

INTERVIEWEE: MALCOLM BARDWELL

INTERVIEWER: DOROTHY PIERCE

Thursday, October 17, 1968, 3:00 p.m., at office, Jess McNeill Machinery,
San Antonio, Texas

P: Mr. Bardwell, you've had a long association with politics, particularly San Antonio and Texas and among some early politicians, and I would like to begin this interview by asking you to recall your first encounter, first meeting, with Lyndon Johnson and how it came about.

B: Mr. Maverick was tax collector and I was his chief clerk in San Antonio. We were both supporters for Dick Kleberg for Congressman--I mean Richard Kleberg for Congress, which included Bexar County at that time.

P: This is 1931?

B: Yes. He was elected for Congress, and he made an appointment of a young man by the name of Lyndon Johnson to be his secretary. Mr. Johnson came to San Antonio, and as I recall was at the Gunter Hotel when we went up and met him for our first time. He was very brilliant, had been a school teacher, and all of us were very much impressed with him when he was appointed and our first meeting with him.

P: What were your first impressions of Lyndon Johnson?

B: He was just a likeable type of fellow. He seemed to make himself agreeable with you, and he would listen to you. He wouldn't carry on all the conversation. He would at that time sort of draw you out as to what was going on and what was going on in your territory, and acted like he wanted to be of personal service to you, so it made everyone of us feel good.

P: Can I back you up here a little bit and ask you how Richard Kleberg came

to run in 1931? I know it was at the death of--

B: Henry McLeary Wurzbach was the then-Congressman and he died. The Congressional district included Bexar County and all the way down to Corpus Christi.

P: That's the 14th?

B: Fourteenth District, yes. There was some discussion of Mr. Maverick running for Congressman, but he didn't decide to run at this time as we knew that at a later date it would be reorganized and Bexar County would be one district. And the machine, as we called the city-county machine which we had fought--Mr. Maverick being one of our leaders, was opposed to their opponent which was Carl Wright Johnson. So we then supported Dick Kleberg from Corpus Christi.

P: This was part of the Citizens League that had been formed?

B: That was a part of the Citizens League, yes.

P: When did that come about?

B: That came about about three years prior to this. It was about '28 or '29, I think. We started off a Citizens League--our slogan was to beat a bond issue here. And Mr. Maverick took an active part and was a leader, you might say, in leading that and for an annexation program that the city was trying to impose on them. We filed suit against the city on the annexation program and won that suit, but we lost the bond issue by a very small margin.

P: What was the annexation program?

B: It was extending the city limits, oh, I've forgotten how many miles out. Today they do have the annexation, but at the time it was ruled illegal.

P: At this formation of the Citizens League in the late twenties, was this the first time that you had worked closely with Maury Maverick, Sr.?

B: That's correct.

P: Had you known him before?

3

B: No, I had not. I had moved here from Atlanta, Georgia. My brother and sister were born here in San Antonio and I brought my mother back due to her health to San Antonio, and when this fight started I joined in and met Mr. Maverick for the first time.

P: That was the beginning of a very close association with Mr. Maverick, wasn't it, Mr. Bardwell?

B: That's correct. When he ran later on as tax collector, he asked me to sign on as his chief clerk, which I did. Also when he went to Congress I served for the first year as secretary to him while Mr. Johnson was secretary to Dick Kleberg.

P: What were you doing at the beginning of your relationship with Mr. Maverick?

B: I had a company called Burnet-Bardwell Corporation--Arthur Burnet--and we were buying real estate and handling insurance, fire insurance.

P: Who were the members of this Citizens League?

B: There was Guy McFarland, I believe there was John Boyle, [REDACTED] ^{Dickson,} C. M. [REDACTED] an attorney--and there were several others. I cannot recall their names right now.

P: Mr. Quill?

B: No, Mr. Quill was not an original member of the Citizens League. He later became--he was working for the courthouse and he--he was working for the stockyards, and then he joined in supporting Dick Kleberg and that's where he got acquainted with--but he was not one of the originators of the Citizens League.

P: Was Judge Hirshberg in this?

B: Henry Hirshberg was one of them.

P: Walter McAllister?

B: Walter McAllister.

P: I was trying to do a little recalling, too.

So, to proceed on, the Citizens League in that period was gaining strength, I would gather.

B: Yes, we captured practically most of the posts over at the courthouse.

P: And ultimately in '34 Richard Kleberg, your candidate, was the first to win in a national contest?

B: Let's see. It was not '34; he won in '32. In '34 they had redistricted the Congressional districts and Bexar County then was a district itself, and Mr. Maverick ran for Congressman at that time and was elected.

P: In fact it was even '31--I believe his term didn't start until almost December--Richard Kleberg's.

B: That's correct.

P: At this point Lyndon Johnson, as you have already said, had been named as secretary and that was where you first met him.

B: That's correct.

P: And they went on to Washington at that point. Did you have any contact with Lyndon Johnson during the period of '31 to '34 when Mr. Maverick ran?

B: Mr. Maverick of course constantly wrote him letters as to what was wrong with the world--

P: Do you know what some of the issues were that Mr. Maverick was writing about?

B: Practically everything of a national--he was interested more in national affairs.

P: Did this have to do with our entry into the beginning of World War II?

B: No.

P: This is too early. You're right.

B: It had nothing to do with World War II. We thought war was over with at that time.

P: It would be later. What about the farm problems? Would those have been--

B: Some. In fact anything of a national interest, and foreign interests Maury was quite interested in.

P: Can you think of some specifics?

B: Well, when the depression was on naturally he was interested in feeding the people and the WPA and the NYA and all of that New Deal of Roosevelt's.

P: How did Mr. Maverick feel about Mr. Roosevelt?

B: He was a very strong supporter of his.

P: And when the Supreme Court packing issue came up at a later date, what position did Maury Maverick take?

