

INTERVIEWEE: DAVID BELL (Tape #1)

INTERVIEWER: PAIGE E. MULHOLLAN

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M: Let's begin by identifying you. You're David E. Bell, and your last government service was as administrator of the Agency for International Development from which you resigned in June 1966?

B: July. At least, I left at the end of July.

M: Previous to that you had been director of the Bureau of the Budget under the Kennedy administration, and that had been your only government service since the time of the Truman administration. Is that correct?

B: Yes, that's right. To be precise about it, I was budget director in 1961 and '62. President Kennedy named me as administrator of AID in late December of '62.

M: Let's go back to your first government service--or the early years of your government service--when you were a staff member of the Bureau of the Budget, and later an administrative assistant to Mr. Truman. Did you ever have occasion in those years to encounter Mr. Johnson, then Senator Johnson, in any way?

B: Not that I recall, no. I obviously knew who he was and knew about him, but the first strong recollection I have of being acquainted with him was in the early months of the Kennedy administration, when he was Vice **P**resident.

M: You later had a position of fairly close personal contact with the presidency during the Kennedy years and part of the Johnson years,

but you also were in a very interesting position of having been a staff member of the President in the early '50's as well. How does the staff setup of the presidency compare with the time when you were an administrative assistant in the White House in 1952 and '53 under Kennedy and Johnson? How has it changed?

B: Since the Truman years?

M: Between the Truman years and the present.

B: I've always been impressed by the similarities, by the extraordinary parallel between the arrangements in the Truman White House and the arrangements in the Kennedy and Johnson White Houses. The parallel is a little closer between the Truman years and the Kennedy years, but not all that much different. My overall impression is that the President needs types of staff assistants which reflect themselves in the staffing patterns of these different White House groups.

For example, in the Truman years, there was the position of special counsel--which indeed I think Mr. Truman inherited from Mr. Roosevelt although I wasn't around at that time. Sam Rosenman had the job and then Clark Clifford and Charlie Murphy. It was astonishing to me, in the early days of the Kennedy administration, how closely parallel Ted Sorenson's duties were to those of Murphy and Clifford--whom I knew very well and worked for. Sorenson even sat in the same office in the west wing. While there was some uncertainty for awhile under Mr. Johnson, that's the office where Joe Califano sits today, and the functions that Joe Califano performs under Mr. Johnson

are very close to the functions that Ted Sorenson performed for Kennedy and Murphy and Clifford successively performed for Harry Truman.

It seems to me that this reflects the need of a president to have a senior staff officer who helps him prepare major policy positions, and to prepare the documents that express those policy positions, which are formal messages to Congress, veto messages, formal statements to various groups that want him to express himself, and speeches. They can verge all the way from formal messages to Congress to straight-out **political** speeches, their common characteristic being the expression of the President's views on major policy issues. The staff work leading to the development of those views, and the staff work leading to the expression of those views, is what, it seems to me, binds together the people that I mentioned.

Another illustration is the assistant for National Security Affairs. That was a rather less-clear assignment in the Truman years. Admiral Sydney Souers, assisted by Jimmy Lay, had responsibility for many elements of that job in the Truman years, but the Naval aide to the President, who during much of the Truman period was Robert Dennison, still had some of the duties--which was a hangover from the days of Admiral Leahy in the War Room in the basement of the White House.

M: Map room.

B: Yes, the map room in the basement of the White House, which was a communications center, staffed by naval officers. Indeed, that was how Clifford and George Elsey got into the White House, via the map room.

Because of that heritage of World War II, the Naval Aide during the Truman years was much more involved in matters of policy and of the communication of intelligence to the President, than were the other two Aides. The Naval Aides were not reduced to mainly a formal job until the Eisenhower years, so that the recent clarity surrounding first, Bundy's job under Kennedy and later, Walt Rostow's job under Johnson, was not so evident in the Truman years.

In addition, the nature of the national security problem was not so clearly visible in those days, so the parallel is not as precise between the Truman White House and the later White Houses. But, nevertheless, there's enough there to impress one more with the degree of similarity than with the degree of difference.

M: It suggests the need for a chief of staff that might--

B: Well, there's another point. None of those three presidents, Truman, Kennedy, and Johnson, none of them used a chief of staff. And I think they were right. It seems to me that the chief of staff concept, which Eisenhower did use, made the White House a relatively arid and rigid and procedure-bound place. It made it harder for the incumbent President to move quickly and flexibly and to bring different slants to bear on problems that confronted him.

I wasn't there in the Eisenhower years so I'm repeating hearsay and going by inference. But he must have gotten through the chief of staff system a least common denominator product. Somebody else had mashed it together.

M: Homogenized.

B: Homogenized it, exactly, and put it before the President, and he was supposed to sign at the bottom of the page. Well, neither Truman nor Kennedy nor Johnson would have stood that for a second. In my opinion they were right. That is part of being a vigorous and effective President--refusing to accept a homogenized product, insisting on having the alternatives presented, the different points of view presented, not making up your mind until you've heard the case argued on both sides or however many sides there are on the particular issue.

In my observation and opinion a strong and effective President has to be in the middle of the policy making process himself, personally. That requires him to have several voices on his own staff and not to have everything come through a single channel. I suppose there are arguments to be made on the other side but, as you can see, I hold fairly firm views on this issue.

M: Your views are awfully important here, of course.

After you became director of the Bureau of the Budget under the Kennedy administration, you mentioned that you got to know Mr.

Johnson fairly well then. Did he take an active role in the business of the Bureau of the Budget in some way that put you in contact with him?

B: Yes, I got to know him, you might say, from two points of view-- or in two different ways. One is that as Vice President he was, of course, a participant in cabinet meetings, in NSC meetings, in all sorts of meetings on different subjects where I also happened to be present or whose business I was concerned with as budget director. In other words his broad responsibilities as Vice President brought him into contact with a wide range of issues which the budget director was also concerned with.

Secondly, the Vice President had certain specific responsibilities and certain specific interests which he pursued directly and which involved the budget director and budget issues. Perhaps the one that brought me personally into the most extensive contact with him in the early days was his role as chairman of what I think was called the Space Council.

M: Yes. It has a long exact title, but that's close enough.

B: Anyway, that was a particular field in which he had been given responsibility by President Kennedy. It involved very important budgetary questions. I can recall discussing those personally with him once or twice. But it also involved a very extensive process of liaison because the Vice President held a series--two or three series

I guess--of meetings leading to the preparation of policy documents to put before President Kennedy, as to what the national space policy ought to be.

We assigned at his request a senior budget bureau officer to work with him, to participate in his meetings, as he put together those policy views. The man in question was Willis Shapley who is, I think, still a senior officer in the budget bureau, a very good man--who had a scientific background and a lot of prior experience. He had been on the budget bureau staff for some years when I became director. So he would attend the Vice President's meetings and make suggestions and raise questions.

He also kept me informed as to what the stage of development was, because as budget director I had, in a sense, a dual role. I was responsible for supporting the Vice President and giving him such help as we could as he put together his recommendations. In addition, as an officer reporting directly to the President, I had to make up my own mind on the same questions and state them to the President at the appropriate time. They were not necessarily identical with the judgments the Vice President came to. There were about three stages of the space business that spring and I don't remember all of it in detail today. There was the immediate question of what should be done with the Eisenhower budget. Then there was the question of what should we add, and along in March or thereabouts, we added something--but it was a limited add-on. At that stage we

deliberately reserved the question of going to the moon. Then it was about in May that the President finally decided that he did think that was an important objective and he made his speech to the Congress, whose culmination we have just seen this morning. A magnificent culmination, and in those days, incidentally, there was great skepticism expressed as to whether, even if we set out to reach the moon by 1970 it could conceivably be done.

M: Is Mr. Johnson important in making this decision?

B: Yes, he was. In my opinion he was. He went into the matter extensively before the President did, as his job required him to do as chairman of the Space Council. He became a strong advocate of making the decision to have a strong program including the objective of getting to the moon. If I remember rightly the interim decision-- whenever it was, in March or April--he would have gone further at that time. I and others recommended at that point we should not go further. Then at the time of the later decision in May, the President and the Vice President were in accord. I can't recall that by then there was any strong opposition from any of the President's advisers on the general question of setting the target of going to the moon.

M: You mentioned your role in making decisions as director of the budget as a district one from your serving on various councils and things of this nature. Again, with your opportunity to view the budget bureau over a twenty-odd year period in its development, have the Kennedy-

Johnson administrations used the budget bureau to a greater extent as a policy-making body than their predecessors did, or is this also--

B: This has been a fairly consistent policy or practice on the part of the Democratic Presidents. Incidentally, I want to go back in a minute and pick up a point about the other aspect of the Vice President as I saw in the early days of the Kennedy administration.

M: Don't ever let me limit you, you wander around.

B: To answer this question, it began in the Roosevelt years. The budget bureau, when it was established in the early 1920's, was established as a bureau within the treasury department--which was an anomalous position because the Budget and Accounting Act of 1921 from the beginning was clear in placing the responsibility for preparing the national budget on the President. The budget that went to the Congress was to be the President's budget. He was to have the responsibility for balancing, or for weighing, the conflicting priorities and different purposes. He had to put together a budget which was related to the resources that were going to be available. That was the whole point of the thing. The President could not just send up a series of separate recommendations without ever adding up the total and saying where the money was going to come from. It was a very sound idea and a very proper one. It's the heart of the budget concept.

