INTERVIEW I

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INTERVIEWEE: JAMES N. ADLER

INTERVIEWER: Michael L. Gillette

PLACE: Mr. Adler's office, Los Angeles, California

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G: --sort of living off the land.

A: Well, everybody was on somebody else's payroll.

(Interruption)

G: Mr. Adler, I want to begin by asking you to describe where you were in the government at the time the War on Poverty was planned.

A: I was at the Department of Commerce but on the payroll or being paid by the University of Pittsburgh as part of a grant to prepare a background paper for the Appalachian program, really growing out of President Kennedy's campaign and I think particularly his West Virginia experience. The Appalachian governors had come together with a proposal to have a program for the Appalachian region, and he had appointed a president's committee on Appalachia, or some similar name, which was composed of the governors and representatives of the various agencies of the federal government and in a sense was sort of a mini-precursor of the poverty program, although I don't think it was seen that way. But it involved a substantial number of the same people and it was a multi-agency task force, on the federal side, meeting with representatives of the governors of the Appalachian region on the other side. It was under Franklin Roosevelt, Jr., who was then under secretary of Commerce. [He] was the head of the federal side.

G: Did you report to him, basically?

A: I reported to John Sweeney, who was his special assistant for the Appalachian program. My office was in Washington at the Department of Commerce, although as I said, the University of Pittsburgh had been given a grant to do work, and a number of us were paid by the University of Pittsburgh.

G: Did the group form any conclusions about what should be done?

A: Well, yes, actually the--if I can remember how the timing [went]. The group was in the process of formulating recommendations for a legislative program when President Kennedy was assassinated, and continued to do that. The poverty program was I guess formally announced February 1, 1964, and I was sent really as a Department of Commerce representative to the poverty program. The task force was composed of representatives primarily from various parts of the federal government. So I continued to be involved a little bit in the Appalachian program and at least kept track of what was going on in its legislative proposals. But I was working pretty much full-time at the poverty program.

Ultimately, the Appalachian program did come up with a report in the legislative program, and it was adopted and an agency called the Appalachian Regional Commission came into being, under the direction of John Sweeney.

G: Did you have any insights regarding President Kennedy's attitude about poverty, how it should be dealt with?

A: Well, I guess the closest insight I had came about as a result of a series of articles written by a man named Homer Bigart in the *New York Times*. He wrote a series of articles about poverty conditions in East

Kentucky. Of course, the President was familiar, from his campaigning, with West Virginia, and East Kentucky was described in these articles as being markedly more impoverished and the conditions worse than in West Virginia. When President Kennedy read those articles, he apparently decided that something should be done and that the federal government with its resources should be able to play a role. I think what happened was he asked Ted Sorensen, who was then his counsel, to determine what the federal government could do, in order to try to ameliorate conditions in East Kentucky. Sorensen then circulated the executive branch of the government to determine what programs there were in the executive branch that could be brought to bear on East Kentucky.

Obviously, if you take a national program and you skew just a little bit the emphasis of it, since East Kentucky I think only had a population of about eight hundred thousand people, the hope was that you could make an impact. The responses from the various branches of the federal government were quite good, and there were some innovative ideas and some substantial commitments. Then there was a meeting in the White House with the President and with Sorensen, Sweeney, FDR, Jr., myself, and I can't remember who else was there. Probably--I don't know if there were any representatives from Kentucky there or not. At that meeting it was determined that the federal government would go ahead with this program of emergency relief for East Kentucky. This must have been in--it was shortly before the President was assassinated.

And I was sort of designated as the person to coordinate the efforts of the various departments and to try to call upon them to put into effect the proposals which they had made to the President and to

Sorensen, things like the Corps of Engineers were going to devote money to cleaning up rivers, to remove debris from rivers, which would in effect be a works program. HEW was going to have the Public Health Service doctors conduct some screenings for--they couldn't do treatment, but they could do diagnosis and try to identify and refer for treatment medical problems. There was a small variant of the domestic Peace Corps which hadn't been established yet, which we, with the help of Dick Boone, got started. And some private money which we were able to raise to get started in East Kentucky.

G: Was that Ford Foundation money, or--?

A: I can only remember two specific sources of resources. One I associate with Reynolds Metal. I had gone to school with some of the Reynoldses, and they made a contribution. Somebody got one of the gypsum companies, and I can't remember whether it was National Gypsum or the other major gypsum company. They gave us a boxcar of wallboard that was used to rehabillitate schools. Dick raised--I think Dick got a contribution from one of the foundations that he was close to; I don't think we had any Ford money, though.

This program then was started I guess in October, something like that, President Kennedy was then assassinated in November, and we met with President Johnson I think early in December to determine whether or not he would continue the program, because the program really couldn't be continued the way it was being done without the President's imprimatur. Because the way we got agencies to contribute resources was to say this was something the President was interested in.

The FHA, the Farmers Home Administration, was another agency which contributed significantly by making loans available in East Kentucky on a basis which was probably slightly in excess of what they would have otherwise done.

G: Let me ask you to go back to that meeting with President Kennedy. Do you recall anything specific that President Kennedy said about poverty in Eastern Kentucky, anything that reflected his own views?

A: No, I can't--

G: Any crucial decisions or issues in that meeting other than the general decision that you described?

A: As I recall--I really don't recall anything specific that was said except that a decision was made to go ahead and to implement the program, and implementation was pretty much turned over to Sorensen. I believe Kennedy attended the meeting and then left when basically he had made the decision to implement it and communicated that to Sorensen. Then we stayed behind with Sorensen for a little bit to discuss the implementation.

G: Do you think that President Kennedy tended to think in terms of rural poverty, such as eastern Kentucky and West Virginia, rather than urban poverty?

A: I don't really have a feel for that. I know that this particular project grew out of the Homer Bigart articles, and of course really there are some cities in East Kentucky, although they're smaller cities. It was not the sum total of the federal government's interest at that time in poverty, because there was already ongoing the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency under Robert Kennedy. That also was

sort of a mini-urban poverty program, or at least had many of the elements of the CAP [Community Action] program. I wasn't involved in it, but I know there was a group of people that were working on ideas for a more comprehensive assault on poverty. I think that there was a lot of work going on at HEW and of course there were legislative proposals that had been around for some time for a youth training corps at the Department of Labor.

I think that my perception was that the poverty program as it was ultimately developed was very much a product of [Sargent] Shriver's selection to head it, and the people that worked with him, perhaps Adam Yarmolinsky and the other people that Shriver consulted with. But I think there was an effort going on which might have been a budgetary proposal under Kennedy, had he not been assassinated. So I suppose the budget was being put together then looking toward legislative ideas for the next year.

G: Let me ask you to go back and describe that meeting, the post-assassination meeting, with President Johnson in December.

A: That was of course the first time that I had seen the President, at least up close. And to me it was an amazing meeting. The people who were in attendance were the President, FDR, Jr., John Sweeney and myself representing the federal part of the program, and the Governor of Kentucky, his press aide, and a man named John Wisdom, who was the representative from the state of Kentucky on the Appalachian regional planning effort and was also pretty much the states' representative of all the Appalachian states. To my way of thinking, [he] was probably the moving force from the state side in the Appalachian effort.

Really the entire meeting, which we had wanted because we wanted to know whether the President wanted to continue it--there was almost no substantive discussion of the program at all in the meeting. It was mostly him telling various stories to the Governor of Kentucky, and no discussion of substance at all that I recall.

We had prepared a press release and taken it over there, which announced the continuation of the program and some of the accomplishments of the federal government, I think, and also some of the commitments that would be made in the future to better the region. We had submitted that, I suppose, to the press aides. I don't really remember exactly who had that. We had the meeting, and the meeting was in the Cabinet Room, and then the President took the Governor of Kentucky alone into his office. Then there was a session with the press, or at least pictures were taken, and we still didn't know what his decision was. I think later in the day we learned that he had decided to continue the program, and we asked about the press release. The White House said that he did not want the press release issued, that this was the time that the government was announcing the Christmas closings of a number of military bases and a number of areas were being severely impacted adversely. He didn't want to announce that the federal government was doing something special for one region at the same time it was impacting adversely through its decisions [on] other regions. I always thought, you know, that's why he's president. I mean, none of us had any conception of anything broader than our program and we wanted the maximum press exposure of our program, but of course, he was thinking of

a broader picture. So there was no release, but the program did go forward.

