

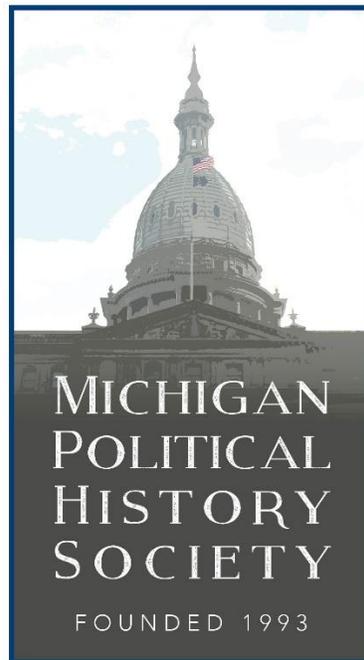
# John J. H. Schwarz

Interviewed by

Bill Ballenger

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**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John "J. H." Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

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Bill Ballenger: I am here today as Bill Ballenger with John J.H. Schwarz, better known to most people as Joe Schwarz. This man has been many things: doctor, mayor, state senator, congressman. You name it, he's been it. And we're going to talk about it. Joe Schwarz - nice to have you here for the Michigan Political History Society.

Joe Schwarz: Thanks Bill, nice to be with you.

Bill Ballenger: Let's start with something - I can hardly believe this. Your grandfather fought in the Civil War?

Joe Schwarz: Yes, Frederick Michael Schwarz, from Bavaria, Von Bayern, immigrated to the United States as a teenager, probably mid-to-late teens, and was in the Union Army in the Civil War. Fought in the wilderness battles, under Grant who was the big chief of that army that fought in the wilderness. Then after the Civil War, he went back to his home town, which was Philadelphia and became a Philadelphia policeman, and that's what he was for the remainder of his career.

Bill Ballenger: And he was born, what in the early 1840's?

Joe Schwarz: He was born in 1841.

Bill Ballenger: And his wife, your grandmother, was born probably in the late 1840's or something?

Joe Schwarz: We think so.

Bill Ballenger: Okay, and then he had some children. She had some children, the two of them. Tell me about that.

Joe Schwarz: They had seven children, five boys and two girls. My father was the seventh. He was born in 1887, and ultimately became a physician. And ultimately became one of the very early psychiatrists in the United States who actually studied psychiatry and was board-certified in psychiatry, and that's what he did. He was a shrink.

Bill Ballenger: Did he have any war experience?

Joe Schwarz: Yes, my father was in the U.S. Army in both World War I and World War II.

Bill Ballenger: Wow. How about your mother?

Joe Schwarz: My mother was a U.S. Army nurse in World War I and World War II.

Bill Ballenger: Wow. So how did they get to Battle Creek?

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Joe Schwarz: They got to Battle Creek because he was transferred to Battle Creek by the Veterans Administration. That’s what he did after World War I, was go around to various places: Arizona, Idaho, Maryland, Pennsylvania and then to Michigan and set up or expanded V.A. Hospitals. So he came to Battle Creek in 1935, and that’s where he was until the beginning of World War II. Then he was brought back into the army, and because he was too old at that time to go overseas, he was stationed right at Fort Custer. So I spent World War II on Fort Custer, and then after World War II, he went into private practice in Battle Creek in psychiatry.

Bill Ballenger: So you were born at Fort Custer?

Joe Schwarz: I was born in Chicago. Short Story. My mother was the third cesarean section in a forty-two year old woman in 1937. And her OB-GYN doctor in Battle Creek shipped her off to Chicago. I was born at the Passavant Hospital, which is now Passavant Pavilion, part of the Northwestern Medical Center in Chicago. And, two weeks later my parents brought me home to Battle Creek, by train, which I think is the beginning of my life-long interest in railroads.

Bill Ballenger: You remember it even then?

Joe Schwarz: I do, yes. Absolutely.

Bill Ballenger: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

Joe Schwarz: I have an older brother and an older sister.

Bill Ballenger: Okay, so you were raised starting at Fort Custer? Fort Custer, Battle Creek?

Joe Schwarz: In Fort Custer, during World War II. I remember riding around Fort Custer on my bicycle as a little four-year-old, five-year-old, six-year-old. Yeah, seven-year-old as well. There was a place on Fort Custer, Bill, out in the boondocks. They called it Hitlerville. And it was a mock European village, and they set up two or three infantry divisions at Fort Custer during the war. One was the 94<sup>th</sup>, I can’t remember what the others were, but they trained at Hitlerville and there was a lot of live ammunition around there. And, of course we loved to ride our bicycles out to Hitlerville when there wasn’t training going on. And you know what our mothers would tell us: “Kids, don’t you dare go to Hitlerville, don’t do it.” And you know what we did, we went to Hitlerville.

Bill Ballenger: Well, were your parents absent or gone from Fort Custer in Battle Creek during the war?

Joe Schwarz: No, they were both there. My mother was at Percy Jones Army Hospital in Battle Creek, which is now the Battle Creek Federal Center, in the building that was built by Dr. John Harvey Kellogg. But that’s where they were. Neither one left the country in World War II.

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Bill Ballenger: Did your father actually know John Harvey Kellogg?

Joe Schwarz: Yes.

Bill Ballenger: What experience did he have with him?

Joe Schwarz: Well, John Harvey Kellogg was interested in people’s mental health as well, and the Battle Creek Sanitarium was where people would come – some of them just because it was a spa, super spa, and some because they had mental problems, whether they had psychoses or neuroses or some because of alcoholism. John Harvey Kellogg and my father befriended each other, and my father did significant work at the Battle Creek Sanitarium. John Harvey Kellogg died in I believe in 1944, but one of my earliest memories is going to his home with my parents and actually shaking his hand.

Bill Ballenger: Wow.

Joe Schwarz: He was an interesting fellow, all white clothes. Everything he wore was white, including a white goatee and mustache.

Bill Ballenger: Sounds like Cornel Sanders or something.

Joe Schwarz: Sort of.

Bill Ballenger: That is fascinating. So, you went to the Battle Creek school system, right?

Joe Schwarz: Yes.

Bill Ballenger: And you graduated from?

Joe Schwarz: Battle Creek Central.

Bill Ballenger: Okay, like mid-fifties?

Joe Schwarz: 1955, yes. Precisely.

Bill Ballenger: And then you went to the University of Michigan?

Joe Schwarz: Yes.

Bill Ballenger: What happened at the University of Michigan? Were you a jock?

Joe Schwarz: I went out for the football team Bill, and played on the freshman football team. And then I was on the varsity my sophomore year.

Bill Ballenger: What position?

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Joe Schwarz: Center.

Bill Ballenger: Center? Oh, OK.

Joe Schwarz: And that was two-way back in the day...

Bill Ballenger: Okay, yeah, absolutely.

Joe Schwarz: ...as you can recall. I played center and a linebacker, up through spring practice of my sophomore year, and then I kind of looked at my grades, and looked at what my goals really were and said to myself, "You know what, you're never going to be the starting center at the University of Michigan. You've got a lot of friends on the football team. Great people, but I think it's time to say it's been a great run, but you better get your tail into the classroom and get serious." So I did.

Bill Ballenger: They probably didn't redshirt much then? If they had, you could have been a fifth year senior. You probably would have started. You could have been All Big Ten.

Joe Schwarz: Ha! All that stuff was later, believe me.

Bill Ballenger: Okay, so, you got serious and you graduated from the University of Michigan?

Joe Schwarz: Yes.

Bill Ballenger: Did you go right into medical school?

Joe Schwarz: No, my degree was in history.

Bill Ballenger: Okay.

Joe Schwarz: And I decided, at some point in a stroke of genius, that I wanted to be a history professor. Which is an honorable profession.

Bill Ballenger: How about Sidney Fine, wasn't he a professor at Michigan then?

Joe Schwarz: Sidney Fine was one of my professors.

Bill Ballenger: He was probably one of your inspirations, wasn't he?

Joe Schwarz: He and a gentleman named Karl Reichenbach, at the University of Michigan, professors of history. They were wonderful. And I did one year of graduate school...

Bill Ballenger: In Ann Arbor?

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Joe Schwarz: ...in Ann Arbor, one year of graduate school in history, and my older brother who's thirteen years older than I, who graduated from medical school in 1952. He got to me, and my father by this time had passed away, and said, "Don't you think you ought to go to medical school?" And I thought about it probably for five minutes and said, "Yeah, I should."

Bill Ballenger: Had you had it in the back of your mind the all along that you really did, maybe want to eventually, become a medical doctor or not?

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, of course you do. The things in the back of your mind sometimes remain there and they don't come to the frontal cortex. Well this jumped up to the frontal cortex and I applied to Wayne State's Medical School, which is where my brother graduated. He also did his undergraduate work at Michigan. And I was accepted, and graduated from Wayne State Medical School in 1964.

Bill Ballenger: Okay, so once you got out of there, then what?

Joe Schwarz: I did my internship at Los Angeles County General Hospital, which is now called Los Angeles County USC Medical Center.

Bill Ballenger: How did you happen to go way out there?

Joe Schwarz: Bill, remember it was the mid 1960's and all young men wanted to go to California.

Bill Ballenger: Oh, okay.

Joe Schwarz: I think there were fifteen or sixteen of my graduating class at Wayne State's Medical School in 1964 - which was 113, I remember the number - who went to the Los Angeles area to southern California to do their internship, and I was one of them.

Bill Ballenger: Okay, what did you think of the experience?

Joe Schwarz: It was the best medical experience that I have ever had because it prepared me for things to come.

Bill Ballenger: In what way?

Joe Schwarz: Well, there was lots of trauma. There were lots of people who were really sick. There were lots of opportunities for an intern to be hands-on in the operating room and in the emergency room. The instruction was exceptionally good because of the physicians who were at that hospital knew how to do things; knew how to take care of people who were really sick, or who were badly injured. So, it was a great, great year.