To give the President that responsibility but to put the staff help for him in the treasury department under the Secretary of the

Treasury was an arrangement which had some drawbacks, because in effect it made the Secretary of the Treasury and the Budget Director sort of double advisers to the President, and it put the staff two steps down in the treasury department, not available immediately to help the President. So in the 1930's there was a famous committee on administrative management. Louis Brownlow and Luther Gulick and Charles Merriam were the three members.

The Brownlow, Gulick, Merriam committee made a lot of recommendations, but one of the things they did was to recommend the establishment of the executive office of the President, and the main element of the executive office of the President was to be the Bureau of the Budget, transferred out of the treasury department and placed in direct relationship with the President. This was done by reorganization plan, I think, in 1939.

The first director was Harold Smith who had been budget director of the State of Michigan. Smith was an activist and a very vigorous man, and Roosevelt began using Smith and the budget bureau as an important staff resource for him, and so did the people who worked directly for Roosevelt in the White House. For example, in those days, the budget bureau had a fiscal division which included a group of economists, --Gerhardt Colm and Everett Hagan and Arthur Smithies were all members. During World War II and immediately afterwards this was the group which performed, insofar as

anybody did, the functions that today are performed by the Council of Economic Advisers--that is, to give the President direct advice on economic policy issues, going beyond budget issues to issues of fiscal policy and so on.

Another strong element in the budget bureau's work in the war years was the so called administrative management work. Don Stone was the head of the Division of Administrative Management during the war. Bernard Gladieux was a senior staff man; so were Elmer Staats, Charlie Stauffacher and various others. This Division of Administrative Management, and particularly the war organization section under Gladieux, were responsible for designing the organization of the federal government for the war effort, and writing the successive executive orders that established the War Production Board, and OPA and the other World War II agencies.

So the budget bureau under Roosevelt was a very strong and useful staff instrument, with budget functions proper plus administrative organization and management functions, plus economic policy functions, plus of course the legislative reference function, meaning to try to get the executive branch to speaking with one voice to the Congress on a pending piece of legislation. The budget bureau stayed strong in all those aspects until the establishment of the Council of Economic Advisers, which also was within the executive office of the President. Thereafter much of the bureau's previous work on economic policy advice to the President became the responsibility of the Council of

Economic Advisers. But still the budget bureau had all the other functions and participated, of course, even on economic policy matters. That's roughly the situation today. And budget directors under Mr. Truman were accustomed to being policy officers. Then under President Eisenhower a series of men were appointed as budget director who by-and-large had a much more limited view of the budget director's function. They were typically men who had accounting or banking experience. They were good men in many ways but they were not accustomed to dealing with major issues of governmental policy, and the budget bureau's role in the Eisenhower years in some respects was a more limited one. This point could be exaggerated, because President Eisenhower gave very high importance to the position of budget director and the budget director was in fact, technically, a formal member of President Eisenhower's cabinet, which was not the case before him nor has it been the case since. But in any event, the budget bureau was a somewhat less policy-oriented group during the Eisenhower years.

Then under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson with a series of economists as budget directors--and economists with an operational instinct which was true of all of us: myself, Kermit Gordon, Charlie Schultz and Charlie Zwick--again the bureau was typically involved with all sorts of policy questions as a matter of course. And the Presidents--both of them, Kennedy and Johnson--have looked to the bureau as natural and appropriate participants in the policy making process.

M: So it's not so much a change as a revival.

B: Exactly, that's the way it seemed to me.

M: It has made it seem to some that it has been a different--

B: Now if I may go back to the earlier point.

I said earlier that I became acquainted with Mr. Johnson in the early part of the Kennedy administration, both in his capacity of being responsible for certain special things, like Space Council, and in his capacity as a general member of President Kennedy's administration.

I can cite an illustration of the latter. Some matter had come up--I don't remember now what the matter was but it had to do with an appropriation--and Vice President Johnson wanted to impress upon me as a new budget director the extraordinary importance, in his view, of being careful to inform and to work with and to be acquainted with the individual members of the House Appropriations Committee. I can remember him sitting me down on a couch in the Oval Room in the basement of the White House where there's an entrance out to the back driveway.

I think the way it happened was that we were leaving a meeting and he wanted to make this point to me and we sat down on the couch and he made it very forcefully indeed, and he was absolutely right. It was a very important point to get across to a budget director who had not until that time spent much time directly dealing with members of the Congress. What the then-Vice President was saying to me was that those men on the Hill are accustomed to

taking great pains and to knowing exactly where they stand and where other people stand on the issues that are before them. He wanted me to understand that no slipshod work would do in dealing with them. You had to think ahead and work as hard as they were working and think about what they were going to want to know about next, and be ready for the next question.

To impress on me how they never slept, so to speak, he told me a story as he is wont to do to emphasize a point, about an episode that happened in the late 1930's. It may have been 1939, but I can't remember precisely, at which time an opening came up on the Appropriations Committee and then-Congressman Lyndon Johnson very badly wanted to have that job, that appointment as a member of the Appropriations Committee of the House. He worked hard to make the arrangements. He was positive that he had considered every angle and taken account of every potentiality and was going to get the position himself. At that point he had to go into the hospital for a very brief period, two days or something like that, and by the time he came out the whole thing had disappeared and another Texan had received the post. The other Texan was a well-known man, Albert something or other, from Houston, I believe.

M: Albert Thomas?

B: Albert Thomas, that's right. Albert Thomas had claimed the job on the Appropriations Committee that Lyndon Johnson had wanted, and he

had done it by being just a little more persistent and just a little more careful to stay with the job until it was absolutely signed, sealed, and delivered than Lyndon Johnson had been. He did not tell me this to suggest that Albert Thomas had done anything improper or unfair in any way. He had a very high opinion of Albert Thomas. They were very good friends. He was just illustrating how careful one needed to be in dealing with members of Congress.

You can see by the vividness with which I recall the story seven years later that he made his point very well to me as budget director. But the point I'm making is that this had nothing particular to do with the elements of the program that he was directly responsible for. This was just his role as a general adviser to the new government, the new members of the administration, on a subject that he knew extremely well, which was how to work effectively with the members of the Congress.

M: Did he ever, after that time or any time during your service in the Kennedy administration, act while Vice President as a sort of legislative liaison capacity to your knowledge? Was this a way in which Mr. Kennedy used Mr. Johnson?

B: It's my impression that he did, but I don't believe I can cite any illustrations or give you any documentation for that at this point. I certainly have the strong impression that the President asked the

Vice President to help on different elements of the legislative program. Ted Sorenson, Larry O'Brien would be, of course, better sources than I on that subject.

M: Did he offer his advice on economic policy matters unsolicited to you as Bureau of the Budget director or to what they call now the Troika? Did they call it that then?

B: Yes, the Troika was invented while I was there.

M: Did he offer the Troika his advice frequently?

B: The Vice President?

M: Yes, as Vice President.

B: Not through me, but it would have been more natural for him to do so through Walter Heller who was in a sense the convener of the Troika. He wasn't the chairman of it. We didn't use a chairman, but he took more initiative in establishing it than Dillon or myself. I suspect that if the Vice President wanted to have an impact on its deliberations, he would have rung up Heller rather than I.

M: In 1962 you moved over to the AID. That caused some comment in the press at the time, that was known as the nastiest job in the government based on its part performance. Is it a fair question to ask you why you would take on such a task as that?

B: Yes, I took it on in the first place because President Kennedy asked me to do so. When he first spoke to me about it I suggested it was a job that required above all else the development of effective

relations with the Congress. That was not a field in which I had much experience--none at all before the Kennedy administration and very little as budget director except to some extent with the Appropriations Committee and the Ways and Means Committee. There were men who seemed to me to be more natural candidates for the AID job because they had much more experience with the Congress and were better at it. I cited Sargent Shriver, who was then of course head of the Peace Corps; Ros Gilpatrick, who was then deputy secretary of defense. I probably offered some other names because this was not a job I particularly relished undertaking.

On the other hand, when the President decided he wanted to ask me to do it, then the choice was relatively simple. I worked for Mr. Kennedy, and I could either move over to AID as he asked me to do or I could resign. At that point another very important element of my own background came into play. During the Eisenhower years I had become much interested in economic development and, indeed, spent three and a half years in Pakistan as the field head of a group of advisers to the Pakistan government on their development planning. This was a team that was recruited by then-Dean Edward Mason of the Littauer School at Harvard and financed by the Ford Foundation. The first contact I ever had with the Ford Foundation was on that project.

Then when I returned to Harvard in 1957 from Pakistan, I continued to be primarily concerned with economic development,

teaching that subject part-time and also helping to manage the Pakistan project and another one in Iran that had been started later.

So I had direct experience in developing countries and I had an academic interest in the problems of economic development. In both respects I was a more natural candidate for the AID job than anybody else who'd ever been in the job, because it's a new subject and most of the people who had been AID administrators, or the equivalent position under earlier organizational arrangements, had not actually had field experience nor had they made any academic study of the subject. Certainly, I could make no case that I was less qualified than the ordinary government person for this job, as I had a very strong interest in the subject and a very deep commitment to it. None of this meant I relished going to the AID job, nobody would.

M: Why is that, why is it such a man-killing job?