G: Let me ask you about the stories that he told the Governor. Do you recall?

A: No, twenty years ago I can't--all I can recall is that that was a masterful job of treading water for about fifteen to twenty minutes, and stories, but I don't remember any of them.

G: Was there anything else significant that happened to which you were privy before Shriver was selected?

A: No. My first involvement in the poverty program per se occurred on--I'm pretty sure the date was February 8 when there was a meeting at the Peace Corps Building. It really was my first meeting of the task force. Shriver had been formally selected February 1, and I had been designated along with one other person from the Department of Commerce. I can't remember whether that other person might have been Andy [Andrew] Brimmer. I'm not sure whether he was there, but because of the nature of my role in the poverty program, I was able to go and stay where the other representatives--it probably was Brimmer--had an ongoing function at the Commerce Department which required really his full-time participation there. I was able, because of the status of the Appalachian program and the extent of its development that had occurred till then, to pull away and stay full-time.

G: How were you invited? Were you invited? How did you learn of this meeting?

A: I think through either Sweeney, or Sweeney and FDR, Jr. It made a lot of sense to have somebody from the Appalachian program because our

experiences were somewhat similar, and as I mentioned, the people were to some extent similar. Jim [J. L.] Sundquist, who had worked very closely with us on the Appalachian Regional Program, was one of the people on the task force. There was another person from HEW who had worked with us. To some extent the same type of effort was under way to pull together the resources of various departments of the government in order to try to make a comprehensive program. I suspect that it was engineered--my being sent over there was engineered by Sweeney, but I'm not certain. I think I was--I may have asked to go. But in any event I remember going. I remember the meeting with some clarity because it was the first meeting that I attended, the first time I had met Shriver. I was the newest person in the meeting, since at that time the program was a week old. When I left the poverty program in 1965, Eric Tolmach I think was the only person who had been there continuously longer than I had, with the exception of Shriver.

G: [Hyman] Bookbinder might have--

A: Well, Booky wasn't there continuously though. I'm not sure when Booky first came. Well, maybe he was there continuously. If he was there continuously, he was not there on February 8 because I know that of the people there Tolmach, when I left, was the only one.

G: Let me ask you to describe in as much detail as possible that February 8 meeting.

A: Well, let's see if I can remember some of the people that were there. [Daniel Patrick] Moynihan was there, and Sundquist was there. Shriver and Yarmolinsky were there. Tolmach was there. I suspect, if I'm right, that Brimmer was the Commerce representative; he was probably

there. Shriver came into the meeting--I think it was early in the week, a Monday or Tuesday--and he had spent the weekend, he said, considering what the outlines of the program should be. He then laid out his conception of the program, and I think at that meeting he described some of his rationale in what he was doing. Well, I know he described some of the rationale. But in terms of what he had done was pull a number of programs that were already in the budget into the poverty program. So that I think he wanted to have a billion-dollar price tag on it, in terms of this was a billion-dollar effort, and yet he didn't have a billion dollars of new budgetary money to spend. I think he had been given five hundred million dollars of additional budget, but he had to pull the other five hundred million dollars from existing programs that were already in the budget.

So part of his strategy was to utilize existing programs that had already been submitted but would have been assigned to other departments and to pull them into a coordinated effort, and to utilize their money that way. One of the things which I think he expressed at that time was a desire to put together a program that could go to one committee. The concern was that we were dealing with, in what became the various titles of the department, subject matter which traditionally would have gone to probably five or six committees. And to go through five or six substantive committees on both sides and then the appropriation committees they've got on both sides would have taken a long time and been undesirable. So the desire was to pull it together into a comprehensive program.

I remember particularly what he said about both the CAP program and the Job Corps program. He knew the CAP program was going to take a significant period of time before it would show any results, and he wanted to have a program that would have some immediate impact. His conception in that regard was the Job Corps. I'm not sure it was called the Job Corps in that first meeting, but as it was proposed at that meeting it involved the use of abandoned or non-utilized military facilities. I think he conceived of the military running the program and said that, the military doing the training. And I think that was the only description of the Job Corps at the time.

I can remember several reactions. I was sitting next to Jim Sundquist and I wrote a note to him saying, "This is the worst idea I've ever heard. Are you going to say something, or should I?" My concerns about the program were that as it was conceived it was going to be too big to be an effective laboratory and yet it was going to be too small to play an effective role in the problem. There was a large youth unemployment problem. The program that was outlined was going to obviously be expensive and somewhat limited in size. I thought the nature of the problem required either a bigger program or a much smaller program which could emphasize research. Sundquist wrote me back a note saying he agreed with him and he thought I would later. And since I thought very highly of Jim's judgment, and since I was the newest and probably the youngest person in the meeting, I decided to keep my mouth shut. There was discussion at the meeting of utilizing the military and I think Pat Moynihan particularly thought that was a bad idea, did not think the military ought to be involved in this kind of program. My

concerns didn't really relate to that, and my concerns were never expressed.

I think that those were obviously the two most important and the biggest elements of the program, although I think that what became some of the other titles were also outlined at that meeting.

G: Let's talk a little bit more about what became the Job Corps. Was the opposition to this original concept of having the military run it more of a political opposition? For instance, did the people like Moynihan believe that if the military involvement was as large as proposed that people would equate it with some form of youthful paramilitary-type training that seemed unhealthy for this society?

A: I really can't remember at this time what discussion took place on that issue, but I don't remember that being a concern. What I remember, or think I remember, being a concern was sort of an insult to the educational community of the country, that here this was a civilian program training people and that the only people that the government thought could train people was the military. I think Moynihan with his background and coming from the Department of Labor didn't believe that. I don't think he believed they were the only people, and he may not have even believed they would be particularly good. And he thought the idea would not be politically--I think his political judgment was that the idea wouldn't fly, that the educational community in the country would be very resentful and would oppose the program on that ground, and that the concept of having the military run the program would result in having an organized opposition and perhaps, at least on a political basis, no gain on the other side, since there would be nobody lobbying

for that. The proposal wasn't discussed at any--well, it was discussed in that meeting a little bit; it was not discussed very much after that. What I believe happened was that somebody leaked the idea to the press that day or the next day, and a day later it was denied by some level of government that this idea was under consideration. And I don't think it ever was after that point, so it was a very short-lived program.

G: Do you know who leaked it?

A: No.

G: Of course, Moynihan had his own department to represent and the Labor Department at this point seemed very jealous about its own employment program, training program. Did you get this feeling at all?

A: No, I didn't have that feeling from Pat. I don't think he was taking at all a parochial viewpoint. I think this was a program that he believed in and would have liked to have been involved [in] in a more full-time way. I think if the program had been structured somewhat differently so there would have been a position that would have made sense for him to head, I think he would have liked to have moved to the poverty program. I think what he was expressing was maybe partly a personal concern, but I think as it was expressed at least it was a political concern, that this would cause a hailstorm of criticism when it was announced and that it would detract from the program. And to some extent, I think maybe he was right because at least there was a mini-reaction when it was leaked and an immediate killing of the idea in light of the reaction. Not, of course, a killing of the Job Corps as a concept, but just a killing of the idea of having the military involved in it.

G: Was there during the task force phase, that you were aware of, friction between Moynihan and Willard Wirtz about how large a role the Department of Labor would play in the employment components?

A: I don't recall being aware of it. I had worked at the Department of Labor I guess from about July of 1962 to about July of 1963, and had spent some time with Wirtz. And I know that just from my experience with him, he tended to believe in making assignments of responsibility to existing organizations. As a matter of organizational philosophy, not I think as a matter of trying to preserve turf. Within the Department of Labor when a problem would arise, he would believe in handling it in a way which was consistent with an orderly organization of the department, whereas Secretary Goldberg had been more inclined to go around the existing organizations. So I would have expected, just on the basis of that experience, that if there was a question of whether a new agency would run it or whether the Department of Labor would run it or the Department of HEW [would] run it, Secretary Wirtz probably would favor the existing agency.

