INTERVIEW I

DATE: April 6, 1981

INTERVIEWEE: PAUL BOLTON

INTERVIEWER: MICHAEL L. GILLETTE

PLACE: Mr. Bolton's residence, Austin, Texas

Tape 1 of 1

B: This is Paul Bolton speaking. The date is April 5, 1981. What is to follow is divided like all Gaul into three parts. The first part was written by me in 1969. The second part was written a few weeks ago in 1981. The third part will be my answers to the questions that Mike Gillette may have for me after I have read the script which I have written out.

This is recording some of my memories of Lyndon Baines Johnson over a period of nearly thirty years. During the early part of that period the contacts were often close and intimate. During the senatorial and presidential years the contacts became less frequent. At the outset these things need to be said. First of all, these recollections have been written out in advance of recording for two principal reasons. The first is that some twenty years of reading from a script as a newscaster has virtually atrophied my ability to speak off the cuff. The script has become a crutch. Secondly, it makes possible at least an effort to be objective. Over the newscasting years it was necessary to curb any tendency to talk back to the Johnson critics.

It also needs to be explained that during the year 1968 it was my privilege, on commission from the University of Texas, to interview some twenty-five persons whose lives were interwined in some fashion with the life of Lyndon Johnson. Most of those interviews, on audio tape and accompanying script, are a part of the LBJ Library, and reference will be made to some of them, mainly by way of reference to underline a point.

Lyndon Johnson's entry into the political scene at Austin in the mid-thirties as state director of the National Youth Administration made little impact upon the three-man staff of the International News Service at Austin. That staff consisted of Vann M. Kennedy, myself, and Walter Fleet, a youngster whose job it was to punch the tape which fed through and activated the automatic telegraph wire printers--we called them Morkrums. Our political hero at the time was James V. Allred, then attorney general, later to be governor, federal judge, and a sometime candidate for the U.S. Senate. Governor Allred's appointment to the federal bench no doubt was due in large part to the intervention of Lyndon Johnson. In any event, we, or at least one third of the staff who did most of the reporting, paid little attention to either the NYA or Lyndon Johnson. Our beat was the statehouse. And since the age of media-handouts--press releases--had not yet reached the Capitol, reporting the statehouse was a full time job. As a footnote to journalism, Kennedy and myself possibly speeded along the age of handouts at the Capitol in behalf of our great and good friend, Jimmie Allred. Kennedy, who had given me a job after some differences

with the Associated Press over the matter of wrongly identifying a picture, was also a special correspondent for the San Antonio Light and other newspapers.

To do most of the actual legwork, while he acted as the big brain of the INS pressroom, Kennedy gathered a goodly group of newsmen, mostly recruited from the University [of Texas]. In retrospect, they seem without peer. At various times the group included D. B. Hardeman, not related to the state senator, who went on to become Speaker Sam Rayburn's private secretary and confidante; Alex Louis, who left us to join the Joe Belden public opinion sampling poll in Texas and then became an independent in that field; Bill Gardner, a quivering young reporter from Galveston who most recently was given an administrative-editorial position on the Houston Post after many years as their Capitol correspondent; Wick Fowler, who was later a war correspondent for the Dallas News; the brilliant Jack Guinn, an artist with his hands as well as with words, later an editor on the Denver Post and the author of two novels--he died in 1968. Many others passed through, such as Mike Scully, who wrote a series of sketches on Mexico and central America; Frank Carter Adams, the erratic extrovert from Virginia who was chief publicist for the Texas Centennial in 1936; Buck Hood and Homer Olsen who in those Depression days moonlighted from the Austin American-Statesman to supplement their Depression-thin wages. Walter Cronkite once told me that we worked together at one time while he was a student at the University, but I have no recollection of it.

We comprised a predominately liberal group by yesterday's definition of liberal, although today's definition is altogether different. We ranged from the ultra-conservative Kennedy to the ultra-liberal Hardeman and the iconoclastic Guinn.

A principal reason for recalling these names is that among the Kennedy enterprises was a small weekly newspaper which he dreamed of making into a political journal. Unhappily, Kennedy spread his dreams too thin, or perhaps outgrew this particular one. Our weekly, which we called the State Observer, flourished for a while, languished for want of tender loving care during the late war years, finally was sold and after two or three ownerships wound up as that current ultra-liberal journal, the Texas Observer. During what we considered its heydey, it sparkled because it was the vehicle for those of us in the INS pressroom to express ourselves without editorial blue penciling. One of the regular columns of that weekly was called "The Mirrors of Austin." Since the other contributors were here one week and gone the next, it was my responsibility to try to keep "The Mirrors" truly reflective. And through this column came my long association with Lyndon Johnson.

Before telling of that first contact, a disclaimer, possibly relative to The State Observer of the thirties and forties and the Texas Observer of the late fifties and sixties, as edited by Ronnie Dugger, and only the name, Observer, in common. For our brand of liberalism was separated from Dugger's brand by not one but two generation gaps.

And as a further footnote, Dugger, who became a bitter critic of Johnson, owed some portion of his beginnings to Johnson, or at least to those who were employed by the Johnsons. The exact year escapes my memory, but when Dugger came to Austin as a University student, admittedly a brilliant boy, he came to KTBC asking for work, said he would not be able to continue his studies without employment. He was given a job in the news department at KTBC. He was a most satisfactory employee--so much so that the then manager, who is the present manager in this year of 1969, J. C. Kellam, aided him in winning a Rotary Club scholarship to Oxford. Mr. Kellam and I sought no mortgages on his future, but it is an understatement to say that we were surprised when he turned upon Mr. Johnson with such ferocity when he became a working journalist. Not too long ago, Dugger offered me the opportunity to contribute to a book about Lyndon Johnson, at this time, so far as I know, unpublished. Presumably it would have been my job to answer some of his interpretations. The offer was declined, without thanks.

