

INTERVIEW I

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INTERVIEWEE: PAT ADELMAN

INTERVIEWER: DAVID G. McCOMB

PLACE: Mr. Adelman's office, 621 West 7th Street, Austin, Texas

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M: To start off with, let me know something about your background; where were you born and when and where did you go to school?

A: I was born in Waco, Texas, March 19, 1906. I attended the usual public school system in Waco, graduated from Waco High School midterm 1924; entered Baylor University the same year, spent three years at Baylor. I started out as a BBA [bachelor of business administration] major, and after two years decided I would go over into the law school with the prospects of becoming a lawyer or using it as a help in my business career, which I had anticipated at the time. I entered Baylor in 1924 [and was there in] 1925, 1926, 1927. It so happened that after a year further on down the line, in 1927, the economy of the country and my father's ill health forced me to withdraw from school to become a salesman in a department store in Waco.

M: This was while you were in law school?

A: This is after I had dropped out of law school, although I actually had one year of law. At that time of course it was a four-year course. And I would have had practically three more years to go for my law degree.

M: You went to work as a salesman?

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A: I went to work as a salesman in the shoe department at Goldstein-Migel Company, a department store in Waco. Then I never returned to school. It was a business career from then on. Do you want some details on my business career?

M: Since you go into the radio connection, how did you get into that?

A: Several years in the retail business field in Waco, and then I decided I would go to another city and I chose Houston and became a shoe salesman, selling ladies' shoes at the old Foley Brothers down on Main Street in Houston for about a year. Then I returned to Waco and became an assistant in the ladies ready-to-wear department at Goldstein-Migel Company. After that I decided I wanted to travel, so I picked up a dress line out of Dallas, which was Justin McCarthy line of dresses and did some traveling there.

M: What did you do, travel all over the Southwest?

A: Traveled the Southern part of Texas. I'd hear about these things and have a yen for them and I wanted to try this and try that. I hadn't quite settled on a career. I was bouncing around. [I was] single. In those days the economy wasn't too good so I felt like that I wanted to try several different things.

After that several months' sojourn in the traveling field as a traveling salesman, drummers, as they called them in those days, I had an offer to go back into the Goldstein-Migel Company, which was the department store there similar to your Scarbroughs operation here. They offered me a job as a salesman in the men's department, men's furnishings, ties, shirts, men's clothing. I worked there.

I was still single and enjoying the single bliss, so to speak. I grew up in the town and know a lot of people and had the usual young man's fun.

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I had met a manager of Station WACO in Waco through a girl that I knew there at the department store that led to double dating and a friendship with the manager. If you're interested in names, does this mean anything particularly?

M: I don't know. What was his name?

A: James W. Pate, P-A-T-E, Jimmy Pate. At that time, of course, radio was kind of in its infancy; it was new and it had a lot of appeal. A radio announcer in those days was really a celebrity. I had no particular interest in radio except I had somewhat of a flair for speech. When I was in the ready-to-wear department at Goldstein-Migel Company, I would announce the style shows.

M: Is Goldstein-Migel still in Waco?

A: Yes, they're still in operation there. I think it's a member of a chain operation now.

M: But they carry the same name.

A: They carry the same name.

So after some double dating with the manager, one day out of the clear blue, he had a vacancy on his staff as an announcer, and kiddingly said, "You have got a pretty good voice. Why don't you come up and try out for a radio announcer!" I of course laughed at him and thought this was a great big joke. So he said, "All right, do this." I said, "I'm not going to give up a job, I've got a good job." I think I was making thirty-five dollars a week which was a big deal. He said, "It would be a cut in salary, but come on up." The girls that we were going with said, "Oh, this is great. Go on up there."

So I would work from eight-thirty to five-thirty, and then I came up at night and I would take what they call the graveyard shift, eight to twelve. At that time they put the

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neophytes, the amateurs, on that and it must have been terrible because the station got calls about who that terrible announcer was. They don't do this now, of course, as you know, they train them at the university; they go to school. They don't put an inexperienced person on the microphone. But that's the way they broke you in; they put you in the harness.

M: So in other words, you took a moonlight job.

A: Yes, a little moonlight job without pay. I was just messing around.

M: For the fun of it!

A: Yes, for the fun of it, for the hell of it! Sure enough, it knocked off a few edges and he offered me a job, because he needed someone and they were kind of hard to come by. I became an announcer and, after two weeks as an announcer, his program director, Byron Lowry [?] decided he wanted to go back to being an engineer. So Pate, who was quite a volatile sort of person--he could make decisions, he didn't have any fear, he was young enough to take a stab at anything--made me the program director. Which was kind of unheard of--you know, two weeks and the man's already program director. Some people work years for this sort of thing, but that was in early radio. Crazy things went on.