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Bill Ballenger: Okay, now what was your career path in your own mind at that time? Would you expect to go on after one year and do something else or what?

Joe Schwarz: Well, I would have expected to go on to a residency in time, but just sitting around the interns’ quarters during that year, there was a group of us who were pretty close friends. Actually, all of us from the Big Ten, and one of my best friends was a fellow named John Hill from Iowa. Cedar Falls, Iowa to be exact. He and I had decided that we wanted to join the Navy. And then when we went in the Navy, asked to be seconded to the Marine Corps, because as you know the Marine Corps has no medical corps – all Marine doctors are Navy doctors – and be sent to Vietnam because the war in Vietnam was heating up at that time. So we did that. We went down, we enlisted. We talked to a very gnarly-faced chief petty officer in the officer enlistment office in Los Angeles and said, “We’d like to be Navy doctors and we’d like to go to Vietnam, with the Marines.” And he looked at us and said, “Doctors, I don’t think there’s going to be any difficulty whatsoever in granting your wish.” So off we went.

Bill Ballenger: You might have been the first people to volunteer for such an assignment.

Joe Schwarz: I don’t think so. I think there were more than us, but we were the two that day.

Bill Ballenger: Okay, so then what?

Joe Schwarz: I went to Vietnam, and was a battalion surgeon for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Regiment.

Bill Ballenger: Stationed?

Joe Schwarz: We were south of Da Nang, and then we were north of Da Nang between Da Nang and the Demilitarized Zone, and that was for a year. Every once in a while we’d get on a Navy transport and go down, and because we were the ready amphibious group too, and do a landing some place, and then “jump five”, but we were basically around Da Nang.

Bill Ballenger: And the guy for Cedar Falls was with you?

Joe Schwarz: No, he was with another Marine battalion, but he was essentially doing the same thing.

Bill Ballenger: Okay, alright, so then what after a year? Then What?

Joe Schwarz: After a year I got orders, which I could not understand. I had to take them to my commanding officer, the Marine Colonel, and I said “What does this mean?” Well what it meant was that I had order to be Assistant Naval Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia. I would go back to the United States for, it wasn’t very long, six weeks and go to Attaché School in D.C.

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Bill Ballenger: In Washington, D.C.?

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, and then off to Jakarta. And so I was off to Jakarta in 1966.

Bill Ballenger: But you don’t know how or why you got this kind of assignment? You don’t know where it came from?

Joe Schwarz: No clue, no clue, other than the fact that in the Navy and in the Army and in the Air Force, one medical officer was assigned as an assistant attaché, not as **the** attaché, but as an assistant attaché. That apparently was tradition.

Bill Ballenger: But they could have picked someone else, but they picked you.

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, they could have, but they picked me.

Bill Ballenger: There had to be a reason?

Joe Schwarz: I’ll be damned, I don’t know why. I have no idea. The Air Force guy was always in Moscow, the Army guy was either in Manila, the Philippines or Delhi, and the Navy guy was always in Jakarta. So I was in Jakarta.

Bill Ballenger: So what happened when you got to Jakarta?

Joe Schwarz: A lot of things happened when I got to Jakarta.

Bill Ballenger: Tell us a few stories.

Joe Schwarz: Well, I can tell you a few stories because there was a revolution going on there. And there had been the attempt by the Soviet Union to essentially suborn Indonesia because the biggest thing is the seaways that come around Indonesia and then head up toward China and Japan. They wanted to control those, and so there was a really, really good consortium of Americans, Brits, French, Germans, Australians, especially Australians who were doing everything in the intelligence field to prevent this from happening. An attempted coup failed, and at that time Suharto started to move in and take over for Sukarno. So these were very, very interesting times and I loved working with the officers from the other militaries and the intelligence services, from other militaries. And of course there was a very big KGB presence in Indonesia. I had to laugh because they were just like the KGB was portrayed in the movies. (In humorous Russian accent): “Oh, doctor you like Russian Vodka? Well, have two or three Vodkas.” “Thanks very much, I think I won’t.” And the Polish had an embassy there. And of course they were hand-in-glove with the Soviets at that time. The East Germans did as well. The great stories: The Polish military attaché, whose name was Wladyslaw Mulgrowski, had these two absolutely gorgeous daughters who he kept trying to push off on westerners, especially Americans and Australians. And I had to go to my commanding officer one time and say, “Look Colonel Kellogg,” – not a Battle Creek Kellogg, but his name was

Wilbur Kellogg – I said, “Colonel Kellogg, look, Colonel Mulgrowski keeps throwing his daughters at me in a way that I find a little bit questionable, and I just wanted to let you know that.” And Kellogg looked at me and said, “Don’t worry about it.” He said, “He does that to everybody.” I said, “Well alright, I feel better about it now.” But it was great fun. I think the most fun story, the most interesting story: We had a little dispensary in the embassy and I was in there one morning and the ambassador’s office called. The ambassador was a man named Marshall Green who was a true diplomat in every sense of the word. He was professional. He was married to a woman named Lispenard Crocker Green, who was the daughter of Edward Crocker, who was the American chargé d'affaires in the embassy in Tokyo. On December 7<sup>th</sup> 1941, his boss, Ambassador Joseph Grew, was not there. So Edward Crocker, he’s in all the history books, this was his daughter who was Marshall Green’s wife. Anyhow, Marshall Green’s secretary called me and said, “We have an American here who is doing some research on conserving certain things, and trying to get the Indonesians to respect this national park, called Ujung Kulon, which is out on the west end of Java, and all of the flora and fauna there. He hasn’t had his gamma globulin shot yet.” And, that’s what we gave for Hepatitis then. You know you got gamma globulin, which is mixed globulin that would which one hoped, and did, have some hepatitis antibodies in it. He said, “Would you come up and give this gentleman, unnamed, some gamma globulin?” And I said, “Well, Mr. Ambassador of course. I will be right up.” That was a *big* shot Bill. That was about eight cc’s you pushed in. So I pulled it up and put it in a syringe, and wrapped it in a towel, and went down the hallway, and up the stairway to the ambassador’s office. And I walk in, and the secretary said, “Go right in.” And the ambassador is there and the other gentleman is there and he has his back turned to me. I said, “Okay Mr. Ambassador, here I am. Is this the gentleman?” The ambassador turns to me and said, “Yes. Joe I’d like for you to meet Colonel Lindbergh.”

Bill Ballenger: Really? Are you kidding?

Joe Schwarz: I did a *Whisky, Tango, Foxtrot* on that one, believe me. I said “Okay”, and he turned around and it’s Charles Lindbergh.

Bill Ballenger: Wow. Wow!

Joe Schwarz: So I have the distinct honor of having pushed eight cc’s of gamma globulin into Charles Lindbergh’s behind.

Bill Ballenger: Whoa, and everything turned out alright?

Joe Schwarz: Everything was fine.

Bill Ballenger: Thank God.

Joe Schwarz: Yes, but as you remember toward the end of his life, he was in his 60’s then, he was interested in conservation. And this is one of the things he did. He was in Indonesia and

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he was looking at this area on the west end of the island of Java. So there he was and there I was.

Bill Ballenger: Wow! That was an incredible story!

Joe Schwarz: But that was a great tour of duty. I had the opportunity to work with wonderful, wonderful people.

Bill Ballenger: What about Suharto and Sukarno? Did you actually have any personal meetings or experience with either of them?

Joe Schwarz: I did. I met Sukarno several times. I can remember the first time I met him was at the presidential palace, and there was some kind of a reception. I was in uniform, which we didn't do a lot of but I did then. He turned around and looked at me and said, "Who is this young man with the crew cut?" So, I had to introduce myself. He spoke some English. It was fine, so I did meet Sukarno. Suharto was a little different. Suharto had been commanding officer of the Jakarta Military Garrison, and at the time of the coup that failed, he had called the Siliwangi Division – Siliwangi Tiger is a Javan Tiger – commanded by a man named Ibram Adji down to Jakarta to secure all the government buildings, and by doing so basically the coup failed. So I had met him on several occasions.

Bill Ballenger: He spoke English too?

Joe Schwarz: No, no, this was the thing. Another call from Ambassador Green said, "Joe?" And I said, "Yes, Mr. Ambassador." And he said, "We would like you to go to Suharto's residence and teach him some English."

Bill Ballenger: Whoa.

Joe Schwarz: And I said, "Mr. Ambassador, I'm honored, but why me?" He said, "Because you are the most junior and the most inoffensive person around here carrying a diplomatic passport and we don't think anything could happen to you. You're so junior." So, for about six weeks, I can't remember which day of the week it was, but one day of the week, maybe a Monday – I can't remember – I would drive to Suharto's house, and go in and walk around a table in the entry way, and teach him English phrases like: "Where is the men's room?", "Good morning", "Good evening", "How are you?", that sort of stuff. We did that for about six weeks and then he felt like he'd had enough. He was a very pleasant guy.

Bill Ballenger: Did you get any evidence in future years that he had kept his lessons that he received from Dr. Schwarz?

Joe Schwarz: No, I never did. I never did. You know he was the president for thirty-four years, and like most Indonesian military dictators, which is what he was, he kind of got into the corruption end of it toward the end. But at that time he was as pure as the driven snow.

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He was a boy from central Java who became a general in the Indonesian army, and by hook or crook, and by accident became president, became the person who replaced the Sukarno.

Bill Ballenger: But wasn't there some time during these thirty-four years, when you would have seen him on TV, and he would be trying to speak English? Did you ever see it?

Joe Schwarz: I cannot remember ever seeing that.

Bill Ballenger: What, you mean you think he never did, or you think you just missed it?

Joe Schwarz: I missed it.

Bill Ballenger: Because you could have taken credit.

Joe Schwarz: Well, I could have probably, but I didn't.

Bill Ballenger: Alright, so how long did this last in Jakarta? Then what?

Joe Schwarz: About a year and a half. Then, I was recruited by the Central Intelligence Agency.

