INTERVIEW III

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INTERVIEWER: Michael L. Gillette

PLACE: Mr. Baker's office, Olney, Maryland

Tape 1 of 2

G: Let's start with 1951. The first thing I want to ask deals with LBJ's election as whip. Do you have any recollection of how he got to be whip?

B: My recollection is that Senator [Ernest] McFarland had, I believe, been secretary to the Democratic conference, because he was a westerner. My recollection is that Senator Lucas was majority leader and the Democratic whip was Senator Francis Myers from Pennsylvania. So you had Scott Lucas, who was a moderate Democrat that Senator [Everett] Dirksen had defeated in November of 1950, and Senator Myers had been defeated, which was unexpected. We knew that Senator Lucas had a tough race because Dirksen had tremendous popular support, newspaper support, and Illinois was a state that could go either way, but Senator Myers' defeat was a big shock.

Senator [Richard] Russell at this particular time had more votes in the Senate than anybody, and he therefore had committed his group of southerners and moderate westerners to McFarland. Now, Senator McFarland was not a strong leader. He in many ways was envious and jealous of Lyndon Johnson. He did not want Lyndon Johnson to be his assistant. Now very few people know this. And the reason was that he, being a former schoolteacher, knew that Lyndon Johnson was the ablest man in our crew to be there, and two, because of his intellectual superiority plus

his political superiority, that Lyndon Johnson would overshadow McFarland, because Johnson got a lot of attention from the media. So it was McFarland's position that it was bad politics for a man from Arizona to be the leader and for a man from Texas to be his assistant, because it would give a bad geographical balance. You'll have to check through the notes to see how we--we picked some liberal, some real extreme liberal, to be the secretary of the conference. I've forgotten, but it was someone who belonged to the ADA liberal wing of the party. So you had McFarland as Lucas' successor and Johnson as the whip. Then I've forgotten who the secretary of the conference was.

Johnson was smart enough to know McFarland's weaknesses. But he also knew what his limitations were, inclined to be overbearing, which he could be. So he worked at trying to make McFarland look as good as he could. McFarland was petrified that his opponent was going to be Barry Goldwater. So during this period from January 3, 1951 until November of 1952 when McFarland was defeated, everything McFarland did, he was thinking how he could stay in the Senate. As a consequence of his having to worry about his campaign and so forth, Johnson had a lot of time to be working with his colleagues there and listening to their problems. Plus McFarland was not a real strong leader. So Johnson was a man that developed a lot of lasting friendships being the deputy leader.

G: Is this how he made McFarland look good, by sort of spending a lot of time with the other senators and taking care of their needs?

B: Yes. Yes. One, he tried to relieve McFarland where McFarland could worry about his re-election. Two, Johnson was very, very good about

being on the Senate floor. When the Senate was in session, he made it his business to be there. Most senators, they hate being there to listen to people like Wayne Morse and people making those long-winded speeches. But Johnson would always be there. He would have lunch with people like Senator [Walter] George or Senator Russell, and he knew how to massage and take care of those people who had positions of responsibility and leadership. He worked at it, he was a genius.

G: There was some indication on LBJ being named the whip that possibly Senator [Robert] Kerr also wanted to be whip, and that Johnson and Kerr went into McFarland's office and when they came out Johnson was whip. Have you ever heard that or does that sound apocryphal to you?

B: I don't think that that is accurate. The reason that I say that sort of unequivocally is that in all the relationships I had with Kerr, never once did he ever say anything other than he thought Lyndon Johnson was the ablest man in the Democratic Party. Now, Senator Kerr at this time wanted to be president, so I don't think that being the Democratic whip would have any appeal. Senator Kerr had tremendous ego, you know. He was a candidate for the presidency in 1952. As you know, Senator Russell was a candidate. So I don't think there's any truth to that statement. I think that Bob Kerr was Lyndon Johnson's biggest booster for this position. I think he wanted Lyndon Johnson to support him for the presidency, which he would have done, but Johnson was totally committed to Richard Russell in 1952, which was a safe position for him to take.

G: Sure. Did Johnson's elevation to the whip position increase his contact with you?

B: Sure, and the reason [is that] once he became the deputy leader, my position--Senator McFarland was my boss. Number two, since McFarland was gone a great deal I therefore had to be with Senator Johnson on a day-to-day basis. I think this helped cement and develop the close professional and personal relationship that we developed through the years. So it was sort of a schooling for the two of us, because we were thrown there together. So I had to converse with him, go over what we were doing and so forth.

G: Would you say that it was that year, 1951, that you and LBJ sort of developed an alliance?

B: Yes. I think because of his position, being the deputy leader, and my position being on the Senate floor, that we were with each other every day that the Senate was in session. Now, like when he was working on committees, I'd have nothing to do with him. But he was very meticulous to be on the Senate floor from the time we opened till the time we closed.

G: How important was the Senate Parliamentarian in helping LBJ master the intricacies of the Senate?

B: I think that Johnson was a much more able man than Mr. Watkins; Charles Watkins was the parliamentarian. I know that Johnson would propose alternatives. Watkins, he would only make his judgment based upon the precedents of the Senate. Johnson would get exasperated with Mr. Watkins and his inability to just say this is the way to do what he was looking for. He was a very able, sweet man, but he hated to make a firm decision or to show you how to accomplish what Johnson would be trying to do. Johnson was smarter than Charlie Watkins, without any question.

So I think he probably set more parliamentary precedents because he would check with others and he would be there making tabling motions. Like Watkins would want particular bills referred to a committee and Johnson would want it to go to another committee, so Johnson would find some way to overrule the Parliamentarian. I don't think Mr. Watkins liked Johnson because of this. But Johnson was a brilliant parliamentarian, because he worked at it.

G: I think he himself was quoted as saying that he thought Russell was the best parliamentarian in the Senate.

B: That was true when it came specifically to civil rights legislation. Russell, as you know, was a bachelor. He loved the Senate and he spent more time with the Senate's precedents and its rules than anyone. But if you'll look at the end product, it was Lyndon Johnson's genius with the parliamentary rules that caused the Senate to pass the first civil rights bill. It was Johnson keeping the Senate in session day after day, twenty-four hours a day, and keeping his troops there to answer the quorum call. He finally wore General Russell's troops down, and it was his parliamentary brilliance that caused the passage of the first civil rights bill. So when it got down to intellectual brilliance, Lyndon Johnson was an abler fellow than was Senator Russell.

I want to say this, which I've said before, that [had Russell], as an attorney and as a man who believes in law and order--and contrary to what Senator Russell preached, he was a law and order man--had Senator Russell, knowing the Constitution and the three branches of our government, in 1954 stated to the world that the Supreme Court's decision in ***Brown*** v. ***Board of Education*** was contrary to the practices of the

southern people, nevertheless it was the law of the land and he was going to support the law of the land, and he was going to urge the rest of the country to sort of grant a little liberalism in permitting maybe the integration of the schools from the kindergarten, the young people who had not been trained under the customs of the South, to give the South a chance to live with the new decision of the Supreme Court, I think Senator Russell would have been drafted for the presidency and would have been president. But I think that was the biggest political blunder in my lifetime, because it was completely contrary to what he said he believed in. And all this stuff about massive resistance and secession, that quite a few people were preaching, was bullshit.

So when you look a hundred years from now at how people look back at this period we're talking about, they will remember Lyndon Johnson for being a doer, and there will be very little about Senator Russell, because Senator Russell was advocating something he really didn't believe in.

G: Okay. Let me ask you about the Senate Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee. This was one that LBJ chaired at that time.

B: I am not going to be a great amount of help to you, because once you lead me from the Senate floor and go to the committees, all I know is what you read in the newspapers and so forth. So I'm not going to really be a tremendous help to you.