M: About what date is this, what year?

A: This was in 1936.

M: And just what did a program director do?

A: [As] a program director in those days, my duties were that I worked a regular microphone shift.

M: As an announcer?

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A: As an announcer. I did "Man on the Street" type broadcasts, special events. I would also relieve. There were two announcers, a morning announcer and an evening announcer, so when the morning announcer had his day off then I would work his shift, plus my regular shift. Two days a week I would open up the station at five-thirty and work until twelve.

M: This was continual broadcasting?

A: Not twenty-four hours. They would close down of course.

M: I mean all through the day.

A: All through the day, on and off. And I would do traffic, which is working up your schedule--we called them worksheets--that the announcers would go by: when to make an announcement, what announcement, and turn over and read this announcement, this program's coming on and so forth.

N: Would an announcer read commercials and things like that?

A: Yes, yes, just as they do today.

N: And news broadcasts?

A: News broadcasts, yes, we'd do news. Of course, we were on Columbia Broadcasting System as our affiliate. When we were on the network, naturally I'd go back in the office and I'd do paperwork, write commercials and that sort of thing. I did everything but sweep up. Kind of a three-ring circus. They don't do that any more, I don't think, unless they're real small stations.

But this was a lot of fun and I enjoyed it. Of course, you become the town celebrity more or less because all you had was radio and everybody knows you. When you walk into a place, you're recognized. This is very glamorous for a young, single

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person.

M: And so you started this about 1936.

A: In 1936, yes.

M: How long did you work?

A: The station at that time was owned by William Randolph Hearst, Hearst Radio, which is a subsidiary of Hearst newspapers who owned KNOW [Austin], KTSA in San Antonio.

An announcer got sick here in Austin and the manager--

Pate was the manager of the two stations, KNOW and WACO--asked me if I'd come down and pinch-hit for a couple of weeks. I came to Austin in the fall of 1938, did fine and immediately fell in love with Austin due to its flair and the University and youth and excitement. After all, Waco is kind of on the dead side! (Laughter) So here I am and I'm still single, and the announcers and clientele here seem to like--by that time I had developed into a pretty good announcer. I didn't have a great voice, but I could punch the copy. This means you could sell. Some people have a good voice and it sounds pretty, but it doesn't sell anything. But I had the flair for selling.

M: So you were good with the commercials and things like that?

A: I was good with the commercials and the sponsors liked it, and of course the sponsors pay your bills to get to the commercial angle. To make a long story short, they asked me if I wanted to transfer down here as a program director and I said, "Fine!" I did. So in 1938 I started here with KNOW as program director and went on until the fall of 1943.

In the fall of 1943 Stelfox Jewelry Company here had sold out to Mr. Aaron Kruger, Kruger Jewelry Company, whom I had shared a bachelor's apartment with for a

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year or two. Out of the clear blue he came to me one day and said, "I'd like for you to manage Stelfox Jewelry Company." I had retail experience; this didn't scare me. But I knew nothing about jewelry; I didn't know an amethyst from a ruby--or silver, you know, this is something that-- (Laughter)

M: This is Kruger that offered this?

A: Yes. Aaron Kruger, who still owns Kruger Jewelry on 7th and Congress. I laughed at him, said, "What are you trying to do!" He said, "I need someone to promote the store and you have good acceptance here. You're well known. I want a name. You don't have to do the buying, I can buy. All I want you to do is be the manager and front it." In other words, create a personality. His idea was good. He ran big ads and stuff. I went in there. A little before that I had married, in 1942, so when I told my wife about the offer that he had made me to leave radio, which I was reluctant to do, she said, "You're crazy if you don't take the job." This was about four times what I was making. Radio at that time was still paying very poorly. I said, "All right, look, what have I got to lose? I'll try it." So I went in and managed the Stelfox Jewelry Company.

Harfield Weedon whom the Johnsons had hired as their first manager about six months prior to manage KTBC after Mrs. Johnson had bought the station--I don't remember the exact date, but some six months prior--[had to go into the service].

M: She bought it early 1943.

A: Early 1943, so this lasted then [until] he had to go into service. Incidentally, it developed that I was 4-F, I was turned down by the military. I was managing Kruger and Mr. Johnson was riding on a plane, I discovered later, coming back to Austin; Mr. Kruger was

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coming back from New York and Congressman Johnson was coming back from Washington. The Congressman, I discovered later, said something to Mr. Kruger about, "How would you like it if I hired your manager?" He had gotten notice that Mr. Harfield Weedon was scheduled for service, and I guess Mr. Kruger said, "Okay." It so happened Mr. Kruger had an understudy at his main store that he knew could handle it, and he knew from my reaction there that I wasn't liking the jewelry business. I was accepting it but not liking it, and I think he realized this.