Bill Ballenger: So another, this comes out of nowhere?

Joe Schwarz: Well we worked with the CIA. We were DIA.

Bill Ballenger: Right.

Joe Schwarz: The attaché office is DIA. So, I worked with the CIA folks in Jakarta.

Bill Ballenger: Yeah, but somebody else had to make the decision to say, "We want you to join the company." I mean, it wasn't like you went out and applied for it.

Joe Schwarz: No, the Chief of Station did.

Bill Ballenger: Okay.

Joe Schwarz: He said, "What are you doing to do when you leave the Navy?" And then I said, "Well I'm going to do a residency some place." He said, "Wouldn't you like to come and work with us for a while, because you're single. You've had experience now, you've been in South East Asia now for more than two years."

Bill Ballenger: And you're "inoffensive"...

Joe Schwarz: That's right, I'm inoffensive, and I thought I was invisible, invincible and bullet proof of course. I found out later that those are the three final stages of drunkenness.

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So, anyhow, I was recruited by the agency, went back to the States, again for just a few weeks. I then went to Laos, way, way up in Northern Laos at a place called Ban Houayxay, which is on the Mekong River.

Bill Ballenger: Now are we into 1968, '69?

Joe Schwarz: Actually, we are in '68.

Bill Ballenger: Okay.

Joe Schwarz: Was there, I'm going to say four months. Basically, there was a crew there of agency people, and we had medical equipment and we could do things. We were helping the tribal people for the most part, who were loyal to the government in Vientiane and not the Pathet Lao. The one thing that happened there, was down the Mekong River one day, comes a very nice tribesman who turned out to be Yoa.

Bill Ballenger: What does Yao mean?

Joe Schwarz: I don't know what it means. It's the name of the tribe.

Bill Ballenger: Oh, okay.

Joe Schwarz: And, he came down, and through two interpreters; Yao to Lao and Lao to English, he said that his wife was in labor and the baby wasn't coming. "How long does it take to get down here?" Well, it turned out it took him about two hours. Going straight north, he was darn-near in Burma. I should say Myanmar, but then it was Burma. I said again back through the two interpreters, I said, "You have to bring her down here, because it doesn't sound like things are going to happen, and that's bad." He goes back up the Mekong. We don't think he is going to return, but maybe about six hours later he comes back and he's got his wife with him.

Bill Ballenger: She was in labor all this time?

Joe Schwarz: She was in hard labor.

Bill Ballenger: Oh, man.

Joe Schwarz: We had enough equipment, it was basically kind of a field aid station, a battle aid station that we had, but we could do things. I had done cesarean sections as an intern at L.A. County Hospital. That's why I say the hands-on helped.

Bill Ballenger: Right.

Joe Schwarz: And he'd say, "As an intern?" and I'd say, "Yes, as an intern." And so did all the interns who spent two months in OB-GYN. We gave her "drop ether" as an anesthetic. And I

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did a cesarean section on this woman. I mean it was a nice little incision, I did pubis to umbilicus, and got a good baby. It was a little boy. We got a good baby, got her sewed up. We kept her with us for about, maybe two and a half - three weeks while she healed up.

Bill Ballenger: Had she had other children?

Joe Schwarz: Yes, and that child was with her.

Bill Ballenger: Was it really? No kidding.

Joe Schwarz: Everybody came. We told the husband that, "She is going to need food. You are going to have to go out and get her food." So, he disappeared for a couple of days and we said, "God, where has he gone?" He comes back and he's got a lot of food for her, mostly rice and everything. He said, essentially through the two interpreter, "I have something for you." I said, "What?" And he pulls out this bottle. And Bill, as God as my witness, it is a bottle of Dubonnet!

Bill Ballenger: Really?

Joe Schwarz: And I said, "What the..." Well, he bought it over in Thailand. He went over across to Thailand.

Bill Ballenger: Well that's pretty good. He knew what you probably liked.

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, that's right.

Bill Ballenger: You probably did like it, right?

Joe Schwarz: So, oh yeah, I did. So, after a couple of weeks she was okay and off she went with the babe in arms, back down the hill and to the Mekong and up into the mist of the Mekong and never again to be heard from.

Bill Ballenger: Well now, I would think that was a major PR break-through for what the U.S. was trying to accomplish in that area with these people, right?

Joe Schwarz: I don't think we'd use it for PR.

Bill Ballenger: Well no, but I mean...

Joe Schwarz: They thought we were good guys.

Bill Ballenger: Yeah, well you were supposed to be encouraging friendly relations between the government and the U.S. That was your job.

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Joe Schwarz: Yeah, that is what we were trying to do.

Bill Ballenger: And, this had to be a big plus? I mean, word gets around.

Joe Schwarz: We flew in from Thailand...

Bill Ballenger: Yeah.

Joe Schwarz: ...in a black, so called, unmarked American aircraft to a runway that was cut out of the side of a hill, and you landed going uphill and took off going downhill. But our senior officer there was an American, a 6-foot four-inch, blonde, blue-eyed fellow from Indiana named Bob Thomas. And we had to laugh because we were supposed to not be there. We called him "Captain Indigenous." Anyhow, that was an interesting tour of duty. And then a guy walked up the hill one day who was a CIA guy, who had been there for many years, named Tony Poczepka. They called him "Tony Po", and said, "They want you in Bangkok." And I said, "Okay." So, I went down to where that little airport was and got on a C-47 that belonged to the Lao Air Force, and back down to Vientiane, and then few Thai Airways down to Bangkok. Went to see the Chief of Station in Bangkok. He said, "You are going back to Indonesia." And I said, "Okay." And then they had to work through some identity things, some identification things. You know, who I'm going to be when I go there, etc., etc. Then, probably a week, ten days later, I took off and went back down to Jakarta. I got off the airplane and the first person I met was Anne Louise Ennis from Kalispell Montana...who became my wife, later on.

Bill Ballenger: Just by happenstance, she happened to be the first person to meet?

Joe Schwarz: She was there with the embassy doctor who, as I said before, worked for the CIA as well. So, she came up with him to meet me, and that's when I met her.

Bill Ballenger: So, was she CIA too then?

Joe Schwarz: Yes.

Bill Ballenger: It is kind of like Paul and Julia Child.

Joe Schwarz: Yes, something like that, yeah. Yeah she was, and she graduated from the University of Montana. She went to work in Madison Wisconsin after she graduated. Was bored, and interviewed with the CIA and they hired her.

Bill Ballenger: I'll be darned. That's amazing!

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Joe Schwarz: So, anyhow, I spent in this particular operation, another probably six weeks in Indonesia. That was completed, and then I went back to Vietnam for a year with the agency.

Bill Ballenger: How bout Anne?

Joe Schwarz: Anne's tour in Indonesia was up about the same time my tour in Vietnam was up, and I accepted the residency position at Harvard, in Otolaryngology. She went back to CIA Headquarters.

Bill Ballenger: In D.C.?

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, in 1971. Actually, Langley Virginia, and we got married in January 1971 and lived in Boston for four years.

Bill Ballenger: Now after you performed the C-section up in Laos, how come you didn't go into OB-GYN? Is that what really convinced you to go into Otolaryngology?

Joe Schwarz: I wanted to do Otolaryngology. There were a lot of things in it that I was interested in. The fact that we had done so much OB-GYN and so much general surgery, as interns at Los Angeles County General, served me well.

Bill Ballenger: So, how long was the stint getting your degree up at Harvard?

Joe Schwarz: Four years.

Bill Ballenger: Four years, OK, and you and Anne were married at that point.

Joe Schwarz: Yep.

Bill Ballenger: And you had children?

Joe Schwarz: One daughter.

Bill Ballenger: One daughter and she was born while you were there?

Joe Schwarz: She was born in Boston, that's right.

Bill Ballenger: And then what happened after that?

Joe Schwarz: And then I did what I had intended to do really all along. And that is, I took a teaching position at the Harvard Medical School for a year. Then, did what I had intended to do all along, which was to go back home.

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John "J. H." Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Bill Ballenger: Okay.

Joe Schwarz: And it was alright with Anne. Brennan at that time was, I think just a year old and we went back to Battle Creek and I set up my private practice there.

Bill Ballenger: In Otolaryngology?

Joe Schwarz: In Otolaryngology, yes.

Bill Ballenger: So, you started out there. This would have been the early '70s?

Joe Schwarz: Yes, in '74.

Bill Ballenger: '74, okay. I'm going to skip ahead a little bit. Maybe just a couple of years. I think at some point you decide to get into politics.

Joe Schwarz: In '76.

Bill Ballenger: What happened? What inspired this?

Joe Schwarz: I had always wanted to run for Congress. There was no deep underlying meaning to it. I had always wanted to run for Congress.

Bill Ballenger: No politicians in the family up until that time?

Joe Schwarz: In the Family?

Bill Ballenger: Way back, yeah.

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, my Uncle Fred.

Bill Ballenger: Your Uncle Fred...

Joe Schwarz: Was my father's oldest brother.

Bill Ballenger: Yeah.

Joe Schwarz: Was a judge in Philadelphia.

Bill Ballenger: Okay.

Joe Schwarz: That's it.

Bill Ballenger: Was he elected or appointed?

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John "J. H." Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Joe Schwarz: He was elected. He had also been a Philadelphia city councilman. Back in the day, I mean way back in the day, and had been an unsuccessful candidate for mayor of Philadelphia.

Bill Ballenger: Well at least you had the little political gene in there, somewhere.

Joe Schwarz: Someplace there was a screwed up gene, yeah.

Bill Ballenger: So it leapt out and in '76 you... So the incumbent congressman was a Republican?

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, Gary Brown, fine guy.

Bill Ballenger: Gary Brown, and he was from like Kalamazoo, Schoolcraft?

Joe Schwarz: Schoolcraft, South of Kalamazoo.

Bill Ballenger: Yeah, and so you decided to run as a Republican?

Joe Schwarz: Yes.

Bill Ballenger: Challenge him in the primary.