B: He grabbed the first announcement and introduced it as a bill, much to the chagrin of the other Congressmen. It was later put into another bill, but he was the first one that filed it.

P: I'm skipping ahead on that. I was just trying to think of anything that-- any specific in this area, but that was very interesting.

B: Not particularly in this area, it was just the--

P: All right, then let's proceed to Mr. Maverick's entry into the political scene. He did want to enter into politics, I gather, and since the redistricting had occurred this was the motivation behind entering in '34?

B: What was that?

P: Since the redistricting had occurred, this was the motivation for Mr. Maverick's entering--

B: That's correct--into Congressional--run for Congress. His uncle Slayden had been a member of the Congress, and he had always wanted to serve in Congress.

P: Was this the same seat that his uncle--Oh, no, it would be redistricted.

Who was opposing Mr. Maverick? Who did the machine put up?

B: Carl Wright Johnson, as I told you.

P: What were the principal issues of that campaign?

B: Personalities. Personalities make issues.

P: How would you describe Mr. Maverick's personality?

B: He was a very dominating man. To his friends he could do no wrong, he was a lovable man. I happened to have the pleasure of enjoying his confidence over a period of years until his death. To me, he was one of the greatest men I've ever known.

P: Who were some other people who were closely associated with Mr. Maverick?

B: Oh, he had a wide acquaintance, but I feel like his wife Terrell and myself were practically really the only confidants he had, although he loved everyone and lots of them--he had many who loved him.

P: How did Mr. Maverick approach you about going to Washington and leaving San Antonio?

B: He just told me, "That's what we're going to do."

P: Didn't give you any alternative?

B: No, "That's what we're going to do." After a year up there, I decided that I did not want to stay in Washington and I went with the Maverick estate, which is a different branch of the Maverick family--than Maury's family. They were relatives, but of a different branch. I went as manager of the Maverick Building. I stayed there until Maury went back to--later on went back when World War II was declared, and went with the War Production Board and called me to come up there with him. And I went. And we went over with him--that's when he was made Chairman of the Smaller War Plants; I went over as his general manager of the Smaller War Plants, which was a separate corporation, \$200,000,000, which we lent to small industries for war purposes and furnished them technical know-how and put

them in--and be able to compete with the large industries.

P: This was the year 1934 that you were in Washington at the same time and in the same capacity as Lyndon Johnson?

B: 1935 was when we went in, and Lyndon was there as secretary to Dick Kleberg. He had been made Little Speaker of the House which is all the secretaries of the various Congressmen have their own speaker, like the Congressmen have the Speaker of the House.

P: This is the Little Congress?

B: And then Lyndon was elected as Speaker of the Little Congress. He was very active; he was an excellent debater; and he had quite a following among the various secretaries of Congressmen and was elected over the, you might say, the dominating crowd that had been there for many a year. He won the election over them.

P: Did you notice any change in the year or so that--two years that had passed since you had met him as secretary to Richard Kleberg before they left for Washington?

B: Oh, yes, he was--he had a knowledge there, his mind was quick. He kept up on all matters of legislation there, and the fact is he advised the Congressman about what was coming up.

P: I believe you even became a roommate during this period at the Dodge House, where he resided. Is that correct?

B: Before he married Bird, I drove up to Washington with him and we went by her home up at--what's the name of the town, near Marshall, Texas. Do you recall the name?

P: Karnack?

B: Karnack, I believe, They had a great big colonial-type home.

P: This is Mrs. Johnson's family?

B: Mrs. Johnson. It was her father--her mother was dead--and she had an aunt there that helped raise her. We stayed there that night, and I asked them where they got the name of Bird--how she happened to get the name of Bird, and I was told that this old Negro that had to take and raise her said that when she was born, she said that she was as pretty as a bird; and that was the way her name became this--Lady Bird.

And so we went on to Washington--

P: This was on your first trip to Washington?

B: On my first trip to Washington. I went on up with Lyndon. I was having to make arrangements about where I was going to stay when I went up there. Later on, Lyndon came back to San Antonio where he and Bird were married.

P: Did you participate in that arrangement?

B: Dan Quill, our postmaster then, got the ring for them and afterwards, Henry Hirshberg gave a party at the St. Anthony which I attended. They then left for Mexico--Monterrey, I believe it was--on their honeymoon. I knew Lyndon then. Then after I had carried my mother and sister to Washington with me when I went up as secretary to Mr. Maverick, then Bird was there having married Lyndon and my mother took quite an interest in Bird because Bird did not have a mother. And my mother and sister went back to Atlanta to visit the other sister just about two months before Congress adjourned. And Bird had gone back. I moved in with Lyndon for a couple of months before we returned back to San Antonio--before I returned back to San Antonio.

P: What was it like rooming with Lyndon Johnson? He was about twenty-seven years old then, wasn't he?

B: I don't know how old he was, but I recall this though. One night I came home and I told him that Mr. Maverick had told me that--oh, who was the head of the NYA up in Washington?

P: Aubrey Williams?

B: Aubrey Williams wanted someone to head up the NYA in Texas. And he told me, he said, "I'd like that job." So we got busy and we got hold of Bob Jackson who was secretary--it was either Bob Jackson or Arthur Perry, I've forgotten which, that was secretary of Tom Connally; and then we got in touch with ^{the} secretary of Shepherd, Senator Shepherd. And we met at Maury's office, met at the Congressional office in the Old House Building, in Maury's office, and I told Maury that, "Here's the man who wants the job--that's Lyndon." Maury said, "Okay." He called up Aubrey Williams and told him he had the man for him and he wouldn't have any trouble with the two United States Senators. He accepted the job and he asked him how much it'd be, and Maury quoted the figure, and I hollered, "Pay him a living wage," and Lyndon said at the time, every time I'd holler a "living wage," his salary went up \$500, so they got him a little better pay for his job. So Lyndon came back to Texas as head of the NYA where he did a remarkable job.