To return to my chronological account, during the late thirties, Congressman Johnson's executive assistant, Sherman Birdwell, one day brought a news release to the Capitol. He was seen by me as an interesting person who might be swabbed for some comments for my "Mirrors of Austin." We began talking on what the assistant to a congressman does and what makes his office tick. What was written about Sherman Birdwell has long since been forgotten even by the author of the words. But the piece must have dwelt heavily upon the proposition that Mr. Johnson is a hard taskmaster, a fact that has been noted since that

time in many a newspaper and magazine piece. The gist must have been that Johnson himself worked long hours and expected the same of those who worked under him. That trait had been evidenced during his period as NYA administrator for Texas. Those interested in pursuing the subject will find it underlined in interviews in this tape collection with Willard Deason, Harvey Payne, and others, those comprising the old NYA gang.

Whatever it was, LBJ was not happy about [the article]. He came personally to the Capitol to see me. We walked across the street to a drug store then located just north of the Capitol entrance and had a Coke; and over that Coke Johnson practiced on me what Stewart Alsop was to describe many years later in a Saturday Evening Post article as Treatment A. To my admittedly limited experience, no other man has this virtually hypnotic quality which Johnson possesses in a face-to-face conversation.

I left that drug store with the conviction that here was a man who met many if not all of the standards which our small group had discussed many times as the worthwhile attributes of a public servant. The next issue of the State Observer carried my impressions of the young congressman, with a linoleum-cut cartoon by Jack Guinn. Possibly it was the first cartoon which ever appeared of Lyndon Johnson in the public prints. Evidently he liked the piece, if not the cartoon, because it became the basis for a friendship which has continued through the years. There's been no reason for me to change my initial impressions of the man.

That story, written in the somewhat tongue-in-cheek style we affected in "The Mirrors of Austin," started off like this: "Lyndon Johnson is six feet three inches tall, dark and Robert-Taylorish handsome, weighs one hundred ninety-eight pounds which he says is twenty-eight pounds too much, has burning brown eyes and deep black hair, and a quirkish grin. When he talks to you he leans way over toward you, and if he wasn't smiling you'd almost think he was Dracula." For whatever generation that may examine these words, perhaps it should be explained that Robert Taylor was then a reigning film star.

To continue our "Mirrors" story, it related that before Johnson flew back from Austin from Washington he signed two hundred fifty-eight letters, which he said he had dictated personally; home folks don't get form letters from his office. He had come to Austin on business relating to forming an aviation council in Texas with the then-Governor W. Lee O'Daniel, and he had to return to Washington at least in time to vote on a pending tax bill. "You can't," he explained, "vote for appropriations with any logic unless you'll also vote for taxes to support them." And the reporter commented, "That, to say the least, was a refreshing way of looking at appropriations."

This story also mentioned another device the young Congressman had inaugurated of writing to every high school graduate in his district offering whatever help a congressman could give. This letter brought many responses, particularly from those with excellent high school records who lacked the financial means of going to college. For these students, Johnson would write to the colleges, to responsible people

that he knew, seeking financial aid, perhaps an NYA job. As a result, he had placed students in at least six schools at that time. Most of them wrote to him regularly, reporting on their problems and progress. The reporter commented: "That may be good politics, but in all likelihood it stems from something else. When Lyndon Johnson got out of high school, he had no money to go to college. Uncle Sam wasn't putting out NYA funds then. But a man named Alvin Wirtz gave him a job at fifteen dollars a month."

Again, a footnote. Alvin Wirtz had an impact on Johnson probably greater than any other man. A former state senator, Wirtz died while attending a University of Texas football game to which he went despite doctor's orders. Some sidelights about Senator Wirtz may be found in an interview in this series with Sim Gideon, the present general manager of the Lower Colorado River Authority.

My next vivid memory of Johnson skips to the war years. In his campaign for Congress, Johnson had said that if he had to vote for war, he himself would join the armed forces. This he did. The story of his Navy service has been told elsewhere, hence there is no reason to recapitulate the record here. My personal sidelight concerns his visits to Austin after the President had recalled him to serve in the Congress. A small group met occasionally at his home during these trips to Austin, and he tried to impress upon us the desperate situation and tragedy of the war in the Pacific. These were all off-the-record sessions. Remember that at this time Americans had an inflated idea of their vast superiority in every field of endeavor, including the military. And

we found it almost unbelievable that the Japanese were far superior to us in that theater of the war. Despite Pearl Harbor, despite the fall of the Philippines, it was difficult for Americans living in the heart of the nation, far removed from the Pacific Ocean, to accept the fact that at that point in time we were losing the war. Johnson's grasp of the entire situation--at least to us it seemed entire, it was so vast and complex--was amazing. He had carried these facts to President Roosevelt, and undoubtedly contributed measurably to planning the counter-measures in the Pacific. Over the years since that time, many have commented on Johnson's ability to assimilate and interpret a complex body of facts.

Early in the war my immediate superior at International News Service, Vann Kennedy, obtained an army commission, leaving me in charge of INS. At that time a struggling radio station called KTBC was an INS client in a very poor-boy way. INS sold KTBC a copy of the telegraph wire from our printers in the Capitol pressroom offices. This so-called drop copy would be delivered by a messenger to the radio station. The price was very low, a few dollars a week. Nevertheless, the struggling station had difficulty in meeting this weekly bill. They were way behind in their accounts with INS. At times, the manager of KTBC would bring the checks he had received from sponsors that day, in order to pay for the drop copy. Much of my time was devoted to correspondence with the New York office of INS, mainly it was Barry Faris[?]. I urged INS to be patient with KTBC, told them there was a rumor that Congressman and Mrs. Johnson were negotiating for the purchase of the station, that

if they made the deal, they would have to assume the debts, and that if we were kind to them they might buy the INS wire which would be a far better commercial deal than the drop copy. However, INS lost patience, and not too long before the Johnson deal was wrapped up, INS cancelled the service to KTBC. For a brief time, the station operated with no news service. The Johnsons did acquire the property in 1943 and purchased the United Press wire. At that time, of course, United Press had not acquired the International News Service.