G: Do you think that the creation of the Neighborhood Youth Corps was a concession to Wirtz, the fact that here was another jobs component that was delegated to the Department of Labor to administer?

A: I don't know. I wasn't really involved in any of that kind of in-fighting. The Neighborhood Youth Corps of course had come from a proposal that was already on the Hill, which would have been run by the Department of Labor. And the poverty program I think was conceived primarily as a coordinating-type agency. It had no funds at the beginning and for about a year had really had no funds. People that were there were on

loan from other agencies or in some instances from universities or private industry. So it didn't have the kind of staff to plan or run a program, and I don't think there was a desire really to make it an operating entity. The only program really that it ran was the CAP program. I think that was the only one. Title VI was run by HEW; the agricultural title I think was run by the Department of Agriculture. There was perhaps some supervision by OEO [Office of Economic Opportunity], but even the Job Corps, what became called the urban centers, were run under contract with mostly corporate entities, perhaps some universities. I'm not really certain who ran the rural ones; that may have been done by OEO.

G: Interior did some and I think Agriculture.

A: And Agriculture did others. So I think to focus on the Neighborhood Youth Corps and say was that a sop to Wirtz would not--I don't know, but it was consistent with the organization of the whole program that that would be operated by the Department of Labor.

G: The criticism that you raised specifically pertaining to the Job Corps, the paradox that it was too large to be an effective laboratory and too small to have an impact on the poverty situation; was this a criticism applied to the War on Poverty as a whole?

A: I don't think so, at least as it was conceived. I think that from the discussions at that meeting and others in which I participated in which Shriver talked about the CAP program, he was fully cognizant of the function of the CAP program to sort of shake up an existing power structure and to try to cause decisions on local level to be made a little bit differently and with the participation of the constituents

involved in the decision, as opposed to it just being made by somebody downtown for their benefit. And I think that my understanding of what had happened to the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency, which had far less money, was that this additional opportunity for money from the federal government, provided you developed a comprehensive program which was designed to serve the needs of your community, actually there was enough leverage in the CAP program to cause cities to participate and to change their way of operating and to coordinate programs with agencies which had not previously coordinated them to involve the poor. And I think that process did happen. I mean obviously to some extent it was greater or lesser. I think as soon as Mayor [Richard] Daley in Chicago found out what was going on, he said, "Not in my city," and the CAP program in his city didn't work the way it was designed probably to work. But I think there was enough money there.

Title VI, which was one which I was particularly interested in and which was virtually a lost title in the program, was designed to induce states sort of on a one-at-a-time basis to adopt AFDC [Aid to Families with Dependent Children], what was then called AFDCUP. At that time the law permitted states to have an option--still does permit that option, as a matter of fact--with regard to whether to include a family headed by an unemployed parent in the welfare program, in the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program. And all the industrial states, or most of the industrial states, had adopted the AFDCUP, but most of the non-industrial states had not. And that title was designed to say to a state, "If you will adopt an AFDCU program and with a work and training component, we'll essentially fund it the first year." I mean, at least

this was the conception of the program. "We'll fund it for the first year, and then after that you've got to fund it." The thinking was that the program would prove sufficiently popular that the state would have difficulty pulling out of it once it had committed itself to it. Therefore it would pick up the cost and that money then the next year could be rolled over to induce other states.

But I think, in the conception at least, there were programs that were potentially adequately funded to bring about a significant effect. I just thought that the Job Corps, while it was going to benefit the people that were involved, what we really needed to learn was how to involve and how to train and educate this target population, which was identified as sort of a difficult-to-educate population, because they were largely already school dropouts who had dropped out of the traditional educational system. And in order to find a handle to that, I thought the best role for the federal government was to try to develop methods and materials that would be effective and then which could be translated into the community, so that it would have a broad impact rather than just impact the individuals.

G: One of the criticisms of the Job Corps was that it was expanded much too rapidly.

A: Actually my criticism of the Job Corps probably was that it was not expanding enough. I had a book at the time that I had gotten from either the library of Commerce or the HEW library on the CCC [Civilian Conservation Corps], and it has never ceased to amaze me; from the day Roosevelt proposed the CCC to the day the first kids were in camp was twelve days, I think. And in that time the bill had gone through both

houses of Congress and the appropriations bill had gone through both houses of Congress. And they had actually recruited kids and taken them out, you know, at least one truckload, and taken them to the Catoctin Mountains. And in ninety days the CCC had two hundred and fifty thousand kids in the program. By contrast, for a year we didn't even have a program or money, and when we had ninety days of our money, we still had no children in the program, partly because it was planned with a much different goal in mind than the CCC. But I had some question whether the goal should have been that much different than the CCC.

G: Was there a recognition among the task force planners that the kids were very different from the CCC kids in terms of their--?

A: Well, yes, I think so, particularly the people that were primarily involved in planning the educational component. There were two different programs: one; the rural program which I think was largely probably planned in OEO, and the other, the urban programs which we solicited proposals for from corporations and others. It's hard to remember at that time, but major corporations thought peace and really a substantial reduction of armaments was at hand. A very significant number of the major corporations in the country that had been active in the defense area were looking for avenues in which they could deploy their resources. Companies like Litton Industries, which had been one of the pioneering companies in systems development, thought that the systems approach could be used domestically as well as to build armaments, and they were anxious to move into education in this area. GE and ***Time*** formed a joint venture that was aimed at education. Westinghouse submitted a proposal and ultimately ran a Job Corps program, as did Litton. So they were

developing their own programs and the role that OEO, that the people who were involved in that which included myself, were really looking to them for their primary suggestions.

Then there were another group of people working I think at the same time under Lou Egan [?], and they were primarily developing educational component for the rural programs. I remember suggesting, "Why don't the kids build their own camps?" I've always thought that building was one of the best things that a young man particularly can do, because it's physical. With the proper supervision, it can be done even by unskilled people, and you get an immediate, or almost immediate, visual reward in that it's something that you've built. I thought if the people built the camps, they would be proud of the camps, and I thought they could live in tents while they built the camps. I can remember people saying, "These kids aren't going to be willing to live in tents." And I said, "Why not? Boy Scouts go live in tents and think it's great." "No, these kids won't live in tents, and they can't live in tents. And they can't build their own camps, because the labor unions won't let them." That was a concern; I don't know how legitimate because I don't think it was ever put to the labor unions. But there was a concern that if the camps were built by the kids themselves under non-union conditions and obviously at wages which would be below the minimum rate, that there would be a lot of criticism or blocking of the program. So that wasn't done, and as a result it took a long time to get the programs going.

So I think the immediate impact which Shriver had hoped for [was] that the Job Corps would be this immediately ongoing program. Perhaps

he had more the CCC model in mind, not as what to do but as the timing, when he thought of that; it--

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--didn't happen that way. The proposals that we got from industry I didn't think by and large were particularly imaginative. Most re-created, or came very close to re-creating, the school system that the kids had dropped out of, with the same kind of structured day and basically the same materials and the same type of teachers. There was one exception to that, a program submitted by a group of psychologists and others. I thought it was the most imaginative proposal we got, but it was sort of judged too far out to try, and the people that were proposing it didn't have an organization or resources behind them like a Litton did. I was not particularly happy with Litton's proposal in its various drafts. Finally Litton sent President Johnson a telegram, which I think was several feet in length, protesting the improper treatment that they felt they were receiving from the Job Corps. Shortly after that they were selected as an operator of a Job Corps here in California, in the Bay Area.

G: Do you recall any intervention by President Johnson in that? Did word come down from the White House?

A: I don't know where the word came down from. I mean Litton was one of the companies that was most interested in doing this, and I think that all of us recognized that their interest and their resources were such that it would be desirous to have them in the program. But our problem wasn't with--I mean, at least my own personal concern; I don't feel that I was a decision-maker at that time. I happened to have been sort of

the first employee of the urban Job Corps, and Vern Alden was brought aboard a couple of weeks or a month or so after the February 8 meeting--I can't remember exactly what the timing was--to head the whole Job Corps program, and there were others. A man named Milt Vogelberg [?], I think, was brought in to sort of be the contracting officer. He had been a contracting officer for the air force out here and had then gone into business and retired. He had a lot of experience in contracting and in dealing with these companies, and his role was important. There were a couple of others whose names at the moment I don't recall.