M: He was correct in his analysis.

A: Yes, he was. I wasn't happy.

So Mr. Ray Lee, the then-postmaster, ambled into Stelfox one day--of course, I'd known Ray Lee for quite some time--and he said, "Can I talk to you in your office?" I said, "Fine, Ray." "Mr. and Mrs. Johnson would like to talk to you about managing KTBC." I said, "Well, of course I've only been here several months with Mr. Kruger. I am interested, but I wouldn't leave Mr. Kruger after just a few months of employment. I'm not that type of person. I'll talk to Mr. Kruger. I am interested." I talked to Mr. Kruger and he leveled with me and said, "Pat, I realize that this is your first love and I wouldn't hold you back. I have Billy Pollack [?] over at the other store that can come in and take over. You won't be leaving me in the lurch," that sort of thing.

So the next step was that Mr. Johnson had someone call me to meet him at the Driskill for an interview. After being interviewed for about a couple of hours, we came to an agreement on salary and so forth. So he just picked up the phone and called Mrs. Johnson in Washington and said, "Lady Bird, this is Pat Adelman. I want you to meet

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your new manager." You know, the President moved fast and had the ability to make decisions and get things done. And this was it.

M: Was that the first time you met Lyndon Johnson at that meeting at the Driskill?

A: No. This is interesting. When he ran the first time for senator, this was against W. Lee O'Daniel, I don't remember the year.

M: 1941-42.

A: --but I was still at KNOW as program director.

Congressman Johnson was getting a lot of criticism from his supporters because his radio voice and microphone technique wasn't too good. He realized this and his backers realized this. Then an employee of the Texas Highway Department--I can't think of his name, his first name is Roy, I can get that later--knew me from radio since you do all kinds of work with the DPS and the police and everything as a media. He ran into me and said, "Pat, I've got a thought." I said, "What is it?" He said, "Congressman Johnson is in Houston meeting with Judge Roy Hofheinz. They're trying to get him to improve himself in speaking radio speech, so that he'll sound better in his campaign speeches. I knew of your experience here in radio and all, and I think that you could do him a lot of good. Would you consider driving down there with me? I'll bring you back." So I said, "I don't know. Let me call my wife." I called my wife and told her what they wanted and she said, "Okay, go on." So I said, "Okay, let's go."

We went into one of the radio stations there where Judge Hofheinz was conferring with the Congressman. After a pretty good wait, I was introduced to Congressman Johnson, and he went into another room and we did some testing and microphone

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placement, how far to stand from the mike, this sort of thing. That's the first time I had met him; it was sort of casual. I reminded him of it later and he recalled meeting me. He has a pretty photographic memory. But it was just casual.

M: Were you able to help him much?

A: Yes, we noticed some improvement.

M: What was his problem?

A: His high-pitched voice, his voice is a little high-pitched.

M: How about the pace of his delivery?

A: This, of course, needed working on. It was everything but a good radio voice. I think that he improved immeasurably.

M: In those days, was he speaking too fast or too slow?

A: His phrasing wasn't good.

M: You mean he wasn't speaking in complete sentences?

A: Yes. His inflections didn't drop off, curve off at the end of a sentence and this sort of thing. He'd leave on a high note. You know, a lot of people do this. People in radio announcing, that's the first thing that you have to work on [with] your amateurs. They'll say, "Go to Scarbrough's." (Imitates) They leave on a high note. You want to round off.

M: You've got to drop your voice?

A: Yes, round off. We call it rounding off at the end of your sentence, so you won't sound amateurish.

M: Johnson got criticism for his radio and television appearances all the rest of his political career, so apparently some of those problems stayed with him.

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A: Yes, yes. The thing is, some people have natural ability. You can improve anyone, but there's a certain native ability, like in painting or tennis or football, you know, some people can adapt real easily and some can't. So this is it. He improved, but he . . . And, of course, ironically, it always amused me that he taught speech and this was his school in Houston. But you can teach . . . Did you ever know Tom Rouse out at the University?

M: No.

A: He was head of the speech department. Oh! We'll want to delete this, I think he's deceased now. But Tom was the worst. He could barely talk and yet he would teach creative speech. But you can teach it and not be a good [speaker]; you can teach tennis and not be a fine tennis player, if you know the fundamentals.

M: I've often heard the criticism that Johnson was very good in a person-to-person conversation with small groups, but when he got onto an electronic medium like radio or television or something, that was lost.

A: This is so true. This is so true.

M: Is the key to that the voice inflection, the delivery? He somehow couldn't project his personality.

A: In other words, if I was reading a commercial I would change my delivery.