(Interruption)

G: Okay. We were going to get into the Preparedness Committee. He was chairman of that subcommittee.

B: Very few people know how hard he worked at getting named chairman of the Preparedness Committee, because he remembered very well that during World War II Harry Truman had been selected as Roosevelt's running mate because of the reputation he made from the old War Preparedness Committee that Truman was the chairman of. I think the significant thing was that every report out of Truman's committee was unanimous by both Democrats and Republicans, and the same was true of Johnson's committee. I don't think there was ever one dissent in any report that came out of the Preparedness Committee.

G: Which is interesting when you consider that Wayne Morse was a member of the subcommittee, wasn't he? I think he was. He was a Republican [member].

B: But Senator Russell really did not want to give up that committee to Johnson. There was a lot of maneuvering, but it shows you the genius of Lyndon Johnson in all the attention that he and Mrs. Johnson paid to Senator Russell. He was a lonely bachelor living at the Mayflower, no place to go on Sunday night. Washington is a boring town--it used to be--on Sunday night. But Lyndon Johnson knew that Senator Russell liked to go some place and have dinner and be treated like family, and that's the way Mrs. Johnson and the Johnson children and Lyndon Johnson treated him. I think the children called him Uncle Dick or something like that. From the time Lyndon Johnson was elected senator from Texas, he made his number-one project to pay attention to the most influential United States senator, and that was Richard Brevard Russell. So when you really got down to the point to have the Preparedness Committee named as a subcommittee of Armed Services, Russell wanted it himself but he had

had so much attention from the Johnsons, he had such good manners, he could not say no. He wanted to say no, and he agonized.

G: Did he?

B: Yes.

G: Were you privy to any of this?

B: Oh, yes, some of it. See, my mother and father were from Georgia. Senator Russell liked me. He thought Senator Johnson sometimes was pushy and ambitious. He wouldn't tell that to Johnson, but he'd tell it to me. He thought Senator Johnson would crowd him and he would hide from Senator Johnson, wouldn't answer the phone. Senator Russell did not have very able staff; he had a fellow named Leeman Anderson as his administrative assistant. I thought he was sort of like a whiskey head, he was nervous and shaky. Senator Johnson, he'd just walk in the office, and Leeman Anderson had been advised by Senator Russell he didn't want to see anybody. Senator Russell was very bookish; he read at least four books per week. Not being married and having any children, he could just advise his staff, "I don't want to see anybody." But Johnson, he tried to get as close to Senator Russell's office as he could. He didn't have no in his vocabulary, he just walked right into the damn office. So what could poor old Leeman do? Only thing he can do is go take another martini. (Laughter) As Russell used to claim, "That goddamned Johnson! The son of a bitch, you can't say no to him!" And it's true, I'm the same way with him. When he wanted something he was hard to say no to.

G: Yes. Well, do you recall any conversations of, say, Russell discussing with you Johnson pushing to be named chairman of this subcommittee?

B: Oh, Russell, he wanted that chairmanship himself. But he also had the problem of being the leader of the southerners. And also, Russell never had a lot of respect for Harry Truman. At this particular time there was tremendous talk of a third party; a lot of southerners were becoming Republicans. So Russell, he also wanted to be president and he thought, of the people he knew, Truman and [Robert] Taft and Eisenhower and all these people, that he was by far the ablest one of all of them, and he was a very able fellow. But he missed the boat when he failed to comply with the rule of the land.

G: So he had on that committee, I guess, [Estes] Kefauver, Lester Hunt, and John Stennis from the Democrats. And then from the Republicans, Styles Bridges and [Leverett] Saltonstall and Wayne Morse. Did he pick the members himself or were they picked by the committee as a whole?

B: Well, I thought Senator Bridges was on the original [committee].

G: Maybe so.

B: My recollection is that when the Preparedness Committee was first started that Senator Bridges was the ranking minority member on there. At one time Senator Saltonstall was a member, and he was a very decent fellow. Morse really didn't know too much about Armed Services and so forth; he was in another world, labor law, things like that. The Labor Committee was his first love. Being a Republican, he liked Johnson, the attention Johnson gave him. But Lester Hunt was one of the really great members of the Senate.

G: How so?

B: Well, because he was a decent man, a good man. He had been a dentist. He had a son that had been caught in a homosexual affair out in Chicago

and the ***Chicago Tribune*** learned about it. So they got hold of Senator Bridges, Senator [Herman] Welker, and Senator [William] Jenner, and said, "Now, we've got this story. Why don't you guys get together with Senator Hunt and tell him that we will kill the story if he will announce that he will not be a candidate for re-election?" Senator Hunt was one of the most popular men that had ever been elected to the Senate from Wyoming, because of his basic decency. And the Republicans wanted to take control of the Senate badly, and this is one seat that if Hunt was a candidate for re-election they couldn't take. So being a patriot, Senator Hunt told them to go to hell, but it bothered him that his son had been caught, so I believe he committed suicide either in his office or the Armed Services Committee.

But he was really a decent man. He was good for the country and he was good for that committee. I would say that had he lived that he probably could have been a great force for Johnson in his bid for the presidency. In 1960, as you will recall, Governor [John Joseph] Hickey was a Johnson delegate but chairman of the Wyoming delegation. But on the first ballot in Los Angeles in 1960, it was Wyoming, when they cast all their votes, that put President Kennedy in as the nominee. But Lester Hunt was very influential in the West then. He was good on that committee.

G: Kefauver was on that, too.

B: Yes.

G: Did he also have presidential ambitions?

B: Yes, yes. Estes was very, very ambitious. But Kefauver was drunk most of the time. I don't know whether you knew this or not. He was a

terrible whiskey head, and a woman chaser second to none. But he was a likeable fellow. He had a great capacity to get his name in the newspaper. Everything he did was [because] he wanted to be president, and he didn't give a damn about being senator on that committee other than the publicity. Johnson basically had his proxy on everything, so you knew that you had him in your pocket. You could do anything you wanted to.

G: Well, what did Johnson get out of the Preparedness Subcommittee? How did it help him?

B: Well, the fact that the Preparedness Committee had all of these unanimous reports, with some very solid recommendations, [like] get a dollar's value for a dollar spent, and calling attention to our basic weakness in the military field. The national press and the world press paid attention to him because he was by far the most outstanding man in the Senate. And I think that if you'll go back and read the attention given to that committee by the national media--it really was before television was a significant factor, but the print media paid attention--instead of being a senator from Texas, he became a senator for the whole country and became a respected man all over the world. Like when world leaders would come that had read about this man and what he was doing, when the different leaders from around the world would come here, they would ask for private audiences with him, which was very unusual because the various embassies and so forth are always reporting back to their governments who the most powerful people in Washington were. I think by Johnson's leadership on the Preparedness Committee he became one of the ten most powerful men in America.

G: Did he ever step on the toes of other senators by his investigations, say of Keesler [Air Base Force] in Mississippi or that Claremont Terminal in New Jersey, I guess it was?

B: I'm not competent to answer that. I don't know. I'm sure that if Senator Stennis was on his subcommittee that he did nothing without his approval. The New Jersey thing I have no recollection of. But there was a very fine working relationship with Senator Stennis and he was well respected and turned out to be a tremendous ally of Lyndon Johnson. He had more to do with the ultimate censure of Joe McCarthy because of his just basic decency.

G: Are there any of the investigations of the Preparedness Committee that you remember as being particularly significant or being things that really involved him more than the others, the Moroccan air base or the tin smelter in Texas City?