B: Because the man in that job has to spend an enormous amount of his time and his energy in trying to persuade a very reluctant, frequently a hostile, Congress to vote the money that is needed. As in the old cliché, which is very true, the foreign aid program has not constituency. No senator and no representative has any strong group of people who are pressing him from his home base to do more for foreign aid.

I think it is true to say also that most senators and representatives do not face a strong hostility to foreign aid from their own constituents, but they do face skepticism. There are individuals in most everybody's constituency who say, "Why should we spend all that money abroad when we've got all these problems at home?" So that most senators and congressmen approach this subject with distaste, if not with opposition. Even those who strongly favor it feel that they have to defend themselves against people in their own constituencies, and they do not get any credit in an electoral sense for their support. So they're in a position of having to do something they may regard as a civic duty, but they don't relish it.

There are quite a few members of Congress of course who are very violent opponents of the foreign aid program. Some of those have very powerful positions; Otto Passman, of course, is the most conspicuous. He's the chairman--was chairman the years I was there and still is--of the subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee that deals with this subject.

So the time and energy of the AID administrator are very heavily devoted to trying to persuade reluctant congressmen, or hostile congressmen, to support the President's recommendations, or as much of them as they can be brought to support. In doing that of course one spend not only a great deal of time on the Hill but also going around the country making speeches, trying to

persuade newspaper men, newspaper editors, influential people all over the country of the merits of the case for foreign aid.

Now that part of the job was almost totally unappealing to me. That's not true I assume of all AID administrators, but it would be true of most. The part of the job that was appealing to me was to work seriously on the development problems of the low-income countries. I would have been delighted to spend my time being concerned about the development problems of Brazil and Chile and India and Pakistan and Korea and all the other countries that we were involved in, going and visiting those places, trying to devise the proper U.S. Government strategy in order to get the maximum development effect for the dollars that we had available through the foreign aid program.

But the way the job exists I had the smaller part of my time, so to speak, to be concerned with the major part of the problem--that is to say, the major part of the development problem. I had to put the bulk of my time on the job of persuasion of the Congress.

Now, I'm not trying to make myself out a martyr here. This is the nature of the job. But you asked me why it is difficult and why it is wearing and why a man wouldn't look forward to it. That's the answer.

M: One of the things I was driving at, I believe--didn't you participate in the task force that originally drew up the AID administrative positions along with Mr. Ball and Walt Rostow and others?

B: That's right.

M: Is there some fault in the administrative set-up?

B: I would be unable today to draft a better administrative arrangement, with very small exceptions. I might make one or two suggestions around the edges, but basically the AID organizational pattern, it seems to me, is the best you could devise. The AID administrator, under the statute was written in 1961, reports to the secretary of state and the President, which is a very powerful position.

M: Sort of a peculiar position though. Wouldn't that ever get in the way of bureaucratic obstruction by maybe the professional state department--

B: But the point is, you see, under that arrangement there was plenty of room for argument--indeed, it was invited--between, say, the assistant secretary of state for Africa and the assistant administrator of AID for Africa. But the point is the two of them were on a par so far as their status was concerned. Neither commanded the other.

In the Eisenhower administration most of us felt that the people in ICA, as it then was, were improperly subordinated to the state department people, so that the assistant secretary of state for Africa actually was on top of the ICA man for Africa. The

then-ICA administrator, under these circumstances, did not command his own troops so to speak. It was very hard for him to develop a policy and to hold to it.

This was different under the Kennedy administration arrangements, which still are in existence today. The AID administrator had direct access to the secretary of state. Any time the assistant secretary for Africa and the assistant administrator for Africa differed, the issue went up to the AID administrator and the secretary.

Now, the secretary could decide against the AID administrator's advice. It happened very rarely in my tenure; I can remember one time the secretary of state decided something against my recommendation--on an AID question, that is. But it was his privilege to do so. That was the conception of the arrangement, that foreign aid being essentially a part of U.S. government foreign policy, the secretary of state should be the determining element.

But the AID legislation even allows an exception to that. It even allows the AID administrator if he wishes, to appeal all the way to the President. The statute was so drafted--which is a very strong position for him to be in. Now I never appeal to the President.

But I frequently made sure that the members of the White House staff who were concerned with foreign aid matters were aware of the progress of an issue as it was moving up through the state

and AID channels. I might well try to organize the situation in such a way that at least somebody on the White House staff might have expressed a judgment as well as the AID people and that the secretary was aware of the views there before he and I had to decide how to settle a particular matter.

So the AID, as an organization, it seems to me--the way it was set up in the Kennedy administration--has the appropriate degree of independence from the state department. Some have argued that AID ought to be to be totally independent of the state department and the head of AID report to the President. I don't see that that gains anything. I think that that's not necessary and would simply add one more agency for the President to try to keep track of. It's a matter of opinion and some would differ. But it doesn't trouble me that I reported to the secretary of state, so long as I had the opportunity as I did, or AID does under the present arrangements, to develop a policy and sustain it against the contrary views of people at lower echelons at the state department--or for that matter, in other agencies.

M: That was my next question. What about the administrator of AID's position vis-a-vis, say, the secretary of agriculture in the case? You've got a lot of USDA people out in these development programs--commerce people.

B: The relationships with the Department of Agriculture were sometimes strained and there was an interagency committee involved, which is always a complicated and cumbersome piece of machinery.

But the essential point there is that under the Food for Peace Program, the secretary of agriculture controls a substantial part of the resources that are available for aid purposes. He didn't get them from the AID administrator. He controls them directly. There's an authorization and appropriation to the secretary of agriculture, so that you have to have some sort of cooperative relationship between the agriculture department and AID. Both have significant resources and they have to work out ways by which those resources will be well used and well applied to achieve U.S. objectives. It is complicated. We thought about this often. We struggled with it many times and never found a better way than the way that now exists.

We also had important relationships with the Department of Defense on military aid; and with the Export-Import Bank; and with the treasury department because the treasury department has the responsibility for giving instructions and guidance to the U.S. representatives on the international banks: the World Bank, the Asian Bank, the Inter-American Bank and so on. So all of these make the AID picture a very complicated one. But, I repeat, it seemed to me when the present machinery was designed in the Kennedy years, that it was as good as could be done and I still think so.

Now, when President Johnson became President, one of the questions that he raised right away and had examined in the early weeks of his administration at the end of 1963 and the beginning of 1964 was the question whether the AID arrangement that I've just been describing, while it might be efficient from the standpoint of getting something done overseas, was equally efficient from the standpoint of getting maximum support from the Congress for foreign aid. He said, in effect, why don't we fragment the present AID program and the present AID organization and put the development-lending, say, with the Export-Import Bank, put the military aid with the defense department, put technical assistance somewhere else, give the supporting assistance activities to the state department because they are used essentially for political purposes, as distinct from developmentally-oriented AID purposes. He appointed a special committee, if I'm not mistaken. George Ball and I were both members and in addition there was Gene Black, quite possibly Bob Anderson--I don't remember who else; it's all in the records. And he asked that group to pursue this question, which they did. Papers were written offering various kinds of alternatives.

My own impression was that George Ball was rather attracted to these ideas to begin with, and at one stage there was quite serious thought given to fragmenting the AID agency, leaving the under secretary of state for economic affairs as a sort of coordinator. I thought this would have been wrong. I thought it was wrong in terms of efficiency, of having an impact on the development problem in the

low-income countries. In addition I thought there was no persuasive evidence that it would receive stronger support in the Congress than the present arrangement.

M: Certainly the state department hasn't got a very good batting average over there.

B: So, when Ball and I reported this question or issue to the President he said, "Well, why don't you go up and find out?" So over a period of a week or so Ball and I went to see all the leaders of the Congress we could get hold of--of the substantive committees, that is, Fulbright and Hickenlooper and Mansfield and Aiken, also Humphrey in those days, who was majority whip and also a member of the Foreign Relations Committee--the Senate Appropriations people, Hayden and Pastore and Ellender; and other leading people who had views on this subject like John Sherman Cooper; in the House the leadership people, Carl Albert, John McCormack, Jerry Ford; the appropriations people, George Mahon, Otto Passman, and the Republican counterparts; the authorization committee, Doc Morgan and Clem Zablocki, who was number two, and the senior Republican, I guess Mrs. Bolton. And we also probably talked to our friend from Indiana--

M: Bradman?

B: No, the Republican, the senior Republican on the Foreign Affairs Committee, very quiet gentlemanly fellow.

M: I can't recall his name.

B: Who has antimacassars on the arms of his chair and gives you tea when you call on him in his office. Ross Adair is his name, I think. He's strongly opposed to the AID program, but in a very quiet tone of voice--very easy to go and see.

M: If you don't expect very much.

B: Exactly. You arrive at a total impasse very quickly in the sense of what you think and what he thinks. Anyway, all these people had very different views--very different views of what was right and what was wrong.

In a sense, one of the key questions was, suppose you split economic assistance and military assistance and put the military assistance over in the defense department. What will that do? Will that give you more support from the Congress for aid or less support? You got conflicting views.

And on all the other issues. What about putting development loans with the Export-Import Bank as distinct from leaving them separate? What about putting supporting assistance in the state department as against leaving them separate, etc., etc.? Otto Passman said, in effect, "It doesn't make any difference how you organize it. I'm going to put it all together in the same bill anyway!" So all of this was reported to the President. It obviously led, or it seemed to me and I think to George, that it led to no obvious conclusion.