P: Mr. Johnson was very much involved and enjoyed politics very much. Why do you suppose that he decided to resign to take this job as the NYA--

B: I don't know what's in a man's mind, but I do know that the Congressman from that district was getting up in years, and somebody one day was going to have to run for Congress.

P: This was Mr. Buchanan?

B: Mr. Buchanan. Whether he had that in mind or not, I cannot say, but he did have an opportunity to make friends all over the State of Texas as the head of the NYA. He did a remarkable job by building these roadside parks which he started, which was later put up over in other states. He helped Mr. Maverick as mayor build La Villeta by furnishing NYA use to him.

He contributed a lot to San Antonio in that manner. And he was very active in making speeches all over the State of Texas where he was well known.

P: How did Mr. Johnson get along with Mr. Kleberg?

B: Mr. Johnson personally got along all right with him. I wouldn't say that Dick Kleberg was a man that--although a very nice man--was not a man that took too much interest in foreign affairs or national affairs. He had been raised on the ranch--

P: Judge Hirshberg this morning said he was a playboy.

B: Well, he was not a man, I would say, that took too much of an interest in those things.

P: Some questions occurred to me while you were discussing earlier parts of this. When you drove through Karnack with Johnson and you met the Taylor family, this was your first meeting of Lady Bird?

B: That's right.

P: And did Lyndon Johnson indicate at that time that he was planning to marry her?

B: He did. We were put on the second floor, a great big wide bedroom--both of us slept there--two tremendous beds in this big, tremendous room. I got up the next morning and in my pajamas wandered downstairs to the cook place to tell the cook there what I wanted for breakfast and when I got back, I was reprimanded rather strongly by Mr. Johnson for running around in my pajamas. He told me, "I'm going to marry this girl. You're going to ruin my marriage if you run around that way." Bawled me out because he said he was going to marry her.

P: Do you think he had already indicated his intentions to the Taylor family?

B: I don't know whether he had done that or not, but he'd already talked to

her. He'd made up his mind he was going to marry her. In later years Aunt Effa, as they called her, came to live with them in Washington. That's Lady Bird's aunt.

P: As a roommate to Mr. Johnson, did he keep long hours? What were his working habits?

B: He worked constantly in the office all the time. He was there early in the morning and late in the eve^w_^ing.

P: Do you recall some specific areas where he was interested or was pursuing at this period?

B: Not now, I don't.

P: What did you used to talk about?

B: Truth of the matter is we didn't see much of each other. Mr. Maverick was a very demanding person, too, you know, and I was down early and late at night. My mother and sister being gone, we worked on Saturdays and Sundays just like it was a Monday or Tuesday, and so did Lyndon. Our office was really our homes instead of the apartment.

P: What areas were you pursuing with Mr. Maverick at the time?

B: Mr. Maverick had formed what was called the "Mavericks" among the Congressmen. He had a small group and they kind of stormed together and they labeled themselves as the "Mavericks." They upset the traditions that a "young Congressman should be seen and not heard," because they immediately started taking active interests in everything rather than sit quietly.

P: Do you recall who was among this group in the Mavericks?

B: There was one from California, I can't think of his--a man in California was very active with him. And I believe a man from Alaska, a Congressman from Alaska was with them. The one from California--his name slips me.

Mrs. Maverick could tell you more about that than I could of the various ones. And Maury then was constantly making speeches to this group, or to press clubs--he went to New York to meet Dorothy Thompson and her group, and I was with Maury on all those occasions. He keeps you busy doing one thing and another; he was never still a moment. And then I'd handle all the correspondence, dictate by dictaphone all the correspondence of the office there, and then those of the special correspondence I'd give to him, and he'd give me what he wanted me to say to them.

P: You said that Mr. Maverick was particularly interested in foreign affairs?

B: He was.

P: Did he introduce some bills at this time?

B: He introduced one or two bills. I'd have to check on those. I know we had the Congressional Library over there, the legislative branch of the Congressional Library, working on several bills for us, but just what they were now my mind has slipped me on that.

P: You had mentioned earlier about--this skips ahead to almost 1938 when Franklin Roosevelt first mentioned enlarging the Supreme Court--Mr. Maverick kind of leaped to the forefront on that. Could you tell me more about that, how that happened?

B: The bulletin came out that the President had said this, and Maury just labeled it bill number so-and-so and stuck it in the hopper as his bill, just copied Roosevelt's words and stuck it in the hopper and labeled it "Maverick bill number so-and-so." Then later on it was changed to a regular Congressional--but he wanted to be the first one endorsing it.

P: Did Mr. Maverick disagree with any area of Mr. Roosevelt?

B: He never said anything--he never disagreed with anything I ever heard of--didn't disagree about Roosevelt.

P: During this time, of course, as you've already said, Mr. Johnson had accepted the NYA appointment and had returned to Texas. And you were telling me of several accomplishments regarding the roadside parks and La Villita.

B: I would see Mr. Johnson then while he was here because he would come to San Antonio. And then when he ran for Congress I went over there to help him at the time when he ran for Congress. Various people that had worked for him in the past quit their jobs and came down and worked for him. When he was secretary to Dick Kleberg, they came from Washington at no expense to Mr. Johnson to work for him.

P: Do you recall some of these people?

B: Well, there was Chuck Henderson and his wife, I know for ~~one~~ that came down. Chuck was then secretary to Nat Patton and he quit his job and came down and went to work free of charge, as I recall, for Lyndon--he and his wife did both.

When he ran for Senator, I handled the first Senatorial campaign for Mr. Johnson in Bexar County.

P: In 1941?

B: And then the second time he ran I got Adrian Spears to head it up so that my name, being in business, would not be mixed up with it. Adrian was a lawyer and could bring fresh blood into the thing.

P: This is 1948 then?

B: '48. And so Adrian today is federal judge.

P: Back to when he first ran in 1937, did you think he had a pretty good chance to take the vacant seat of Representative Buchanan?