It is to be hoped that one day the Johnsons will record the details leading to their acquisition of KTBC, as a matter of historical interest. It is, of course, well known that the property was acquired with Mrs. Johnson's separate, inherited funds and that original ownership was solely in her name. She still owns a majority of the stock, although some small sales have been made to others. These are of record with the Federal Communications Commission.

My knowledge of the transaction is all hearsay. An interesting note came from a conversation with George Brown of Houston. Herman Brown and George Brown comprised the firm known as Brown & Root, which grew from a team of mules on a road grading job in Bell County during the Depression days into one of the nation's largest construction firms. Herman Brown during the thirties and the forties lived in Austin, and both brothers were close friends of the Johnsons. George Brown says that he first brought the Johnsons together with the wealthy West family of Houston who were then the owners of KTBC. He says that Mr. Johnson was reluctant to approach the Wests; they were anti-Roosevelt

and [he thought they] would consider him an obnoxious young New Dealer. Brown says he was convinced that Johnson could sell himself--there's that Treatment A again--if he had the opportunity, and he arranged the opportunity, a meeting in a Houston hotel. What transpired at that meeting only the Johnsons and the Wests know. However, the Johnsons did acquire the station in 1943, and in the following year they offered me the job of news editor.

KTBC was far from prosperous when I was offered this job; they could not afford to meet the salary INS paid me, although it was certainly modest, that INS salary. Two facts led me to take the job--perhaps three, the third being the obvious downgrade upon which INS was operating and the uncertainty of what would happen to me when Kennedy returned. But the first consideration was that at our house, we had been listening to Ed Murrow--"This is London"--and were convinced that a great future existed for electronic news, radio news then, since television was not established. The second influencing fact was that the publisher of the Harte-Hanks newspapers in Texas, Houston Harte, offered me a part-time job as correspondent in Austin for those newspapers, which did not conflict with my employment at KTBC. Mr. Harte and I later became very fast friends. Moreover, the Johnsons did not object to my continuing to act as string correspondent for Time and Life magazines. There were other and personal reasons which are immaterial.

One of my last assignments as INS correspondent was the arduous one of reporting without assistance the tumultuous Democratic state

convention in the spring of 1944, held in the Senate Chamber at the state Capitol, which certainly involved Johnson in state politics as distinguished from local congressional politics. This convention witnessed the birth of the so-called Texas Regulars. As in other one-party states of the South, Texas has always in fact had two or more Democratic Parties, and the conservative wing of the party took on various names during the Roosevelt years. The 1944 split between the liberal and conservative wings--perhaps better labelled as the pro- and anti-Roosevelt wings--was in a sense definitive. At the 1944 convention the pro-Roosevelt forces were defeated on a key issue and walked out of the Senate Chamber and across the Rotunda to the House Chamber. My INS story out of Austin that day reported the presence in the House Chamber of Austin's Mayor Tom Miller, the prominent contractor, Herman Brown, and Austin Congressman Lyndon Johnson. Students interested in this party split are referred to a booklet published by the University of Texas Public Affairs Institute, authored by Dr. Douglas Weeks. He suggested that the 1944 convention probably represented the birth pangs of the Republican Party in Texas. Subsequently, the national convention seated both the Texas Regulars and the pro-Roosevelt delegates.

If the formation of the Texas Regulars in 1944 signified the birth of Republicanism in Texas, as Dr. Weeks suggests, another probable result of that split in the Texas Democratic Party was the denial of the vice presidency, and hence the presidency, to Speaker Sam Rayburn. Many Texas political observers firmly believed that had

the Texas Democrats been united at the 1944 convention, the Bonham member of Congress would have been the vice presidential nominee rather than Harry Truman. Rayburn and Johnson were extremely close; Rayburn always considered Johnson as one of his proteges. The implication becomes obvious. Had Rayburn become president in succession to Mr. Roosevelt, the course of history would have been drastically changed for Johnson as well as for Rayburn. It is also believed to have been Sam Rayburn who encouraged if not actually pushed Lyndon Johnson into challenging Governor Allan Shivers in 1956 for control of the Democratic Party in Texas. When Johnson won that campaign, he became a favorite son contender for the presidency, in 1956 and again in 1960. For further observations on that 1956 campaign, the student is referred to the recording in this series made by Vann M. Kennedy.

Following the state convention in 1944, my employment at KTBC began, with the understanding that as a moonlighting assignment I would help Mr. Johnson in his campaigning for re-election. As a New Dealer in a state where the anti-Roosevelt sentiment was often fanatical, he was never without opposition. In 1944, when no substantial candidate entered the Democratic primary, the anti-Roosevelt faction persuaded a man named Buck Taylor to become a candidate. The kindest thing that could be said of Buck was that he was nobody. His obvious function was to be a mouthpiece for the anti-Roosevelt faction. One campaign document widely circulated over the district was a picture of Mrs. Roosevelt shaking hands with a Negro. Appropriate text connected Johnson with Mrs. Roosevelt. In 1944, that picture was considered a

highly potent campaign document. In 1946, Johnson had more substantial opposition in the person of Hardy Hollers, an Austin attorney. Johnson won both races with no great difficulty.

A most pleasant memory of those two campaigns is of the trips taken with Mr. Johnson as he campaigned in the ten counties, then, of the district. Between towns he would reminisce, talking of his boyhood and his earlier campaigns. It is no secret that every town in the district had benefited in some degree through Washington services of their congressman. As a result, Johnson had a hard core of loyal supporters throughout the district--the mayors of Bastrop and Brenham, the county judge of Lee County, to single out just three. The outstanding example of how towns benefited was the location of Camp Swift, one of the largest army training centers, outside of Bastrop. The then-Mayor, Will Rogers of Bastrop, has made a recording for this series.