But we just didn't think the Litton proposal was particularly imaginative, and I don't know whether the White House told Shriver to move or whether Shriver's own sense [was] that it was better to start and develop the program as it goes rather than getting an absolutely ideal blueprint. There may have been several things contributing, and I think it was time to get started. I don't think anybody questioned that.

G: Was there a question within the Job Corps planners with regard to what sort of kids you ought to go after?

A: I don't remember that being particularly debated. I think that for the most part a decision was made--I think we had a description as part of our request for a proposal that we sent to the companies and others that were interested. I don't remember there being much controversy in terms of developing that; it was a sixteen- to twenty-one-year-old that was primarily a school dropout or somebody with a poverty background. Those were what I remember as the principal components. I think there was a concern about--particularly Lou Egan and some of his people had a

concern about whether urban kids, really ghetto kids, could adjust to the rural environment, whether they would feel so at sea--I remember discussions of the different noises or maybe absence of noise in the countryside, and the impact on people. And there was some concern, but I think, as I recall, it was just decided that we would try it and we would see what happened.

G: What was the result?

A: I left the program in February of 1965, which was before there were any kids in camp. So although I stayed a little bit and was interested in the program and kept up just a very little bit, I really don't know.

G: Was there a concern that the rural white kids from Appalachia and the urban black kids might have problems if they were tossed into the same camp together?

A: I don't remember that concern being discussed. It probably was a concern of some people and it probably was discussed in the context of needing to be aware of the situation and alert to it. I don't remember there being any question about the fact that the program was going to be integrated, and it was going to take people from all over the country and that there would be that kind of integration. But I'm sure that particularly Lou's people who were planning the program gave some thought to would there be a problem, and if so, how to prevent it or deal with it.

G: I want to ask you about whether or not you feel that a substantial portion of the War on Poverty as it was discussed in this task force came out of Shriver's own experiences with the Peace Corps?

A: I didn't get that feeling in any direct sense. I thought it came out of his experience in dealing with the Hill; in that sense, his experience in the Peace Corps. I thought he had a terrific sense of how to deal with the Hill and what to do and how to get the program through.

The outlines of the program seemed to me to be a putting together of ideas that were already pretty much extant, ideas that the federal government had been working with in one form or another. The CAP program, it seemed to me at least, came directly out of the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency, which Robert Kennedy had headed, with Ford Foundation money, and I think five selected cities had really attempted the same thing on a smaller scale. The Job Corps I think was pure--in a sense it was pure Shriver, or at least funneled through him. There was no existing program or existing legislative proposal, I think, by the administration in that area. There were youth training programs and other kinds of job programs, I think. But I think that one he developed, and as I said, I think he did it--he expressed the reason for doing it as he wanted to have something that would be immediate.

My guess would be it was drawn partly from Yarmolinsky's experience. Yarmolinsky of course was at the Department of Defense then, and Yarmolinsky was interested in how the Israelis had used their army as a melting pot and had taken people from very diverse backgrounds and various degrees of education and trained them. In fact, he had asked the Israelis for some training manuals and had gotten some, and had found out they were U.S. army training manuals of about World War II vintage, translated into Hebrew. I don't know, but I just have to think that since he was at the Department of Defense that his influence--he

must have had a role in suggesting the use of the military, both as trainers and the facilities.

Now, the other titles--Title VI I think, really as near as I can recall, came out of my experience in the Appalachian program, because there were Appalachian states that were using work and training programs. There was a group called the Happy Pappies in one of the Appalachian states, which were welfare fathers that were doing work. I can't remember whether there was some other influence for Title VI or not. There was a farmers' loan--there was some sort of a rural program. I don't remember exactly what the scope of it was. I mean, I would think that came out of Agriculture's suggestions, and you know the Neighborhood Youth Corps came out of the Department of Labor, things like that.

G: There was a provision that was informally referred to as a land reform program that would enable poor farmers to buy land or a cooperative would buy a larger tract of land and then sell it to the poor farmers for farming. This was not included in the final act. Do you recall the discussion of that provision?

A: No, I don't recall it. I mean, I don't really recall it being discussed in the February meeting, although it may have been.

G: Do you think that the task force had an urban orientation as opposed to a rural one? You did have all these people who had worked with the President's Commission on Juvenile Delinquency.

A: If I think in terms of the people that were involved, yes, and probably the people that Shriver--Shriver consulted an enormous range of people from the time of his involvement. It was just sort of a steady stream

of people, and I think probably most of them had an urban orientation. I think the program as it developed perhaps had a--the CAP program obviously was aimed primarily at urban programs. The Job Corps really didn't have a particular orientation. I mean, it was going to take people from all over, but the CAP program, which was probably the most significant part of the poverty program, did.

G: Did you and people like Jim Sundquist feel that rural poverty was getting short shrift?

A: Well, I didn't, but I wouldn't have necessarily had a background to make that judgment. Jim's own background I'm not sure was particularly rural, although he was at the Department of Agriculture at the time. He'd had a lot broader governmental experience than that. I don't remember the Department of Agriculture representatives, Jim or anyone else, pounding the table or saying that we should be doing more for agriculture. In my own thinking about the problem right now, it seems to me that to some extent at least the people that were in the rural areas and were poor, to some extent at least were coming into the cities. So that although it might have been considered there might have been a rural problem, the impact to some extent was on the city. And I think the other thing is of course we had ongoing many programs through the Department of Agriculture that were aimed at farms, at least, so that--I don't know what all the programs were, but I know there were some city programs and there were housing programs. The idea was not to duplicate the entire federal government. So I think that the aim of this was to sort of fill in some gaps, and I don't remember there being criticism of the balance of the program.

G: Let's talk about the Community Action Program for a minute. What was your perception of community action at the time it was being discussed in the task force?

A: My conception was that it was designed to take a community and say to a community, "We will give you some additional federal funds if you will develop a comprehensive program aimed at the needs of your community. You'll have to look at all of the resources that you have in your community, all the significant resources, and you'll have to involve them in a coordinated program. And in developing the program, you'll have to involve poor people, the people that the program's to be designed for. It's not just designed downtown and put into place." I mean, in my conception the need for such a program--the federal government had a lot of programs that funneled money to cities. And of course there were state programs and there were private programs and there were charitable programs. And each one focused on itself, really. HEW might have a training program, and it would have some counterpart at the state or some counterpart at the city, and it would focus through HEW. And the Department of Labor would have one, and there were various programs and they never came together, maybe, at any level.

They each did their own thing but without a central purpose, and the idea, as I understood it, of the Community Action Program was to try to focus the resources of the community and to some extent to focus them on the poor, where before the focus may have been on libraries or parks or police or something else. This said to the communities, "If you'll focus some of your resources in a coordinated way on the poor, we'll give you some additional money." So the carrot was the promise of

additional federal resources. And when you're the last person in, so to speak, to say, "Well, I'll give you another X million dollars if you'll do it my way," if they can accommodate you to get this 100 per cent federal money, they're likely to.

So it put together elements in a city in a planning process that maybe hadn't functioned quite that way before, because to some extent the planning process--particularly as they were drawing money from federal and state resources, the outlines of their programs were developed by the need to comply with the federal and state program, and sort of without regard to looking at the totality of the community. I thought the people that were designing it were very much aware--there was a feeling that was expressed often, I think, that the poor did not have a significant political role and did not have a significant voice in programs that were being done. There was a feeling that there was a paternalism that was involved and that it was desirable to change that and to involve them in the process and to increase in a sense their political power. There were some obvious problems, like who are the poor and how do you get the representatives of the poor, and do you have elections?

G: Do you think the planners intended for the program to circumvent the local political establishments and create a direct line between--?

A: I didn't think it was so much a circumvention as sort of a co-opting of the existing--you couldn't really do this around the existing power structure. They had to be involved at least; to work ideally, they also had to be changed to some extent. At least they had to interact with the poor in a way in which they hadn't before.