B: Yes, I did.

P: Was that a close election?

- B: I've forgotten now. He came out very strong for Roosevelt during that election, and as I recall the other man was not. And Roosevelt was very popular in those days.
- P: Of course this was the declining end of--some decline of his popularity due to the Supreme Court issue.
- B: He was still popular over in that area.
- P: You think Mr. Johnson read that correctly then?
- B: I think he did. Mr. Johnson has been great on picking polls that people don't realize about. He has his own poll system, like the Belden poll, and different polls there. He has had polls taken when he was running for Senator and Congress and I imagine he has since he has been President. He gets an idea of what's going on with the people there.
- P: Are those private polls you mean?
- B: Yes.
- P: Run by his own people or does he hire--
- B: He hires them. It's not a published poll.
- P: That election he had appendicitis right before the voting day, didn't he?
- B: That's correct.
- P: Were you in Austin during this time?
- B: I went over there to see him. I was here but I'd go back and forth to Austin. When he had appendicitis, I went over there to see him.
- P: Do you recall any particular events or incidents that occurred during this '37 election?
- B: No, I don't.
- P: Mr. Johnson had gathered around him some pretty dedicated people I would imagine.
- B: That's correct. Senator Wirtz was one of his great admirers--A. J. Wirtz

who later became Under Secretary of Interior under Ickes. Wirtz had lived in Austin and he was one of his greatest supporters.

P: Do you remember a Mr. Ray Lee in this campaign?

B: Ray Lee? I don't know. Where's he from?

P: I just had his name written down.

B: I never heard of him.

P: It was in regard to this campaign--I don't know how he figured in.

B: A. J. Wirtz was the one that helped him more than anyone because he was really--he was experienced, having run for Senator for many years, and he was of a great value to Lyndon in his first race from practical experience having gone through it himself, you see.

P: Now you were back in San Antonio at this point?

B: I was then manager of the Maverick Estate at that point.

P: I was going to say--this last part of '37, from April 1937 when he won the election through to the following '38 when Mr. Maverick was unseated, they would have been Congressmen together. Do you know how their relation was during that period?

B: There was never any unfriendly relation between Maury and--I never heard of any unfriendly relations.

P: No, I was just--did they ever co-sponsor any bills that you know of?

B: Not that I know of.

P: In 1938, when Mr. Maverick did return home, you said that he began working on several of the WPA projects in that area. Am I correct?

B: Let's see, when was he mayor?

P: That was in the forties, wasn't it?

B: In '38--no he didn't. It was in the forties was when--no, no, that was in '38 because, you see, the war started in '41.

16

P: He came right back and was mayor; I think you're right. You said at this point he continued correspondence and working with--

B: Working with Lyndon as--Lyndon was then head of the NYA, you see.

P: No, he would have already been in Congress by this point.

B: Well, at the time that Maury was mayor, Lyndon was head of NYA because they helped build La Villita together. Then Maury was beat for mayor. I can't remember just what years that Maury served as mayor.

P: I don't have that written down, but I can check that easily enough.

B: But then after Lyndon went back to Congress, Maury kept on corresponding with him all the time; there was no unfriendly feeling at all. Maury kept up the correspondence on--he was a great letter writer.

P: Had Mr. Maverick figured in on Mr. Quill's appointment as postmaster at all? This is going back.

B: Mr. Quill was appointed temporary postmaster by Dick Kleberg. Then when Maury became Congressman, it was up to Maury to make him either permanent postmaster or get a new postmaster. We had the exams and we had to do some arguing and we made the recommendation and John Garner, who was Vice President, opposed it because a bunch--John Ball and that group wanted Algelt as postmaster--Mr. Algelt was a real estate man. Maury stuck by Dan Quill and made a speech at the Congressional and that the appointment of a postmaster was the Congressman's prerogative and not the Senator or the Vice President. He won his point and got the appointment made.

P: Mr. Maverick was the one that figured then?

B: As the permanent postmaster, yes.

P: Going back again further up, how did Mr. Maverick feel on the minimum wage problem?

B: He'd like to see them make more money because to use his expression to me,

"If a government man had one white shirt, he'd be able to get two white shirts." He was in favor of paying them more money.

P: Mr. Maverick was one of I think only two that voted for that in the Texas delegation. Is that correct? On the minimum wage issue. I believe that was quite a controversy here in the State.

B: I don't know who the two were but I know he was strong for the minimum wage.

P: Do you know how Mr. Johnson stood on this issue?

B: No, I don't. They were not in Congress together. Maury was not Congressman at the same time Lyndon was Congressman, I don't believe. Maury was Congressman and Lyndon was secretary.

P: Wasn't Mr. Maverick a Congressman for two terms?

B: Two terms.

P: That would make it '34 to '36 and '36 to '38, and Mr. Johnson resigned in '37 from the NYA.

B: But he couldn't take a seat until '38.

P: I thought since it was a special election on the death of a Representative--

B: It may have been--you may be correct, but I don't recall minimum wage coming up at that time when the two were Congressmen.

P: I'm not sure on that, on the date of when that came up. I was just wondering if you did.

B: I don't know how he stood on it. I know how Maury stood, but I don't know how Johnson stood.

P: How did Mr. Maverick stand on neutrality of this country--this is at the beginning of the war? It wasn't at the beginning of our commitment, but it was moving in Germany; or there was awareness of--

B: He was not isolationist by any means, if that's what you're--

P: Yes, it is.

B: He was no isolationist.

P: Did he make any speeches on the floor regarding this?

B: That I can't remember, but no doubt he did because he was certainly not an isolationist.

P: Do you remember the particular event where Mr. Maverick coined the phrase, "Gobblety-goop?"