B: He got a lot of attention in like ***Time*** and ***Newsweek*** and ***U.S. News & World Report*** on his investigations. Everybody that was opposed to waste in the military--the military's always unpopular after a war and [we had] gone through the MacArthur era and so forth. It made good copy. I was reading some of the notes you gave me about the lieutenant colonel's wife talking about how Johnson had abused her about changing the plans. I don't know, this is the first I've ever seen of it, but it makes good copy, where a colonel's wife wants the quarters changed and it costs the taxpayers beaucoup dollars. I'm more inclined to believe her side after reading your notes than I would be from what the newspapers would print, because it's awfully easy to make charges from Washington when you're not on the scene.

G: Did the Preparedness Committee help him in his relations with other senators at all?

B: No doubt about it. Because in the Preparedness Committee you were sort of wrapped in the American flag. You were trying to make your country better, it was a prestigious committee to be on, you were getting your name in the paper in being a member of this committee trying to do better for America. So it helped him tremendously on the Republican side. He worked at being a friend of Senator Taft. I don't know whether you know this or not.

G: No.

B: He worked for that. The one way that he was helped in his friendship with Taft was [by] his relationship with Senator Russell, and his position of being opposed to the repeal of Taft-Hartley, that helped him with Taft. But Taft was not a personable fellow; he was not a fellow like you could invite over to your house to dinner. He sort of separated himself. I think that's one of the reasons that he never was the Republican nominee for the presidency, he was aloof.

G: But was Bridges his principal link with the Republican Party then?

B: Yes. Yes. He and Bridges respected, liked, and if it's possible for two men to love each other, they did. They really liked [each other]. Bridges used to talk to me, he said, "You know, you can't dislike Johnson. He makes you like him." And I think that's true, because Bridges and Johnson in their own way were trying to do what they thought was best for the country, and in many ways they had the same type of constituencies. Bridges, he tried to be the number-one conservative in the country. He was well known for handing out cash money all over the

country to those people he thought would vote with him. He was a big power.

G: Well, the Preparedness Subcommittee I guess had an office or offices in one of the SEC buildings a couple of blocks from the Senate Office Building, is that right? Do you remember?

B: At the bottom of the Hill there used to be a temporary building built during World War II for the SEC to have space. The SEC wasn't very high on the government list of more popular agencies, and I think that Johnson requested space from GSA and since they controlled the appropriations they got practically what they wanted. So a lot of the people, I believe Donald Cook and people like that, would work out of there. But you're talking about two city blocks away from the Capitol because we, back then, had limited space. Every senator was looking for more space; every committee was looking for more space.

G: How much time did he spend with the subcommittee, do you have any idea?

B: A tremendous amount of time.

G: Did he really?

B: Yes. As you know, he was a workaholic. When he had hearings scheduled he was the best prepared member of the committee. While Johnson was not a lawyer, he would have been a great lawyer because he knew basically what answers to the questions were going to be propounded before they ever answered. I don't know of anybody that had a better staff in the Senate while I was there than Johnson had, both in his senatorial office and on his committee staff. He was a perfectionist. He broke up a lot of happy homes with his demands on your time. Sunday was not a holiday in his vocabulary.

G: Let's talk about--

(Interruption)

It was in 1951 that Douglas MacArthur was fired and came back and made his farewell speech before the joint session of Congress.

B: Probably there's two great speeches that I ever heard in Congress: Winston Churchill and MacArthur tied for the two best speeches that I ever heard in my life. Even as pro-Truman as I was, pro-Democratic as I was, I want to tell you, as a youngster, when MacArthur made that speech that "old soldiers never die, they just fade away," I tell you, tears came down my [face]. That's the impact he had. Had you taken a vote at that moment when he finished his speech, there would not have been ten dissenting votes in the whole Congress about MacArthur's position.

But I have never understood, as close as I was to Senator Kerr, what was his motivation for taking on MacArthur. There's only one thing that may be the reason: Truman had promised Clark Clifford that he would sign the natural gas bill. This may be the reason that Kerr took on this unpopular battle, for Truman, because Kerr wanted that natural gas bill more than anybody in the world, because he understood the economic significance of it. So that's the only reason that I can fathom as to why Bob Kerr took on MacArthur. Because [in] Oklahoma and Texas, the easy thing to do would be anti-Truman and be pro-MacArthur. I don't know, books have been written about Kerr. I haven't read them. It's going to be interesting to see if anybody brings that up, but I'm about convinced that that's the reason.

G: What was Johnson's reaction to the speech, do you recall?

B: No, I don't recall his specific reaction to it, but of all the jobs that Lyndon Johnson accomplished as a Democratic senator and as chairman of the Preparedness Committee, he was a genius in the way he conducted the MacArthur hearings. He defused a very, very divisive issue. Being an egomaniac himself, he knew how to take care of MacArthur's ego. He killed him with kindness, and the more MacArthur talked, the worse he looked. But it took a long period of time with a tremendous amount of information, and so Johnson just killed him [with kindness]. He gave him--you can't write this up, but Lister Hill had a favorite word that when you gave somebody honey he called it a honey fucking, and Lyndon Johnson gave Douglas MacArthur the biggest honey fucking I have ever seen in my life. I mean, it was brilliant! But it took a man who had an ego like Lyndon Johnson to know what to do to MacArthur. He just [said], "Yes, General. Yes, General." But in the meantime he would ask questions that MacArthur didn't have good answers for. So MacArthur ultimately hung himself because the only thing MacArthur wanted to be was be president. He was responsible for his own downfall. Truman did what anybody had to do, but it wasn't very popular.

G: Did Russell also take a similar position, do you recall?

B: I think that initially, when the hearings first started, that Senator Russell was very anti-Truman and very pro-MacArthur. But the more that they had MacArthur there, there were such glaring weaknesses and errors on his part that he destroyed himself. You know, after the MacArthur hearings he faded away.

G: The hearings I guess were supposed to be joint hearings with the Armed Services and Foreign Relations [Committees], but Russell seemed to chair the hearings, or at least a lot of them.

B: Yes. My recollection is that since it was basically an Armed Services issue, that Russell was I believe almost unanimously selected to chair the thing. That was the reason for that.

G: Yes, that makes sense. Johnson's mail seemed to have run very heavily in favor of MacArthur.

B: There's no doubt about it. If you read the Texas papers, Truman was very unpopular in Texas because of Taft-Hartley, tidelands, depletion. So Truman would have been lucky to get 20 per cent of the vote in Texas.

G: Did Johnson feel like he had to be very cautious with this Texas public opinion?

B: Sure. This was his genius. Johnson had had such narrow victories. The first time he ran for the Senate he was defeated, and then in his contest with Coke Stevenson he just [won by] 78 votes, or 87.

G: Tight.

B: Like the first time I met him, he just said, "I ran on a ticket totally opposed to repeal of Taft-Hartley and I ran on a pro-tidelands [ticket], and I'm not going to change. Don't talk to me." You know, the national Democratic Party was just the opposite. Truman thought that tidelands was a big rape of the rest of the American people. There's no way you could make Truman popular in Texas, so Johnson had to be very, very careful. How he survived--well, he's lucky he got elected for a six-year term. Had Johnson been a candidate for re-election in 1952 he would have been defeated, because of the Korean War's unpopularity and

Truman's unpopularity. He was lucky he got elected with Truman in 1948, but he was lucky that he had to run in 1954 instead of 1952.

G: Or perhaps even 1956, that might have been [difficult], with civil rights heating up--

B: Yes. He was lucky.

G: The tidelands bill was passed by the Senate that year and Truman vetoed it.

B: Yes. It had to be passed by the House and the Senate. So Truman vetoed it, correct.

G: Do you recall, first of all, any of the maneuvering in the Senate to get the bill passed by them?