M: So Johnson's problem then in dealing with television and radio was in his--

A: Could not adapt, could not change. Well, he tried, but he just didn't come out in a real pleasing manner. I guess it always sounded real Texanish. He never could drop that.

M: I don't know what you'd do to solve a problem like that.

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A: I don't know. Oh, I'm sure that he had the finest instructors. There's one thing about President Johnson. One of his great talents is to get people around him, finest stature in their field; a lot of his ability was in his choice of people.

M: You mean he could pick good people?

A: Oh, yes. Good people. He recognized them too.

M: That's a talent too.

A: Oh, a real talent.

M: To get back to your story, you went to work for KTBC.

A: I went to work for KTBC as the manager, and the highlight of my managerial career was that for the first time since Mrs. Johnson had bought the station, I put the station in the black. In other words, it made money instead of losing money.

M: It had been losing money up to that point, hadn't it? Okay. What did you do to turn the station around?

A: Of course, one thing I went out and sold myself. I got off the microphone and managed and sold, where a lot of managers would just try to do the executive duties. But I had to do that, too.

M: You went out and talked to customers and sold time?

A: Right. I had an entree and I made trips to New York and Chicago and St. Louis and sold time and programs to national advertisers.

M: You went into a national market then?

A: Yes, I went into the national market myself. Of course, the station had national reps. Still they couldn't do a whole lot for you; they're more or less order takers. So this is

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what I would do, I would go to the advertising agencies and to the manufacturers, if they had their own house agencies.

M: And you would contact people on what--automotive sales?

A: Yes. And Procter and Gamble, Colgate-Palmolive.

M: Companies doing a nationwide business.

A: Yes, and try to get their programs on the station. You see, some of the fine CBS programs we weren't allowed to take because the manufacturers weren't buying the Austin market; they were depending on San Antonio to cover the Austin market. Our problem was to try to coerce them into buying our station, which cost them X more dollars. We tried to prove to them that San Antonio did come in here but just didn't cover fully enough, and we had a good solid [?] station.

M: Was that a good selling point then?

A: Oh, yes, and personal contact.

M: The fact that you went up there and talked to them.

A: Right. Right. And showed them maps and showed them coverage things, showed them propaganda, like any business has, a little sample, so to speak, of the product.

M: In this kind of business, could you prove to them that their sales would increase if they came in and used your station?

A: This was the point that we attempted to do. We were successful in some areas. In some areas, we weren't. Of course, we had local distributors helping us, wholesale grocers were interested in getting programs because they were---

M: Sure, it would help them.

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A: "Fibber McGee and Molly,"--"why can't we get it here in Austin?" It was sponsored by Lava Soap, for instance.

This was how we got it in the black.

M: Was this your idea, to do this national traveling?

A: It was an accepted procedure in the industry. No, it was no innovation on my part. Stations were doing this. Mr. and Mrs. Johnson were aware that this needed to be done and, of course, I was the logical man to do it as manager of the station.

M: What about the problem of the capability of the station itself?

A: We had a tough problem in that we had recently gone to daytime and nighttime. It was on a different kilocycle, different frequency when they bought the station. We had, off the top of my head, 5,000 day and dropped down to 250 at night. Of course, our night coverage wasn't [as powerful].

M: That changed just as you came in?

A: Yes. I think it did change before I came in.

M: So you came into a station with a new--

A: With a new location on the dial now. At that time push buttons were very popular; of course, they're popular now but not to the extent as at that time when everything was push button. You'd have five or six push buttons and you'd put them on the stations. We weren't on enough radios with our new frequency. In other words, they had them set to KNOW, KTSA, and WFAA, so people weren't listening to us, we found out by the surveys. The other station was clobbering us with surveys. Of course, I still have my doubts as to the complete accuracy of surveys, you know how they do that sampling.

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They call a hundred people and they project that to the entire audience, and if seventy-five of them are listening to another station, they get that rating. Of course, they still use that in national, in the Nielson rating, and I guess it's as accurate as they can do. What else can they do? Either call people or have some kind of gadget on the set.

M: So you had to tell people where you were to get them to listen.

A: So we did this through other media. We hit newspaper heavy, and of course we used direct mail. Then one idea I had, I called all of the servicemen, radio service technicians--they have an association--into the office and had a lot of little knickknacks and coffee and cold drinks and told them that we wanted to make a deal with them; that we would advertise to the public generally that anyone that needed their radio set to KTBC at 590, that we would pay for the service call. So we ran an ad to that effect, and that would be free service. We paid the serviceman for doing this, and we got a lot of sets changed to us, which was very important. Of course, the newspaper ads, when we'd get new CBS programs, they would supply you with pictures and so we'd run a lot of ads. We just kept building and building.