B: That was in Smaller War Plants. He was chairman of Smaller War Plants. As I said, I was the general manager. And he got so tired of the various phrases that the Bureaus would send out and the war production would send out like, "They don't have the know-how," something like this, that one day he just said, "it all sounds like a bunch of gobblety-goop," and he popped off and told some newspapers about it and that's the way--said, "That's a bunch of gobblety-goop, bunch of talk--they don't know what they're talking about. They picked up a bunch of--"

P: How did that manage to catch on so quickly?

B: I don't know. It just struck the people's fancy, I guess.

P: Going on to 1941 when Mr. Johnson decided to run for the Senate--for Senator Morris Shepherd's unexpired term in April of 1941, did Mr. Maverick advise him on this at all? Do you know?

B: No, he didn't.

P: How did you happen to come in contact--did he contact you regarding helping in this campaign?

B: Yes.

P: What was your opinion of his chances for this?

B: After listening to him, I thought he had a pretty good chance. He's a very persuasive man. And who knew what Pappy O'Daniel was going to do at that time!

P: Do you think it was either an ill-advised timing or just the situation or why didn't he win the election?

B: It was more of a situation with who--Pappy O'Daniel was a freak in public office, you might say.

P: And he had appeal in Texas?

B: Yes, he did. Instead of answering a question, it would be, "Pass the biscuits, Pappy," you know. Everybody would drop a dime in, and when they'd put a dime in it, everybody would go vote for him. It was a new thing in politics. We didn't have singing; we didn't have guitar-playing for politics; and Pappy O'Daniel, as a flour salesman who had been on radio, came in with that, and it just caught on with the average person. They believed he was going to give them better pensions. He got in there and he cut the old-age pensions instead of increasing them. He was a phenomenal-- he was just a freak of politics.

P: Managing his campaign here in San Antonio, how did you try to counter the appeal that Pappy O'Daniel was gathering?

B: You never knew--he was the type of person that nobody said they'd vote for, they were ashamed to admit it, but they went and voted for him.

P: So you were surprised when--

B: Everybody was surprised, yes.

P: Do you think this defeat affected Lyndon Johnson?

B: Not a bit. He was just more determined than ever to run the next time. I doubt that he felt like that. He was known over Texas and could win and he did.

P: Did you have any contact other than this campaign of '41 with Johnson during the forties personally or through Mr. Maverick? This would be during his Congressional years. He was in the Navy, of course, during part of that time.

- B: Oh, yes, I went up to Washington with Mr. Maverick. After he was up there, he asked me to come up there. And I went up in December of '41. And then my wife came up there in January of '42.
- P: In what capacity were you serving Mr. Johnson?
- B: No, I say that was in '42. I was up there with Mr. Maverick in the War Production Board.
- P: Oh, I'm sorry, I thought you meant Mr. Johnson.
- B: Mr. Johnson then had gone into the Navy. My wife had worked in Mr. Johnson's office with Lady Bird and Mrs. Connally at that time just stamping out mail, free of charge. They all got in there and the women there just helped send out the mail and send out the literature while Lyndon was gone. And that was John Connally's wife, Bird, and my wife for awhile--we were up there--and donate her time.
- P: When he was reelected he was in the Navy, I believe, and his name was filed in his absence. Did they do this in his office?
- B: I don't recall that.
- P: I think it was in '42 when he was in the Navy and he was up for reelection.
- B: Oh, I'm sure it was done, but I don't recall it. I imagine his office filed it, or she did.
- P: What do you recall of this period of Lyndon Johnson's Congressional activities?
- B: During that time while I was in Washington in '42, going through that time while he was Congressman, he used to have open house ~~very often~~ *often on* Sunday and I'd go by to see him--my wife and I would go by. He entertained quite a lot. Well, he was in the war; there was not much--
- P: Do you think he had a special alliance to Franklin Roosevelt before his death?
- B: Oh, yes.

P: And Mr. Garner?

B: You see, he was an aide in the Navy first to Forrestal. Then he asked to be sent over to the Pacific and they granted it. After awhile Roosevelt recalled all Congressmen in service and made them all come back and serve as Congressmen. During that war period of time, there was not much, you would say, any outstanding legislation as I recall, because it was an all-out battle for war.

P: And what were Mr. Maverick's primary activities with the WPA?

B: He was with the War Production Board, granted priorities to cities and counties, and then went over--Donald Nelson then appointed him as chairman of the Smaller War Plant. General Johnson of Johnson and Johnson Meat, I believe it is--baby food--was then the chairman and didn't satisfy Mr. Donald Nelson, so he appointed Mr. Maverick as the chairman. And Maury went over as chairman of this \$200,000 corporation. His primary position was to get small business into war production. England had the same thing and they called it "Bits and Pieces of England." Instead of Smaller War Plants, it was "Bits and Pieces"; but in this country we called it the Smaller War Plants. We had to appear before the Congressional committees--I mean the Appropriations Committee, and ask for our appropriations. Maury's service as Congressman in that time, he knew the various Congressmen and he was treated with a great deal of respect. The fact is Senator Taft was one of his greatest supporters, even though the Republican hoped to be President of the United States--he was the best supporter I think that the Smaller War Plants had--was Senator Taft. Then of course when war was over, that abolished--the Bureau of the Budget transferred it over to the Department of Commerce. I left right after the war and I think Maury did too. Maury went to California.