B: Oh, yes. It was a very emotional issue, especially with the liberal Democrats. The oil and gas people had never trusted Johnson. He and Rayburn had done more for them than anybody in the country, because they had to protect their flank back in Texas. The 27.5 per cent depletion, Rayburn and Johnson, by their selection of people to be on the committees, nobody ever touched depletion as long as Lyndon Johnson and Sam Rayburn were in the Congress. I mean, this was their genius of knowing what they had to do to protect these idiots from themselves. But they were never given the credit. When Truman vetoed the tidelands bill, it hurt them.

Now, Truman had promised Clark Clifford and Kerr that he was going to sign the natural gas bill. The fact that Truman lied--there is no doubt in my mind that Harry Truman made the commitment to sign the natural gas bill, which would have in effect negated the Supreme Court's decision which said that the federal government had control over the

prices of natural gas. As I look back, probably that was the biggest political blunder of Harry Truman's presidency because I think [it contributed to] all of these shortages, high prices and so forth. I thought at the time that Truman did the right thing, but I want to tell you, I think that what happened with OPEC, everything, had we really had free enterprise out there working in the market place, our country would have been better off. So all that hate that Truman got, and the people that got defeated, Scott Lucas and Myers, I mean it shows you the funny things about history. But had Lucas and Myers not been defeated, then you and I wouldn't be here talking about Lyndon Johnson. These things happen.

G: On the tidelands, I guess each state had a little bit different interest because the tidelands and the territorial histories of each state were a little bit different. Texas had--

B: Well, Texas and Florida, Louisiana. Any of those states that had frontage on the water, it was to their benefit to be for tidelands.

G: Did they try to make deals with, say, the West or any other--?

B: Any state that had coal or natural gas or oil, Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia. My recollection is pretty generally any place that you had natural resources like coal and oil, they supported the tidelands because they didn't want the federal government coming in and taking what they had. So you had a strange coalition that developed. But the country, I'm talking about a majority of the Congress, supported tidelands and the natural gas bill.

G: Did Russell Long carry the ball on the tidelands or was there one designated--of course I guess Price Daniel was relatively active in it later on.

B: Well, you know, it's like comparing chicken salad and chicken shit between Russell Long and Price Daniel. Price Daniel got a lot of attention in the Texas papers, but when it came to being an effective legislator, a man who knew how to get things done in Washington, he was nothing. You could go out on a street and ask somebody, "What do you think about Price Daniel?" they don't know who the hell you're talking about. Russell Long was a doer. He and Lyndon Johnson, they knew how to trade. They had a background of being politicians and trading and being sought after by people all over the world. But Price Daniel was out of his element. He was a very innocuous senator.

G: Was anything done to try to prevent Truman from vetoing that tidelands bill, do you know?

B: Well, I am sure that Rayburn and Johnson, the people from those states that were most affected, like Russell Long and so forth, would talk to Truman. And Clark Clifford, who had represented the railroads and so forth, knew the economic consequences, and I think that he tried to get Truman to be part of it. But Truman had been captured by the liberal wing of the Democratic Party. He made it his big issue; he was opposed to the greedy oil men and so forth. I mean, you didn't get a fair hearing with him on it.

G: That summer a number of things happened. Walter Jenkins resigned and ran for Congress.

B: He ran for Congress and Frank Ikard defeated him. We all were hoping that Walter was going to win. None of us knew who Frank Ikard was. Then to show you the way that Rayburn and Johnson worked, old man Rayburn really liked Walter Jenkins, and Johnson was sort of upset that Walter quit him to go home and run, he really didn't like that. Johnson never wanted anybody to resign. But a significant thing, to show you the genius of old man Rayburn and Johnson, was Frank Ikard, what committee did he wind up on? Ways and Means. What committee has jurisdiction over depletion? Ways and Means. Old man Rayburn told me one day, he said, "Bobby, those goddamn fool oil people have got no brains! Now I get a man that's got some influence, that's respected on the Ways and Means Committee, and what do the bastards do? They come up here and they bribe him, they give him seventy-five thousand dollars to go work for them. You know, it's stupid!" And they were, absolutely. He was a disaster at that. He went to work for Independent Oil Producers or something.

G: American Petroleum Institute.

B: Petroleum Institute. And they couldn't wait to get rid of him, because he didn't have any influence. And when he was on that Ways and Means Committee and being Mr. Rayburn's boy and Johnson's boy, he had tremendous influence. Anybody had a tax problem, he could trade with them. But, boy, once he got down there at the Petroleum Institute, he didn't have anything to trade. Now he does good in the society columns, but when it comes to being an influential man, Frank Ikard is not.

G: Did Johnson have any trouble getting Jenkins back after the election?

B: I don't think so. One, Walter had a big family. I believe the first job he ever got sort of when he got out of school was going to work for Johnson, I believe as a stenographer or something. Johnson always made everybody a part of his family, and you were a real traitor when you got a better job. He'd just say it was like an errant son or a daughter that has not done what--he was very, very chagrined and disillusioned that Walter was going to run. Plus Johnson was a coward in many ways. He didn't want to have to have his administrative assistant run for office, he'd have friends on both sides. So he said, you know, "I can't do anything but lose in the situation," but it worked out that Frank knew that he had to have their support to be something, and he got their support. You know, he was really lucky that Frank Ikard won, because Frank became his friend and he got Walter back, who was probably the most unappreciated man that I've ever known. I thought he was one of the ablest people that ever came to this town.

G: How was he able?

B: Because he got the job [done]; he took care of that day-to-day Texas stuff that somebody had to do. He was such a. . . . He had no ego, he would be there first man in the morning and he was always available. If somebody had to work on Sunday, he was there. You felt it an honor if Walter asked you to do something. Mildred Stegall, those people--her husband died. I mean, these people were the biggest bunch of workaholics I've ever seen. Now, John Connally and Warren Woodward, people like that, they finally said, "I don't need this. I have a wife and I have a life of my own," so they went on to bigger and better things. But Walter was really a slave, the best one I've ever known.

G: Did you get along well with him?

B: Yes, absolutely. Never had anything but the greatest respect [for him] then and do now.

G: Did his ability to run the Texas office or take care of the Texas thing, did that free Johnson then to concentrate on other senators?

B: Yes. Johnson never had to worry about Texas problems because Walter Jenkins knew what they were, he took care of things. He was the most indispensable man that was ever around Johnson. I hope he took care of him, I don't know. If he didn't, he should have, somebody, Mrs. Johnson or somebody ought to take care of him, because he was without any doubt the ablest administrative assistant, confidant, business associate, than anybody I have ever known, a tremendous man.

G: Did Jenkins also handle personal business as well as the political stuff?

B: Yes. Yes.

G: Johnson also bought the LBJ Ranch that year.

B: I noticed in your notes, you called to my attention something--I did not know when he bought that ranch.

G: When did he talk to you about it? Do you remember his discussions with you?

B: Oh, I remember him talking to Senator Russell and Senator Kerr about Lady Bird had spent some of her money buying a ranch. I don't think at that particular time I had ever been to Texas. This was his hobby, this was his love. This did more for him mentally than anything, because with the way he drove himself, he needed some hobby. This was his hobby, the love of the land, the cattle. Some of the fiercest debates I

have ever heard in my life were between Johnson and Morse and Clint Anderson and Kerr about who knew more about cattle. There were big fights about Hereford, Black Angus.

I don't know whether you know it or not, but Wayne Morse was a genius in the cattle business. He had a herd of horses and cattle. It's a strain of cows I'm not familiar with, but they were from England, and he won right [here]--we're here in Montgomery County where you're interviewing me. Wayne Morse won more blue ribbons with his cattle than anybody in the history of this county. I never will forget, Wayne Morse one time come to me and he said, "All right. I'm running for re-election. I want you to get one of your rich oil friends"--because he thought I knew all of Johnson's rich friends, which I did not. He wanted me to get one of Johnson's rich friends who was in the cattle business to breed their bull with him. Morse said that's got to be worth fifty thousand dollars, and what he's looking for is a campaign contribution. He's going to have a Texas bull make love to his cow for fifty thousand. (Laughter) I never did forget that.