M: Did you lower, at all, your rates? Did you try that?

A: No, we kept pretty well our rate structure. Of course, they were plenty cheap and they were competitive with the other stations, so we didn't have much problem there. The problem that we had as a new station with a new frequency, a new place on the dial, was selling the merchants and the national time buyers too that we had an audience. At the start we didn't. We were fighting for that audience.

Here's the fallacy of your surveys, there are four or five of them, I guess. The

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station calls in the John Jones Company to make a listening survey, and invariably the station that hires them usually gets the best report. Now this doesn't make sense to me. It's kind of like a woman who's picking out a little boy in a school play--her boy just outshined everything and everybody. But it's still a vehicle and a formula that they use and, of course, you can switch statistics around and prove a lot of things.

But, anyway, the station came along. I ran the station KTBC from March 31 of 1944 to March 31, 1946, so that's two years.

M: Were the Johnsons around a great deal? I mean, would you see them?

A: No, Congressman and Mrs. Johnson were in Washington most of the time. They would come in between sessions. Mr. Johnson would fly in some. They had the home out on Dillman. I guess I would see Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, and/or one of them, maybe once every two months or something like that. But I received a phone call from one or the other at least once a week.

M: What would they want, information about the station?

A: Yes. I would go over the operations and happenings. Of course, we made daily sales reports; I had all the sales staff including myself make daily sales reports on who we called on and what new accounts had we put on and that sort of thing. We would talk, I'd say, a minimum of an hour, sometimes two hours L.D.

M: Sounds like they were interested in the details then.

A: Very interested in the details. Congressman Johnson's memory of details that I had given them maybe one, two, three, four, five weeks ago stayed fresh in his mind. I don't know what a photographic memory is, but his capacity to remember things always amazed me.

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I didn't have this capacity so I would fill my desk with notes that I had taken of various and sundry reports and statistics that I needed so that I could sort of stay in the ball game with him.

Some things stick out in your mind and I recall a compliment that Congressman Johnson gave me in one of the phone conversation sessions. It was to the effect that he had great admiration for my leveling on questions that he would ask; to wit, if I didn't know the answer I would say, "Mr. Johnson, I don't know." There was no bluffing, no stalling, no trying to get by, "I think maybe," "I believe." And he complimented me on this. This is one of my characteristics. You ask me a question and I don't know, I'm going to say, "I don't know." I'm not going to guess at it or try to bluff you. Evidently he had run across people in his career that would not admit, "I don't know." There are so many people this way.

M: Since he hired you and since the station was owned by Mrs. Johnson, who was your boss?

A: Technically Mrs. Johnson, but Mr. Johnson did about 90 per cent of the contact with me on the operation of the station. Now, if he conferred with Mrs. Johnson after hours [I don't know], but my telephone conversations were with him I'd say almost [entirely]. Oh, she might get on and say hello or something like that. But as busy as he was, he had the operations of this station at heart and in his mind. A great amount of credit goes back to his ability and flair. He didn't profess to be an expert in radio station operations, but again I go back to his ability. He was in touch with other radio station owners, he was in touch with the high officials of Columbia Broadcasting System, he was in touch with big

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station operators. He had numerous friends--Ted Taylor out at Amarillo, for instance, was a big operator. So he picked the best brains in the industry to help me and help the station progress. This is greatness. Right on up through the presidency. I've known that he had this.

M: Was he an easy man to deal with? Was he a hard man to work for?

A: No, he was not a hard man to work for. He kept you busy. He demanded your full application to the job. He paid you well. I never had a harsh word from him.

M: He has a reputation for having a hard, quick temper.

A: Well, I've noticed his temper. I've experienced his temper with other people, but not with me. He never lost his cool with me; now, why, I don't know. But there was a certain amount of pressure that he kept on you, you might call it silent pressure. You knew it was there, and this was to go ahead and produce. Ultra-ambitious, this was his nature, and he transferred this over to you.

M: Did you feel like he wanted the station to grow and the sales to increase and the profits to increase and to be a success?

A: Yes, definitely. In other words, the station was set in the same pattern as his political career--drive, drive, drive!

M: Why? Why does he want this? Does he want it to make money?

A: In my opinion, it was a mixture of wanting the station to be successful and, in no particular order, he wanted to be a financial success, wanted to prove that the station could be number one in Austin which it finally became; wanted to please his wife, [to show her] that she had made a good business venture, and his normal ambition for

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success. This is the pattern, I think, of his life.

M: His interest in the station then just fits in with everything else.

A: Fits in with his political career.

M: In 1945, at least from what I read, there was an incident involving unionization of the station. Were you in on that?

A: Yes, right in the big middle.

M: What happened then?