So then the President, before closing the issue, invited all these fellows down to dinner at the White House. It was a kind of classic occasion. I don't know if anybody wrote it down at the time, but it was a great evening in the sense of an object lesson in how the American government works. Most of the people I've named were invited to dinner. We had dinner in that upstairs dining room. I don't know whether they call it the family dining room--it's the family dining room, isn't it?

M: It used to be, under the Kennedys it was. Now they may have changed it, I think.

B: Right. This was early on. If I remember rightly, it was in early 1964. It was a stag dinner. There were drinks and so on, and people were eating. Then the President said a few words about why everybody was there and what the problem was that he was confronting--of how to deal with this difficult problem of foreign aid legislation.

And he asked George Ball to report on the discussions that Ball and I had had. Ball was there and I was there, and I would be quite confident that Rusk and McNamara were also there. I can't remember who else--Bundy, I suppose--and all these congressmen. So Ball reported on what we had found, which, as I just indicated, was conflicting advice.

And then the President invited the members of Congress and the Senate who were present to say what they thought and one by

one they got up. They said there what they had said to Ball and me. The views were not just at odds. They were at sixes and sevens! There were no two of them who would have agreed--or almost no two of them--who would have agreed on anything.

Doc Morgan felt sure the the separation of economic and military assistance would damage the possibilities of the foreign aid legislation in the House. Fulbright, at that time--he changed his mind later--felt that the separation of economic and military assistance would be a good thing for the aid legislation in the Senate. But Dick Russell--I'm pretty sure Dick Russell was there--said in effect, "Don't give me that military assistance stuff; it doesn't belong in the military affairs committee; it belongs in the foreign relations committee," and so on.

So in a way it was a comical evening. They all stated conflicting views and they all passed the buck to each other. And after an hour of this the President said, "Well, you can see what kind of a problem I've got to make sense out of all this advice and thanks very much," and closed the meeting. What he finally did that year was to leave the AID machinery very much the way it had been and to make no major recommendations for changes.

Now the following year when he had just been elected by a big majority and brought in whatever it was, 65 Democrats with him, something like that, I thought we had a major opportunity for a breakthrough toward a longer-term authorization. I thought if we

could move toward a longer-term authorization, even though we'd have to have the annual appropriations process, that would be a significant gain, and worth a good deal of effort.

The President did not. I've forgotten the details now, but he did not strongly support the multi-year authorization. I thought that was the last good opportunity we had for any improvement in what is an extremely difficult legislative process--with an authorizations bill having to go through first each year, followed by appropriations bills, so the process of considering the AID legislation involves not just two committees each year, but four committees, and the legislative process is twice as long--at least twice as long--as would normally be true for most government agencies. And that contributes to the problem I was describing earlier of how the AID administrator has to spend his time.

M: You served through the transition time between the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. You've mentioned one indication here of the impact that Mr. Johnson had on the AID program generally. What else, what others are there? How did the AID program change from Kennedy to Johnson?

B: In the early stages the major change, of course, was his consolidating the two positions, which had been separate until then, of assistant secretary of state for Latin American Affairs, and assistant administrator for AID for Latin America. When he took over from

Mr. Kennedy those two jobs were held by Ed Martin and Ted Moscoso. One of the very first changes that President Johnson made anywhere in his administration, as a matter of fact, was to consolidate those two positions into one and put Tom Mann in the job. In fact he gave him a third hat. No, excuse me, Ted Moscoso had been coordinator of the Alliance for Progress, as well as assistant administrator of AID. But what the President gave Mann in addition to the assistant secretary of state's job and and the combined coordinator of the Alliance for Progress and the assistant administrator of AID job, he gave him a title as special assistant to the President. I don't know that he ever used that or that it ever meant anything in practice, but it was intended to symbolize that he wanted Tom Mann to be Mr. Latin America. He was giving him state department, AID and White House roles, so to speak.

Mann came in therefore with a mandate to consolidate state and AID efforts in Latin America. We had some discussion in the immediate weeks after he came in as to how that should best be done. What we finally worked out, is stated in a document which Bill Rogers drafted--not the new secretary of state, but another Bill Rogers who had been deputy to Moscoso and remained under Mann as deputy coordinator of the Alliance--a very able young lawyer, who's now with the firm of Arnold and Porter (Washington law firm). Bill Rogers and I worked out a draft document which Bill discussed

off and on with Mann while it was under preparation. Then I talked to Mann about it and finally it was agreed; Mann, in effect, recognized that in the AID part of his job he reported through me to the secretary, whereas in the state department part of his job he reported directly to the secretary. In addition to this point arrangements were worked out under which there was an organizational consolidation of the AID people and the state department people working on Latin America in a single office performing the state and AID functions for different geographic parts of Latin America. I've forgotten how the thing is broken up now, but there were ten offices then as I remember it. There was a separate office for Brazil. Then there was an office, say, for Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. There was an office, say, for Chile and Peru--something like that--and an office for Central America and so on.

Those offices had in them both state and AID employees. Mann, Rogers and I agreed that it would be important, in order to make it plain that the AID people were not to be regarded as second-class citizens, for some of these offices at least to be headed by AID people, not by state department people. And that was done. Of the initial office chiefs, I believe there were two who were from AID as distinct from coming out of the state department. I don't know what the situation would be today. So this was an amalgamation of AID and state personnel.

It hasn't worked too well incidentally; in my opinion this is not a successful arrangement. It's not a disastrous arrangement, but it has, over time, tended to derogate the AID personnel as opposed to the state department personnel, in spite of the fact that most of the time--perhaps all of it--one or two of the office chiefs have been AID people.

It has also tended to derogate the AID considerations entering into a policy decision and to play up--unduly play up in my opinion--the state department considerations entering into it. In deciding to make a loan, for example, or establishing the terms of a negotiation with a country about development assistance, this arrangement I think has not served us as well as the arrangement which kept the two staffs separate, and in effect expected them to argue and to clarify and raise issues, rather than to smother the issues down at a lower level. There would of course be conflicting views on this point.

Now, beyond this early action and the question I referred to a few minutes ago about how to reorganize the AID program, particularly in relation to Congress, I suppose President Johnson's largest personal impact, came somewhat later--I can't give you the precise timing--in two respects both of which were aspects of his view of the AID matter or what came to be his view of the AID matter. One was a very explosive situation, I don't remember whether it was late spring of '64 or late spring of '65, but it will all be in the Johnson Library.

This related to the practice of making pledges through international consortia. This was a practice which had been developed under Gene Black in the late 1950's and continued through the Kennedy years. It was a good practice in many respects because it focused the attention of various aid giving nations and the World Bank on the economic development needs of a specific country. There was a consortium for India. There was a consortium for Pakistan. And the system was that once a year these groups met. After careful preparation and, indeed, after some preliminary meetings they met for what was called a pledging session at which the various countries would say, "Well, we accept the World Bank's judgment that India needs for next year so much foreign exchange and we are prepared to pledge so much." The European countries had not liked this process very much because they found themselves having their arms twisted to put up more money, but that was precisely why Black had invented it, and why it had been regarded as advantageous to the U.S. --because it meant we put in our resources in context with others, and we could argue about fair shares, so to speak.

Now, the situation that I refer to from our point of view happened suddenly. I suspect there must have been some sort of growing concern in the President's mind that had not be communicated effectively--at least to me. I was the responsible officer at the time. The practice had always been that we didn't make these pledges until we had the money clearly in sight. We made the pledges

against either the appropriation that was already in hand or the appropriation that would be financed by the legislation then before the Congress. If the latter were the case, we said, "Our pledge is obviously contingent on congressional action on the recommendations that the President has made." But the President's budget had already been settled on the basis that this was how much we expected to pledge to India or Pakistan.

The President however came to feel that a pledging session of this type improperly limited his flexibility. Once we had pledged, in effect, he was on the line. And he didn't like that.

Another element of what led up to this--it is entirely possible that the process of getting the President's clearance, approval, of a pledge to be made had become routine. We normally went through the Bundy office, the assistant for National Security Affairs, and somebody on the Bundy staff would look into it. The budget bureau would look into it. The treasury people would look into it. If everybody agreed then there would be some kind of check directly with the President, but that was up to Bundy normally, or somebody on Bundy's staff.

As far as I was concerned, all of this was going along very smoothly and suddenly, bam! One day the pledging session was due to happen that afternoon. The participants from other countries

were in Washington. It was to happen at the Wardman-Park Hotel or wherever the meeting was taking place--I suppose it was actually at the World Bank conference rooms. And the word came from the White House, "Hold up, the President doesn't want you to make a pledge!"

Well, as far as we were concerned the making of a pledge was the culmination of a process that had started six or nine months earlier. How could we stop now? Everything had been done all the way along the line and we had informed the President at each appropriate stage. He'd approved the budget, he'd given us advance clearance, and now at the last minute he said suddenly, "Don't do it."

Well, we very hastily worked out some caveats and qualifications to emphasize that the pledge we were making was a limited one, subject to all sorts of contingencies, and was also subject to our being satisfied that the country in question was doing enough for itself--which was one of the key points that the President had in mind. He said, "Why should I commit myself? What have they committed themselves to?" And the President under all these circumstances was persuaded to let us make that pledge that day, but he said in effect, "No more. You can't make pledges any more."