Joe Schwarz: Yes.

Bill Ballenger: That's tough to do.

Joe Schwarz: Yes it was.

Bill Ballenger: Well, I mean, you might have gotten your Calhoun County support anyway. Did you do very well in your home county?

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, I did okay, I did alright. At that time the district was essentially Calhoun, Kalamazoo County, Branch County and parts of surrounding.

Bill Ballenger: Right. Well you evidently didn't totally get it out of your system?

Joe Schwarz: No, I don't think you ever do that.

Bill Ballenger: No, so in other words, was it a learning experience? Did you learn from it?

Joe Schwarz: Oh yeah, it was a learning experience, and it was not a bad experience.

Bill Ballenger: So, after it was over, then what? Did you get into local politics?

Joe Schwarz: I got into local politics in 1979, and was elected to the Battle Creek City Commission.

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John "J. H." Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Bill Ballenger: And then how did that go? How long were you...

Joe Schwarz: That went very well, enjoyed it. Was elected mayor of Battle Creek in 1985 and to the state Senate in 1986.

Bill Ballenger: How were you able to juggle your practice and your political duties? Did your political duties impinge on your time as a practitioner?

Joe Schwarz: Well, impinge is probably not a bad word. Impingement, yes. A little bit of impingement, but never the less, I worked my butt off. With the approval and assent of my wife, was able to do both.

Bill Ballenger: Right. Now you are mayor of Battle Creek, didn't a seat open up in '86? Was it open or was there an incumbent Democrat in there?

Joe Schwarz: In the Senate?

Bill Ballenger: Excuse me, in the Senate.

Joe Schwarz: Oh, Harry DeMaso retired.

Bill Ballenger: Yeah, Harry DeMaso retired in '86.

Joe Schwarz: Yep.

Bill Ballenger: Okay, so you decided to run to succeed him.

Joe Schwarz: Yes.

Bill Ballenger: And, what happened then?

Joe Schwarz: It was an interesting primary.

Bill Ballenger: The district was like Calhoun and Eaton?

Joe Schwarz: The district was Calhoun and Eaton and a small part of Ingham – Holt in fact was in the district.

Bill Ballenger: Okay, alright.

Joe Schwarz: Calhoun and Eaton is what the district was.

Bill Ballenger: The dominant, and Calhoun was by far the biggest?

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John "J. H." Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, I guess. Yeah, Calhoun is about 150,000 - 152,000. Eaton at that point was probably about 90. So, anyhow, yeah and then this little part of Ingham up here.

Bill Ballenger: Yeah. So, you ran in the primary?

Joe Schwarz: I did.

Bill Ballenger: And what, did you have an opponent then?

Joe Schwarz: Ah, yes, it was...

Bill Ballenger: Ernie Nash?

Joe Schwarz: There was an opponent and the opponent was in fact Ernie Nash, State Representative Ernie Nash.

Bill Ballenger: He was an incumbent state representative.

Joe Schwarz: From Bellevue, yes.

Bill Ballenger: But he was from Eaton County, which was a smaller county.

Joe Schwarz: Yeah.

Bill Ballenger: So you won that.

Joe Schwarz: Yep.

Bill Ballenger: And it was pretty much a Republican district. So you won that.

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, pretty heavily Republican.

Bill Ballenger: Although it was a terrible Republican year, '86, you may remember.

Joe Schwarz: Yeah.

Bill Ballenger: You know Jim Blanchard, the sponsor of our little talk here, won a resounding re-election.

Joe Schwarz: Who became a good friend, by the way.

Bill Ballenger: Yeah. So you come into the Senate, a freshman. What was your reaction to what you found in the state Capitol? Because, this was the first time really wasn't it that you had any experience in state government?

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John “J. H.” Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Joe Schwarz: Yes.

Bill Ballenger: What was your reaction, what did you think?

Joe Schwarz: Well first my experience in local government served me well. And that’s one of the things that I have preached since then, to people who want to run for the legislature. “It will be very helpful if you have some experience in local government. At the city level, or at the county level, the township level. Because so much of what the legislature does has to do with relationships with its local governments.” That served me well, and I noticed that right away, as compared to members who did not have any experience in local government.

Bill Ballenger: So there were people, probably there for some time in the Senate, but they hadn’t had any real local government experience before they had been elected. So even though you were a freshman, you actually had a little step on them.

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, I did, and it was great. It was very helpful, but I loved the state Senate. It was the glorious pre-term limit years where there were mentors in the Senate, of both parties, who would be helpful to you whether you were a member of their party or a member of the opposite party.

Bill Ballenger: Who were the ones that you remembered most?

Joe Schwarz: John Engler.

Bill Ballenger: John Engler was already there, yep.

Joe Schwarz: Harry Gast.

Bill Ballenger: Yup.

Joe Schwarz: Dan DeGrow...on the Republican side. On the “D side,” Art Miller was an excellent help. John Francis Kelly.

Bill Ballenger: Right.

Joe Schwarz: And others in that first term. You know the old saying, “Can’t we all just get along?” We all *did* just get along. It was fine, and when there was a problem, I think we solved it most of the time pretty constructively. So, I enjoyed that first term of the Senate, and felt it was quite a good learning experience. And I had no compunction whatsoever in approaching John Engler, or Harry Gast, or Dan DeGrow, or Art Miller, or Lana Pollack, John Kelly or someone, saying, “OK, here’s a problem, I don’t quite understand this, fill me in.” It worked, the place worked.

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John “J. H.” Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Bill Ballenger: And it was a fairly closely-divided Senate, even though the Republicans had control. It was 20 to 18.

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, it was 20 to 18.

Bill Ballenger: Democrats controlled the House.

Joe Schwarz: Yup.

Bill Ballenger: And Jim Blanchard, a Democrat, was governor. So that was the first term.

Joe Schwarz: Yep, and Martha Griffiths was lieutenant governor, so any ties were broken on the Democratic side.

Bill Ballenger: That’s right. What did you think about Martha Griffiths?

Joe Schwarz: I loved her, she was wonderful.

Bill Ballenger: Was she a good presiding officer?

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, she was fine.

Bill Ballenger: Good, that’s good. Let me ask you about one thing that came up for a vote in the last year you were in your first term in the Senate which nobody really thinks about or talks about nowadays, and that is: “emergency manager.” I don’t know if you even remember, because I asked Ken Sikkema, who was in the House...

Joe Schwarz: He was in the House.

Bill Ballenger: ...at that time, and he voted for it. That original legislation passed almost unanimously in the House and Senate. It was not a partisan issue at all. It was sponsored by, I think, John Engler and Dick Posthumus in the Senate.

Joe Schwarz: Probably.

Bill Ballenger: And Jim Blanchard signed it. Okay, and everybody was fairly happy with it until you got into the 2000s.

Joe Schwarz: Of late.

Bill Ballenger: This was way back ten, fifteen years later, and then it started to be applied to more and more cities. And then of course Rick Snyder came in as governor in 2011. He says, “It’s too weak. We need to strengthen the Emergency Manager Law.” And at that point, everything diverged. It became a very partisan issue. I’m just curious, looking back at

the history, what is your thought? Do you ever even remember this being debated very strenuously?

Joe Schwarz: No, there was no strenuous debate. Had there been I would have remembered it.

Bill Ballenger: Yeah.

Joe Schwarz: And I'm certain that I supported it, because I felt it was good government.

Bill Ballenger: Yeah, you did. You voted for it.

Joe Schwarz: This was one of the things that we had to do to clean up some incipient problems out there in the various jurisdictions that we had.

Bill Ballenger: Did you have any feeling way later, almost two decades later when the wheels came off the buggy on *emergency manager*? At least according to the Democrats, saying, "This is a terrible law. This should not be allowed. The governor and the state should not come in big-foot and smash down local governments and take away their power." What's your feeling about all of that?

Joe Schwarz: My feeling is that the emergency manager concept is still a good concept, still a workable concept. I think one has to be careful where one applies it, and one has to be aware probably now more than ever. People are going to be offended with the emergency manager concept if it comes to my town: "I don't want you here. Well, your government is broken. You've laid off half of your police force and half of your fire fighters. The roads are in horrible condition," and on and on and on. "And the revenue outlook for this community is terrible. We need to have someone come in, pick up the pieces, try to put them back together and re-structure the government for this jurisdiction so that there is some future." And I think that concept is a good one.

Bill Ballenger: Do you go back to your days as a mayor and a city commissioner and think, "You know this could have happened to us if we hadn't taken care of our books, and we'd gone in the tank fiscally?"

Joe Schwarz: Bill, as you know, all politics is: "There but for the grace of God, go I" so, yeah, sure that's true. Fortunately in Battle Creek we were and actually remain solvent, but yeah, absolutely.

Bill Ballenger: Okay, so you get through your first term. You are elected to three more terms. What were your committee assignments?

Joe Schwarz: The first term was Health Policy and Education, and I actually chaired the Education Committee. I was very fortunate to have somebody like Vern Ehlers on the committee with me. What a wonderful and capable legislator he was.

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John “J. H.” Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Bill Ballenger: From Grand Rapids?

Joe Schwarz: Grand Rapids, Yep.

Bill Ballenger: Later a congressman.

Joe Schwarz: Later a congressman. The second, third and fourth term I was on Appropriations, and chaired the Subcommittee on Appropriations for Higher Education. Which to me...

Bill Ballenger: The last two terms?

Joe Schwarz: Three.

Bill Ballenger: Three, oh, all three terms?

Joe Schwarz: Yes.

Bill Ballenger: So, you not only got on the Appropriations Committee, you chaired from the beginning for twelve years.

Joe Schwarz: I chaired that *subcommittee* for all three terms, yes. And which for me was the consummation devoutly to be wished, because I love the universities. It's a good example, as you know, if a legislator in a state as complex as Michigan, with a budget the size of Michigan's budget, with all of the pieces, you've got to be a specialist. I was a specialist on health care issues because of my profession prior to coming to the legislature and during my time in the Legislature. I became a specialist on public higher education because of my love for public higher education, and that was my favorite thing.