One of the statements made to me by Mr. Johnson seems hardly credible today. He said in effect that he had to exercise all of his will power to campaign as was expected of him in the small towns, walking up and down main street, with a handshake and a smile for every person he met. He said in substance that he recoiled from offering his hand to a stranger. Granting the sincerity of that statement made in those early campaigning days, his present ability as an absolute artist of the handshake becomes all the more amazing. I had not thought of that statement for years until during the first years of his service as vice president, I rode on the press plane that accompanied Mr. Johnson on his Southeast Asia tour. That tour was one

long handshake to monstrous crowds. On the streets of Honolulu, Taipei, Manila, he had shaken hundreds of hands. He would stop his motorcades in order to dismount and walk through the crowds to reach more hands. It happened that I was on the vice presidential plane on the flight to Bangkok and witnessed first hand the agonized pleas of the experts on Thailand that he not shake hands. The idea was that the Thai people shrink from a contact. Their way of greeting is the slight bow over their palms-together hands. Johnson assured the advisors he would abide by the customs. And for a part of the distance from the airport to downtown Bangkok, he did follow those instructions. The route was over a narrow road, and working people were returning to their outlying homes in buses; because of the narrow roads a great traffic jam developed. The motorcade slowed almost to a crawl as buses swung out of the roadway to permit the oncoming cars in the motorcade to pass. Several times the Vice President alighted and went into the buses, faithfully following the Thai greeting custom. Then at a small collection of buildings, possibly akin to a shopping center, the dam was broken. Johnson alighted again and was roaming through the crowd. The story we got was that one of the Thai people had once driven a taxi in New York City, and was Americanized to the extent that he wanted to shake hands with the distinguished visitor. And everyone else around this handshaking pair decided that they too would try this American style of greetings. After that, it was "Katy, bar the door;" the handshake had arrived in Siam. I have wondered if it survived.

During this 1944 to 1948 period, I received some lessons in the art of writing a political speech. The baptism was on a speech having to do with the atom bomb. In those days at least, the procedure in preparing a speech for Mr. Johnson went like this: First you talked with the man, rather you listened and took frantic notes while he spouted ideas and phrases, almost in fact dictating the speech, with his remarkable memory for facts and figures to bolster the phrasing. On this particular speech he outlined what he wanted to say--the probable effect of an A-bomb dropped on the Tenth Congressional District. I took the notes, did some outside research--and there was not very much available in those days on the A bomb--and prepared a first draft. It seemed to me a very creditable effort. The speech was carried to him, he read through it rapidly, and handed it back, saying in substance, "That's very good. Now go through it and cut down the three-syllable words to two syllables." Well, I sweated over it for many hours and carried back a second draft. This time he said, "Try once more and see how many of the two-syllable words you can reduce to one syllable." I was somewhat miffed at this second rejection slip, but followed instructions. And looking back at it, I do regard the speech as a minor triumph to which a lot of multi-syllable adjectives could be applied, such as concise, simple, effective and understandable. The most difficult part of writing a speech for him was in the peroration, an uplift note at the end, preferably something which, hopefully, would bring a cheer from his audience.

Recently, in the spring of 1969, an article by another speech writer appeared in Life magazine, which I read with much amusement and some nostalgia. The principal change in the MO [method of operation] of the presidential speech writers appears to have been that they lacked the personal contact with the man before preparing an initial draft of the proposed speech. While it is understandable that the President would not have the time to consult with his writers prior to every small speech, it does seem that the job of the presidential speech writer must have become infinitely more difficult.

To revert to the political record chronologically, the 1946 campaign was particularly bitter. This was the campaign waged by the Austin attorney, Hardy Hollers. Incidentally, at this point in time in late 1969, Hollers is an executive of a citizens group in Austin which has been active in the election of candidates for city government posts. The Hollers congressional campaign was in post-war days when it was still most difficult to obtain materials for any kind of construction. It followed that when almost any new building went up in Austin, Johnson detractors would insinuate that Johnson had an interest in the construction, a money interest, that is. The interested student is referred to an interview tape in this series done by Gordon Fulcher for a specific instance of the political myths of those days.

Also some reference needs to be made to the progress of KTBC during that period. It had been a daytime station when acquired by Mrs. Johnson. For day-and-night operation it was necessary to get a new radio frequency which would not interfere with already-operating

night stations. After this was done, the Johnsons obtained an affiliation with the Columbia Broadcasting System. The network affiliation increased our prestige enormously and enabled us to get a foothold on local advertising, of which the station had practically none when the Johnsons acquired it. Hence the station itself prospered.

I like to think that among the reasons the station prospered was the aggressive news policy. A news staff in a town the size of Austin was virtually unheard of at that time. News at the local level consisted of tearing the stories off the telegraph wire, UP or AP as the case might be, and reading those stories on the air. KTBC started reporting statehouse and local news gathered by the KTBC reporters. At one time in those early years our staff of three men--a magnificent number--included two who are still operating successfully in the Austin area at this writing: Stuart Long, who now operates the Long News Service at the Texas Capitol and who reportedly has the highest income of any Austin newsman, and Wray Weddell, who could never be persuaded to face a microphone but who could cover the news of Austin with one hour on the telephone, and who now has his own front page column daily in the Austin afternoon newspaper, the Statesman.

An index to the attitude of the Johnsons was the fact that KTBC sent me to San Francisco for a series of first-hand reports on the organization of the United Nations. In preparation for this assignment, I went first to Washington and spent considerable time in the office of Senator Tom Connally of Texas, then chairman of the Foreign Affairs [Committee] for the Senate. I rode on a special train from Washington

to San Francisco, sharing a room with the Senator's foreign affairs advisor. There were few Texas newspapers represented there, and to my knowledge, only one other Texas radio station. A former member of the Texas legislature named Roy Hofheinz had obtained a job with a Houston station and brought along his newfangled wire recorder. KTBC had a wire recorder, but we would not have dreamed of carrying it out there. Not only was it bulky; the KTBC recorder had only one reel of wire and our engineers were not too confident about it. But Roy was persuaded that the recorder would revolutionize reporting, as in fact its successor, the tape recorder, did. So my reports from San Francisco were in the old fashioned way--I recorded on disc at the CBS station then located in the Palace Hotel in San Francisco and sent the discs back home. Just in case you missed the name, Hofheinz is now the daddy of the Astrodome and the owner of the Barnum and Bailey Circus.