We were confronted with an upset to our system, which was very troublesome. As I remember the way it happened--this would

have been in '65 rather than '64--the occasion that I speak of was the pledge to India. We went ahead and made the pledge with all these caveats, but the Pakistan consortium came along a month later and the President wouldn't let us make a commitment, a pledge. The Pakistanis were extraordinarily upset and angry, and said, "You made a pledge to India a month ago, what's different about us?" And there was no satisfactory answer to that question except that the President, in effect, had changed his mind. He changed it over a period of time. I still can't give you the anatomy of the change or why it happened and it caught us 'twixt wind and water.

But from that point on, the process of working out quid pro quos as to what the country in question was going to do for itself, and what we were going to do for them, became a much more complex process. The President wanted to participate personally much more than he had earlier. That had advantages in the sense that we could speak to the other countries with great force, with the President in effect insisting on our requiring strong self-help measure from them, which is a good thing. But it also made very difficult the process of trying to work out all the lateral consortium-type arrangements and the appropriate commitments from different countries.

Now this same view, that is to say the President's view that he wanted to see the whites of their eyes--he wanted to know what

the country in question was going to commit itself to before he would allow our resources to be committed--became even more an interest of his, even more of immediate concern to him in the case of PL 480. There was a long period when he was insisting that we release our PL 480 shipments to India, to Pakistan--both of whom needed our grain very badly--not a year at a time, not two or three years at a time, as had been the earlier practice. Bill Gand and I and Orville Freeman had brought it down to a year at a time because we thought that more appropriate. But the President insisted on bringing it down to three months at a time. There were periods when the timing of shipping the grain was worked out to the precise day on which the shipment of grain had to on onto the boxcar to get to the port to get on the ship to reach India to keep the food supply flowing--at a period when India was in a quasi-famine. The President was not willing to release it earlier because he wasn't satisfied with the performance of the Indians on their commitments, or with the commitments that they were making.

I personally felt at the time--and still feel--that he carried this much too far, that he lost a good deal of effectiveness because the Indians came to feel--it affected India more than anybody else--the Indians came to feel that he was trying to exact the last pound of flesh from them. He was keeping them on tenterhooks all the way along, and they naturally developed a considerable resentment. They could understand why the United States would ask for strong

commitments and strong action on the part of the Indians to do better with their own agricultural production. That they had no difficulty with, but they felt he carried this brinkmanship much too far, and I agreed with them. I don't mean that I made any public statements about it. In fact, I've never even said it before until this tape.

But it seemed to me they were right. He carried this so far that he built up in them resentments and antipathies, and some of this was counterproductive to what he was after. Besides, it took an awful lot of his time, Freeman's time, my time, the Ambassador's time and so on, all on matters that were not worth it in my view. Now the President would have a different view. He's entitled to it. He was in charge, so that we were all carrying out what he wanted to do to the best of our abilities. But in any event, this is a very important aspect of Lyndon Johnson's role in the aid business. It will repay some study when the documents are in a cool library and somebody can study them at leisure and look at the different points of view and different elements of the problem.

M: These quid quo and commitments that you mentioned him being so interested in keeping firm, explicit, are self-help commitments or political?

B: So far as I am aware they were self-help commitments in the proper sense of what was the country going to do for its own development. In the Indian case, for example, we asked them to put much greater emphasis on agriculture, to put more resources into agriculture, to

give it a higher priority in relation or comparison to industry-- all entirely appropriate considerations from the point of view of what was going to be best for Indians' development. And all these conditions, incidentally, were strongly agreed to by leading Indian economists and politicians who had examined their own problems and come up with the same conclusions the U.S. observers came to.

This point, incidentally, became obscured. One of the reasons it may have backfired in the Indian case was that at the same time the President was doing this, he was very resentful of the Indian point of view on Viet Nam. It was the rather supercilious--I must say, I agreed with the President wholly on this--rather supercilious Indian point of view that the Americans have gotten themselves involved in a bad war and we don't agree with the U.S. point of view and on the whole we think the Viet Cong are honest revolutionaries, and so on. They insisted on saying this loud and clear, and in general behaved rather as though they wanted to kick us in the shins about Viet Nam. This naturally irritated the President. As I say, the rest of us fully shared the President's view on this point.

Indians are inclined to be holier than thou and to express themselves that way. It's a bad national trait. They'll no doubt get over it when they accept more international responsibilities themselves--because after all who would suffer first and most if the Communists did in fact take over Southeast Asia--the people who

would be right there. Obviously the next target would be India. So they had an enormous amount at stake--in a sense, more than anybody else--in the success of our Southeast Asia policy.

But, in any event, they didn't see it that way and they didn't hesitate to express their point of view on Viet Nam. This was going on at the same time they were having a famine and needed our help. When the President was very stringent in requiring commitments and action on the substance of their development problems, including agriculture--not limited to agriculture, the question of fiscal policy for instance came into it but they were all developmentally oriented policies that we were bargaining about--some Indians said what the President is really trying to do is get us to knuckle under on Viet Nam. That was the suspicion, obviously, that was high in their minds. Especially when they felt they had done all that the President could possibly ask on the straight economic development issues, they said if effect, "What more does he want! If he expects us to change our views on Viet Nam in order to get some grain from the United States, we won't do it," which was a perfectly natural reaction on their part.

But so far as I'm aware, as I say, the President in fact was not bargaining about that. He may well have wanted to make plain to them that they were in the peculiar position of on the one hand kicking us in the shins about Viet Nam and on the other had asking

us for grain, and that they were not as courteous perhaps as they might have been about it all. But as far as I know, I repeat, he was not in fact making the aid contingent on anything like that. I don't think he was even saying it to them in a direct way, but of course I didn't see all the messages between him and the secretary and Bowles, so I don't know about that, but I saw no evidence that he was in fact trying to twist the Indians' arms for political objectives.

M: He, now, I think, requires personal approval of all AID programs over ten million dollars--

B: That happened while I was there.

M: That happened while you were there--is this part of the same desire to keep everything close to his own hand?

B: I think so. He had the feeling that we were perhaps not being as tough as he would like in demanding self-help commitments on the part of aid recipients. He just wanted to be assured that things had been looked at in the White House and, where he chose, by himself. This, however, while I was there at least, did not turn out to be particularly burdensome, because by the time we were ready to make any commitment over ten million dollars, we had already been through a very elaborate internal process. We knew exactly why we wanted to do it. We had thought about the self-help conditions we wanted to attach, and we felt we had a very persuasive and convincing case.

One important change we made was to be sure to include somebody from the Bundy staff, usually Ed Hamilton or somebody else, depending on the geographic area concerned, in all of our policy meetings so that people from the White House staff saw exactly how we did these things, and what we considered to be relevant considerations on any decision, and why we felt we had asked for enough self-help in any given circumstance. So when we put together a memorandum and sent it over to the White House saying we proposed to do the following, there was a White House staff man who had already been involved in the meetings that led up to this and knew all about it and could therefore speak for it, or if he preferred against it, but I don't think that ever happened while I was there.

The President also--not only for AID but for other government agencies--wanted his staff to review not only presidential appointments and things like presidential appointments, which in our case included mission directors overseas, but he also began to ask for White House clearance on every appointment at grade GS-16 and over. That was something that had not been done in the Kennedy administration. That was another piece of White House review machinery but, I repeat, I don't think that had anything particularly to do with his view of AID. That was just a general requirement that he decided was a good and useful control point for his White House.

(End of interview. Discussion followed on next appointment for an  
interview.)

INTERVIEWEE: DAVID E. BELL (Tape #2)

INTERVIEWER: PAIGE E. MULLHOLLAN

M: What I would like to do today, to finish up, is briefly this. You promised me a couple of stories, one regarding how Vice President Johnson told you how he became Vice President and the other regarding the budget session of 1964 at the ranch. But beyond those two, what I really want to do is get your impressions on some general issues, sort of to provide a comparison of other people who have both held the same job you had and the others high in the AID apparatus. Those would just be more or less general in nature. So if you can launch a story with a kind of formal beginning perhaps that's as good a place to start as any.

B: Okay. I'm sure that President Johnson must have told this story a great many times to a great many people. And there will be other versions of it recorded. He'll no doubt write his own. I remember it not too clearly at this time. I remember the occasion vividly. I don't remember the precise details I'm sure as vividly as I would have some time ago. I must have heard it in the summer of 1961 or '62. It was on a boat, one of those evenings on the Potomac, when we went down the river with a group of members of Congress and cabinet members and executive branch people like my wife and me. After dinner a group of us were standing toward the back of the boat and the Vice President started telling us about how he had accepted the nomination to be Vice President.