A: Well, we had hired a chief engineer. You see, because of the war years, personnel was so hard to get. Toward the end there were two women and myself as sales staff. We didn't use women announcers, although we had women on women's programs, so announcers were hard to come by, and [so were] chief engineers. I happened to be in New York on a sales trip and the chief engineer got unhappy with one of the other members of the staff and placed himself in a chair in my office. Paul Bolton called me and said, "Mr. Jeffus [?] wants to resign, wants you to come back and pay him off." I said, "What's he doing?" He said, "He's just sitting in a chair in your office waiting for you." I said, "It will probably be a week before I get back." "Well, he will probably be in that chair." This is just one of those little oddball things that happened. (Laughter)

So we hired through recommendation of some other station, Leland--I can't remember his last name, I'll pick this up later; it was kind of an unpleasant experience and I wanted to forget it. He came down as chief engineer and did an adequate job. His wife was unhappy, didn't like Austin. She was from Dallas. So in trying to appease her--the lengths that we went to appease people was astounding--my wife and I took him

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and his wife to Dallas on a trip, just to let her see Dallas again. She had an obsession with Dallas, so we made a special trip. The ends you'd go to keep somebody happy!

It so developed that Leland, I surmise, I have no proof but I feel pretty confident, was sent in here by the union or put in a position to get hired to be sent in here--how it was worked, I don't know. But when he got notice from the mediation board, the government agency that steps in and tries to mediate, the National Labor Relations Board, the National Labor Relations Board told us that we were going to be organized, or attempt to be organized, and called us into a conference. It finally got down to the nitty-gritty that this Leland, our chief engineer from our own ranks, was the propagator of the thing. Of course, this meant they sent a union organizer in here, a field man as they called them, and he and I and the labor relations board man and an attorney representing management who happened to be Mr. Herman Jones--now the judge here, Judge Jones in the district court--negotiated hour upon hour. They picketed us, carried signs. We never had any violence.

M: They didn't close down your station?

A: No, they didn't close down the station. We negotiated and negotiated and negotiated, and one day we got a phone call that it was over. Peace and harmony suddenly permeated the atmosphere. And it's still not union.

M: Did your chief engineer stay on with you?

A: No. He left and we replaced him with a fellow by the name of [Frank] Yeagley. All of this happened right at the end of my career here at the station. I don't remember whether I had turned in my resignation before the union negotiations started or not, I might be

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able to recall at a later date about the sequence of events there. I was working on an annual contract, March 31 to March 31, so I had given Mrs. Johnson a letter of resignation. I've got the letter, I can get the exact date, maybe a couple of months [notice], something like that. And, of course, I told them that while this was going on that I would continue in the capacity as manager until it was settled or until that time when they could replace me. It wasn't any deadline deal as far as I was concerned. My dissociation from the station was most amiable. I received a very nice letter from Mrs. Johnson with regrets. At the first annual Christmas party after I had left the station, they presented me with a beautiful gold watch with an inscription on there, "From Lyndon and Bird," that sort of thing, which I still have.

M: In that union fight, was there any threat of violence?

A: No.

M: The reason I ask that is that in one of the accounts I've read of it, they said that there was a threat of violence and some of Johnson's friends armed themselves to protect the transmitter and the station. Is there any truth to that?

A: Not to my knowledge. Now, I did one thing. At a little conference between Congressman Johnson and Senator [Alvin] Wirtz and myself, there was a feeling that there could be violence. After all, you just don't sit back and say, "It's rosy." So, after discussion, we felt like that if something did happen, if there was some violence at the transmitter which was a possibility, that we should have the transmitter plans, the blueprints and specs. So I was elected, naturally, to get these plans. I called the chief engineer, Leland, and told him that, for obvious reasons, I wanted the plans and the

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diagrams of the transmitter and all the mechanics of the station. He said, "Okay." I said, "Well, you meet me at the transmitter and get them for me." I rode out to the transmitter with my wife, just went on in, and he gave them to me. I'll tell you that this was not a trip that I enjoyed, but I felt it was my duty to do this; I was manager of the station, so I got them and brought them back.

M: So there was no problem there?

A: No problem at all. The union negotiator was very hardnosed, as you would expect him to be, but he was just a little fellow. There were never any real hard words passed between Mr. Herman Jones, our attorney, and him and myself. Of course, they were poles apart in the idea.

Now what implications this threat of unionizing the station, [what] connection it had with any of the political arena in Washington, I don't know.

M: I was going to ask you if there was any problem that you had because of the political connection of your owners.

A: Any problem?

M: Yes. It's obvious that the political connections they had helped the station some.

A: Oh, yes, yes.

M: But were there any problems created?