Another insight into the Johnson character is afforded by what happened when the old friends and former Johnson associates returned from war duty. They included John Connally, Jake Pickle, Bob Phinney, Willard Deason, J. C. Kellam and one or two others. Connally's wife, Nellie, had worked for KTBC as a salesman all through the war years, at least that portion of the war years when the Johnsons owned the station. Now, John and the other returnees were given apprentice-type jobs at KTBC. They were to learn the radio business preliminary to organizing their own station, which they eventually organized under the name of KVET, K-V-E-T. As was inevitable, Johnson was accused of using these veterans as a front for owning a second radio station in

Austin. Personally, I have no knowledge of the financing arrangements for KVET. I do know that most of its personnel served an apprenticeship at KTBC. As a sidelight, there was a question as to whether J. C. Kellam or Willard Deason was to stay at KTBC as station manager. I was asked my preference and said I would prefer to work for Kellam, who continues as manager to this date [1969]. It doesn't follow that my preference had anything to do with his selection. It also should be noted, for the record, that for many years I served in a role which we called, for want of a better name, as acting manager when Kellam was out of the city. The job was never formalized, since I had neither the aptitude nor the desire for a managerial role. But when Kellam was absent I could sign any necessary contracts, checks, and et cetera.

As another aside, one of my memories of these early days at KTBC was a staff meeting held at Lake Buchanan, a Sunday afternoon outing for families. There was a long discussion of all of the things which the staff could do to make KTBC more successful and more lucrative. At the conclusion, in a pep talk, Mr. Johnson declared that if we all pitched in and gave our best, in a few years we'd all be playing golf every afternoon. With some amusement I have remembered that incident down through the years. No one at KTBC ever became a golf champion.

It was clearly understood that management or ownership at KTBC never would dictate the news policies and this understanding was never breached. The few people who have been told this have expressed some polite doubts. But without such a clear policy, the news department at KTBC surely would have floundered and fallen apart. It would have

been discredited. It has always been my firm belief, openly voiced and sometimes to the avowed consternation of other newsmen, that no reporter can be entirely objective. His very selection of facts with which he constructs his news stories reflect to an extent his personal views. This is particularly true in political reporting. Holding this belief, it has been a deep personal satisfaction to know that a majority of the listeners found no pro-Johnson ties in our reporting. Moreover, the news department's reputation among our professional colleagues was always excellent. Not many years ago, Mr. Johnson was quoted to me as having said to the manager, "How in the hell can I get my name on KTBC news?" Possibly we leaned the other way to avoid an appearance of a pro-Johnson bias. We did go further than other news media in reporting the emerging local strength of the Republican Party; and one of the station's prized exhibits is a letter from the Travis County GOP chairman commending KTBC for its news coverage.

In fact, the area in which KTBC news had its most fretful moments with management was in what we termed the puff story, concerning some business enterprise, some advertiser. To draw a line between legitimate business news and pure propaganda tied to advertising sometimes is most difficult. You are in trouble, too, when you write a feature concerning one business and all of that business' competitors expect the same treatment. Salesmen attempting to wrap up a contract for advertising are prone to make rash promises. To the best of my knowledge, ownership never interfered in these spats between news and management. At times, news would compromise as far as our conscience would permit.

We always had the right to say no, and we knew that if we said it, it would stick. There were occasions when we said no. You win some and you lose some.

To return to the political wars. Perhaps because it was my life for several months, in my judgment the 1948 campaign for the U. S. Senate was the turning point in Mr. Johnson's career. If he had not run for the Senate, if he had dropped out of the race as he tried hard to do, if he had not been elected, and if he had not served with distinction as his party's leader, he would not have been in a position to go on to the presidency.

With the possible exception of John Connally, no one person is qualified to tell the story of that campaign. The nominal title of campaign manager went to Claude Wild, an Austin attorney who held the same position in Johnson's first campaign for Congress, back in 1937. But John Connally was in charge; with Johnson, he mapped the strategy and raised the necessary funds. Of course, Johnson himself had been planning all of his political days for some office higher than the congressional representative for ten Central Texas counties. His helpfulness to citizens interested in their own communities outside the Tenth Congressional District became a matter of common knowledge. For a specific instance, reference is made to the taped interview with publisher Houston Harte, whose newspaper interests were in San Angelo, Corpus Christi and a half-dozen other Texas cities. In that interview, Harte tells of Johnson's efforts on behalf of the Corpus Christi Naval Air Station and the San Angelo flying field, Goodfellow. For

active campaign workers, Johnson could rely upon those who worked for him in the NYA days and those for whom the NYA had meant subsistence. He could also call upon numerous people he had befriended as a member of Congress--as one example, the many high schoolers who had written to him and whom he had helped get jobs to continue their education.

Possibly the easiest way to get a day-by-day summary of the 1948 campaign is by reference to the book, Texas and the Fair Deal, by Professor Seth McKay of Texas Tech. The book is largely a digest of the daily newspapers, and a very thorough digest at that. The book is beyond criticism as a factual, day-by-day account, but it lacks in that there is no attempt to evaluate anything. Treated in a virtually off-hand manner was the near-catastrophe which hit during the very first days of the Johnson campaign--the kidney stone.

The story of that near-miss was well told in an interview with Warren Woodward in this series, so it will be reviewed here only briefly, from a personal standpoint. Horace Busby, who went on to become the President's chief speechwriter and advisor and who is now a respected business consultant in Washington, was getting his baptism. He had been employed just weeks before the campaign, along with Woodward, and had come down from Washington to work with me on the speech writing and particular the opening speech of the campaign. For him it was a brand new experience. Together we worked over several drafts and finally turned out the final product, ready for the candidate to deliver in Austin's Wooldridge Park on a warm summer evening. The final draft was completed just a few hours before delivery time.

My job included carrying a copy from which he was to read out to the Johnson home on Dillman Street.