Bill Ballenger: Was a lot of that due to your devotion to your alma mater in the University of Michigan?

Joe Schwarz: Absolutely to my alma mater, but in time to the fourteen other schools as well. It doesn't make any difference whether you're a Wolverine or a Spartan or a Bronco or whatever. These are wonderful universities.

Bill Ballenger: Right.

Joe Schwarz: They are really the gem, the jewel in the crown of what we have in this state, and we have to take care of them. I never had a hearing that was not on a university campus. Hell, we went up to Houghton two or three times in those twelve years.

Bill Ballenger: Michigan Tech.

Joe Schwarz: To Tech, to Northern, to Sault St. Marie, to Lake State, to all of the other schools. At least probably three times to each school in those twelve years, but in the four or five

hearings that I'd have before the final hearing for passing a budget; always held on a college campus. One of the things that I believe I can legitimately criticize today's Legislature for is that these hearings are now held in Lansing. And I'm asking, "How can you as a chair in the House or the Senate, of the committee that funds, that provides the state appropriation for our public universities, how can you really do that knowledgeably, without having your hearings on the campuses themselves?"

Bill Ballenger: Why do you think this has happened?

Joe Schwarz: I don't know, I don't know what the reason is. I don't think there is any good reason, it is just what the chair has chosen to do. And I believe it is an inappropriate choice.

Bill Ballenger: Well they have had different chairs over the years...

Joe Schwarz: Oh, yeah.

Bill Ballenger: ...but the trend has been the same.

Joe Schwarz: Yes. True.

Bill Ballenger: It's bad.

Joe Schwarz: True.

Bill Ballenger: Well, one thing that must have been a little disappointing to you is that despite your success as a chairman, and I think you were highly-regarded as chairman of that Subcommittee on Higher Education, the state's share of funding for higher education continued to go down as a percentage of the budget compared to fifty years ago.

Joe Schwarz: Well, as compared to fifty years ago, yes. The actual number under my chairmanship went up every year.

Bill Ballenger: Okay

Joe Schwarz: And it didn't nose dive until after term limits took over in the Senate after 2002.

Bill Ballenger: That's when it started to go down?

Joe Schwarz: And then it tanked! But every year that I was chair, the actual dollars went up.

Bill Ballenger: Dollars went up even though maybe only as a percentage of the state budget, it wasn't going up?

Joe Schwarz: That's true, as a percentage.

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John “J. H.” Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Bill Ballenger: But at least it was going up.

Joe Schwarz: The dollars always went up.

Bill Ballenger: But after term limits in 2002, that is when it really went in the tank.

Joe Schwarz: Yep. Yes, that’s true.

Bill Ballenger: And why do you think that is?

Joe Schwarz: I think, unfortunately that there was a lesser appreciation of what a fabulous asset those public universities are. The point I used to make to my fellow members of the Senate and House as well, especially to my subcommittee and to the members of the Appropriations Committee, “Look, if the state appropriation goes down, tuition goes up. That relationship exists. It goes down further, tuition goes up further.” And that’s where we are now. That’s where we are now. The state appropriation has gone down to the point where tuition can be defined in some schools as utterly unaffordable. That’s why, one of the reasons, there are many, one of the reasons we have this intolerable student debt.

Bill Ballenger: Did you get the kind of support from the House, in terms of keeping higher education funding levels fairly high while you were chairman of the Senate committee?

Joe Schwarz: Yes.

Bill Ballenger: But, the same thing happened in the House once term limits kicked in?

Joe Schwarz: Yes, the House and the Senate... I found that that committee, my committee and my subcommittee in the Senate, and the subcommittee in the House, we worked together beautifully and for most of those years...

Bill Ballenger: Who were some of the people you remember in the House?

Joe Schwarz: Oh gosh, in the House that were working on it, you know, Paul Hillegonds was wonderful to work with.

Bill Ballenger: Right, the speaker.

Joe Schwarz: Curtis Hertel was wonderful to work with.

Bill Ballenger: Democratic Speaker in ‘97, ‘98.

Joe Schwarz: Democratic Speaker. Yeah, these were people who were great to work with.

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John "J. H." Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Bill Ballenger: And of course the House, they had more and more turnover on these committee chairmanships, so you know...

Joe Schwarz: Yep.

Bill Ballenger: ...they didn't have anybody consistently there.

Joe Schwarz: People worked together well, and the importance of these universities was recognized. And as you know, okay you say, "Well, it didn't hurt the University of Michigan." Well, the University of Michigan sits out here with the way it's funded. It has the largest endowment of any public university in the United State with the exception of the University of Texas System.

Bill Ballenger: Yep.

Joe Schwarz: The University of Texas System.

Bill Ballenger: Right, the whole system.

Joe Schwarz: And their endowment right now is about eight billion dollars. And you go down to the next highest endowment is MSU, which is still I think a tad under two billion. And then you go down to other schools, a little smaller state universities. They don't have big endowments. They don't live on their endowments. They need their state appropriation. And their state appropriation is a much larger percentage of their budget. And if their appropriation goes down and if you look 2002 'till the present time how they've gone down and what the tuition has done, I think it's unforgivable.

Bill Ballenger: Well, let's say that finally somebody saw the light and said, "We've got to start kicking up state funding for higher education again; get us going back up so that these colleges and universities could maybe tamp down their tuition." Because it is like you say, it is like a zero sum game...

Joe Schwarz: That's right, it is.

Bill Ballenger: ...you know if one goes up, the other one, etcetera. What practical effect do you think it would really have on the universities or are they insatiable? They just want more money. They wouldn't lower the tuition, they'd keep it there. It might not go up as fast.

Joe Schwarz: Well, there is a certain amount of insatiableness that you have to except, that's a given. No question. However, most of the schools really need that state appropriation to stay up there and be increased every year. Their expenses don't go down. Huge expenses, salaries at universities, faculty salaries. You know everybody has an organization that, I will say a union, because it is a union, but they're represented and the unions do the best for the people that belong to the unions. So the salaries and benefits go up. So the state has got to keep up with this. You could say, "Well to hell with the universities.

We are sick and tired of them spending this money. This is ridiculous, we are going to spend it on something else." Well, that's really not fair to the young men and women in this state who are going to school at these universities: "It's a fact of life, ladies and gentlemen of the Legislature; suck it up and do the right thing!"

Bill Ballenger: Okay, Senator you're a politician in Michigan now. You're in the state Senate. Do you ever, or did you ever back in the late '90s, let's say, think about those days back in South East Asia? The people you knew there, did you keep in touch with them?

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, all the time. Of course, between my wife who died in 1990 and had many friends that she made in the agency, but then in the subsequent years, I kept in touch with a number of them. Another, Assistant Naval Attaché in Indonesia, a fellow named Don Black, Navy Lieutenant Commander, Ohio State grad. We're best of friends. There were two or three or four women in Vietnam who were agency people. Some of the most dedicated professionals I've ever met in my life, and two of them actually one, owns a home down on Lake Michigan, down South of St. Joseph. They come up every summer. I drive down and we swap tales back and forth. What wonderful people they were. Both of them, thirty year veterans of the agency. I think back about them and what wonderful professionals they were, and what great examples they were to me, who was new at the trade. I'm very fortunate that I'm able to talk to them and see them at least once a year. They're retired and living in Arizona, but they come up to Michigan in the summer.

Bill Ballenger: And also, when you were a young bachelor in the embassy, it must have been paradise there? Wasn't it?

Joe Schwarz: It's a fact of life that I wasn't aware of prior to this, but in a large international capitol like Jakarta, in Indonesia the fourth most-populous country in the world, there are many embassies. There are many absolutely wonderful single women in these embassies, and we had more fun than you can imagine. There's a revolution going on outdoors, but we all got to know each other well, what with Australians, Brits, French, Germans, Italians, lots of Dutch in Indonesia because for three hundred years of course it was the Dutch East Indies. So, I highly recommend to a bachelor, if you get assigned to an embassy, take the assignment. I think you'll like it.

Bill Ballenger: So the ratio of men to women was pretty good too?

Joe Schwarz: In that particular coterie of people, of embassy folks, yes.

Bill Ballenger: Okay so you're in the Senate. It's the late 90s. You're coming up to 2000. You had a presidential election coming up. Bill Clinton's second term is ending. You've got George W. Bush running. You've got John McCain running. You've got several other people running. Tell us what happened in 2000, in that presidential year. You're in the middle of your fourth and final term in the Senate because you're going to be term-limited in two years in 2002. Anything in particular happen this year that sticks out to you?

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John "J. H." Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, I chaired the McCain campaign in Michigan, which by the way, we won.

Bill Ballenger: Right.

Joe Schwarz: And I did something I very rarely did, but I took the opposite side from Gov. Engler, and he understood that. I mean, I think he likes people who are honestly independent politically, and that was not a problem with him. He worked as hard as he possibly could for George W. Bush. I worked as hard as I possibly could for John McCain.

Bill Ballenger: Well did you know John McCain?

Joe Schwarz: I had met John McCain on one or two occasions and I think without breaking into classified information, one of the assignments, one of the groups that I was assigned to in my CIA tour in Vietnam, was to ferret-out if we possibly could, where American POWs were held. And in McCain's case we knew where he was, but there were a whole bunch of others we were trying to find out. When McCain first came to Michigan, he and I had a conversation about that and very shortly thereafter I said, "Senator I'm going to support you. I just feel like I have to do it. We are Vietnam veterans and I have the utmost respect for you. And not only your legislative record, but your record as a naval officer."

Bill Ballenger: So did you talk to Gov. Engler about doing that beforehand?

Joe Schwarz: Yes, I did. I said I'm going to...

Bill Ballenger: Did John McCain have anybody on his side in Michigan before you stepped forward?