G: Someone has recalled that they actually traded cattle on the floor of the Senate, that they would sit there and--

B: Oh, sure they did. They're trading. One day, to show you what took place on the Senate floor, Senator Kerr come to me one day. Johnson had quit--you know, you start talking about the Ranch and he bought it and so forth, Kerr, he really liked Johnson, but he didn't want Johnson to have something he didn't have. Kerr didn't know a damn thing about cattle, so he went out to the University of Oklahoma and he made a speech. He asked to meet the head of the veterinary department, and it

was a fellow named Dr. Kazee, K-A-Z-E-E. He said, "Kazee, what do they pay you?" He said, "Senator, they pay me fifteen thousand dollars a year and they give me a house and an automobile." Kerr said, "Kazee, I'll give you fifty thousand dollars and you have your wife pick out whatever floor plan you want and I'll build you a house, and I'll buy you two cars if you'll come to work for me." But he said, "I want to be one of the best cattlemen in America, because between Lyndon Johnson and Clinton Anderson and Wayne Morse, they're driving me crazy about how smart they are." So Dr. Kazee agreed to go to work for Senator Kerr.

So Senator Kerr told me one day, he said, "I'm going to get a call and I told a man to ask for you. He's out in South Dakota looking to buy a bull for me." So Dr. Kazee called and asked for me and I got Senator Kerr off the floor. He and Johnson were talking. I said, "Gentlemen, I got an emergency call for Senator Kerr." So Kerr came to the phone. When he got off the phone he grabbed me by the lapels, he said, "I just paid twenty thousand dollars for a bull called Highland Marshal [?]. The bull has got clap." I said, "I never heard of that. I never thought it possible for an animal to have gonorrhea." He said, "Kazee says in six months he thinks that he can cure him. I'm rolling the dice." Senator Kerr bought that bull. He's the first man to ever syndicate a [bull]. He syndicated that bull, Highland Marshal, for about three hundred and thirty-three thousand dollars. The bull was so good that before Senator Kerr died they had to change the rules. Highland Marshal had died, but they had so much semen from the bull that they were sort of corrupting the Black Angus business, so they passed a rule that from the time the bull dies you can use the semen, but you can

never get papers, because they were trying to make it possible, you know, for them to make more money.

So he and Johnson used to talk about "how's that old bull doing that's got the clap." That's what they talked about on the Senate floor. It was hilarious. They were jabbing each other all the time, and Johnson talking about that old Hill Country around Johnson City was so much better for cows because it has more minerals. It did look like that those old cows did weigh more, but I didn't know a damn thing about cows, could have cared less. But he and Kerr, they'd just sit there and talk about how many they had and how many they lost. But that was his hobby; he loved it.

G: Do you think that in the fifties the power in the Senate was beginning to shift from the southerners to the westerners?

B: In the fifties? No. See, Senator Russell had the coalition with Senator Taft and Bridges and the Republicans. So the real power in the Senate in the fifties was what they called the Republican-Dixiecrat coalition; that was where the real power was.

Now when the power began to switch was when Eisenhower was elected president in November of 1952. He took office January 20, 1953. He named a fellow named Herbert Brownell to be attorney general. So Richard Nixon and Brownell realized the only way that they could continue to be a majority party was to try and attract black votes. So Brownell was the one that proposed the first civil rights bill. In the meantime the Supreme Court in 1954 made their decision in ***Brown*** v. ***Board of Education***. Well, Nixon had entered into an alliance with Roy Wilkins, who was the head of the NAACP. Richard Nixon had made a

commitment to Roy Wilkins that when the Senate reconvened that he would rule that the Senate was not a continuing body and that each new Senate could adopt its own rules. Well, I want to tell you, that's when Richard Russell and the southerners went into hysterics. But that was the beginning of the breakup of the Dixiecrat-Republican coalition that had controlled the Senate. In the meantime Senator Taft died. So from the time that Nixon [was] vice president, he was overruled by the Senate in his interpretation of the rules; I think they voted to table his opinion.

But the change from that southern-Republican coalition to the Johnson control of the Senate didn't take place, oh, till about the election of 1956. See, you had more liberals from the West, like Gale McGee, Frank Church, Frank Moss and people elected, so you really don't switch until January 1957. Because that election in 1956, I think anybody running on a Democratic ticket got elected. We had the biggest sweep of Democrats in the history of the Senate. That's when Johnson had a tremendous majority, and those people that were elected, because of the leadership that he had shown, the responsibility and so forth--but Walter Reuther controlled people like Frank Moss. So there was always this big battle--and Frank Church, I mean, Frank Church, had he been sort of a moderate Republican and gone on, say, the Appropriations Committee instead of Foreign Relations, he would have been a big power in the Senate. He was more interested in foreign affairs and he ultimately destroyed himself.

G: Alvin Wirtz died that fall.

B: Yes. See, I know Johnson really loved and respected and revered Senator Wirtz. I guess Senator Wirtz had a lot to do with his being elected congressman, but I don't know whether I ever met him. I've met his daughter. You can't get much out of me about Alvin Wirtz because I don't know about him other than what I've read, which has all been good.

G: The big issue that Johnson seems to have been interested in that year was the universal manpower training bill that had a draft provision and everything. Do you recall his work to get that enacted?

B: Yes. Once again, it was his leadership and the respect he had of Senator Russell, so he automatically got most of the southerners, [along] with Senator Bridges, who was very pro-national defense in the Republicans. So he put together that coalition to support the universal military training bill. It was through his leadership genius, by giving in a little here and there. I've forgotten the [details]. There was some terrible opposition to universal military training at the time. Everybody was tired of the Korean War and World War II and so forth. The military were having great difficulty getting competent people. Up until the last recession they've always had the problem. Once you have a recession people go into the services, but when times are good, the service is the last place they want to go. He was right then. We ought to have it now.

G: There seems to have been a lot of resistance to a doctor's draft as well.

B: The medical schools were opposed to it, plus the doctors were at this particular time probably the most effective financial lobby in the country. Anybody that had a license to practice medicine, you know, he

was guaranteed the highest income of any professional group in the country. They were very, very conservative people. Their lobbyists in Washington, the American Medical Association, had trained them in the power of giving. Just like Senator Kerr, he made a deal with the doctors to oppose Medicare. He had the biggest kitty that anybody has ever had in the history of the Senate from Oklahoma because those doctors were giving money. They didn't want to give two years, I believe, to military service, either before or after. Now, you can't have universal military service without doctors. We had the problem then, we still have it right now. We have a shortage of doctors.

G: Who do you recall as the doctors' primary lobbyist in Washington? Was there anyone who was especially skillful in representing the AMA there?

B: Oh, you'd have to find out who they had. But because of the cash money that they had to distribute in senatorial campaigns, they had tremendous power. If you spend a hundred thousand dollars in Wyoming or Idaho, you can almost buy an election, and that's what they had been doing.

Earle Clements' election is a good illustration. Now Earle Clements had made a commitment to the doctors in Kentucky that he would oppose some liberalization of the social security bill. Now Johnson talked him into changing his vote, and his vote meant the difference. So the doctors all put their money with Thruston Morton, because they felt Senator Clements had lied to them. He paid a terrible price. But they were that influential in Kentucky. That one vote defeated Earle Clements.

G: Amazing.

I think that's it on all this.

(Interruption)

B: You'll have to cut it down, because you can't possibly use all this stuff.

G: Do you recall any efforts to get Eisenhower to run as a Democrat rather than a Republican?