G: Do you think that Shriver anticipated the conflict that came as a result of this?

A: Yes, from the first day I thought Shriver was very much aware of the conflict that this was going to cause and the turmoil and the disruption of municipal politics, and I think he thought that was good. What I was always curious about was whether anybody explained that to Johnson and whether he understood. I never could imagine, if he did understand it, why he was accepting it because so many of the cities where there was going to be turmoil had Democratic politicians which were important to him. And yet I see that in his book he says he did understand it, and God knows the man had an enormous capacity to understand things and particularly the political process. And Shriver certainly understood it, so Shriver may fully have explained it to LBJ and he may have thought it was appropriate.

G: How do you know that Shriver understood it? What did he say indicating it?

A: I can't remember, obviously, after nineteen years what he said, but as far as I can remember, he just said that this would be the impact; this would cause change in the way cities made their decisions.

G: Within the planners of community action, was there any significant variation of what the results would be and how they would be achieved? For example, did Dick Boone or some of the others from the Ford Foundation experience have a different view than others, say, coming from a labor background or administrative background in government?

A: Yes. I'm not sure. I think that maybe it would help--I see that in your paper there is some mention of phases. Maybe I could give you my own version of the phases that there were and how it worked.

There was the first phase which was a planning phase, which was the basic structure of the program. That was pretty much over on February 8, not totally. Shriver continued to meet with people and the program continued to be refined, but he largely had laid out the outlines of his legislative effort, as I recall, on that day. There was then a principal focus of preparing a booklet, a book for Congress explaining the program and presenting the program. I think Chris Weeks was largely responsible for heading that effort and putting it together. But sort of simultaneously the act was being drafted, the book was being put together, and the broad outlines of programs were being formulated. And that effort involved all the members of the task force in working fairly long days and into the night to put that together to get it ready to go up to the Hill.

Once that was done, I think that the task force broke down then more into areas designed to try to implement the various proposals when the legislation was enacted. I think there was a high degree of expectation that it would be enacted, although there was some concern. There were some close votes and there was concern raised about Yarmolinsky's role, which was a traumatic thing for the people that were involved in the agency, because at least as we understood it, there was essentially a requirement that Yarmolinsky, who it was assumed would have been the number-two person in the agency, had to leave the agency.

G: Why was it assumed that Yarmolinsky would be number two?

A: Well, because he was. The President had appointed Shriver and it was certainly assumed I think by everybody--it was assumed by me and everybody else--that Shriver would continue in that role and would push the thing through Congress and would head it when it was enacted. And Yarmolinsky was a very important number two to Shriver. Adam was the person that ran the staff and that in a sense made things happen in a concrete way. I think that he was spending full time doing it. He was enormously dedicated to it. I think it was just assumed that that's something that he would want to continue to do. And of course from an operational sense, it made sense because he had been so involved in the creation and was involved in really running the agency, and knew what was desired and knew what the resources were and knew who the people were. And his position at the time--he was a special assistant I think to McNamara, and I think it was assumed that he would want to take a position like this, which involved line responsibilities. I even remembered sort of--it's very vague now that I think about it--I remember some discussions when the bill was being drafted about whether to make the deputy's position one requiring Senate confirmation.

G: Oh, really?

A: And I think that--I could be just pulling this out of the air, but I think that Adam wanted Senate confirmation. I think it could have been structured in a way that it wouldn't, but I think he wanted that imprimatur, and I think it was--it's been ages since I've looked at the act, but I think it was structured so that that number-two person did require Senate confirmation.

G: Do you recall the circumstances of his exclusion from the program?

A: No. Well, I mean obviously how the thing was doing on the Hill was of concern to all of us, and this booklet was prepared and they held the hearings in the House. The legislative people in the White House were counting the House, obviously. And I don't know who it was who came from the legislature and I don't know whether they went to the President or whether they went to Larry O'Brien or whether they went to Sorensen or whether they went to Shriver, but some congressman or congressmen claiming to represent a substantial bloc of votes apparently said that they wanted a commitment that Yarmolinsky would not be the number-two guy, as a price of supporting the legislation. And I know there was deep concern about yielding to that, on a matter of principle, and also there was concern, you know, do we really need to yield? Do these people really--is it really Adam or the program?

G: Were they members of the North Carolina delegation?

A: I don't remember who it was.

G: Anything that you recall about this question of whether or not you should yield to them?

A: Obviously, I wasn't involved in any of the discussions. The staff people were interested and we were picking up tidbits and rumors and what the count was. We weren't consulted, but the impression developed among those I think who were trying to put the bill through, who were actively involved in the legislative effort, that there was a very substantial risk to the program if they didn't make the commitment. And I assume it was made, and Adam's role quickly, I think, began to diminish and he limited himself and went back to the Department of

Defense. I guess Jack Conway was named the deputy, and I don't remember Jack's coming in. Obviously he did.

G: Sometime later, I think.

A: Yarmolinsky didn't--I don't think he disappeared totally, but I think that a commitment was made and I think we were generally aware of that fact.

G: One of the arguments that the members of Congress involved seemed to have made at the time was that Shriver had told them that there had been no commitment made to Yarmolinsky to name him deputy director, and they felt that Shriver in fact had made such a commitment. Do you recall that at all, and do you know if there had been any commitment?

A: No, I don't know. As far as I was concerned, it was just assumed. I don't know that there needed to be a commitment or that there was one, but it wouldn't surprise me if Adam said to Shriver, "This is something that I really would like to do." It was obvious that he was totally committed to it, was devoting long hours to it, and felt, as we all did, that this was very important. I'm sure he would have wanted that position.

G: Others have suggested that during the task force period Yarmolinsky served as the day-to-day coordinator, if you will, of the various planning groups and with the ideas, sort of a day-to-day chief executive while Shriver was working the Hill, doing other things. Is this correct?

A: Yes, that would be my recollection. Shriver was--of course, he also had some Peace Corps involvement, too. But in terms of the poverty program, I think he was involved in the legislative effort. He continued to be

involved in really trying to immerse himself in the best ideas that were available around the country to develop a poverty program. And also in terms of the best people to run it, because I think it was assumed, as I said, it was going to pass. He needed to have a Job Corps director and he needed to have a CAP director; there were a number of positions that he needed to fill. But I remember him spending a lot of time seeing people from around the country. For example, he met with the welfare director from either the state of Illinois or Cook County, I can't remember which. That kind of person he was meeting with to try to get their ideas as well as the ideas of the people that were more immediately involved, and the Ford Foundation, people who had been involved in funding the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency.

G: After Yarmolinsky was excluded from the program, who coordinated, who took his place?

A: I don't really remember.

G: Who would you go to?

A: By that time I think Vern Alden, for example, on the Job Corps had been brought in, although he was still president of Ohio University and he wasn't spending full time in Washington. But that would be who I would report to. And I think he had a deputy, a fellow named Pat [Patrick] Healy who functioned as his deputy. So I would report to them.

G: Do you think that the War on Poverty would have been different if Yarmolinsky had been allowed to stay?

A: I'm sure it would have been somewhat different, but I can't define in what sense. Adam was a strong person, and he would have had ideas. And Jack Conway I think is a strong person; I'm sure he had ideas. So I'm

sure that the program lost something with losing Adam and gained something with Jack, but they were probably different things and different emphases.

One of the things that disappointed me, really, about the program and about the CAP program particularly, was that I thought at least to some extent that there should be some greater federal involvement in developing experimental programs and saying to communities, "This is something we'd like to see if this works, and we'd be willing to fund it in your community if it's compatible with what you did." My perception was that CAP programs funded proposals from communities without a lot of--there was obviously a CAP staff that must have had some impact on the development of the proposals, but the proposals weren't all that different, at least in their overall impact, from community to community. My own particular emphasis at the time--interest then; still an interest--was to see a push for a jobs program. And it seemed to me that at least an approach to the elimination of poverty would be to try in a community to see what the impact was of eliminating, or coming awfully close to eliminating, unemployment.