The essentials, as I recall it, are that he was called up by John Kennedy and asked if he would be willing to run for Vice President on the ticket with Mr. Kennedy--Senator Kennedy. And the Vice President said, "The first thing I did was to talk to Dick Russell, and Dick Russell said, 'Lyndon, you can't do that. You would be a traitor to the South.'" "And then," said Vice President Johnson, "I talked to Bob Kerr, and Bob Kerr said, 'Lyndon, if you did that I'd take out my pistol and I'd shoot you.'" "And then," said Vice President Johnson, "I talked to Sam Rayburn, and Mr. Sam said, 'Lyndon, you've got to do it.'" And Mr. Johnson said, "Why, Mr. Sam? I asked Dick Russell, and I asked Bob Kerr, and they said I should not." And Mr. Sam said, "Lyndon, you've got to do it. If you run with John Kennedy, he will win. If you don't run with him he will not win, and Richard Nixon will become President of the United States, and Richard Nixon is the man who called Harry Truman and me traitors. You've got to run and beat Dick Nixon." And the Vice President said, "That argument impressed me, so I went back to Bob Kerr and I told him what Mr. Sam said," and Bob Kerr looked at me and said, "Lyndon, if you don't run with Senator Kennedy, I'll pull out my gun and shoot you." And I went back to Dick Russell and I told him what Mr. Sam said. And he looked at me and he said, "Lyndon, Mr. Sam is exactly right. You've got to do that and I will back you up," or words to that effect. That was the general outline of the story.

M: There was no Rayburn around in '68 to offer the same advice when it turned out the other way, too.

Was the '64 budget session at the ranch your first budget session with Johnson as President?

B: No.

M: It would be the second one, then.

B: Johnson became President at the end of 1963, of course, and the budget was not wrapped up. On the other hand, the budget was very far advanced. Then President Johnson and Kermit Gordon pretty much reworked the budget themselves and did not involve me. I don't know how many cabinet officers they did involve in that final few weeks at the end of '62 and the beginning of '63.

M: '63 and '64.

B: '63 and '64, pardon me. So the fall of '64 when I was at the ranch was the first occasion on which I was exposed at any length to the President in a discussion about the budget. We had submitted our budget in the normal fashion under the usual rules. I don't remember anything now in detail about the nature of the budget we submitted. I was asked to fly down to the ranch. Orville Freeman was asked to come down the same day and Kermit Gordon as budget director. I think we were the only agency heads involved. There were one or two White House staff members riding the plane to and from Washington. We had a small plane, so there weren't very many but I remember that going one way Horace Busby was on the plane. The reason I remember is it's the only long talk I ever had with Horace Busby and

it was a very enjoyable talk. I think Bill Moyers was with us going one way, but that's not of importance to my story.

(interruption)

As I was saying, I'm sure we arrived at the ranch in the morning--we must have left Washington fairly early and, of course, you pick up some time moving with the sun. And we went into session with the President. I think he first talked to Orville Freeman about the agriculture department budget and spent an hour and a half, or an hour, with him. Then he talked with me--Kermit, of course, was present for both of these--about the AID budget. He gave me a very tough cross-examination, which gradually led me to think as we went on in the conversation that what he was doing was sort of testing how strongly I felt about the budget we put before him, discussing with me and with Kermit the reactions of the Congress, the difficulty of getting the AID budget through the Congress, but essentially trying to find out how strongly I felt about it, and how strongly Kermit felt about it.

Kermit and I were very close together. This was not a case in which the budget director was proposing something quite different from what the agency had put forward. Indeed, most of the time we had with the President in the morning was spent by one or the other of us making the case for the budget very much as it had been presented. The President was very tough on us and said he did not think he could get that much money through. He wasn't at all sure it was warranted. So he was pressing hard on us and we were responding

as well as we could. We did not close it up in the morning.

Then we broke for lunch and the luncheon conversation was general. Mrs. Johnson was there and various others. I don't remember either of the daughters being there but there were other family members present, and other members of the White House staff. It was a general and very pleasant lunch.

M: Social lunch or business lunch?

B: No, mostly social. Then after lunch we resumed the business discussions and there was more or less a deadline on them since we were due to go back to Washington that same evening. So the discussions after lunch were relatively brief discussions in which the President in effect was saying, "Well, how about settling it on this basis?" We had a little further bargaining but not much. And he came out at a figure which was significantly less than I had gone in with but not so much less that I thought he was deeply damaging the program. I don't know how he felt about it, of course. He may have felt that Kermit and I talked him into something that was higher than he really wanted. But in any event it all ended very amicably.

The significance of it to me was that this was the first occasion on which I came to feel that the President's relations with his subordinates were often those which he had learned in the Congress. He applied to relations with his subordinates in the executive branch attitudes and practices he had learned on the Hill. That is to say, his natural approach to us was a bargaining approach. He was trying to strike a deal with us.

This was a very unusual attitude for me. I was not accustomed to it. It was not Mr. Kennedy's attitude. It had not been Mr. Truman's. It had not been the attitude of any of the people I had worked for in Pakistan or in other jobs that I held over the years. And it puzzled me. I'm not at all sure I understand it still. But I came to feel over the next couple of years as I continued to work for President Johnson that this was in a sense a part of his--what had become at least--natural approach to his colleagues in the executive branch. It made you feel--made me feel at least as one agency head--as though I was trying to win an argument or win almost a battle with him sometimes, rather than facing jointly with him the issues in a situation and trying to decide what was the best thing to do. He was in a sense challenging me to persuade him that I had the answer he ought to adopt. I don't think there's anything wrong with this. I'm not in any sense trying to make a case this is erroneous--

M: It's a technique.

B: --or difficult. It's just that this is the way he was, and I'm trying to record it, and specify it as well as I can.

M: Did he ever say, during the course of that, that he thought in the past the tactics of the AID budget had been to ask for much more than they thought they could get through and what he wanted to do was ask for a realistic figure?

B: Yes, he did. I don't think he waited until that day to make that point. I think he'd made that point clear to Kermit and me before we ever put the budget figures in.

M: It worked for a couple of years--

B: It was effective with the Congress. It gave us some uncomfortable moments when we had to explain his recommendations. The implication was that the previous budgets had been inflated, which I personally would feel was not the case in the standard sense of inflated. But we certainly put budgets in at the high end of the range in the Kennedy years, knowing we could use the money very well if we got it, but also expecting it would be cut substantially, whereas President Johnson, just as you say, deliberately chose the opposite policy and tried to go in with figures at the low end of the range and try to persuade Congress to provide it all.

And that first year, at his request, we worked closely with George Mahon. If I'm not mistaken that was the year in which Otto Passman was overridden--I guess first within the appropriations committee and then later on the floor--and took quite a shellacking.

I remember incidentally a minor amusing story. Sometime after that had happened, which would presumably have been later in 1964--or perhaps 1965--I was at a reception or cocktail party at Bob McNamara's house and I met Andy Goodpaster, now the NATO commander in Europe. I had not known Goodpaster before that. I'd heard about him because, of course, he worked on President Eisenhower's

staff in the White House. He greeted me with delight at Bob McNamara's house and recounted some of the difficulties that General Eisenhower had with Otto Passman. He told me how President Eisenhower had ended up feeling very unhappy and, indeed, resentful toward Passman because he felt that Passman had let him down on several occasions even though Eisenhower had paid special attention to Passman, called him down to the White House, and tried to show him special attention. And Passman had turned around, and not exactly gone back on his word, but gone back on what President Eisenhower had expected of him. And Andy Goodpaster said, "I can tell you that I haven't felt as happy in a long time as I did when I read in the newspapers about those tire marks on Otto Passman's back!"

M: Do you think that tactic of submitting a budget at the lower end of the scale then backfired after a couple of years? Congress forgot what was happening and tended to treat it as a bargaining maximum which they could then reduce?

B: Certainly that happened. I'm not sure quite why the attitude of Congress became tougher on the foreign aid question. I've thought about this quite a lot, and various people have various explanations. I think a good deal of the difficulty was that the Senate advocates of aid--those who had advocated aid typically and steadily through the years, notably Bill Fulbright and some of his associates--soured on the subject as they soured on the Viet Nam war.

I do not believe that there was, in fact, any significant connection between the Viet Nam war and United States economic aid--or military aid for that matter--because we have given military and economic aid to all sorts of countries in which fighting has broken out. The United States has become involved in that fighting or not become involved in it as it chose. There was nothing inevitable about it. The aid program did not entangle us in Viet Nam. We chose to become entangled in Viet Nam and for what were considered to be good reasons of national interest and national policy. Whether they're good or not is a matter of argument. But I do not think it is impossible to sustain the view that the aid program tangled us up in Viet Nam, and therefore the aid program is a bad thing and a dangerous thing. But anyway that's the way Bill Fulbright felt about it.

Consequently I think the people in the Senate who had, over the years, strongly advocated the aid program disappeared so to speak or became much less interested in it. We still had a lot of people in the Senate who felt by and large that aid was a good thing, but we could no longer count on a major cut in the House being offset by a major restoration in the Senate and the result being some kind of compromise which would give us a decent amount of money. The Senate was liable to do something that was nearly as hostile as what the House had done. This made the legislative process much more difficult than it had been previously.

I am sure there were other reasons as well. To some extent people got tired of aid. They didn't see that it was making all that difference in the world. To some extent it was clear that the Communist threat that had been so influential with the Congress in the 1950's and early '60's--in providing argumentation for members of Congress to use, partly with their own constituents, partly with each other--the threat of Communist expansion was clearly changing. The Soviet Union was no longer as expansionist. The split between the Soviet Union and Red China meant that there was no longer a monolithic Communist bloc which looked as though it was extending tentacles around the world. There was still a Communist threat, all right, but it didn't look like the same threat to U.S. security as it might have a few years earlier.

M: Harder to justify money for.

B: That's right. So all of these elements were clearly involved in the change in atmosphere and in attitude in the Congress toward the foreign aid program.