- P: Did Mr. Maverick during this period deal specifically through Lyndon Johnson for appropriations or getting information regarding--
- B: No. He would have to go to the Appropriations Committee. Johnson was not on--
- P: He didn't lend help or assist in his--
- B: No, not at all.
- P: That brings us just about up to the '48 election when Mr. Johnson ran against Coke Stevenson and won by the famous 48-vote victory and gained the name "Landslide Lyndon." You said that you were at that point back here in Texas and Mr. Johnson asked you to--
- B: I got Adrian Spears to act as campaign manager.
- P: For Bexar County?
- B: Bexar County. Jimmie Knight was the commissioner of streets and public works here in San Antonio. I was working with Jimmie and what money we needed, I handled the arrangement of the money and so forth for the organization. People have always likened Lyndon to winning by--it was 83 votes and claimed it Duval County. The truth of the matter, the 83 votes were won in Bexar County. Bexar County went about 10,000 votes in the primary against Lyndon Johnson, and in the run-off, we changed it over and it was about 83 votes or 100 votes, something like that, for Lyndon Johnson. So really Bexar County is the guilty one and not Duval County.
- P: I think Duval County was one of the areas where it was highly contested--
- B: It was highly, but they always talk about that box and everybody thinks that box was in Duval County. It was not, it was in Jim Hogg County. And they all claimed George Parr was the one down there; his vote was the same as it was before, in the primary. And Bexar County votes were the ones that were changed over.

P: How did you manage to do that?

B: They just went to sleep up here and we got organized better. And Lyndon stayed over here more and he concentrated his efforts in this county.

P: Where were you able to solicit some support and funds, from whom?

B: Various ones. But I got the different factions, the Maverick factions and the Kilday factions together. And Owen Kilday said if I'd handle whatever money there was, he'd be satisfied if I'd handle it, so that the Maverick faction wouldn't get it and the Kilday faction wouldn't. So I was the middle-man in between. Although I was a Maverick man, they looked on me to handle it for them fairly.

P: Would you describe this Kilday-Maverick faction a little for me please, and how did it come about?

B: Kilday beat Maury for Congress. And Owen Kilday then, and Maury fired him when he got to be mayor--Maury fired Owen Kilday as chief of police and when he took his oath, he pointed down and he says, "You're fired," so there went Owen Kilday. And Owen then ran for sheriff and got elected sheriff. So you had practically everyone at the courthouse was a Kilday faction.

P: Was Kilday part of the machine?

B: The old machine was known when C. M. Chambers was no longer in existence.

P: Would these be part of the Citizens League?

B: No, it was part of the old machine, you might say.

P: Kilday's faction was?

B: Yes, part of the old machine.

P: And yet both the Kilday faction and the Maverick faction were willing to support Johnson over Stevenson?

B: That's right.

P: Why was this?

B: We just got them together.

P: Was Stevenson more objectionable to them?

B: Maybe Lyndon was more persuasive.

P: I believe Stevenson was considered a Tory Democrat at that time.

B: That's right.

P: What was your strategy in San Antonio to win over, or to promote Lyndon Johnson and the more liberal element here--

B: They didn't go on the basis of liberal or conservative in the fight. If you can get one faction, they're for Lyndon Johnson, and the other faction is for Lyndon Johnson, issues then, you know, you didn't go on whether this was a real liberal or that's a conservative. That issue wasn't brought up.

P: What group was supporting Coke Stevenson in San Antonio?

B: Those he had done favors for as Governor--appointees, many lawyers.

P: Did he have much campaign fund support from San Antonio?

B: Let's say both sides weren't lacking. Both sides there spent their money.

P: Was there any question in the San Antonio balloting regarding any of the ballots as there were in some of the other counties?

B: No.

P: There was no contesting?

B: We had voting machines.

P: Oh, you had voting machines instead of boxes?

B: As I recall, there was voting machines then. I may be wrong, but there was not any controversy; there wasn't any shouting about this box or that box.

P: Coke Stevenson went on, as you know, to take this into the court. Was there ever question in your mind that Mr. Johnson had won the election?

25

B: Not at all, because the Duval thing there hadn't changed from what it was in the first. Where the change was was Bexar County. Over 10,000 votes had changed here. They never questioned Bexar County.

P: And you don't have any idea where those 10,000 votes came from in San Antonio?

B: People just changed their minds. When you get two factions together. If they thought Maury was all for Lyndon Johnson, this other faction was going to be against him.

P: Is this between the time of the primary and the run-off?

B: Yes. But when you get both factions together--you say, "Well, I'm not going to be for him because Maury is for him;" or "I'm not going to be for him because Kilday is for him." But when you get Kilday say, "I'm for him, and Maury's for him," well this is the middle of the road. "Let's vote for him." You don't have that fight.

P: It's interesting to know that Bexar County was the one that really turned that election.

B: That's right. People don't realize this.

P: I don't think it's in some of the books either that are written.

Do you remember any particular anecdotes involving that campaign since Mr. Johnson did spend a good part of time in San Antonio?

B: I know this. On election day Mr. Johnson got Mr. Kilday and Mr. Maverick in the car with him and they rode around to the polls, so that they were all together.

P: Do you think that this was due in part to Mr. Johnson's persuasive personality?

B: That's correct, yes.

P: Was there an issue in Texas regarding his stand on, I think, Taft-Hartley?

Didn't that come up at that time?

B: He came out against it. Bexar County has never been a very strong labor town.

P: I believe Stevenson got the AFL to endorse him, didn't he?

B: Yes, but as far as Bexar County was concerned, it doesn't affect it. It hasn't--In those days labor vote just made lots of noise, but it didn't get out and vote. They never stick together.

P: To digress one moment, in the '41 campaign, had Roosevelt supported his decision to run for Senator?

B: Who?

P: Had Roosevelt supported Lyndon Johnson, or endorsed him, for the '41--

B: I don't think he endorsed him.

P: Do you know why he didn't?

B: No. I don't think he took an issue on those things. That's a fight among-- I don't recall Roosevelt ever coming out and endorsing someone unless there was a bitter fight against him. But in Texas, whoever ran was not-- it was not any of his business which one should be Senator. If it had been a Republican, though, that would have been a different thing. But a Democrat, two Democrats running together, the President never interfered with a thing like that.

P: In this '48 election, of course, this was the period when the civil rights issue was first introduced by Hubert Humphrey. Did that cause much furor--

B: That didn't come up through here at that time.

P: Do you know how Mr. Johnson stood on that issue at the time?

B: No, the records show that, but that was not an issue in this campaign in Bexar County.