B: Yes, I do. We had a senator from South Carolina named Olin D. Johnston. Senator Johnston did not like Truman because Truman fired MacArthur. Olin Johnston had fought as a sergeant with MacArthur in the Rainbow Division in World War I. So Olin had been making statements that he wanted General Eisenhower to be our nominee, that Truman could not be elected. There were quite a few people that were anti-Truman that thought the only hope for the Democrats to win would be to have Eisenhower as our nominee. I think that the Democratic Party would not have selected Senator Russell, but Senator Russell could have been elected instead of Eisenhower. But the Korean War--Truman had to make some major, major decisions, NATO, the Greek-Turkish episode. He probably had more monumental decisions than any president in my life time, like dropping the atomic bomb. See, the senators all thought they were smarter than Truman. Truman was not a very good talker. He was not a very influential man. Everybody that I knew thought they were smarter than Truman. But history is very kind to him, because he made those tough decisions.

G: As long as you're on 1952, let me ask you about the Russell effort for president. You've indicated earlier that Johnson supported Russell enthusiastically.

B: Yes, he sure did.

G: Did you go to the convention?

B: Yes, I was assistant director of the Democratic platform committee and I was there. Once the Republicans had picked Eisenhower, none of us thought at the convention that in view of Truman's unpopularity we could win. It was sort of a holding action. The real pros--everybody was trying to protect their own ass. Most of the people at this particular time at the convention were governors, senators, congressmen, mayors, and everybody was trying to see, what can I do to minimize my losses? Because they read the polls like everybody else. See, Truman had not taken very many people into his confidence that he was going to support Adlai Stevenson. So you just can't sell a man in six months for the presidency. And then some of the positions that Stevenson took did not help him. He was a real left-winger in his campaign, and the American people are not that way. So he was devastated.

G: Did Russell really think that he had a chance?

B: You know, when he got to Chicago and announced that he was for the repeal of Taft-Hartley, this really tore his pants because a lot of the conservatives in the country who believed in him also were very anti-big labor. So when Russell did that, it was a colossal mistake. He tried to back down on it a little bit, but from the moment Russell did that, well, he never had any chance at that convention. Because Walter Reuther was the most influential man at the convention in 1952, 1956 and 1960. And the reason he was influential, he spent cash money that he took from Canada, from the UAW, which he didn't have to report to anybody, to buy delegates. So he and his other labor allies, they had enough delegates to control big delegations, and the way you get the

presidency is to win New York and California and Pennsylvania and Ohio and Michigan and Illinois. It may surprise you, he had a lot of delegates from Texas, because UAW was big in the airplane business in the Fort Worth-Dallas area and the oil workers around Houston. They were very smart. They put their money to elect their people, because most people don't go to the little county precincts and get elected delegate. But Reuther was a genius in spending labor's money to get people elected that would do exactly what they wanted [them] to. And he was a tremendous power.

So Russell had no chance whatsoever when you look at the make-up of the convention. While he couldn't get the nomination, he could win in November. It's the same thing they're confronted with right now; [Walter] Mondale can get the nomination but he can't win in November. Same identical situation. I don't know who can beat the President as of right now. I think President Reagan will be elected overwhelmingly, based on the information we have today. But the Democrats need somebody that can carry Texas and the West. We historically can't win if we can't carry Texas.

G: To what extent was Russell's candidacy designed to offset Strom Thurmond's defection and attempt to lure the South out of the mainstream of the Democratic Party?

B: Most people--I'm talking about the power brokers--did not place much significance on Strom Thurmond and his breaking away. Strom Thurmond is a strange phenomenon in the history of American politics. The fact is that his movement only carried four states. I mean, Wayne Morse and Strom Thurmond represented extreme positions. You always have those,

but people who are really knowledgeable about politics and the history of presidential campaigns didn't pay much attention to it. Thurmond would have appeal to race haters and people like that, the extreme right-wingers, but he was never any real significant factor in that.

G: Were you with Johnson and Russell when they were watching the balloting?

B: No. No. As I told you, I was working on that platform committee, which is the meanest job. You work around the clock trying to get the platform ready for presentation to the convention, a tremendous experience, from my point of view, of knowing the people and their problems. As I recall, we [had] some of the best people, we had a black congressman named Bill Dawson who was a good friend of Mr. Rayburn, and Senator Johnson who was the national committeeman from Illinois. His parents had been slaves down in Georgia. But it was people like that that would help you hammer out [the platform]. The biggest plank we had was civil rights. That was very divisive. But I spent all my time trying to get the platform passed and get through there to the convention and so forth. I knew Senator Russell had no chance of being the nominee, so it got around to seeing which way Reuther and his crowd were going to go.

G: Do you think that his failure to get the nomination made Russell a more narrow southerner? Did this embitter him to the national Democratic Party?

B: Yes. Yes. I don't think there's any [doubt]. I think the fact that he was precluded from being the nominee in 1952, with the knowledge that had he been the nominee he could have been elected, made him a bitter man. I think that it made him seek more solitude, to complain about his aches and pains. He was not a happy man after that, never. I think it

just ruined his spirit. He ceased being a leader. It's like a general without any troops.

G: Do you think that experience affected Johnson at all?

B: Yes, I do.

G: How so?

B: Well, I think that he realized the power that labor had in a national convention. After that convention in 1952 Johnson began to get more and more into a moderate, mainstream position with the Democratic Party. Instead of a senator from Texas [he was] sort of being a senator from the whole country. The fact that he supported the first civil rights bill, he was breaking the relationship with Russell. The smartest thing he ever did is not going to that southern caucus when he was first elected, because he was smart enough to know that you couldn't be elected just as a southerner. You had to be a man from the West to get the southern bigot label off you. That was the thing that made it possible for him to be vice president and then go on to be president.

G: In talking to you about his own political future and chances, did he ever allude to Russell's experience in 1952?

B: Yes, many times.

G: What did he say?

B: He just said, you know, that you can't be elected as a bigot and that Senator Russell had every bigot in the Democratic Party backing him. He had a very narrow base and he was swamped. Here was a man with a lot of talent, a decent man. Senator Russell was really not a bigot. The black people that I knew around the Capitol really liked him, because he was a decent, kind man. But because of the publicity of the Thurmonds

and all of these people, these race baiters, instead of just being a statesman and just saying, "Hey, we need help, we need your tolerance," he didn't have the courage to do it. And that's the reason he never went any further than being a senator from Georgia, and Johnson went on to being one of the tremendous leaders in the history of the Senate, vice president, and president. But Johnson crossed the bridge.

G: Anything on [John] Sparkman's selection as vice presidential running mate?

B: I think Sparkman's selection was sort of a sop to the South. John Sparkman was well respected, but he had no strength in the South. Had Stevenson been smart he would have selected Russell. It's just like Kennedy; Kennedy would never have been elected president without Johnson. But Stevenson wasn't smart enough. I would have just drafted you, say that we differ on civil rights, but he's a good man and I'm going to work on getting him to be a national leader. Sparkman was politically a bad selection because he had no influence in the South. He had a good labor voting record, so really it gets back to the power of Reuther and the labor moguls. They didn't want anybody on that ticket that they didn't control, because Reuther and the labor leaders knew where the real power in this three-tier system is, the Supreme Court. They don't give a damn about any appointee except the Supreme Court, and that's the reason that Mondale has their support now. But the people who have got money in the country and are smart, they know where the power is, and that's the reason that as of right now Reagan will beat Mondale pretty badly.

G: Let's talk about some of the legislation that came up that year. [Pat] McCarran was very interested in--

B: In the Bricker Amendment.

G: Well, yes. Now that comes later. But now, he seems to have been interested in problems that he tried to cure with the Bricker Amendment, I guess, the executive agreements regarding treaties and things of this nature. Why was McCarran so interested in these areas? Was it--?