M: Secretary Rusk made a comment, I believe, that set Fulbright off at one point regarding the possible connection of the military aid program to interventionism. Did the President ever comment to your knowledge on military aid and its relation to the possible necessity for American action somewhere or other?

B: I don't remember, no.

M: You said you didn't think there was any connection in Viet Nam, for example.

B: No, but I don't remember any incident such as you speak of.

M: The testimony--the burden of it was that Fulbright's suspicion, which you've mentioned there, that there was a connection between AID investment and AID program.

B: Yes, I apologize. You're correct. Fulbright undertook to buttress his case that there was a connection by some quotation from Dean Rusk--which was really a misuse of what Rusk said, as I remember it, although the incident isn't all that clear in my mind. I do remember that something like this happened, and I felt at the time that Fulbright had gone pretty far out of his way to buttress his case by this quotation from Rusk. And Rusk hadn't meant to say at all what Fulbright described him as saying.

M: And that would be consistent with the President's view so far as you --

B: Yes, I can't cite a case, a quotation from the President. But I'm sure the President felt this way. There were no indications to the contrary. His feeling about Viet Nam was simply that it was important enough to us to sustain the freedom of South Viet Nam--the independence of South Viet Nam--particularly since we had made a commitment to do so, that we had to first, provide, assistance and second, put troops in. But it was the underlying

importance of the place to American interests, not the question of our having provided aid to it in the past, that was significant.

M: Well, I wanted to make it clear on that.

B: Right.

M: During the '60's, generally, the emphasis of AID is said to have shifted from free or grant aid to the development loan aid. Is this a product of Kennedy? Johnson? David Bell? Or any single individual? Or group?

B: The shift had begun in the late '50's with the establishment of the so-called Development Loan Fund, which was started in perhaps 1958 or thereabouts. That was the beginning of this change.

In the first years of the Kennedy administration the creation of the Agency for International Development involved putting together the organization of the Development Loan Fund and the old International Cooperation Administration, ICA. The two of them were consolidated into the new AID. This gave the Agency for International Development essentially three major kinds of assistance at its disposal.

One was development loans in dollars but at subsidized interest rates and over long periods of repayment. Initially they were-- I've forgotten--one and a half percent interest, perhaps, maturities as long as forty years and with a grace period before any of the principal needed to be repaid up to ten years. Very soft terms, the way the word "soft" is referred to in the development lending business.

Secondly, there was what was called supporting assistance, which were grants, which could be made to aid-receiving countries on two main kinds of bases. One, as in the case of Korea or Taiwan or Turkey, grant assistance to a country to enable it to carry a military budget and sustain a military force that were larger than it could sustain out of its own resources.

In addition, supporting assistance was used for emergency purposes. It was used for example in the Congo. It was used every now and then in Panama. It was used in the Dominican Republic. It was used in cases in which security interests were served--security interests in a broad sense--and it was felt that assistance needed to be in the form of grants. The assistance was not tightly related to any clear and definite development plan or development program.

The third kind of aid which was available under the original concept of the Agency for International Development was development grants, which were thought of in the original design as being either to finance technical assistance activities or, in some cases, capital assistance on a grant basis, to be used where there was a strong development program but where the country in question could not logically assume the obligation of repaying a loan and paying interest on it. In practice this third category of assistance was used almost exclusively for financing technical assistance--the provision of training and advisers and that sort of thing. Some

small pieces of equipment and supplies for the training or technical assistance activities were also financed through this category and provided therefore free to the receiving country. If technical assistance activity, say, involved the establishment of a training program for agricultural extension agents, the development grant authority might be used to provide a couple of jeeps for the trainers or motion picture equipment to show training films or something like that.

But the development grant authority was not used, as it originally had been intended, to finance capital activities, because it was felt that a) the Congress preferred the development loan authority to be used, and b) the development loans were furnished at soft enough terms so that almost any country could logically assume the repayment obligation. They didn't have to repay any of the principal the first ten years, there was a long repayment period thereafter, and a relatively low rate of interest.

Now over the years I was there two different kinds of evolution occurred.

Excuse me. I should also mention that there was, of course, a fourth major kind of aid. That was military assistance which was grant aid in the early years, and was intended to finance training and military equipment for countries where our own security seemed to be involved in building up their military strength.

Now the evolutionary changes that occurred--which were quite marked if you look at it over a three or four year period--were first of all a change which we did not propose in the executive branch but which was forced on us by the Congress. That was a trend toward hardening the terms of the development loans. Steadily year by year the Congress insisted on raising the rates of interest, reducing the grace periods on the amortization of capital and shortening the period of repayment.

M: Harder in all respects.

B: Harder in all respects. Gradually harder. We fought this battle year by year. This is one of the cases, incidentally, in which the Senate did not help us because several members of the Senate, notably, Carl Mundt and Allen Ellender, felt that the loan terms should be harder and it was a mistake for us to provide this money at low interest rates and with long amortization periods. So they joined in this move and gradually the interest rates climbed up until I think when I left they were  $2\frac{1}{2}$  percent, and the grace period had been shortened to five years maximum, and the total amortization period had been cut down--I've forgotten how far, maybe to thirty years, maybe to twenty-five. As this happened, of course, the extent to which our aid really subsidized a transfer of resources to the developing countries as distinguished from a commercial loan operation--the subsidy element was reduced, the commercial element was increased. This was un-

fortunate for those countries which, like India or Pakistan, were extremely poor and whose economic circumstances indicated that we ought to give them softer terms.

The second change that happened over the years--this one was deliberate on our part--was that we deliberately reduced supporting assistance. We tried to get out of the supporting assistance business. We tried to build programs of economic change in aid receiving countries which would enable them to handle their own defense budgets and which would permit us to eliminate supporting assistance as a category of aid. We had a great deal of success in this and over the years we eliminated supporting assistance in a number of very significant countries. Taiwan, for example--I think it's gone. It certainly was going in Korea. I think it was eliminated in Turkey and Pakistan--cases where there had been very substantial amounts of supporting assistance. Bolivia was a case where we were phasing it down and out. We got it trending downward in Jordan, and so on. I always felt this was a very good change we were making.

However, the total amount of supporting assistance did not diminish as much as might be implied by this policy because, as we were reducing it and eliminating it in some of these countries, the supporting assistance costs of the Vietnamese war rose. This meant supporting assistance rose not only for Viet Nam but also

for Thailand in smaller amounts and Laos--and as a result the total volume of supporting assistance stayed fairly high, but it became very sharply concentrated in Southeast Asia.

M: And presumable reducible at some future time.

B: Presumably reducible at some future time, exactly.

M: Did the hardness of these terms, as it became harder, did it mean that there is something to the argument of people like Michael Harrington and some of the New Left critics of the AID program who said that we've now reached a point where our aid is counter-productive in the sense that the burden that is placed on the recipient countries is high enough to make it a bad investment for them?

B: No, I don't think so. It's a less attractive source of resources for them than it was before. The only case that could be made along these lines would run as follows: a loan from the United States at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  percent interest rate is clearly more advantageous to a developing country than a loan from the World Bank at  $6\frac{1}{2}$  percent. The only additional costs which needs to be taken into account to a developing country is that the AID loan can be spent only for American goods and services. Insofar as American goods and services are more expensive than the same goods and services bought from, say, Europe or Japan, there is an additional element of cost.

M: Called additionality?

B: No, additionality is a different point. But the higher costs of buying the stuff in the United States would need to be weighed against the subsidy element represented by the low interest rate. And there could well be a situation in which the cost of the product in question was so much higher in the United States that it would pay to borrow the money from the World Bank at higher interest rates but to buy it in Japan, say, because the total cost over a period of time, counting interest, amortization and everything, could end up lower buying in Japan at a World Bank rate of interest than buying in the United States at an AID rate of interest. However, this is not the normal case. In any such situation, presumably the country in question would take its money from the World Bank.

But the normal case is that costs are higher in the United States for many products, but that in other products, the United States is competitive. If the country buys sensibly in the United States then the additional cost of buying here is not all that great. It may be 10 or 15 percent, but the interest rate differential is much greater than that so that it still pays to borrow from AID rather than from a commercial source.

But the advantage is not as great as it once was. Last month I visited India, and talked with the Indian who is in charge of obtaining aid for India. And he described the very painful and complex process which he has to go through. He has to do what

I've just described, that is figure out what he can get in the United States that doesn't cost too much.

He also has to meet a number of the other complex provisions of American law. If he buys anything in the States for example, he has to provide opportunity for small businessmen in the United States to bid on the item in question. That's a very complicated procedure and the Indian embassy in Washington has to maintain a large procurement staff in order to meet the red tape proscribed by our law. There are also shipping provisions. Much of what they buy in the United States has to be shipped on American bottoms, which have higher costs than other shipping lines, so that it's a very complicated process.

And he was saying to me, this is not only true of aid from the United States, but parallel or similar restrictions are in effect on the aid he gets from any other country, and they're all different, so that it's a very intricate juggling act that he has to go through. And I ended up this conversation feeling great sympathy for him and feeling that in his shoes I might very well throw up my hands and say the whole process isn't worth it. These countries that want to help us, don't help us very much because their interest rates are getting harder all the time. Then they insist we go through all the terrible rigamarole and red tape--

M: Which adds a few points itself.

B: That's right, so the aid business is by no means as generous a process as most members of Congress have thought it was, and do think it is today.