A: They were minor. There were a few people in town that didn't like Congressman Johnson, and consequently these few people, when you tried to sell them time, radio spots, would tell you frankly, "No, I'm not going to advertise with Lyndon Johnson. I don't like him." Of course, some of them used words that weren't too flattering, but this

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is a man in public life in his position. But I would say it didn't present any big problem.

It was very, very minor.

M: Why did you happen to leave in 1946?

A: Why did I want to leave? Well, this goes back to a desire or a bug or a bee in the bonnet that was put into me by my father, who was a grocery merchant and was in business practically all of his life. His theory was, I remember his saying it: eventually get in business for yourself, whether it's a fruit stand or a peanut stand or what have you. He liked that independence, the convenience. I guess there's a certain amount of ego in it. You can call your shots, if you want to kick out the window lights, you kick out the window lights. So this bee was in my bonnet. I guess the restlessness, you might say, of my nature--you see, I had a history of change: ladies' shoes, traveling on the road, ladies' ready-to-wear, ,always in merchandizing, and back into radio, out of radio into jewelry. In other words, I had a little wanderlust. Frankly, I have no regrets of these changes; maybe it has kept me from becoming wealthy or further along, but my philosophy of life is not based on dollars and cents.

M: So you wanted to go into business for yourself.

A: I wanted to go in business for myself, so I talked to my attorney, who is now deceased, Stanley Hornsby, and told him what my plans were. He said, "Pat, if that's what you want to do, what do you plan to do?"

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M: The basic question was that I asked you why you left the station and you said you wanted to go into business for yourself.

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A: A new business for myself. My attorney, Hornsby, said that real estate was really popping, it was going real good. And at that time it was easy to get into. He said again, "Pat, with the people you know and your public acceptance, a certain amount of popularity having been in radio so long here, your name is well known, we can set you up contracts and you can take your examination and get listings. I think you'll do real well." This happened, and sure enough, I did do real well for a couple of years. Then we had a shortage of houses.

M: Is this residential?

A: Yes, residential properties. The builders were selling their own houses; they didn't want real estate men to cut you out. It got tough. In the meantime, in the fall of 1946, I had added fire and automobile insurance as a sort of a sideline with the agency and so, as the real estate business was taking off, I started working more and more on the insurance end of it and it finally developed. In 1950 I had a burst appendix and this threw me out of commission for six months. At that time my wife, in order to survive, went to work for one of the senators in the legislature and pulled us through. But I kept my little insurance business. I operated right out of my dining room at a desk. That went on up until about 1960, in my present home I built an office inside my house there, converted a room and had my business there. Then I moved to the Littlefield Building later on. In 1950, incidentally, I dropped the real estate because I was having a hard time riding both fields.

I decided to concentrate, so I established my own business until here I am today. May 1, 1968, I associated my agency, the Pat Adelman Agency, with the J. O. Garrett Company, which is an older agency than mine. We were good friends and, of course, this

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is the trend in our business now. It's happening all the time that agents are combining their offices and their personnel, going on machine bookkeeping and automation and that sort of thing to cut down the expense factor because of the commission cuts that we've had. So this is how we operate. I still have my identity, I still own my business.

M: But you're associated with them?

A: Associated with them. We pay them a certain fee for doing our office work. We represent the same companies, so it's sort of--I use this expression, it's kind of funny, people get a kick out of it--a Buick Motor Division of General Motors. I'm the Buick, you know. That's not accurate *per se*, but it's just sort of an association deal.

(Interruption)

M: You're going into the insurance business and real estate, and I was just getting ready to ask you whether in this real estate business or insurance business you had any contact with the Johnsons.

A: Yes. My wife and I are guests at the KTBC annual Christmas party every year. I don't think we've missed. The Johnsons remember and appreciate several people that were back there in the beginning of the station. There's our accountant, Louise Sneed and her husband; Albert Caster, a CPA, and his wife; of course, Paul Bolton who worked long after I left. Incidentally I hired Paul Bolton from International News Service, where he was a Capitol correspondent. We established the first real news department where we had our own news writing. Before that, they'd just read what came down on the wire from the news services like AP and UP.

M: Paul Bolton did that work for you?

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A: Paul Bolton, yes. He established it. He was the father of radio newscasting in Austin.

We'd naturally see them [the Johnsons] during that time. While he was vice president, he would come to them. He didn't come while he was president, but he has started coming again now. He was at the last one.

M: So you'd see them at the parties?

A: I'd see them annually. Now, as far as business, I have carried some insurance coverage for Mrs. Johnson at the Ranch; I carry insurance coverage for personnel, Mr. Kellam, the general manger and Mr. Charles Howell, the TV manager. I have never attempted to use my friendship with them or my past employment with them as a vehicle to put them on the spot for insurance, because having been in the business I know that they have big advertisers that they're obligated to in this field. So I've never wanted to make them feel anything and I think they appreciate it.