Joe Schwarz: I'm sure he had some people on his side, but they weren't really public. So I went public, and when I went public I think other people felt it was okay, that they could go public about it. You know, Engler was working as hard as he could for George W. Bush, and was working as hard as he could then against McCain. I can remember McCain saying, "When you go out in the morning, when you come to Lansing, be sure to have somebody start your car for you." Anyhow, that was great fun in that primary traveling all over the state with McCain. You know, he knew that I had been in Vietnam, because he had heard me talk about it. It was one of the things we've done, but he wanted to check my bona fides, which is good. So, I talked about being in Laos. And he said, "Do you remember that saloon that everybody used to talk about in Vientiane? Where the Dancer's did this, that and the other thing?" I said, "Yeah, this was the name of the saloon." He said, "That's good, thank you. You got it right."

Bill Ballenger: He knew that you were genuine at that point. You were the real deal.

Joe Schwarz: That's right, I established my bona fides with him.

Bill Ballenger: Absolutely, well that's the way it's done.

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John “J. H.” Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Joe Schwarz: So, in any event, it was great fun. And we won the primary and then I was able to – along with Gov. Engler... I went to Gov. Engler to be the co-chair of the Michigan Delegation to the convention. Spence Abraham was a co-chair too. There were actually tri-chairs – to be able to name a lot of the delegates that were given to the candidate who won the primary – so that was a lot of fun. Enjoyed it. The convention was very well done. John McCain was as-ever gracious in accepting the fact that he wasn't going to be the nominee and very, very publically supporting George W. Bush. Which is typical John McCain, a class person from top to bottom.

Bill Ballenger: Now, you come to 2002. You saw it coming. You knew you were going to be term-limited for the first time in history for the state Senate. Anybody who had been elected, you know, in 1992 is when the referendum passed.

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, thirty-one out of thirty-eight were term-limited.

Bill Ballenger: Right, exactly. So you knew it was coming. Now, what did you decide to do at that time? As I remember there was still another campaign.

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, I ran for governor on the Republican ticket. I ran against Dick Posthumus, who was the majority leader of the Senate at the time, and a very good friend – remains a very good friend.

Bill Ballenger: Well he was lieutenant governor.

Joe Schwarz: That's right he was lieutenant governor.

Bill Ballenger: He had been majority leader.

Joe Schwarz: Had been, but now he is lieutenant governor. That's right.

Bill Ballenger: And he only had one-term seniority on you in the Senate, right, when you came in in '86?

Joe Schwarz: That is true. He had one-term seniority.

Bill Ballenger: Okay. Well, what was your feeling that he just wasn't good enough to be the Republican nominee?

Joe Schwarz: No, not at all. I think he represented the more conservative wing of the party.

Bill Ballenger: Yeah.

Joe Schwarz: And I think I represented the center right wing of the party. I think that in a primary, I was naïve enough to think that first there would be a high voter turnout in a gubernatorial primary, in a year when there was no incumbent governor running.

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John "J. H." Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Bill Ballenger: Right. You were hoping maybe a lot of independents would turn out. It would be more moderate...

Joe Schwarz: Yes, I was hoping more people would turn out, but it's foolish to think that anybody is going to turn out in a primary election. I mean, the very best we've ever done is somewhere around twenty-two or twenty-three percent.

Bill Ballenger: Right.

Joe Schwarz: And usually it's below twenty percent. So, I was hoping against hope that that would happen. It did not. Dick won the primary and was the candidate for governor against Jennifer Granholm.

Bill Ballenger: When you say he was farther to the right of you and you were kind of center-right. How do you define yourself, ideologically, as center-right as a Republican serving in the Senate and running for governor in 2002? What in your mind, or what do you think other people think, makes you a little more moderate as a Republican than a lot of the rest of the Republican party is today?

Joe Schwarz: First, I can work with the other guys, because most good hard-working Democrats are center-left, and there is common ground there. But there are some issues. I'm pro-choice. I'm *not* pro-abortion. Immediately, they say, "You're pro-choice, you're pro-abortion." I'm *not* pro-abortion.

Bill Ballenger: Well let me ask you this. Back in 1986, was that even an issue when you ran?

Joe Schwarz: Oh I think, to a degree.

Bill Ballenger: I mean did you have to take a litmus test, you know?

Joe Schwarz: No.

Bill Ballenger: I mean were you endorsed by Right To Life in 1986 when you ran?

Joe Schwarz: I may have been, but I'm not sure, but I was the Republican candidate.

Bill Ballenger: Well that's kind of amazing isn't it?

Joe Schwarz: My position has always been the same. I am pro-choice, in that I believe a woman has a choice, but I am not pro-abortion. And I've had many, many opportunities and many, many years of practicing medicine to advise women who are pregnant and don't want to be pregnant. What do you do? And my advice to an individual, all of them, has been, "Carry the pregnancy to term unless there is a reason, a health reason that you can't." There are some of those, but not many.

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John "J. H." Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Bill Ballenger: Right.

Joe Schwarz: But it always is, "Carry the pregnancy to term." But I believe a woman has a choice. That is where the farther-right members of the Republican Party and I have had our problems over the years, and continue to.

Bill Ballenger: What about other issues? What about LGBT issues today? Which wasn't even a factor when you first got in.

Joe Schwarz: Today?

Bill Ballenger: Yeah.

Joe Schwarz: I have no problem with gay marriage. If a gay couple wants to get married, and it's legal in that state, then they have every right to get married.

Bill Ballenger: But back in the '80s or the '70s when you were first...?

Joe Schwarz: You know that never came up.

Bill Ballenger: Well I know it didn't, but if it had what would your reaction have been?

Joe Schwarz: I would have felt the same way.

Bill Ballenger: You would have?

Joe Schwarz: Yeah.

Bill Ballenger: Okay.

Joe Schwarz: I would have felt the same way.

Bill Ballenger: Alright, very interesting. What are some other issues?

Joe Schwarz: One of the problems today Bill, is we get bogged down on these issues, which don't have anything to do with the economy, with jobs, with national security...

Bill Ballenger: Right.

Joe Schwarz: ...with the upkeep of our infrastructure, with education; the things that a legislator or a member of Congress should be truly concerned about, get bogged down on these issues, which are really marginal issues, and people have strong feelings about them. They have every right to have strong feeling about them, but they shouldn't be center-stage.

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John "J. H." Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Bill Ballenger: And you think too much attention is being focused on some of these marginal...

Joe Schwarz: Yes, I do. I've always felt that.

Bill Ballenger: Okay, so 2002 comes and goes. Jennifer Granholm beats Dick Posthumus in the general election by four percentage points. She's governor. 2004 comes along and Nick Smith. One thing we didn't cover was way back, when you were in the Senate in your second term,...

Joe Schwarz: '92, I ran.

Bill Ballenger: ...in '92 you ran for Congress.

Joe Schwarz: I ran. I thought I was going to win that.

Bill Ballenger: Yeah.

Joe Schwarz: And I lost the primary to Nick.

Bill Ballenger: To Nick Smith who was another state Senator serving with you.

Joe Schwarz: Yes.

Bill Ballenger: So, you were in the same district and he won. Why do you think you lost that primary in '92? And we'll get to 2004 in a minute.

Joe Schwarz: I lost that primary in '92 because it became obvious, after it was all over and we went back and took stock, I wasn't conservative enough for the people, especially in that lower tier of counties: Branch, Hillsdale, Lenawee, out-county Jackson County. Those are very conservative people.

Bill Ballenger: You think it was again issues like abortion that made the difference?

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, absolutely and I didn't realize that. And the second thing that beat me in that primary was again, horrible voter turnout. And the people who are really motivated, as you know, are the self-same people we're talking about, especially the ones who are motivated by issues that we would consider quite far to the right issues.

Bill Ballenger: Right.

Joe Schwarz: And they come out and they vote in primaries. And they win primaries, and that's what is going on today.

Bill Ballenger: Yeah, I think Nick Smith had another advantage. He had a farm.

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John "J. H." Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Joe Schwarz: Yep.

Bill Ballenger: And, there was a lot of farm support for him.

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, absolutely. I agree.

Bill Ballenger: You know he had a farm kind of background and constituency. You didn't. That probably helped him.

Joe Schwarz: I agree, I think it did.

Bill Ballenger: Okay, so you get to 2004, and Nick after six two-year terms...

Joe Schwarz: Six terms, that's right.

Bill Ballenger: ...says, "I'm out of here. I'm retiring." It is going to be an open seat race, and you decide, "I'm going to run again." Okay, what happened?

Joe Schwarz: I won the primary.

Bill Ballenger: Right.

Joe Schwarz: There were five or six in the primary. I won the primary with twenty-eight percent of the vote. And one of the candidates was Nick's son, a very good guy; a couple members of the Legislature, I mean it was quite a cross-section of the party.

Bill Ballenger: Right.

Joe Schwarz: Then, I won the general.

Bill Ballenger: Right. Okay, so you get in and you're...

Joe Schwarz: Against a weak candidate by the way, in the general.

Bill Ballenger: Well, whether it was weak or not, it doesn't make any difference. It was not viewed necessarily as a marginal district at that time. Whoever the Republican nominee was, was probably going to win anyway.

Joe Schwarz: I was quite certain I would win the general.

Bill Ballenger: In that year, in 2004, George W. Bush lost Michigan, but only by three points to John Kerry. So it was pretty close to the top of the ticket.

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John "J. H." Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Joe Schwarz: I got a lot of Democratic votes in the congressional seat, especially in my home county, Calhoun County, and especially in the areas around Ann Arbor. The city of Ann Arbor is not a district.

Bill Ballenger: Right.

Joe Schwarz: But, North, West and South of Ann Arbor, like Saline, Dexter, Chelsea, Whitmore Lake, were all in the district.

Bill Ballenger: Right. Well in that year it didn't even matter so much how many people turned out because you had five other candidates who were more conservative than you. And they kind of split the vote up amongst themselves.

Joe Schwarz: I think that's quite so.

