of Admissions about three or four months ago, he said that for the first time in our history our freshman class will have less than 50 percent Caucasian and the rest will be ethnic minorities of one kind or another, so we're certainly changing. Then I've got here, question seven: What else did you place on high priority? Now, you don't have to say anything more--you've done so well--but did you have anything else?

CT: Yes, I'd like to comment on two areas. One is the recruitment and the retention of faculty, which I place very high on my priority list. So I spent a lot of time personally in the recruitment effort and also retention effort of the very best faculty members. So this is an area I think we should still concentrate and put a lot of effort on. The second area where I also put a lot of emphasis myself is the new initiatives in academic programs. I think to make Irvine great we really have to selectively focus a few new upcoming areas, which will fit particularly well with the Irvine community and the regional interests, as well as the academic development. Two particular areas I would like to point out, which I personally put tremendous effort on. One is East Asian Languages and

Literature, and I tried to get a department formed and going and to get the very best people, faculty, involved. And also, the second area is the Geoscience Department, particularly in the area of global systems. This is very much related to the climatic change and acid rain and ozone depletion, as well as the global warming issues. We have done very well in this area and we are right now still negotiating with some very top people in this area. If we can successfully recruit them, I think that will make Irvine the leading center in this area in the country. So I'm very pleased so far with our efforts in those areas.

SM: Thank you. That's very good. I'm sorry you're leaving because I can see you going to Berkeley and saying, "Come on, fellas, you've got to get ahead of Irvine now!" (chuckling) Well, that's just kidding. What suggestions will you leave us as you depart for Berkeley July 1?

CT: I think the campus is in very good shape right now. Also, Chancellor Jack Peltason is extremely well experienced and he will continue to lead the campus. And there's a very good management team and I think we also have the best group of deans and department chairs right now with us. So I think there's really very little I can suggest. I think the main thing is that in the next few years Irvine will grow very fast. While we are growing, we have to be very careful in making those decisions about which areas we'd like to

emphasize and what programs. Also, in terms of faculty recruitment, I think we have to be extremely selective and place quality always above anything else.

SM: Well, that I've heard many times. When we came, Jack Peltason said, "Now, we've got to have the very best qualities. If you don't have a good foundation, we will never be able to build very much."

Now, on the ninth question, I thought you might be interested that the Center for the Studies of Higher Education at Berkeley has conducted a seminar all year, about once a month, on writing a history of Berkeley, and they asked me to attend. When they learned how far along I had gone, they felt they were . . . What's the word. I can't get the word now [parochial], but nevertheless, they decided to expand it to the nine campuses and they have applied for a very large grant.

Two weeks ago, there was a very important meeting we had on the corner of Shattuck and Bancroft. They had taken over a Masonic something--it's very nicely fixed up--and we had about fifty people listening to us. Upstairs they had a dinner for Clark Kerr and Dean McHenry, the former Chancellor of Santa Cruz. I was on a session with Dr. Hinderaker who was our first Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, and then he went to Riverside [as Chancellor] for sixteen years. And there was Christenson, which was rather ironic, because

Christenson was only Chancellor of Santa Cruz for a couple of years and then just didn't work out. But he had a lot to say about planning. The notion was how are we planning the campuses? How did we plan them? How will we plan them? And I'm thinking of this: That President ^{GARDNER} Gardiner, who couldn't be there, but who was very much in favor of the meeting, and we had a printed little invitation thing and so on . . . One of the most helpful things for the new campuses was an [advisory] committee formed from the old campuses. And Dr. John Galbraith was the chairman, who later was Chancellor at San Diego and then gave it away and went back to writing history. But I'm going to suggest to President ^{Gardner} Gardiner that he form an [advisory] committee particularly of people like myself who helped start something from scratch. Because all the people on that committee had never . . . You see, Santa Cruz and Irvine are the only two that have ever started from scratch. I mean, [UCSD came from] Scripps Institute, Citrus Experiment Station for Riverside, and so on . . .

So this [conference] was very interesting and well-attended, and they video taped it. Sheldon Rothblatt is the acting director for your Center for Studies of Higher Education and I must say I would like to put in a recommendation that this man is very good. And he's been acting, I don't know how long, but he's an historian in English history, which is my field, and I know that he's a

brilliant historian and he's doing very well. So you are going to have to face a decision once you get to Berkeley of making someone the chairman. I think that Center for Higher Education is being . . . This program is also being run by Mrs. Carol Brentano.

Now, Bob Brentano is about the best medievalist in the country and is a good friend of mine. And his wife, she's in sort of architectural history, Carol Brentano, and she's helping to run this program. The last session will be next month and I'm going to be the speaker on what we've done at Irvine. So I thought you'd be interested that Berkeley's interested in history now and getting into it. They felt a little chagrined when someone gave a fine talk on the developments at Davis on agriculture; and somebody else spoke in our section--never the full university--but they still were doing something. And Davis has . . . This woman was very bright and she spoke very well and she's going to have a good book. But I'm very happy that Berkeley is going to do this and it's in very good hands with Sheldon Rothblatt and Mrs. Brentano. Now are there any further questions or comments? Anything you'd like to say for the record? As I said, this interview will be placed in the archives and will be available, if you permit it, to anyone to come and take a look.

CT: Well, I just want to make a brief comment about the history of the university. The history of Berkeley, I think it is marvelous idea. I'm always very personally interested in studying the history of institutions and the autobiographies and all those developments. I actually did have a meeting with several people in the Center for Studies of Higher Education a few weeks ago, including Marty Trow and Sheldon Rothblatt.

SM: (inaudible) in the group.

CT: Yes, yes. And so we had a very, very good discussion. I know both Sheldon as well as Marty Trow very well. I think certainly I will support this effort and try to make sure that it gets through.

I am so pleased to have this opportunity to talk to you, Sam, about my experience at Irvine. I must say it has been extremely fruitful, my two years here, and it also gave me a much broader perspective, in terms of the multi-campus university. I think the University of California is the only, and perhaps most successful, multi-campus university in the country. We all benefit from each campus. Now, spending two years at Irvine certainly reinforced my feeling in this particular aspect. Now going back to Berkeley, I will need a lot of support from my friends from other campuses, as well as from systemwide administration. So I'm really pleased to have had this opportunity here. Thank you.

SM: Well, we're very pleased to have had you. And I really agree with you that the experience of a new campus, relatively, meaning that it's only twenty-five years old, has gone as far as it's gone. Certain things you probably may know, that we started with 100,000 volumes, and I don't think any university in the world started with 100,000 volumes. Dean McHenry at Santa Cruz only had about 93,000. And the reason was that Dan Aldrich got ahead by appointing our Librarian John Smith, who's dead now, the first librarian.

CT: Yes.

SM: He was appointed two years before we opened. So besides getting the 75,000 volumes from San Diego stored in a basement, John Smith had put together 25,000 here. I'd like to say, it's been a thrilling experience for me to be here. I'm still teaching one course, which I love to do, I love to teach, and to do this history of UCI. And I understand that Suzy Peltason has done a pictorial history, which I have not seen. But we've taken so many pictures of this place, you wouldn't believe it. Well, I do want to wish you the best of luck and thank you for coming. It's been a great pleasure.

END OF INTERVIEW