M: In regard to the real estate in the earlier period, did you have any business connections with them then? The reason I ask that is that I've read that they did invest in some real estate in Austin.

A: No. I don't think at that time they were investing. You see, I was only in the real estate from late 1946 to 1950 and, to the best of my knowledge [they weren't]. Probably if I had stayed in the real estate business, I would have been involved in some of it. No, I never handled any real estate transactions for them.

M: Let me give you an open-ended question. Is there anything that I should have asked you about that I didn't, or any concluding comments you wish to make?

A: Yes. You know, I've read numerous articles, the complimentary ones and the

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uncomplimentary ones. What's that one? *A Texan Looks At Lyndon*.

M: By J. Evetts Haley.

A: That vicious one. No one has mentioned this and I don't see how they've overlooked it unless they didn't know it. But to me this is ultra-interesting.

One time up on Lake Travis at the LCRA, the Lower Colorado River Authority Building up there--it's sort of a lodge that you can come up to and groups can use--I think we just had the staff up there for just a little outing. In a private conversation with him he revealed something to me that I've never read. Now maybe someone has written about it, maybe he's never told anyone about this and this is it: President Johnson told me at that time that his ambition was to be a man behind the scenes to promote or sponsor another person into high office for important positions rather than himself. Did you ever read or hear anything about that?

M: No.

A: No one has ever mentioned that. I just wonder if he's never told anyone that but me.

M: When did he say this to you?

A: While I was manager of the station.

M: In the 1940s then.

A: Yes, and this was up there in a casual conversation. He didn't use these words, but to paraphrase a word, he'd rather be a kingmaker than a king. [He said] that he would get a greater satisfaction out of this. Now, you've always felt like he wanted to be the king in everything.

M: Yes. That's strange, isn't it!

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A: He had no reason to say this to me, but he did. He must have meant it or he wouldn't have said it. Isn't that interesting?

M: Yes, nobody has ever mentioned that before.

A: No, sir. I've never read it. I've looked for it. Another thing that interests me, they've mentioned this--you hear pros and cons. Now things change, but I can't believe them, in that [there is] the rift between him and John Connally. I can't buy this. I think he has one of the greatest admirations for John Connally of any man living. As a matter of fact, he has said to me on an occasion or two that John Connally is the one person of everyone that he knows or has come in contact with whose attitude toward a problem is like his. In other words, their minds work [alike]; they would come up with the same evaluation of a problem is what I'm trying to say. This doesn't mean that they always agree on everything; I'm sure they don't. Of course, with the turn of events today! But I don't know.

M: Anything else?

A: Another thing that always interests me is, is Lyndon Johnson a liberal or a conservative.

M: Have you got an answer for that?

A: Yes. I think that he has facets of both. I think that he's a humanitarian, yet at the same time I think he has leanings toward the conservative side of things, too. Now [Barry] Goldwater, we know Goldwater. But Johnson's spectrum is broader. I think he can be liberal on this issue and be conservative on this issue and be 100 per cent honest. He doesn't go down the line just because it's conservative or because it's liberal. I think his scope is that broad.

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This is interesting to me, and I haven't read this either. That is, his tastes for food are very commonplace, and my tastes are commonplace. For instance, I know he loves chili; he loves hot dogs. I've traveled with him and I've eaten a lot of meals with him. He loves good chopped hamburger steak, rather than the fancy fifteen dollar sirloins and the French cuisine and all of that. This interests me because I'm this way, too.

M: You'd think he might be the other way.

A: But he's not. He wasn't when he would travel and eat with me.

M: Was he a good traveling companion?

A: Yes, and highly entertaining in groups of people, highly entertaining. A lot of stories, a lot of good Texas homespun stories. He liked to quote his old daddy, and I have this characteristic, too. I'm full of these little homespun philosophies.

M: He liked to tell those kind of stories.

A: Oh, yes, homespun stories.

M: I've heard he's rather earthy in his language.

A: Not any more so than an average man around a group of men. I think his language around ladies has always been very precise. I would say he's not a dirty-mouthed, swearing person, he doesn't use s.o.b. every other word or that sort of thing. If the situation calls for son-of-a-bitch, why he'll use it, but if it doesn't fit, he doesn't say it. He has a good vocabulary. To me a person that swears all the time lacks in the vocabulary; it's a cover-up, so everything is g.d., s.o.b., that sort of thing. They have about twenty-five words and they're limited.

M: Is there any thing else we ought to put on this?

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A: At the moment I think that's about the meat and the coconut.

M: Thank you very much.

End of Tape 2 of 2 and Interview I