P: Your capacity was solely within the limits of Bexar County?

B: Yes.

P: Have you attended any of the state conventions?

B: I never went.

P: Any of the national conventions?

B: No.

P: Since the 1948 election as Senator, have you had--

B: I'll take it back. I attended one state convention and I decided I'd never--. That was enough; I didn't want to go to any national or state convention any more.

P: When was that?

B: That was some time in, oh, right when Roosevelt and Al Smith--that was in Houston. You remember? I think Roosevelt nominated Al Smith as a "happy warrior"?

P: I don't personally remember, but I have read about it, yes.

B: You wander around and you don't know what you're doing unless you're on the inside.

P: Since 1948 have you had occasion to work with or for Mr. Johnson on any issues here in Bexar County?

B: No.

P: Have you kept up with correspondence with Mr. Johnson?

B: Since he has been President?

P: Since 1948. Well, let's say during his Senatorial years first and then--

B: Oh, on occasions, yes, I've had--seen him, not on a specific thing, maybe to help somebody. Somebody would ask me, "Would you try to get him to get my boy something on this?" or be of some help to somebody. Nothing personal. I've seen him while he was Senator, but I've never asked him anything personal at all. I've asked him ever now and then for somebody

who would ask me to write something. They're either going to Washington and want an entry to meet him or something of that type--that's all.

P: At this point there in Johnson's career, it has been said that he became much more of a conservative, if I may use that term to you. How do you feel about that charge?

B: I think some liberals are more confused as to what they're thinking about. They think they're liberal, but really they're confused human beings. I don't know whether Johnson is a liberal or a conservative. I hear some people that claim they're great liberals and they confuse me so because they don't know what they're talking about really.

P: Well, of course, the factional split during the fifties in this state became quite evident between the various--whether you want to use the labels conservatives and liberals, but they became pretty strong. If Johnson did align himself one way or the other, would this have been a political move on his part, do you think?

B: Yes. Just what are you referring to though? What split was there?

P: I would call it conservative versus the liberal. During the fifties; I think primarily it had to do with some of the oil issues that came before the Senate.

B: I don't recall any oil issues.

P: And of course this was the time also when the Dixiecrats--

B: You take, for instance, Governor Shivers, his appointees. Why, the people here, they considered him more of a Republican than a Democrat.

P: Governor Shivers, right. Well, this was the move of the Dixiecrats, too, I was speaking of at this point.

B: They were more Republican than they were Democrat. They ran on the Democratic ticket, but were Republican in their thoughts. They finally came out and

showed their colors. Shivers has now come out--he carried for Eisenhower, and he's now for Nixon. I mean he has been a Republican all along, although he has enjoyed the benefits as a Democrat by running on the Democratic ticket, because he couldn't get elected any other way. He's not honest in his thinking.

P: So you don't feel that this charge by some of the liberal factions in Texas is necessarily true regarding the conservative side of Lyndon Johnson?

B: No.

P: Since his Presidency, Mr. Bardwell, have you had occasion to see the President--see Mr. Johnson?

B: Yes, I've seen him up at the ranch on several occasions.

P: What were these occasions?

B: Well, he has invited me to come up there and visit the ranch. We'd drive around, show me what he's doing up at the ranch and his cattle. And this past week, I had the honor of being up there a couple of days and a night at the White House to meet the Prime Minister of New Zealand at a State Dinner. He told me he'd like to see me when he gets back to Texas before he goes out of office up at the ranch. It's been more of a personal basis, our friendship over the years.

P: What do you all discuss regarding his career and the future and his past Administration when you're sitting down talking with Mr. Johnson?

B: Well, you don't tell the President anything.

P: Has he asked your advice regarding any current issues?

B: No, you don't--now if the President--Harry Truman says one time to Mr. Jess McNeel when we went out here to see John Garner on his ninety-fifth or ninetieth birthday, I've forgotten which--and Truman and Johnson were there. And Harry Truman--and Mr. McNeel said, "I want to tell you something,

Mr. Truman--Mr. President." He says, "Now, wait a second, young man. You don't tell the President anything!" And I've often remembered that, so I have not told the President anything. There's only one President of the United States, and you don't tell him.

P: How does the man you know as Lyndon Johnson, as the President, compare with the man that you roomed with?

B: He's a very mature man, and I would say that a man that has gone through, or any man that goes through four years as President is bound to take the responsibility that wears on a person. And it's a very sobering effect to meet any man that has been President.

P: Has he changed much?

B: I would say he has changed. He's not the jovial man that he used to be. The weight of the world can wear anybody down. Truman too. When I was Maury's secretary, Eisenhower was attached to the Military Affairs Committee. I used to call him up and have him bring a bill over. I'm sure he wouldn't do it today, but he was a very jovial man. But you wouldn't say during his Administration he was as happy a man as he was when he was Major and Colonel there on the Military Affairs Committee. You can't serve four years with the decisions you have to make. It may not suit you, but it's got to be what he thinks is good for the entire United States. And that's awfully hard.

P: Over the years Mr. Johnson's approach on a lot of things has been using his persuasive techniques and personality. Do you think he has lost this now? They call his consensus--

B: I don't think I--whether he has lost it or not in the past year or two-- I don't know whether he has used it, we'll put it that way, like he did when he was in the Senate because the weight has been too strong on him.

I don't know exactly how to express it. Being a salesman, I wish I had a way of being as persuasive as he is when he wants to be, I'll say that.

P: Mr. Johnson has not recently gotten a very good press. What do you think is the cause of this?

B: You know, I guess there's maybe about--it used to be the Duponts and the Morgans and so forth in the fight, but today there's about five people--the head of ABC, head of NBC, and the head of CBS, the New York Times, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch--they mold the public opinions today; and they all seem to be against him. Once you get the people that mold the public opinion like that, you haven't got much of a chance. I don't think you have the writers that you did in the newspaper business and the great writers like we had in the forties. I don't think you have the same type of people in the newspaper business as your columnists back in those days. Your press is being combined, your newspapers are being combined, too many people are being thrown out of work. I mean the old-time newspaperman.