As noted in the Woodward interview my consternation was almost beyond words when I met a close-mouthed doctor coming down the stairs leading to the Johnson second-floor apartment. I found Mr. Johnson in his bedroom, just getting out of bed, obviously suffering severe pain. In the McKay book this illness is called--quoting from a newspaper of the day--a kidney infection. It is a term which seems inadequate to describe a kidney stone. Reputedly the pain of a kidney stone is the most excruciating that man occasionally suffers. At any rate, as reported in more detail in the Woodward interview, Johnson did make his opening night speech and only a few people knew that he was in deep pain throughout.

On the morning after the opening speech, Warren Woodward and myself flew with the candidate to Amarillo. He kept several dates in the Panhandle area, through all of which he was most seriously ill. Finally we boarded a night train for Dallas. The first planned stop was Wichita Falls. I had written a speech for that city. But on the Pullman he became so ill that obviously he could not stop there. Instead, I got off the train in Wichita Falls, and after some consultations with his local campaign workers, I eventually had to read my own speech in a radio appearance in lieu of Mr. Johnson. The candidate, as so graphically described in Mr. Woodward's interview, subsequently was flown to Rochester, to the Mayo Clinic where after several days the kidney stone was removed without surgery. The instrument with

which it was removed is on display in the clinic's museum, at least it was at one time because I saw it there.

At Johnson headquarters in Austin, all was dark and dreary. Woodward has related how Connally refused to accept the candidate's orders that his name be withdrawn from the senate race. Connally's muleheadedness paid off when Johnson came home from the Mayo Clinic, full of vinegar and ready to go.

Obviously, he had some catching up to do; and the idea of campaigning by helicopter was born. I wish I could recall more about the meeting at which the helicopter project was first laid out. It was a first in national politics. But all that I clearly recall is that a modus operandi was worked out.

That's the end of what I wrote in 1969. Very little about the 1948 campaign. I would have liked to have written much more, but it was getting much too long.

Now we go to the second part of this narrative.

Up to this point what has been said was written by me in the late sixties, more than ten years ago. It is now March, 1981. Reading over what was written before, I am appalled and saddened by the number of deaths among those I interviewed for the oral history series, or otherwise mentioned in the narrative. My close personal friends such as the manager of KTBC, J. C. Kellam, called Jesse by very few people indeed and not including me or anyone else who worked under him; Stuart Long, one of the finest newsmen Texas ever produced; Gordon Fulcher, one-time editor of the Austin-American, when that paper had a separate personality;

the genial newsman, Harvey Payne, from whom I took the story of how an advance man operates in a political campaign. I believe that advance men were first used in Texas politics by LBJ in the 1948 campaign. The erratic extrovert, Frank Carter Adams; my great and good friend, Alvin J. Wirtz, whose death I previously noted.

Then of course the death of LBJ. Mrs. Bolton and I spent the weekend at the LBJ Ranch with the Johnsons just before his death. Somewhere in the millions of papers in the vast LBJ Library collection is a radio script in which I reported on that weekend. I had retired but went back to the station for this special report. Not on file, but I have often wished that it was, was a conversation Cactus Pryor and I had on the air on his program, the Cactus Pryor Show, a few days after the death. We hadn't the forethought to arrange for its recording, and neither of us had any script. I recall, for a reason, that I ended the broadcast by quoting "Abou Ben Adhem." The reason I recall it is that after the broadcast Cactus asked me about the poem. He had not ever heard it before. To me that was an astonishment. I thought every schoolboy had to memorize it.

Abou said, "Write me as one who loves his fellow men." I believe that was true of Lyndon Johnson, after his fashion. He loved mankind, but not necessarily all individual men. Or not even a majority of all. It perhaps is biased and subjective thinking; nevertheless I have always believed that his view of the world in general was very much like my own, which goes something like this: At a much younger age I was all for doing whatever I could to better the lot of all men.

But I was always discomforted when I walked into a five-and-ten and observed the type of people who were customers there.

Lyndon liked to do things for people. It wasn't necessarily to give them pleasure, but the act gave him pleasure. I could name more than one example from my own experience, and there's no reason to think that I was singled out.

Today I do not have the mood or patience to put down all the words that I used in the earlier narrative. My role of speech writer for LBJ in the 1948 senatorial campaign could be expanded at great length. But if it has historical value, Bob Caro has the facts and will use any of importance in his biography of Johnson. Now how Lyndon prompted me to take my daughter, Beverly, to Mayo's for treatment of thyroid cancer has been told by her--and Joe Phipps--in a Redbook article which will be somewhere in the file. Others no doubt will tell how KTBC radio became KTBC radio and television. Again much space could be devoted to relating how our fledgling and ignorant news department adapted to the visual with Polaroid cameras and many on-camera interviews, and the gradual growth of that department to its present eminent position. Likewise, the use of tape recording cartridges, how it transformed the radio commercial business as well as the news department.

To recite only the bare essentials, KTBC was granted TV channel 7 and went on the air with the first television show on Thanksgiving day, 1952, for the Longhorn-Aggie football game. The first news show, as well as all other locally-produced shows, was through a glass. A cubicle, soundproofed against the noise of the equipment, was built in

the transmitter building atop Mt. Larson, and a camera shot our images through the glass window. Jay Hodgson, Uncle Jay, did his kid show. Dan Love reported on sports, all through a glass darkly. Meanwhile our studios were being constructed on the ground floor of the Driskill Hotel.

(Interruption)

Our chief engineer was a self-taught electronics expert, Ben Hearn, who learned the rudiments in the army but had to do television from scratch. The news department also was wholly ignorant about television. It was a major step forward when we acquired our first movie camera; up to that time we had only Polaroids. Not too long ago, perhaps a couple of years ago, I visited the present KTBC newsroom, looked over their mechanical marvels. I would have to learn the business all over again.

The station did prosper. Competition did not hurt us. Someone else can discuss the debate between VHF and UHF. The other two commercial stations in Austin are UHF's but seem to be doing just fine. Donald Thomas, seemingly permanently assigned to KTBC by his law firm, wrote the most liberal profit-sharing and retirement plan that he could persuade Internal Revenue to approve--in fact I understand that no plan so liberal has since been approved by IRS. The Johnsons also sold small amounts of stock to some of their employees, including their news editor. This stock was sold with a recapture clause which has since been exercised.