With all the diversity in the country and all the money that was spent, as far as I'm aware there was never a community that basically used all their money or most of their money or something to develop, to try a jobs program, which always seemed to me the sine qua non of eliminating poverty. Because it both provided income to individuals but also a sense of dignity. All the other programs were more designed at providing services to people who were poor and needed family counseling or needed medical care or needed child care or needed better housing.

There were all the existing agencies that were service-oriented, and I felt that CAP tended too much to simply be an enlargement of their services to provide service to this group of poor rather than saying, they're poor because they don't have income and they don't have a sense of dignity and accomplishment, and if we could give them a job, then they could procure their own housing; they could procure their own child care services, they could procure their own medical services. I was disappointed that there wasn't a greater emphasis on that. I think there was an experiment in New Jersey with income maintenance which I never liked, because it provides the income but without the dignity of a job. But I don't think they ever experimented with a jobs program.

G: There was a proposal, I think, within the task force that a rather massive manpower project be funded by an added tax on cigarettes.

A: No, I don't recall that at all.

G: It was deemed politically unfeasible.

A: I saw that in your outline, but I don't recall--I mean, I don't know whether I was just unaware of that or whether that had been surfaced and eliminated by February 8. I have absolutely no recollection of that.

G: The Labor Department certainly seems to have favored much more emphasis on manpower and job training and that sort of thing, providing jobs. But those who took a different position seemed to stress that they simply didn't have that much money to spend on it.

A: That's why it would have had to be an experiment in a selected community. But as far as I know they didn't do that. The Department of Labor's emphasis, it seems to me was as you said, on training which is a little bit different than jobs. They had an ongoing MDTA [Manpower

Development and Training Act], what was then called the MDTA program. As a matter of fact, Johnson visited in that tour he took of I guess various--I guess he went to Appalachia; I think he went to Indianapolis, I can't remember where else he went. In I think it was Painter [Paintsville], Kentucky he visited a manpower training program.

G: I have some miscellaneous questions that I want to ask you about. With regard to the Job Corps, did you feel like the employment service would do an adequate job of recruiting? Was this an issue?

A: [From] my own experiences from the year at the Department of Labor and whatever else I had gathered, I was very unhappy in general with the employment service and would have doubted whether they could do an adequate job almost of anything. I did not think it was a--of course, there's no such thing as the employment service. That was one of the problems there. There are fifty states with some coordination and guidance from the federal government. I'm sure there are some services that probably were very good, and others which weren't. It would be pretty much a mixed bag. My own particular emphasis was on trying to get the programs going and trying to get the best urban programs designed and situated and finding the right sites and the right facilities. I think that may have been, again, a function that Lou Egan--it may have been under Lou. I don't really remember the discussion of that particular problem, but I'm sure it existed.

G: Why didn't Vernon Alden head the Job Corps?

A: You would probably have to ask him that. I think the reason he didn't head it on a permanent basis was that he was very involved and satisfied with his position at Ohio University. I think he had done a very good

job at Ohio University and was well respected. I think he wanted to stay. I think when Shriver first asked him, I think he said no.

Shriver is a fascinating person and a very charismatic person; if he has a shortcoming, though, I would say that he doesn't hear the word no. And when he wants something and wants somebody and they say no to him, he just doesn't hear it. And I think Vernon Alden said no to him; I'm quite sure of it. And he said, "I want you anyway. Will you give me two days a week, one day a week? You're the person I want." I think he hoped that he could co-opt him, get him excited enough about the thing that Alden would leave [Ohio], and I think Alden had too much to leave.

G: Was the fact that Alden only spent a couple of days a week with the Job Corps a problem in the slow development of the Job Corps?

A: No, I don't think so. I don't think that we were at any time waiting for direction. I think that what probably needed to be done at some point, and was sort of stimulated by the Litton telegram to the President, was somebody needed to say, "Okay, you've planned enough. So it isn't perfect. Go with the best that we can do now and improve it."

Tape 2 of 2, Side 1

G: With regard to the task force members, did they generally represent the views of their departments from whence they came, or did they work independently with their own views?

A: I can only draw from my own experience, and my sense is that they were dedicated people and trying to develop the best program they could, and that there was not a parochial representation of their department. I virtually never--I probably kept Sweeney somewhat informed, but I don't

remember reporting on a regular basis to the Department of Commerce; certainly I was not reporting what was happening day-to-day, and I was never instructed. Now, there was somebody else, I think it was Brimmer, but at sort of the assistant secretary level, who might have been carrying from Commerce--and of course Pat Moynihan was an assistant secretary of Labor. But Pat and Jim Sundquist I think--no, Jim was a deputy assistant secretary at Agriculture. I thought they were basically trying to put together the best program and not representing their departments in a narrow sense. It's difficult in the federal government, at least I think it was difficult to know what is the view of your department. That really means to some extent the view of the secretary because there isn't any board of directors for a department. I had no involvement with the Secretary of Commerce. I would be surprised if somebody like Eric Tolmach had any contact with the Secretary of Labor. Obviously Moynihan would have, but mostly I think we were representatives but we were doing what we thought we should do.

G: Was there a feeling on behalf of the Department of Commerce that the role of business leaders had been inadequately stressed in the War on Poverty?

A: I wasn't aware of any such feeling, but if it was communicated, if it would have been a feeling, I would have thought it would have been communicated through the assistant secretary and to that level from Shriver. Shriver actually had a very significant relationship with business, both because of his own background--he did consult with quite a few major business leaders in the course of developing the program. I think his own predilection would have been to try to use the resources

of the business community as much as could be, and of course the urban jobs program was really a principal--probably the principal way in which major corporate enterprise in America could participate in the job program. And that was a pretty significant role, and also the role I think that they very much welcomed because of this concern that defense contracting was going to be severely limited and that they should find another role. There were some people loaned from business to the program. John Rubel from Litton, it seems to me, spent a significant amount of time with the program. Incidentally, he's someone you ought to talk to.

G: Where is he?

A: I don't know, but I bet we could find him.

G: Do you recall any input in the task force from the Attorney General, Robert Kennedy?

A: I wouldn't know of any personal input. He was not present at any meeting that I was present at, and of course I would assume that he would have easy and direct access to Shriver. Dave Hackett and Dick Boone I would have thought were representing to a significant extent some of his interests. Steve Pollak? I mean there were a number of people from the Department of Justice involved in the drafting of the planning. And I would have thought that since Robert Kennedy had headed really the effort on the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency, and I regarded CAP as sort of an expanded version of that, that their views were really well represented.

G: Did you work with the drafting team at all?

(Interruption)

G: I asked you if you worked with the drafting committee at all.

A: Yes; I can't remember--it's funny what you can remember and can't remember. I can't remember precisely who had the laboring oar in drafting it, or if it was drafted a title at a time. I think Hal probably drafted the CAP program, or was largely responsible for its drafting. The preamble to the act we all had a little hand in. I have in the back of my mind at least that Chris Weeks had a significant role in drafting that sort of statement of purpose, but I'm not certain that's true. I had a significant role I think in Title VI, in the backup materials for Title VI. I don't really remember precisely how the whole thing was drafted or came together.

G: Let me ask you to describe how the task force functioned. Would you meet on a daily basis?

A: It was pretty loose at the beginning. I used to say jokingly that if I had gone home and not come back that way, I would have been okay, too, but I was enjoying it and I felt I was doing something useful. At the beginning it was reasonably loose. Adam, I guess, was primarily responsible for making assignments. As I said earlier, there were a number of tasks after February 8 that had to be performed. Putting the book together was the biggest one of those, and I think Chris and Anne Oppenheimer spearheaded that effort, but they were pulling together materials and relying on others of us to give them materials for backup for the various sections that we were most familiar with. There was a large or significant at least amount of my time, and I think Eric's, spent answering mail. We got a tremendous amount of mail and there was a desire to answer all of it.

I did some speaking; because of my peculiar arrangement of being on loan, really, from the University of Pittsburgh, I was one of the few people that had relatively easy access to travel money. Budgets were limited, and for people that were on loan from a department to travel, they had to spend travel money from the departments but were limited. But I spend grant money which was treated differently than the way that the government treated things. So it was relatively easy for me to travel. I did a fair amount of traveling and making speeches explaining the poverty program to people in various communities.