P: How do you think Mr. Johnson feels about this?

B: I don't know.

P: Has he ever discussed that with you at all?

B: No.

P: Has he ever discussed the Viet Nam war with you?

B: I've not asked him to. When I've been up there, I've felt it was my duty to just keep his mind off anything pertaining to his office.

P: Were you surprised at his March 31st withdrawal? Running for a second term?

B: Yes, I was. Then after analyzing it, I wasn't.

P: Why do you say that?

B: I feel that he felt there that he could do more to bring on peace that he was being blamed for over this if he didn't run than if he stayed in there and tried to run.

P: Do you think he would have won if he had--well, say he had gotten the nomination; do you think he could have won the election?

B: That's a hard thing to say. You know it's awfully hard to be the man that's in the power of the Office of the President, but just what he would have done I don't know. I can't answer that question.

P: Did you think he might change his mind before--

B: No. When he had made that statement, I knew he'd never change his mind. He made it too plain. If you knew Johnson when he said that, you'd know there was no ifs and ands. He wouldn't change his mind at all.

P: Do you think his health figured in on that at all?

B: No, but bringing up his children might have. I heard him one day say his daughter called him over crying--I was up at the ranch, and she was crying out, he said--said that they told her she had failed in such-and-such a grade, and the rumor had gotten out and they hadn't even graded the cards. I mean, the cards had never been graded, but they'd gotten out stories on her and every other thing like that. And he says, "You don't know how hard it is on my children." The newspapers had published stories about his daughter and it wasn't so, I mean about failing in some grade. They hadn't even graded the thing.

P: This was his daughter Luci in the National Cathedral?

B: ~~_____~~ Yes.

~~_____~~

~~_____~~

P: Regarding his family, many people say that Mrs. Johnson is one of his strongest aides and helpmates.

B: I think so. I think she's one of the greatest women that has been in the White House in a long time.

P: Why do you say this?

B: Because she has been such a help to her husband; she is charming; she has grown in stature and her mental outlook on things from when I knew her back, first met her.

P: How do you recall Mrs. Johnson as you first knew her?

B: She was a young girl that was studying journalism, full of vigor just like you are; but today, she's mature and has grown great as she has gotten older and studied. She constantly reads and she knows what to do.

P: Some people say that Mr. Johnson does seek her guidance in a lot of issues. Do you think this may be so?

B: I hope he does.

P: Do you think she might be a stabilizing influence on him?

B: I think any good wife is a stabilizing influence on a man, and I hope he does seek her advice because I know she would give him good advice.

P: To what do you think has arisen the charge of the credibility gap with the Johnson Administration and Johnson himself personally?

B: You mean with the youth of our nation?

P: Well, it's not only the youths that have picked it up. The newspapers say it, too, that Mr. Johnson may say one thing and do another, or say one thing and counter it.

B: I don't know that I follow you there that he may say one thing and do another. He has been very consistent as far as I know in doing what he said. He has been a pretty good poker player.

P: Oh, he is?

B: He doesn't play cards, but I'd say I'd hate to play poker with him because he's not going to show you the whole card right till the last.

P: Do you think this might be more responsible for it?

B: Yes.

P: The newspapers have reported on various occasions where he supposedly has indicated that something was going to be done this way or so-and-so was going to be appointed and the person was not, or the occasion did not happen, and I think this has generally come to be termed as the credibility gap with what Johnson says and what he does. You don't give any substance to this charge at all?

B: No.

P: How do you think history will rate Lyndon Johnson?

B: Well, I imagine there's two things. First for the advancement on legislation that we've gotten. Kennedy could get through practically no legislation. All the legislation that was gotten through was by Johnson, like Medicare and all of this other.

P: Civil rights.

B: All of that was gotten by Johnson. We talk about Kennedy being a great President, but if you can name me many pieces of legislation that he was able to get through--I don't know of any.

P: Could you compare Mr. Johnson to Mr. Roosevelt?

B: I think that's an unfair question.

P: Why do you say that?

B: Well, I still say that's an unfair question. I think people are afraid now that they're going to dig up--that he would be like Jesus Christ and come back to life again. You know, lots of people that hate him, but to me he was so great, and I think Truman, too.

P: Mr. Bardwell, do you have any concluding remarks to say regarding Lyndon Johnson's career or his Administration and his Presidential Administration?

B: No, I don't at the present time. I think I've given you about as much
as I can right now.

P: I certainly do appreciate it and thank you very much.

B: All right.

**GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE**

Gift of Personal Statement

By Malcolm G. Bardwell

to the

Lyndon Baines Johnson Library

In accordance with Sec. 507 of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, as amended (44 U.S.C. 397) and regulations issued thereunder (41 CFR 101-10), I, M. G. Bardwell, hereinafter referred to as the donor, hereby give, donate, and convey to the United States of America for eventual deposit in the proposed Lyndon Baines Johnson Library, and for administration therein by the authorities thereof, a tape and transcript of a personal statement approved by me and prepared for the purpose of deposit in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library. The gift of this material is made subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Title to the material transferred hereunder, and all literary property rights, will pass to the United States as of the date of the delivery of this material into the physical custody of the Archivist of the United States.
2. It is the donor's wish to make the material donated to the United States of America by terms of this instrument available for research as soon as it has been deposited in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.
3. A revision of this stipulation governing access to the material for research may be entered into between the donor and the Archivist of the United States, or his designee, if it appears desirable.
4. The material donated to the United States pursuant to the foregoing shall be kept intact permanently in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

Signed

Malcolm G. Bardwell

Date

11/25/64

Accepted

Sam F. Williamson, Jr.
Archivist of the United States

Date

4-30-73