For many years I served on the board of directors. I considered the position honorary only. J. C. Kellam was aware of what the Johnsons wanted done, and the board okayed his proposals. To my knowledge, LBJ never attended a meeting of this board.

It would be of interest to me, but perhaps to no others, to list the newsmen who have passed through KTBC, where they are now and what they do. But I do not recall all the names, nor do I know what they do. One day late in 1980, the professional magician Harry Blackstone told on the "Today Show" of his days at KTBC, mentioning me by name although my own memory is that he was more of an announcer than a newsman. Harry, like many another, came to us from the University as a part-time worker.

Another who locally distinguished himself was Neal Spelce. I recall that when his talents became apparent, I talked with him on the necessity of becoming a part of the whole community, whether or not he planned to continue in electronic journalism. It was with pride a few years back when Neal was elected [Austin] Chamber of Commerce president.

Bill Moyers says he learned at KTBC but the fact is Bill's basic training was on one of the Harte-Hanks newspapers, at Marshall, and he was a fine newsman before he ever came to KTBC. The present manager of KVET, Ron Rogers, was one of our boys, also Phil Miller, who moonlights these days as a sports editor for KLBJ. Wray Weddell, my first fulltime associate, is now the guiding genius of the Austin Citizen which attempts to compete with the American-Statesman. I have not heard of John Thawley for several years. He ran away to edit a hot rod

magazine on the West Coast. At one time, when both Neal and I were with LBJ on his vice-presidential round-the-world-trip, he ran the KTBC news department alone. How, I will never know. If I thought hard enough and long enough, others would come to mind.

Which is enough except for a kind of a sort of a peroration--which I hope to express with good taste. In that connection, I once shocked his daughter Lynda, in the White House. Lynda, LBJ and I were seated at a table where he was enjoying a snack of some kind, and I addressed him as Lyndon. Lynda spoke up primly, "We address the President as Mr. President."

Historians will line up the debits and the credits: civil rights legislation, the Vietnam War, the Great Society, inflation, et cetera and et cetera. I have not put my mind to those great issues. My day was earlier when I traveled the back roads of the Tenth Congressional District with a high-strung young congressman who constantly developed lesions on the back of his hands and who talked of his philosophies of politics and dictated countless outlines of speeches, some of which I put on paper. Some forty years ago that was, and I wonder if there are others who think of the things that his name suggests to me. When I see a big truck parked in a roadside park while the driver catches forty winks, I wonder if that driver--or that picnicing family nearby--ever gives a thought to the man who launched the roadside park system in Texas. Bob Montgomery once told me that the idea was his, Montgomery's. But whoever [had] the idea, it was Johnson's drive and energy as NYA director that made the system come to life.

Think of a hot, dry, July day when in the evening you water your lawn. How many of the countless householders in Austin consider, as the water flows so freely, how lucky we are to have a string of dams on the Colorado River to ensure that unceasing flow, while many other Texas communities must ration their water. And the swimmers, the boaters, the fishermen, the lovers of outdoor life, perhaps once in a while they think fleetingly of the man who initiated that string of lakes. And those developers who have constructed huge apartment complexes and hotels along the shores of Austin's Town Lake, I hope that sometime they privately voice their thanks to the man who made possible those buildings which mar the landscape in a section once periodically devastated by floods. Downstream, those rice farmers who never worry about a lack of water to flood their fields, perhaps they have an occasional thought for the man who made that water possible.

Those farmers and ranchers in the Hill Country, who swear so bitterly at the size of their electric utility bills, do they remember that their utility poles were sunk and their electric complex was built in a section where the private utilities insisted they could not be economically sunk in granite.

The litany could continue. Sure, those things were done with our money, yours and mine, out of the federal treasury. But they were good things, and they exist today only because of the driving, restless spirit of Lyndon Johnson.

A few of us, for a brief time, will remember.

(Interruption)

G: The third section of the oral history [interview] will be a series of questions and answers.

Mr. Bolton, I want to start by asking you if you have any insight on the early association between President Johnson and Governor Jimmie Allred.

B: No, not of the relationship between them. D. B. Hardeman and Alex Louis were both great friends of both men, and whether they had anything to do with bringing them together I can't say. Both men are still alive. They should be interviewed on that very subject, if they haven't been. But I don't know of any.

G: When Lyndon Johnson ran for the Senate in 1941 against W. Lee O'Daniel, and Governor Allred ran against him in 1942, was there any sort of agreement that one would run the first time and the other the second time?

B: No, I don't think so. I don't think there was any agreement between them on that point.

G: You mentioned in the narrative that Alvin Wirtz had given Lyndon Johnson a job at fifteen dollars a month. I've never heard that. Do you have any idea where that information came from?

B: Yes, in my series of oral tapes I did one with Sim Gideon, who at that time was general manager of the Lower Colorado River Authority. Wirtz made a hobby of giving jobs to young men. Sim was one of his boys, and Lyndon was another of his boys to whom he gave jobs. I don't know what they did or where the jobs were. I assume that they had something

to do with Southwest Texas University, because that's where Lyndon went to school. Wirtz lived in Seguin, which is not too far, you know, from San Marcos.

G: You went to work for the station in 1944, as you indicated.

B: Right.

G: I wanted to ask you, first of all, what specifically was involved in the growth of the station. Was it the fact that it became a full time rather than simply a daytime station? The affiliation with CBS? Any of these things that you feel are important?

B: Well, I went over them briefly, perhaps too briefly. They had to get nighttime radio. That was the first must. And to get that from the FCC required a change of channel so that they wouldn't interfere with some other radio station. If you will tune in your radio some night you will find that KNOW, KVET, KOKE, and WOAI in San Antonio--the four stations--are all grouped at one end of the dial. KTBC is clear at the other end of your dial. That was a handicap. People were used to tuning in that other end of the dial, and it really was a handicap to be clear down at the other end. But we had to do that; we had to have nighttime radio.