I saw a sheet in your thing that obviously was a memo somebody had prepared making assignments, and I don't even remember the assignment that was given to me, although it makes some sense that it would have been since it relates to the Department of Commerce. But I think things were done that way. I do remember memorandums being prepared, and that was focused through Yarmolinsky.

G: So perhaps you would meet and Yarmolinsky would divvy up the assignments, then you would go and draft the working papers and then come together again to discuss those papers?

A: It's funny, I remember the meeting on February 8 with Shriver because I remember my involvement started a week after the program began. I remember fairly much who the people were that were there and some of what was said. I don't remember too many other meetings like that where there was a large meeting. I don't remember--I really can't pinpoint any other meeting with Shriver nor can I really in my mind focus on any other large meeting with Yarmolinsky. There was a tremendous amount of activity and I know we worked long hours and we tended--you know, we

were eating together and we were housed initially in a very small amount of space at the Peace Corps Building. Then we moved over to the Court of Claims Building and we had a large amount of space.

People coordinated through daily contact with each other and lunch and dinner. We all sort of knew what we were doing and what we were supposed to do and what was supposed to be done, and we did it. But I can't remember exactly how assignments were given. I think it was pretty informal. When you've got work--Yarmolinsky expected what he called adequate staff work and if you gave him something that was half-baked or not fully developed or fully thought out, he let you know, usually. So the work that went in to him was as good as people could make it.

G: Did you have any fear that the Appalachian program was going to be swallowed up by the War on Poverty?

A: No.

G: That funds would be diverted?

A: No. John Sweeney, who really I think structured and sort of masterminded the Appalachian program, had worked on the Hill as a staff member of the Senate Labor Committee, and he had a very good sense of what the Hill wanted and would accept, what would be appealing to them. I know that probably from the day before he took the position with FDR, he had a pretty good idea of what kind of program for Appalachia would go through Congress and he had tremendous confidence that he was right, and he was. It was a very different program. The emphasis in the Appalachian program was on the--the single biggest item, I suspect, was building roads. So it had some elements that were capable of coming

with the poverty program, but the basic approach was on the roads and on a regional organization.

It was interesting. Initially there were some states that I guess were not interested in it and didn't believe that it would come to anything, or for whatever reason. And as soon as it became fully developed and they saw what the program was and maybe when they saw that it was going to pass, states became Appalachian which had been not Appalachian before. At the extremes, New York developed an Appalachian region and Alabama developed an Appalachian region and began sending representatives and participating. I didn't see really a conflict between the two programs. I saw them more as complementing each other.

G: Was there any input from Congress at the time the War on Poverty legislation was being prepared?

A: I know Shriver was talking to people and I'm reasonably sure some of the people he was talking to were senators and congressmen, obviously in order to. . . . He was probably doing most of that perhaps with the White House legislative staff, I'm not quite sure. But there were a number of legislative involvements that were important. First, finding the sponsor, which he did, and I think he regarded it as quite a coup to get [Phil M. ] Landrum in the House as a sponsor. Then working with the Congress or the committee chairman, in order to get it through, to get the concept of one committee. I don't know who specifically he worked with. Obviously he was successful, and I'm sure it shortened the time for the thing enormously.

G: Who from the White House worked with the task force, do you recall?

A: I don't remember anybody from the White House coming to any meetings or working sessions that I was involved in. From time to time, we would know that Shriver went to the White House and when he went, Moyers' name was one of the most frequently mentioned names. If you've got some names I could respond to them, but I don't specifically recall other names.

G: Myer Feldman? Was there any consideration given to the fact that there was a presidential election going on and the planning of the War on Poverty? Did you, for example, tend to focus on programs that might have an election year appeal if proposed?

A: I don't think so, not in that sense. As a matter of fact, as I said, I always thought that the CAP program was basically destructive of the Democratic interests. I mean Democratic with a capital D. It did not, although somebody could argue that this was a large amount of money and you could spend it in cities in a way which would favor, I suppose, an incumbency, because of the dedication of the people involved and the way the act itself was structured, that money couldn't be spent that quickly and it wasn't going to have a big impact immediately, a big visible impact. The way it was going to operate was going to basically cause friction between the President and the incumbent political organization in the city, and as I said, frequently that was Democratic. So it seemed to me very unproductive in terms of trying to influence in Washington.

I think that obviously [in] any governmental program you want to make it appear to be as effective as possible and you are doing the maximum. And I think Shriver's idea--I don't think he had in mind the

election when he designed the Job Corps and hoped that it would have an immediate impact. But I think what he had in mind was simply giving time for the CAP programs to develop, because if the CAP program was going to work at all, it was really the prospect of money, if you engaged in significant planning, that was going to make the CAP thing work. It wasn't going to work if they threw money in there, and I think that actually probably turned out to happen, that probably there were pressures to spend the money faster than the planning.

With the Job Corps you could perhaps start with a less than ideal design and develop and improve your educational materials, and improve your organization, and improve your structure, because you're dealing with something new when you were dealing with each Job Corps.

Once you started spending CAP money without getting the commitment from the various levels of government that were involved to work together, they'd go off on their own way, they'd [have] never come together [as] the CAP was antici~pating. And it wasn't just to make the streets department and the police department and the housing department in some city cooperate with each other, but you also still had state agencies and federal agencies. The goal of it was designed to focus the resources of all of those agencies on a particular community in a cooperative way.

G: It seems rather idealistic to [inaudible].

A: I didn't ever see any analysis of what the Committee on Juvenile Delinquency thought they had accomplished in the five initial cities. I suspect they may have accomplished rather more because they were dealing with grant money initially in a nonpublicized way, and they could sweat

out the time it took to make the various agencies come more together. But it's a real problem, because the structure of government we have now never comes together. And it comes together at the federal level only at what was then the Bureau of the Budget and now the Office of Management and something. The Department of Labor and the Department of Interior and HEW all had programs, and Agriculture, sort of in common or parallel, but they didn't have to focus together, and you've got state programs. It was idealistic, but it was based on work that had been done that had produced some significant results, I think at least in the planning stage by the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency.

G: In the book ***Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding***, Moynihan asserts that after the legislation was submitted to the Congress and moved into the phase of setting up the actual programs, that a different philosophy took control of community action and the whole Community Action Program was radicalized by people like Dick Boone and [Sanford] Kravitz, Fred Hayes, Eric Tolmach and Jack Conway. Would you agree with that?

A: That doesn't really--I'm not sure--I don't know what Pat means by radicalizing. First, I don't think I would consider most of those people radicals. And I'm not sure how you could radicalize community action, I mean the original concept of it. I don't know if I'd--radical probably is a loaded word but it was drastic or dramatic; I mean it was designed to shake up the existing power structure. I think the criticism of it probably is that it didn't do enough of that. I'm not saying that it should have done more or less in an ideal sense; I don't think it did as much as was originally intended. Now, whether that was good or bad, it may be that trying to--I don't think it was really designed

to work around the existing power structures. I don't think that would have worked and it wouldn't be effective. But it may have assaulted them too much to be effective. I think, from my own sort of limited involvement afterwards, that the poverty program as a whole didn't live up to its promise. Of course, because I probably would pick on different reasons for it not living up to the promise than Pat did.

G: What would you single out?

A: I think in the areas that I am most familiar with, I think that, as I said earlier, the CAP program should have at least in one or two areas made a major job program its principal focus, because to my way of thinking jobs are the sine qua non. It was interesting during the Depression when 25 per cent of the population was unemployed, or something [like that], we didn't have any trouble figuring out what kind of programs to do. We didn't enact programs which, by and large, provided social services to people; we didn't enact Medicare kind of programs or service kind of programs. We enacted jobs programs. We did the WPA [Works Progress Administration] and PWA [Public Works Administration] and the CCC, and we put people to work. I think that's still the right answer, and I think the Job Corps--I think the poverty program overlooked that answer and didn't focus at all on it, and therefore we lost. I think that's a tragic loss of opportunity, because the poverty program was one of the few programs which has existed which had relatively--which had a fairly large amount of money to which there were relatively few strings attached.