M: Now how is this related to additionality? I must misunderstand additionality.

B: The additionality point is different. When we provide funds through a loan which permits a country to buy something in the United States the question arises--and some members of Congress made a lot of this point--the question arises whether it is something which the country would have bought in the United States anyway with its own foreign exchange earnings. If we lend money to them to buy such a thing in the United States, then they simply use their own foreign exchange earnings to buy in Europe and Japan and the tying of aid to procurement in the United States does not provide additional American exports. The question of additionality relates to the question of whether the aid exports are additional to what we would sell commercially through trade to the country in question.

It is a legitimate question; it is a real question whether, in fact, the procurement under the aid is additional to what the country would buy using its own foreign exchange resources. It's a beast of a question to administer because it inevitably involves an "as if" question, a hypothetical question. What would they have

done with their foreign exchange if the aid wasn't available?

Well, the aid is available, so it has to remain a hypothetical question.

M: This gets more important as the balance of payments problem gets worse.

B: It did become more important as our balance of payments problem became more difficult. I assume that at the present time since the balance of payments is somewhat better, we may feel a little less heat on this particular question. We tried to look at past trends of procurement. We tried to demonstrate--which seemed to be true, incidentally--that by and large our commercial exports were rising to aid-receiving countries and not falling, and that therefore the evidence was that as a general matter our aid was financing additional exports and not replacement exports. But the data are tricky and there are complex problems always of triangular relationships and whether even if procurement from the United States on a commercial basis is rising, might it not have risen more rapidly if we didn't make an AID loan available, and so on.

M: If 'B' then buys from us, 'A'--

B: All that sort of thing. It's essentially a question you can't prove and answer unequivocally because it involves a hypothetical issue-- what they would have done with their resources if the aid money hadn't been made available.

M: You talked last time about the consortia--

B: Excuse me, before we go into that, let me mention one other thing that involved a deliberate change in the American aid pattern over the years that I was involved, first as budget director and then as AID administrator. That was the deliberate reduction in American military assistance. This is very important and it's often overlooked.

I believe in the first Kennedy budget, or maybe it was in the budget inherited from President Eisenhower for the fiscal year '62, military aid I think was a billion, eight hundred million dollars. Early on we got agreement in the executive branch that it was time to end military aid to European countries. There was still some military aid to Europe in the early '60's. That was brought to an end. It was phased down and out.

We then had several years, '61, '62, '63, in which there was really quite strong argument typically between the budget bureau and the AID agency on the one hand and the defense department on the other, with the state department normally siding with the defense department, as to what should happen to the military assistance to the large countries--the large receiving countries--Korea, Taiwan, Viet Nam (this was in the early days), Pakistan, Turkey, Iran. I think those were the major military aid recipients in the early '60's. We kept chipping away at this matter and gradually we persuaded-- I don't know if we persuaded is the right phrase--gradually more and more people in the defense department were persuaded--John

McNaughton was a clear case of this, Bill Bundy to a large extent, although McNaughton I think moved farther faster--that it was desirable and appropriate to plan a phase-out, or at least a phase-down, of American military aid to a number of these countries.

Iran was an easy case, because the Iranians have a lot of oil money and they could pretty well afford to buy what they needed, and we got the Iranian military aid cut quite sharply.

Pakistan, in a sense, was a case that closed itself out; when they started fighting India naturally we suspended the aid and we didn't really resume it on any substantial scale.

Greece was a case in which we had a lot of trouble. The Greek economy was growing strongly all the time and we in AID, and the budget bureau also, were arguing that meant the Greeks could afford to buy and pay for more of their own military equipment and the aid from the United States could therefore taper down. We did get a tapering, although this was an annual crisis of considerable dimensions. NATO was involved and so on.

Turkey was hard to get headed down. I'm not sure we did during the time I was there, but we got supporting assistance headed down and we got the regular economic aid, I think, headed down also. So there was a prospect of termination of economic aid, the implication being that the Turks also would begin steadily to pay for more of their military purchases from us.

In Taiwan we got the supporting assistance closed out, the economic aid closed out, and military assistance headed downward.

In Korea we got the supporting assistance--at least until the Viet Nam war may have opened it up again--headed downward, and economic aid downward, and military aid downward. The key point is that during those years we achieved a considerable reduction in military assistance and the acceptance of a much more rational attitude part of the aid receiving countries and the Pentagon to the effect that, where a country had substantial foreign exchange earnings of its own and a strongly growing economy, it would make sense to expect that the country would pay for more of its military needs. And I think that was an important change and an important accomplishment of the aid policy of those years.

M: And one as you say that's not mentioned very frequently in connection with it, I think.

I was beginning to ask a minute ago, as you talked about the pledging sessions and President Johnson's activities regarding consortia, but what about the multi-lateral agencies that we use and some of which were created during the Johnson administration, notably the Asian Development Bank, but there are others. Did President Johnson insist that this become more important outlet for our activity or did he express an opinion of this?

B: He was a very strong supporter of at least the Asian Development Bank, which is the main new one. I think it's fair to say--I believe I remember correctly--that he was a strong supporter of aid going through multi-lateral channels--a point on which he agreed with Bill Fulbright and Gene Black.

Now his practice was not always consistent with that view. For example in his relations with India, as I believe we talked about last time, he pressed the Indians very hard on a bilateral basis, using our aid as a bargaining device to persuade the Indians to change their policies. But he was a strong supporter of multilateral aid nevertheless and his action on the Asian Development Bank was decisive.

M: I was going to say there was some hint of intergovernmental difficulty on that.

B: Oh yes. Within the government there was a very strong difference of view on whether there should be an Asian Development Bank and if there was, whether the United States should put money into it. If I'm not mistaken the treasury department was persuasive, and I think Doug Dillon was the secretary at the time, in taking the view that we should not support the establishment of the Asian Bank, should not agree to put any capital into it. There was some kind of a meeting coming up in Asia and I think, as a matter of fact, our representative went to it with those instructions.

M: Wellington, New Zealand.

B: I think so. The state department had gone along reluctantly. AID had strongly argued that we should join in the ADB but had been overruled. The matter was settled, as I recall it, by the--what do they call that committee chaired by the secretary of the treasury--

which deals with policy--international financial policy. It controls the U. S. involvement in the IMF and the World Bank. It was set up under the Bretton-Woods Act and it put the secretary of the treasury in the chair on issues like this. That's a case where the secretary of the treasury used his chairmanship to dominate the making of policy. I assume that this position was checked out by somebody with the White House, probably through Mac Bundy's office. And that was the view expressed by our representative.

Well, just a few weeks later the President, in some speech or other--maybe it was the Johns Hopkins speech in early '65--the President reversed the government's position as stated at Wellington in the course of proposing a large, new economic development program for Southeast Asia. He was looking for ideas and actions to support his concept and he stated strongly that he thought the Asian Development Bank should be established and he proposed that the United States should join.

Well, this changed the prospects for the Asian Development Bank overnight, and it went ahead with a bang, got established, and then the Congress approved U. S. participation. Gene Black, I remember, testified--I was along with him--and Henry Fowler, who was then I think the secretary of the treasury. We all supported it--I guess Joe Barr testified on behalf of the treasury department--and the Congress approved it. So this was a case in which the President reversed

previous government decisions in favor of the Asian Development Bank, but I don't know how far it was a reversal of his own previous decisions.

M: I was going to say, were you involved in the decision change as far as he was concerned?

B: Yes, what happened was that word came that the President wanted to make this kind of a speech and Rutherford Poats, who was our assistant administrator for the Far East at the time, worked with a White House task force to prepare the necessary proposals and ideas. And he was among those who said, "Well, look, one of the things to do is ready-made; it's right in front of us. All we have to do is go along with the notion of establishing the Asian Development Bank and that will be a clear earnest of our intentions to support regional development in that part of the world." And I don't argue that that point wouldn't have been thought of if Poats hadn't made it, but he certainly did make it, and the President did accept a view which AID had been arguing for all along but which the treasury department had opposed.

M: Then later that Asian Development Bank funding ran into difficulty. Were you still in at that time?

B: The Asian Bank was originally established with capital subscribed by a number of countries, including the United States, with the concept that this capital would be available to the bank for lending and would

support borrowing by the Asian Development Bank on the world's money markets to raise more capital which in turn could be lent on commercial terms.

There was no soft window of the Asian Bank to begin with, but a soft window was provided for in the charter. That is to say the Asian Bank could accept funds which it could then lend at low rates of interest and long-repayment periods--non-commercial rates. But it would have to get the money separately from the initial capital subscription. So the Congress approved the initial capital subscription and the charter. Then the question arose--and I think this was after I left AID--should the United States provide, I think the figure now is two hundred million dollars, to the Asian Bank to match two hundred million dollars from the Japanese to be available to the bank for lending on soft terms.

M: IDA type?

B: IDA-type money exactly. That's what was held up in the Congress last year, but I understand that it is now moving forward again in the Congress this year.

M: But that was after your time, so you weren't involved in all the lobbying.

B: That's right. All this was after my time.

M: Those were the general questions I had in mind. Would you care to add anything that you think important to put on the record here?  
Don't let me cut you off.

B: No, I cant' think of anything else that occurs to me offhand.

M: You've been most cooperative to give us your time and we certainly appreciate it.

B: Great pleasure.

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