Bill Ballenger: And you were the most moderate. And anybody who wanted to be slightly center-right, Joe Schwarz is their man. Right?

Joe Schwarz: Well, enough to win the primary.

Bill Ballenger: Okay. Now, you get into Congress, you're elected to Congress. Now you've got a medical practice you've had all this time. Right? In Battle Creek, so what did you do?

Joe Schwarz: I came back to the district virtually every weekend. I say virtually, because not every weekend. I practiced on Saturday mornings and saw patients then and I would frequently also practice on Monday mornings, and go back to D.C. Monday evening or Tuesday morning because the House did not go back into session, usually until sometime Tuesday afternoon. So it worked out fine. I had myself put on a straight salary from the medical practice. And I did a lot more as it turned out than that salary, but I was very happy because you put me on a straight salary and then I'll be here every Saturday and I'll be here virtually every Monday. So it worked, it worked out fine. I wasn't the only – there are more physicians now in the U.S. House, but I think I was one of six or seven in the House at that time. Several of them were doing the same thing I was doing. It was alright.

Bill Ballenger: Well, one thing that was really good about getting elected, when you were elected, was you guys, you Republicans, were still in control of the House. It was the last session of a twelve year stretch...

Joe Schwarz: That's right.

Bill Ballenger: ...when the Republicans controlled the House. Before they lost control in 2006.

Joe Schwarz: For four years.

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John “J. H.” Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Bill Ballenger: So, you’re in there and when you got to Washington did you ask for certain committee assignments?

Joe Schwarz: Yes.

Bill Ballenger: What did you ask for?

Joe Schwarz: Armed Services.

Bill Ballenger: Okay, why?

Joe Schwarz: Because of my experience in South East Asia, my experience in the Navy, my experience in the intelligence community and I also asked for Agriculture and got that as well.

Bill Ballenger: So you got both of your committee assignments that you wanted.

Joe Schwarz: Yeah. Well I also got another one. I got Science and Technology too. But I didn’t ask for that, they just gave me that one.

Bill Ballenger: Okay.

Joe Schwarz: I got Armed Services and I got Ag and enjoyed it. Someone said, “Why in the hell did you take Ag?” And I said, “You know you look at it” – this is a horrible simplification but nevertheless – “What is agriculture and being on the Agriculture Committee? It’s economics and science.”

Bill Ballenger: Yes.

Joe Schwarz: That’s what it is, and in all of the meetings the committee had huge amounts of agriculture economics and science applicable to agriculture. I loved it!

Bill Ballenger: Well not only that you have a lot of farm land in that district. You remember Nick Smith back in ‘92 and the farmers.

Joe Schwarz: The district and its makeup spoke for itself.

Bill Ballenger: Well how did you like your committee assignments? Did you like them?

Joe Schwarz: Loved them.

Bill Ballenger: All three of them?

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, loved them.

Bill Ballenger: Okay, and even Science and Technology? You liked that?

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John “J. H.” Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, loved it.

Bill Ballenger: Okay. So, what did you think overall of the U.S. House as an institution? All of a sudden, not 38 Senators, but 435 U.S. Representatives. What was your reaction to the House?

Joe Schwarz: It’s big.

Bill Ballenger: Maybe too big?

Joe Schwarz: I kind of compared, especially the Republican Conference, to my high school senior class. My high school senior class was about 452. So about half that number, and I was trying to remember everybody’s name. That was my first assignment: “I’m gonna learn all your names, who you are, so I can say, ‘Good morning Representative Jones. Good morning Representative Smith.’” And I think I did a relatively good job of that.

Bill Ballenger: That is a pretty tough assignment. 230 in your caucus I think, in your conference.

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, about. The other thing, I just loved the Armed Services Committee. John McCain took me under his arm.

Bill Ballenger: Oh, great.

Joe Schwarz: When he went somewhere, I virtually always went with him. In other words, the Munich Security Conference: his office called us and said, “You are going to the Munich Security Conference with Senator McCain.” I said, “Okay.” “And we are leaving such in such a day. Go show up at Andrews at such in such a time. We are going by an Air Force plane.” It turned out to be a vice presidential plane, a 757. And the group that went; I can’t remember them all. Hillary Clinton was in the delegation. John McCain, John Thune...

Bill Ballenger: How big were these delegations?

Joe Schwarz: The Congressional Delegation; we were about ten members of the House and about eight members of the Senate. And then the rest of the aircraft was filled up with press and other various and sundry pundits on the plane. It was a great education.

Bill Ballenger: Did you have any impression of Hillary Clinton?

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, I had a very good impression of her, Hillary Clinton and I on that first trip. We got off the plane in Munich and immediately a U.S. Navy plane taxied up. The congressional members, and not all of them, took off and we went to Kiev, Ukraine. The Orange Revolution had taken place and we went to see the government there. Talked to them, then we had a conversation with them. John Thune was in the group and...

Bill Ballenger: Senator from North Dakota.

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John "J. H." Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Joe Schwarz: South Dakota.

Bill Ballenger: South Dakota, excuse me.

Joe Schwarz: Mark Udall the Senator from...at that time a representative from Colorado. Elected to the Senate and unfortunately defeated. What a great guy he was and is. But, we went there and we talked to the representatives of the Ukraine government, and then we went across the street. This is in the old part of Kiev on one side of the Dnieper River. It is just a beautiful, beautiful old city. Went to the home of the prime minister who was, as you know, this absolutely gorgeous woman named Yulia Tymoshenko. Just a wonderful, brilliant woman, but just strikingly good-looking. And you think, "God, can anybody that good-looking be a prime minister?" We were having lunch there and sitting on my right was Hillary Clinton. We were having a good conversation and toward the end of the lunch we were served this little crystal glass with some clear liquid in it. She looked at her glass, and I looked at mine. We noticed some of the guys were doing this. Hillary kind of tapped me like this and she said, "Congressman, what do you think is in that glass?" I said, "Senator Clinton, I think because we are in the home of the prime minister of Ukraine, this is probably very, very good Ukrainian vodka." She kind of looked at me again and she said, "I think so too, shall we?" And we go boom like that. (He demonstrates a "throw-back".) So, she was a great traveling mate for this big group of people that went.

Bill Ballenger: How many foreign trips did you take all together?

Joe Schwarz: Foreign trips? Ah, five, six. Munich Security Conference both 2005 and 2006. Iraq with Sen. McCain, Sen. Graham, Sen. Thune. I think that was 2006.

Bill Ballenger: Were these all in connection with Armed Services?

Joe Schwarz: Yes, they all were. I had to go to the chairman of the committee and ask permission every time, and he always said yes. Just McCain and I went to a conference on climate change in London. Which was very interesting.

Bill Ballenger: Just the two of you?

Joe Schwarz: Just John and I, yeah.

Bill Ballenger: Fascinating. What do you think about climate change?

Joe Schwarz: It's real.

Bill Ballenger: Okay.

Joe Schwarz: It's real and we ought to listen.

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John “J. H.” Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Bill Ballenger: Do you think the government is doing the right things to deal with it?

Joe Schwarz: I don't know how you deal with it. I don't know how you deal with it. How do you deal with climate change, something that is inevitable? You know we are not going to stop burning fossil fuels.

Bill Ballenger: It's not nice to fool Mother Nature.

Joe Schwarz: No it is not, but never the less, I think some steps are being taken, but it's a fact of life. Do everything you can to control it, but you're not going to control it, it's not going to go away. Climate change is a fact of life. Ask the people who live on the island of Kiribati in the South Pacific.

Bill Ballenger: Right, right, it is about to disappear.

Joe Schwarz: That's right.

Bill Ballenger: Well if the rest of the world isn't completely cooperating, like particularly China. How much good does it do for us to, you know?

Joe Schwarz: That is a fair question. And that's my answer, it is a fair question.

Bill Ballenger: Exactly. Okay, so you are in the House. You're one term. You're commuting back and forth. Was the life style something you could cope with, tolerate, handling your practice on Saturday and Monday and going back and forth?

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, it was. I think I did it a little differently. When the gavel fell on Thursday afternoon usually, don't get in anybody's way, because the rush to the airport was a stampede.

Bill Ballenger: Yeah.

Joe Schwarz: You know it's like we talk about some politicians, "Don't ever get between them and a TV camera."

Bill Ballenger: Right.

Joe Schwarz: But this is, "Don't ever get between any members to the House and the airport on Thursday afternoon."

Bill Ballenger: Right.

Joe Schwarz: And I just said, "To hell with this, this is ridiculous." So, I would on Thursday evenings, always find a couple of folks to go out to dinner with and have a nice dinner and talk over things, and fly back on Friday morning. It was more civilized.

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John "J. H." Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

Bill Ballenger: Yeah. And of course unfortunately, you didn't any longer have Anne?

Joe Schwarz: No.

Bill Ballenger: It wasn't like you had a home like a lot of these congressmen say, "I've got to go back and be with my family at home."

Joe Schwarz: I did have a home, but I was living in it by myself.

Bill Ballenger: Yeah. Okay, so did you feel you were doing anything differently to correct, or didn't you even think about this, this so-called image that you might have had in the Republican Party; that you were a little too moderate, or center-right? I mean are there votes that you cast that you now looking back think, "I could have sent a signal that I'm a really reasonable person. Everybody ought to accept me?"

Joe Schwarz: Well I am a really reasonable person, but certainly are there votes I cast? Yes there were, but they were votes I felt strongly about and I cast them. And I was not in any way inclined to change my persona or my feeling about issues because I might be irritating, angering some of the people in the party. I mean my loyalty has been, is, and always will be to the United States, and to the State of Michigan and not to the party. And one of the problems now Bill as you know, is it's gotten to the point where, "What is your first loyalty?" If some of the members of Congress and members the Legislature are honest, they'll tell you, "Well it is to the party." Whether it's the Democrats or the Republicans, but it's to the party, and that is absurd. That's utterly absurd. That's not where your loyalty needs to be.