I think the Job Corps also missed its opportunity to be as beneficial as it could, because here we had probably the only large

amount of unrestricted funds for education in the country. I mean the large amounts that school systems spend are tied into very substantial state regulation of curriculum in some states and teacher certification and training in virtually every state. They tie into a conception of what a school should be; they only have the children for a limited number of hours, and they have increasing budgetary problems. The Job Corps could have defined its goal in such a way as to maximize, I think, the educational learning and the opportunity to learn whether and how we could make an impact with these kids, and develop programs which could then go into the community.

Perhaps this is true of any government program, but there was a little bit of a desire to make a program look effective to protect the program, and sometimes that was done at the expense of developing the best program or the most knowledge. For example, with regard to the Job Corps program, there was a belief in the people that were planning the educational program that if you take children from this group of kids who have dropped out and haven't been in school for a while, and if you test them, let's say on day one, you'll get a relatively low result. If you test them after they've been in the program for three weeks or four weeks, you get a rather dramatic increase, not because you've taught them so much but because you've put them back in an environment which is verbal and test-oriented and they'll redevelop what skills they have. Therefore there'll be a very substantial gain. This at least was the hypothesis of some of the people. And that then if you tested them again at four months or five months the increase would be relatively small compared to the jump that had taken place after a month.

So instead of testing this hypothesis or learning what this hypothesis would teach us, they simply didn't do the testing at the three-week, four-week interval. We tested the kids I think as they came in; we tested them at six months or something, and said, "You know, this is fabulous progress. The program is working." But we don't know how much of that was due to the program working and how much of it was due to just re-entering an academic environment. That's just a small example, because the program wasn't sold to the Congress as an experimental program of let's find everything out we can and keep it small and manageable, but was sold as we're going to educate people. They wanted to protect the program to have statistics which showed a guy came in at a sixth grade and he went out at an eighth grade in six months, reading level, that kind of thing.

I may have been the only person that ever understood what the potential of Title VI was, or at least what I thought the potential of Title VI was. As I mentioned earlier, I thought Title VI, properly used, could have brought states into AFDC view and could have caused them to initiate work training programs that would have been very significant. Again, it was relatively unrestricted money that was designed to be able to [be] give[n] to states or communities to be used with their existing welfare programs. As far as I could tell, that wasn't done at all either. The money was used for demonstration kinds of things, but not something that would move a whole state into a community work and training program. Which again, focusing on the jobs aspect was what I thought the program should have done.

G: Congress also, I think, as part of Title VI added a disclaimer requiring that any person who received federal funds had to sign some sort of--it wasn't exactly a loyalty oath, was it? But it was some sort of--

A: I saw that in your materials; I do not recall that. But obviously if it happened, it happened. I don't remember any discussion of that and I don't think that would have had a substantial negative impact. I think the problem from my perspective was that the program was essentially delegated to HEW to run and they didn't have the same concept; they had a different concept of what ought to be done. So it was run differently.

G: Was OEO responsible for overseeing the administration by HEW on this? Did they fail to do that, or--?

A: I don't really know, because remember I left in February of 1965, which was just after we got our funding. In fact, I was a federal employee again for a very short period of time, if I remember correctly. I don't know how much oversight OEO exercised. It obviously would have been tricky to oversee the existing agencies, which had their own administrative structure up to the secretary of HEW or Labor, who wouldn't be immediately responsive to what Shriver said just because Shriver said it. If Shriver and a cabinet officer disagreed on something, the only way that I know that that could be resolved would be to take it to the President. And obviously you were reluctant to do that very often, if at all.

Shortly after the poverty program was enacted, Vietnam began to occupy more and more of the President's attention, it seems to me, and so I would have thought it would have been harder to get that kind of

problem resolved. But I don't know how often that kind of problem came up.

But I don't think--it's been a long time since I've read the act. I'm not sure that OEO had any direct role once those titles were funded and the various departments were going to run them. And I wasn't at OEO, really, when it was fully structured and operational to know whether there was--I mean I know there was a CAP because I knew the CAP people and met with them. And I know there was a Job Corps but beyond that--and there was a legal services component.

G: Well, it ran VISTA [Volunteers in Service to America], too, of course.

A: Yes. It probably had its hands full running the programs that it was directly responsible for and staffing them; with regard to VISTA and with regard to CAP and with regard to the Job Corps, you're talking about new programs that you're sort of starting from scratch.

G: Apparently during the legislative phase about thirty-five million dollars was shifted from the Appalachian bill to OEO. Do you recall this and did this create a problem?

A: No, I don't recall it and I certainly don't recall it creating a problem. As I said sort of at the outset, the basic funding for all the OEO programs, except I guess CAP, came from legislative proposals that were in the hopper where they could move the money so that they wouldn't increase the budget. Because Johnson was also very concerned about the budget and it seems to me that he was concerned about going over a hundred billion dollars. It's hard to believe that we have come from here to there, but he was determined to submit a budget under a hundred billion dollars. He wanted this program to be a billion-dollar program,

so the only way that that could happen was that money come from other programs and other agencies. I don't remember that being a problem.

G: Did you feel at the time OEO had enough money to spend?

A: When you say at the time, you know, the--

G: I'm not talking about the operating funds for the task force. I'm talking about the amount that was authorized.

A: I would have to give a qualified yes to that in the sense that if OEO's mission had been properly defined and properly performed, it would actually have been advantageous for OEO to have relatively little money at the beginning, because particularly the CAP program could only suffer, in my opinion, by having a lot of money at the beginning. What it had to have in order to work is relatively little money at the beginning and the promise of fairly significant money two or three years down the road, so that a community would be willing to turn itself inside out now in order to develop a program which would come later. That process wouldn't work if there was a lot of money now, because the only way you can spend a lot of money now is through the existing agencies and existing programs and just expand what you're doing. One of the ways--I thought it was sort of like a person with measles and if you just expanded each bump and each program just did more, the person still has measles; you haven't cured the person.

So I think that it should have had relatively little money with the promise of more, and it probably worked out a little bit, with Vietnam, to be the opposite. CAP probably had more money at the beginning than it needed and probably didn't get the money in the later years that it needed in order to cause communities to really be willing

to make fundamental changes. I guess I think that VISTA seems to me to have operated reasonably well. Obviously the more money, the larger the program that you could operate. But at least at the beginning it seems to have been able to launch a meaningful program.

I think the Job Corps was able to launch something meaningful, as I said. I would have preferred really a different emphasis. I would have liked to have seen more of the rural camps and focused more on work, and probably made those camps--tried to make the expenditure per person less, and fewer urban centers and made the expenditure per person more.

G: I guess part of the philosophy or question of philosophy was whether you were going to provide serious technical training or give the youths a healthy, good time in the country.

A: [In] the CCC experience, I suppose the people had a healthy, good time in the country, but the amount of good they did in this nation is phenomenal. You can still visit quite a few CCC projects. There's a mission north of here in California that the CCC rebuilt, or built. It's phenomenal. I'm sure when the people that were involved in that project come back and visit it, it's got to have changed their lives. There are trails in the forest and a lot of improvements and furniture and park equipment that the CCC built, so I think the nation got more than its money's worth and would have again.

At that age in people's life, doing something meaningful and feeling good about themselves, I think is--it may not be more important than education, but I think it has to exist before education's going to work. I don't think you can educate somebody who's not motivated and

doesn't feel good about himself and is basically negative about everything. I mean you can put it on the blackboard; I don't think it's going to go into the brain. But I think if he feels he's accomplishing something and begins to see a potential in himself, then the education becomes much more likely. One of the ideas that Shriver played with but I don't think he ever did--this would be one of the direct Peace Corps-poverty program kind of situations--was that he played with or considered some way to use the concepts of Outward Bound in the poverty program. There had been Peace Corps training I think done by Outward Bound, certainly using Outward Bound kind of principles. That made a tremendous amount of sense to me. I would have liked to have seen that done to see whether that kind of physical outdoors motive, experience aimed at motivation, wouldn't have provided a basis then for greater achievement by the kids in whatever they chose to do, whether it was education or work.

End of Tape 2 of 2 and Interview I

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