B: McCarran was my very good, dear, personal friend. In fact, he gave my ex-wife a job. But he was a very, very conservative senator from Nevada. He was very anti-Truman, very pro-MacArthur. Senator McCarran was an extreme right-winger. Any of these [conservatives], like William Buckley, I'll have to use him as an illustration, a guy that espouses a right-wing cause, Senator McCarran would be their advocate. Because Nevada has always been a conservative state, didn't have very many people, basically sheepmen and cattlemen and little business people and so forth [who] have a hard time making a living. Now McCarran would vote for labor on Taft-Hartley, but when it came to immigration legislation and so forth, he was a very bitter, tough opponent. He liked Lyndon Johnson. He hated Truman. I mean, he's a typical Irishman; there's no in-between, they either like or hate.

G: Why do you think he got along well with Johnson?

B: McCarran was a very, very bright man. He knew that Lyndon Johnson was the ablest fellow we had, and he also knew that Walter Reuther and people like that could never own Lyndon Johnson. So it's always been my experience a man who's a pro, whether he agrees with you or not, he respects your intellectual ability. And I think Pat McCarran thought

that Lyndon Johnson was without a doubt one of the ablest senators that he'd ever known. He'd been there, Christ, he was there for years and years, and a big power, as long as you had the southern-Republican-conservative coalition. But he just loathed Harry Truman. He had served in the Senate with Truman and he despised him.

G: What was McCarran's major concern in Nevada? Was it protecting the gambling interests or was it minerals?

B: He was very big in protecting the gambling industry, because I believe he was a man who was responsible for Nevada legalizing gambling. He was a very big advocate of states' rights. He did not want the national government imposing its will on the states. So this way he attracted a lot of people. He was unusually interested in immigration. He thought everybody that had any tendency to be liberal was a communist; he was just a very strong anti-communist fellow who was a little harsh.

G: What about the mining interests in Nevada?

B: The mining interests, anything they wanted he was for. That was his constituency, and the reason he was elected year after year was anything they wanted, he tried to get for them.

G: Molly [George W.] Malone was the other senator.

B: Molly Malone was his colleague and McCarran was really responsible for his being elected, because McCarran had a lot of difficulty with some of the national Democratic Party. So if the Democrats didn't nominate somebody that McCarran wanted, he would just call his boys away from the polls, and they elected Malone. But while he liked Johnson, Malone was intellectually far inferior to both Johnson and McCarran. But he's a westerner; if you made a deal with him, Molly Malone would keep a deal,

and Johnson knew this so he manipulated him, he used him. And they liked each other.

G: Now, Donald Cook resigned as chief counsel to the Preparedness Subcommittee and became chairman of the SEC.

B: Donald Cook is one of the illustrations of the kind of intellectual talent that Lyndon Johnson could bring to this town. Donald Cook had a Ph.D. from George Washington University, brilliant man in the securities business, well respected, never made any money. But he knew how to make the system of government work, and he was respected on Wall Street. I think of all the people that Lyndon Johnson had around him, John Connally, Walter Jenkins, everybody, when it came to sheer intellect that Donald Cook was the smartest one of all. He was really presidential timber.

G: Getting someone of Cook's stature--he was on the SEC at the time, I guess--

B: Yes.

G: --to serve as investigator or counsel to the Preparedness Committee. How did he do this?

B: By flattery, by making the man act like a traitor if he did not take the job. Johnson had a tremendous talent to make a man feel that he would be disloyal to his country if he didn't take the job. But once again, Donald Cook had the intellectual capacity to know that he was dealing with one of the smartest people in the world. So it was in his interests to be associated with Johnson, because, one, he was helping his country and he was helping himself. As you know, later on Johnson tried

to make him secretary of the treasury, which he turned down, which I regret. I think he would have been a good one.

G: Now Cook, after a year I guess, went back and became chairman of the commission.

B: Chairman of the SEC.

G: SEC. What could he do for Johnson there?

B: He was a responsible entre to Wall Street. I mean, they're tremendous opinion makers. If they are reasonably happy with Washington, they don't bother you, but if the people who control the wealth in this country feel like that they're being raped, they can really be influential politically. Johnson had an unbelievable rapport with the moguls of Wall Street. I've been there to Lehman Brothers and Goldman-Sachs. See, the one thing that Wall Street can't stand is for people to make waves. I mean, they need stability, they need to know. Whatever governmental action is going to be taken, they don't want any big bombs to explode in their face. They have to be able to make decisions for five years or ten years, and Johnson gave the stability. They liked him; they supported him; they put their money where their mouth was. And if a man in Wall Street had a problem, they could talk to Donald Cook. Now, he may not agree in totality with their position, but at least they had somebody that had a brain that they could talk to, and that's what Johnson had. Johnson was more liberal than those conservative people on Wall Street, but at least they had a man in a position of influence that they could talk to about things.

G: What role did Edwin Weisl play in this connection?

B: Edwin Weisl was very influential, not only in the legal hierarchy but with Wall Street. He, once again, was a conservative Democrat. He was a Horatio Alger story; he started out as counsel for old man Hertz [?]. He was the first Jewish member of Simpson, Thacher and Bartlett. As he got older, he didn't like [it] to be known that he was Jewish because he was sort of anti-Israel. I remember one time I talked Johnson into making a bombs-for-Israel speech and Mr. Weisl was opposed to it. He said, "I'm an American. I think they should take care of themselves." But he was a good man and a bright man. But he made it easy for Johnson to attract bright people, because being with Simpson, Thacher and Bartlett, they had their finger on academia. The best brains coming out of Harvard and Yale and whatnot were trying to get jobs there, and they were also smart enough to try to get them into positions of responsibility in the State Department or the SEC down in Washington. So they complemented each other.

(Interruption)

G: Was Weisl Johnson's principal link to the New York Jewish community in this stage?

B: No. I guess when Johnson was a congressman, Roosevelt didn't really know what to do about all the Jewish immigrants fleeing Hitler. Johnson sponsored a lot of bills to get Jewish immigrants in the country and he worked with the Jewish community and I think with people like Abe Fortas and people like that. Johnson became known with the Jews of America that he was a decent man and he was trying to help their relatives and so forth. But I don't think that Mr. Weisl was a very influential force with the Jewish community.

G: The Truman seizure of the steel mills took place that year. Do you recall--?

B: Yes, I recall that.

G: Johnson condemned it, I think, as extremely dangerous.

B: Yes, sure he did. Right. What President Truman did was unpopular with the great majority of the attorneys in the country, the opinion makers, you know, for a president to just go without any legal authority to seize a particular industry. Because if he legally could seize a steel business, he could seize any business in the country. So I don't know who advised the President of his legal authority, but I would say that probably was the dumbest mistake of judgment of Harry Truman's presidency. I think it caused him more grief than anything he did, because he acted as if he was above the law. Once he was knocked down by his own courts, like Chief Justice [Fred] Vinson [who] really wasn't well trained in the law, voted against him; Truman never did forgive him. But that was the dumbest thing he ever did. So it didn't take a lot of courage for Johnson to be opposed to Truman for seizing the steel mills; I'd say 90 per cent of the American people agreed with that position. Politicians like to do the popular thing with their constituency, and that was very popular. Especially the newspapers felt that if old Truman could seize the steel mills, he could seize our damn paper because we were writing editorials every day saying he's dumb.

Tape 2 of 2

G: In 1952 you had a lot of division within Texas within the Democratic Party. The labor-liberal group was advancing Ralph Yarborough, who ran [for governor] that year. Shivers meanwhile was mobilizing to take the

Democratic Party of Texas out of the national column for Stevenson. Do you recall Johnson's reaction to this and his role?