Bill Ballenger: And in 2006, Tim Walberg, a former state representative, who had been one of your opponents in 2004 and lost, decided he's going to challenge you in a primary and it's going to be one-on-one. Did you have any feeling that, you know, "This shouldn't really be happening. Why would he even have a chance against me as an incumbent?" What was your thinking?

Joe Schwarz: During or after?

Bill Ballenger: Well, during.

Joe Schwarz: My thinking during was that I should win the primary.

Bill Ballenger: Did you feel you'd done everything you could reasonably do?

Joe Schwarz: Would I do things differently, now?

Bill Ballenger: Yeah.

Joe Schwarz: The answer is yes, but with 20-20 hindsight.

Bill Ballenger: Well what would you have done differently?

Joe Schwarz: I would have concentrated on “get out the vote” in areas that I knew were supportive: the three quarters of the way around Ann Arbor in Washtenaw County, is one; in Battle Creek – which is no longer in the district, but it was then – in my home town and in my home county. In the City of Jackson. I mean there are places where I would have concentrated and the concentration would have been “get out the vote”, and emphasize my record, not only my political record, but what I had done in life vis-à-vis his. And quite frankly we did not do that enough. We didn’t do it strongly enough. We didn’t put enough energy into it and we lost the primary.

Bill Ballenger: You didn’t feel you could have necessarily put in any more personal time yourself in those areas did you, that would have made a difference? I mean, it was more of a question of G-O-T-V, “get out the vote” in campaign season in terms of allocating financial resources to get people to turn out?

Joe Schwarz: I put in a huge amount of time.

Bill Ballenger: Going back to district events and stuff.

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, going back to district events. Going to Lincoln Day dinners, and I could feel a certain amount of opposition from the far-right at events that I would attend.

Bill Ballenger: Well, but that was there all along. It always was.

Joe Schwarz: It was there all along, but I guess I did not appreciate the level of ludditism in the right wing of the Republican Party.

Bill Ballenger: So that built up. So then Tim Walberg beat you in the primary. What was your reaction afterwards? Was it much different than what you just told me?

Joe Schwarz: Yeah, I was disappointed that I lost, but I have a life. I have a life. I have multiple interests.

Bill Ballenger: Right, and you had your practice.

Joe Schwarz: I had a very fine medical practice. I was asked not long after that to become a faculty member at the University of Michigan and to teach in the Ford School of Public Policy. And now, I’m beginning my tenth year doing that. So, I had a life. I have a life, and I think it is a mistake – you’ve seen it, I’ve seen it – for people to become so wrapped up just in the mechanics of holding office that everything else falls by the wayside and that’s not good.

Bill Ballenger: Well, the Republicans, your party, lost control of the house in 2006. So Tim Walberg goes down there in the minority and serves two years. Then he gets beat in 2008.

He finally got the seat back in 2010, and now the Republicans are in the majority again. But, the next two terms you would have served, if you’d stayed on between 2006 and 2010, you would have been in the minority. Let me ask you, down there in your opinion, does it make that much difference being in the majority and minority?

Joe Schwarz: Ever the master of understatement. Yes, it makes a *huge* difference.

Bill Ballenger: Alright. Well, but remember while Hillary Clinton was on this trip with you, when you were in the majority in the House, she was in the minority in the Senate.

Joe Schwarz: In the Senate, yep.

Bill Ballenger: But she still got to go on the trip. So the Democrats aren’t completely suppressed.

Joe Schwarz: Well, they got to go on the trip, yeah, but try to get a piece of legislation through.

Bill Ballenger: Okay, so it would have made a real difference. I mean...

Joe Schwarz: Oh, I think it would have made a *huge* difference.

Bill Ballenger: Okay, so you’re back in the district and you’re practicing again. Let me ask you this: Your speaker during your single term in the House was Dennis Hastert. I’ve seen you quoted as saying you thought he was a great guy. You must have been just absolutely floored by what’s happened to Dennis Hastert in the last two years?

Joe Schwarz: All of the above. Utterly floored. He was, in my mind, a very grandfatherly sort of a guy. He wasn’t loud or boisterous in any way. In the first six months that I was in the House, one of the things that I’m most proud of is being one of the leaders in getting the approval of Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research; getting that bill through the House and through the Senate and then vetoed. It was George W. Bush’s first veto, which I don’t want to talk about because it was really a very ill-advised veto, but never-the-less. But, it was a Castle-DeGette bill – Mike Castle, the congressman from Delaware. What a superb individual he was. He was governor of Delaware. He ran for the Senate and was defeated in the primary by that woman who said, “I am not a witch.”, and Diana DeGette, who is still in the House, from Colorado. Just a lovely woman.

Bill Ballenger: A Democrat.

Joe Schwarz: A Democrat. She and Castle had this bill, which made Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research legal, so the government could finance it, could fund it and it could be done nationwide. Which every scientist who follows that thing knew had to be done. So, they came to me almost immediately when I went to the House and said, “You’re a physician. Will you help us with this, because a couple of physicians on the Republican side now are so conservative, they won’t do it even though they know it’s the right thing to do?” Castle and I went to Denny Hastert, in his office, just off the chamber, that

office. He came out and talked to us. Sat down at the table. Listened to us, and then he looked at me and said, “Okay Dr. Schwarz, explain to the speaker why this should be.” And I told him, “This is research that has to be done if we want, in the United States, to continue to be on the cutting edge of biologic research, of genetic research, of the ability to define biologic treatments for certain diseases.

Bill Ballenger: Right.

Joe Schwarz: He sat there and listened very patiently and everything. What we were asking for was a vote. He thought for about twenty seconds, kind of looked away and looked back and said, “You’ll get your vote.” We brought it to the floor. Got the vote. It passed. Sent it to the Senate, it passed. Bush vetoed it and we did not have enough of a majority to override the veto.

Bill Ballenger: I’ll be darned.

Joe Schwarz: And as you know, subsequently, Barack Obama did it by executive order.

Bill Ballenger: Right.

Joe Schwarz: But that was my closest exposure to Hastert when I was there and I thought the world of him.

Bill Ballenger: That would have been almost the zenith of your legislative accomplishments, if only your Republican president had signed the bill.

Joe Schwarz: That’s right. That was his very first veto. A logical person I believe, a rational person, would ask yourself why in *hell* would you veto that bill? And it was a perfect example of the influence, the far-right, the *right to life* of this world. It had nothing to do with *right to life*. People didn’t even understand the research and what was done. And the problem was, “OK. These eggs are donated and you can get embryonic stem cells from the eggs. Well, if you don’t get embryonic stem cells from them and they’re not used, I mean these are going to be used. They were going to be fertilized.” Bananas! They are going to be tossed in the garbage. If I ever was dealing with an issue where I was on the side of the gods, it was with the embryonic stem cell issue. And Denny Hastert made the right decision and I... irrespective of what’s happened to him, which is terrible, I would always thank him for that.

Bill Ballenger: One last question, unless you want to bring up something else that maybe we’ve missed, and that is, how do you look from what you read and see and hear in the media, at the function of Congress today compared to back in 2005, 2006? That’s only ten, twelve years ago. Do you think things have deteriorated or is it pretty much business as usual – it’s the same situation? What do you think?

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Joe Schwarz: I think things have deteriorated. Things have become far too partisan. The money calls the shots. It did when I was there too, but not to the degree it does now.

Bill Ballenger: You think the *Citizens United decision* was probably a big factor?

Joe Schwarz: It's a horrible decision. The gerrymandered congressional districts, all we have to do is look at Southeast Michigan. I tell my students at UofM, look at the fourteenth district. Elbridge Gerry would jump out of his grave and do a dance looking at that district.

Bill Ballenger: Well, but the original district you were elected in, the seventh, was pretty much gerrymandered back in 2001. Yeah, that was a good Republican gerrymander.

Joe Schwarz: Well, it was a Republican district but... I don't think the seventh was particularly gerrymandered.

Bill Ballenger: You think the Republicans did a much better job of gerrymandering in 2011 than they did in 2001.

Joe Schwarz: Oh, yeah, much better. And I think it is pretty hard to gerrymander when you get out-state. Because the population is not dense enough. It's pretty darn easy to gerrymander in Southeast Michigan or in New York State as you get down toward the city. California of course is not gerrymandered anymore because of the bi-partisan reapportionment commission out there, which was championed by none other than Arnold Schwarzenegger. And I think we should have a bi-partisan reapportionment commission in Michigan. So you have the money. You have the gerrymandering. And in Michigan you have the thing that's as bad or worse than those two, and that's term limits. It doesn't make for a good legislative body. We elect good people to the Legislature, Bill. I would never say we'd elect bad people. We don't, we elect good people to the legislature, but government is complex. In a populous state, government is even more complex, and it takes a little time to learn the twists and turns. And six years in the House is not enough. There are a few people in the Senate who have done six in the House and are in their second four year term in the Senate, who can probably tell you where the bodies are buried. They are very few and far between. So term limits, I believe, is the worst thing that the voters of this good state have inflicted upon themselves, ever.

Bill Ballenger: Well, one thing is the federal courts did throw out the congressional portion of term limits.

Joe Schwarz: Thornton vs. Arkansas. They did.

Bill Ballenger: And, let me ask you this. If you were still in the state Senate and you were not limited by term limits, and an opening for a congressional seat came up; and if it wasn't in the middle of your term; you had to make a choice on whether you ran for the Senate again

**Transcript: MPHS Oral History of John “J. H.” Schwarz, interviewed by Bill Ballenger, 7.08.16**

and you could. Or, you had a chance to run for Congress and go to Washington. Which would you choose?

Joe Schwarz: I don't know, given the circumstances, I might run for Congress. Depending on if these are issues I feel strongly about, I'm running for Congress. Or maybe not. I don't feel that strongly about it, I can do more good here in the Senate. So you just don't know.

Bill Ballenger: Well, you've done a great job in this interview. Thank you very much.

Joe Schwarz: Thank you Bill very much, good to be here.

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