B: Well, one, my knowledge about Texas politics is very, very limited. By being around Johnson as much as I was, I was well aware of the possibility that Allan Shivers was going to be a candidate to run against Lyndon Johnson. I was also well aware of the weakness of the national Democratic Party in Texas. Shivers was much more popular than Lyndon Johnson was in Texas at this particular time. My recollection is that Shivers supported Eisenhower, worked for him and did everything in his power to unseat anybody that was favorable to the Stevenson-Sparkman ticket. There were a lot of people trying to create a war between Shivers and Johnson.

G: Who in particular, do you recall?

B: Well, all of the conservatives in Texas were. Once again the oil people were doing everything in their power to get rid of Rayburn and Johnson. I think that at this particular time that they were advancing somebody to defeat Mr. Rayburn. Johnson knew that if they got Rayburn they would get him. So this was the reason that Johnson was very, very leery of any confrontations with anybody. While he supported the Stevenson-Sparkman ticket, he knew that it was an impossible burden. So he made those few token appearances, but as far as getting out and trying to mobilize people, even if he had turned every resource at his command over, he could never have made Stevenson popular in Texas. So he was a practical, pragmatic politician. He had an impossible burden. Just like George McGovern, you can't take George McGovern to Texas and win. But Johnson was petrified that Shivers was going to be his opponent. I

think Shivers must have been a pretty able fellow. They ultimately reached a truce, that they both went their separate way. But Johnson was lucky that he and Shivers never had to run against each other.

G: Did Johnson do anything to your knowledge to minimize that possibility?

B: He did everything in his power to touch base with those people, those monied people in Texas. He and Shivers had some of the same supporters. Johnson, with the Preparedness Committee and his election to be the assistant Democratic leader and his support of Eisenhower, especially in foreign affairs and so forth, he sort of negated Shivers. He was always looking over his shoulder to make damn certain that he never gave Shivers anything to go after him with a hatchet over. I think that one of the reasons he gave Eisenhower the support he did was that he was negating Shivers.

G: Rayburn seems to have been very hostile to Shivers.

B: No doubt about it. I think Mr. Rayburn realized that Shivers was trying to destroy him. Mr. Rayburn, I believe, felt that Shivers had willfully and knowingly lied about him time and time again, so there was a very bitter dislike between Mr. Rayburn and Shivers. Mr. Rayburn didn't like [for] anybody who had run as a Democrat and been successful running as a Democrat, not to support its nominees. I think it's something that he could not forgive.

G: Tom Connally was also fading out that year and was replaced by Price Daniel.

B: Yes. Well, Tom Connally had been in Washington too long. He had Potomac fever, he didn't go home, out of touch with Texas. And the worst committee in the world for Tom Connally to be on was the Foreign

Relations Committee, because Texas didn't know a damn thing about foreign relations. They could have cared less. Tom Connally is a good illustration as to why there ought to be a mandatory sixty-five-year-old retirement. A younger man should have been being groomed. He was a good man, a good senator, but he had been in Washington too long.

G: How did Tom Connally's leaving the Congress affect LBJ's position?

B: Well, it made him the senior senator from Texas, so everybody who had a problem in Washington had to deal with him. Tom Connally's retirement was a tremendous boost to Johnson. The fact that Price Daniel came here--he was innocuous. Johnson paid a lot more attention to him than he deserved, but when it came to just sheer capacity and ability, Johnson ran rings around him. He manipulated him and used him also by being kind to Price Daniel and treating him with a lot of dignity. My recollection is Mrs. Daniel was a lovely lady; Mrs. Johnson paid a lot of attention to her. But this helped them sort of soften Shivers' hostility, because Shivers and Daniel had been colleagues or partners in their support of Eisenhower. I believe Daniel voted for Eisenhower in 1952.

G: I may be a little bit out of line chronologically here, but Drew Pearson was writing a lot of stories that could be considered hostile or unfavorable to LBJ. That must have been a complicated relationship between LBJ and Drew Pearson.

B: Well, Drew Pearson and Lyndon Johnson, once again, egos, both of them monumental egos, both very, very bright, both respect each other. The end product was that before Drew Pearson died, he thought Lyndon Johnson was the greatest man in the history of the country. But Drew would

attack Johnson, trying to get him to do one of Drew's projects, because he knew that Johnson was a compromiser and that he had thin skin. They both had the same friends. But they liked each other. They respected each other. So I take with a grain of salt anything I read about Drew Pearson and Johnson.

G: How did Johnson react to these stories?

B: Oh, God! Listen, he was the most sensitive man about criticism in the news media of anyone I have ever known. Since I never had to run for public office I could tell people to go to hell. Now Drew Pearson, he was outrageous in his demands on Johnson. Drew Pearson owned Estes Kefauver. Estes Kefauver was a proven crook. Drew Pearson didn't die broke. I don't know whether you know it or not, but he was one of the wealthiest landlords in this town. He's got a farm out here that Tyler [Abell] inherited from him, over a thousand acres out here in Montgomery County and one of the finest farms in the world. Drew was always giving green beans away to people. But Drew worshiped money, he worshiped power. He had power; he elected a lot of United States senators in his lifetime. But he and Lyndon Johnson liked each other. They were power brokers.

G: Did Johnson leak stuff to Pearson?

B: Sure. Absolutely. But Johnson disliked the fact that when he would-- Johnson, as you have learned, was very secretive. So when there would be an executive session of the Preparedness Committee or an executive session of the Democratic conference, Estes Kefauver would tell Drew Pearson everything that took place. So Johnson would really get ticked. He'd say, "There's no way you can keep a secret from Drew Pearson

because Kefauver tells him everything that happened." Drew Pearson owned Estes Kefauver.

G: So what could he do to prevent Kefauver from leaking the committee's findings to [Pearson]?

B: There was nothing, nothing you could do. The only thing is that most of the time Estes was loaded, he didn't attend too many meetings. He was not a hard-working senator; he was a playboy. He and John Kennedy were the two biggest playboys I've ever known. They really were not effective United States senators.

G: Did Kefauver have a different perception of how the subcommittee ought to work? Was he more interested in cops-and-robbers sort of investigations?

B: He was only interested in publicity.

G: Really?

B: Like when he got to be chairman of the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency, all he was looking for was to put people on the payroll to advance him publicity-wise. Like when he went out to Hollywood to investigate the pornography, when he received these shots of these little girls down there, he'd invite them to come up to his suite. He was absolutely corrupt. Pearson never would write anything about it, because he was Pearson's leak.

G: One of the stories that Pearson wrote during this period was that Johnson and McFarland had had some disagreement in the washroom.

B: That was one of Pearson's lies, to try--see, Pearson lived with combat, he liked to get senators disliking each other, and I think both

McFarland and Johnson called Pearson, said, "Whoever told you this lied to you." Pearson never corrected it.

G: But you're confident that it didn't happen?

B: I know it didn't happen. McFarland and Johnson were good friends, because Johnson worked at it. Johnson worked at making McFarland look good. It was like a love affair as a one-sided romance. But Johnson did everything he could to make McFarland look good. I don't think I've ever seen McFarland say anything unkind about Johnson, even after he left the Senate.

G: One of the items I have here concerned the Democratic platform and resolutions subcommittee that you were involved with, and indicates that there was an effort to include a nationwide presidential primary. Do you remember that initiative and LBJ's role in it?

B: I don't remember anything that Johnson had to do with the platform committee. I believe Kefauver and Pearson were the two biggest advocates of a national presidential primary because Kefauver had been very successful in New Hampshire and Wisconsin, and I believe the California primary Kefauver had won. He was one of the proponents of a national presidential primary. But for the life of me I don't remember Lyndon Johnson ever stating he was for that.

G: Okay.

End of Tape 2 of 2 and Interview III

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