Then of course getting the Columbia Broadcasting System affiliation, I think--I don't know this for a fact, but it's speculation on my part--probably was due to Lyndon's knowledge of and acquaintance with high officials of CBS. In other words, CBS had an affiliation in San Antonio which covered the Austin area adequately. They didn't have to have another station in Austin for coverage. But Lyndon

or someone sold them the idea that they should affiliate with this new station.

And in all modesty, I think that the news department had a great effect on the growth of the station. You must understand that a news department in a station was almost unheard of in Texas at that time. If you had a news editor, all he did was pull the wire, tear the wire, and pick out whatever stories he wanted and put them on the air. We made an effort not only to collect the local and state news, but to interpret it. We had, as I said in my other scripts, two of the best reporters in Texas in Long and Weddell. When Long went to KVET it was a great loss to me. The fact that we would go to such lengths as to send a man to San Francisco to cover the United Nations organization was a feather in our cap which, I think, brought us listeners. And the more listeners you have, the better you can sell the advertising on a station.

G: Lyndon Johnson seems to have had almost a consuming interest in news and in knowing what was going on, you know, with the three televisions and the tickers. Was this development of a first-rate news section here in KTBC his idea?

B: Oh, yes. Definitely.

G: Do you recall how it got started?

B: Well, if I haven't covered that, I'm sorry. I thought I had. He came to me, and I don't remember his words, but the substance was that he wanted to make KTBC the outstanding news station of not only Austin, but of Texas, and would I take on the job. My wife and I had great

conversations about whether I should give up one job to take on a field that I knew nothing about and which I did not consider myself particularly fit for, because my voice was not particularly an attractive radio voice. But it was a challenge that I accepted. And I think that the work we did on KTBC contributed greatly to the growth of the station.

G: You discussed covering the UN conference at San Francisco.

B: Yes.

G: That was a joint venture with Harte-Hanks and KTBC?

B: Yes, and the Dallas Times Herald. I wrote stories for the Times Herald and the Harte-Hanks newspapers. Yes, it was a joint venture with them. They helped pay my expenses.

G: Do you recall who proposed that suggestion?

B: Oh, I'm sure Johnson proposed it. I have no independent recollection of it, but he was full of ideas. If you knew the man, you know he had more ideas than any one man could carry out. He was full of them.

G: Let me ask you about the competition in 1944. You had how many radio stations?

B: We had KNOW, [which] was the leading station in Austin. KOKE and KVET had not yet been established. WOAI was the greatest competition at that time. They had a newsman named Ken McClure, who had a great following for his afternoon newscasts. I believe it was afternoon newscasts, it may have been night newscasts. That's a long time ago. But anyway, WOAI was our great competition, and the only competition with any news coverage.

G: Who owned WOAI?

B: Who owned them? I don't have any idea. It was owned by a corporation, but I don't know who it was.

G: What about KNOW? Was that owned by a prominent individual in town?

B: No. KNOW was owned by the Wendell Mayes people from West Texas that had a number of stations, and I think they still own a majority of the stock in KNOW.

G: Did one station tend to focus on one type of programming, and another--? For example, I understand that KVET later emphasized sports broadcasts.

B: Well, no. At that time rock and roll hadn't been--now, you're talking about radio?

G: Right. Talking about it in the mid-forties.

B: Well, in the mid-forties we all played about the same music and we had programs--Jack Benny, et cetera. WOAI was NBC and we were CBS. KNOW had to be ABC.

G: What was Mrs. Johnson's role in the decision-making that went on at the station?

B: Well, of course, I don't know how much she discussed with her husband and Mr. Kellam, but as I said, Mr. Kellam from the time he took over the management was very close to the Johnsons, and he brought the decision of the owner to the board of directors and we usually just okayed whatever he wanted. So I can't say what her role was exactly. She attended some of the meetings of the board of directors after television had started. I don't think we ever had a board of directors for radio.

G: What about LBJ? What was his role in the decision-making?

B: Well, of course, again it's hearsay on my part and speculation. I think he had a great deal to do with every step of it.

G: Really?

B: Yes. I've never agreed with Mr. Kellam's position and the Johnsons' position that gave him a secondary role because it was not his money that was put into it, because the stock was in her name. But I think he was responsible for a great deal of every progressive step that was taken by the station.

G: I guess one of the important aspects of making a go of the radio business was selling advertising.

B: Yes.

G: Did he encourage this or suggest sales strategies that you're aware of?

B: Well, I'm not too familiar with what went on on the national scene. I assume that he had some influence with the people he knew. For instance, I know we had one program from very early on. We had a program called "The Budweiser Hour," which ran right after the news at ten o'clock, which was sweet music designed for the University students. We carried that program for years and years, it seems like. I've always assumed that Mr. Johnson had some contacts with the people who made Budweiser.

G: August Busch.

B: I don't know that for a fact, but it's a reasonable speculation.

G: Yes.

(Interruption)

B: I tried to make it clear in what I said before that it would have been fatal to any sort of believable news department if we had become the organ for LBJ, the mouthpiece of LBJ, in the news department. So we did lean over backwards in avoiding LBJ stories in the news department. In trying to be objective on all news, including [that concerning] the newly developing Republican Party, as I stated before, we were very friendly with the chairman of the Republican Committee in Travis County and had a letter of commendation from him. We also tried to seek out Republican news, Republican candidate political news, just to be an objective reflection of the entire political spectrum in Austin and in the area. I don't recall any specific instances but I know we had one or two complaining letters from one candidate for Congress one time. I know I devoted a great deal of correspondence in pointing out to him that whatever he had sent us we had used, but he hadn't sent us very much. He lived up in Burnet. That was one of Jake Pickle's races. But that's the only instance that I recall. In fact, I don't think we had any other complaints. We had no complaints from any legitimate political candidates that they were mistreated, Democratic or Republican.

G: Let me get back to the subject of politics and just ask you some questions about state politics during this period, the 1940s. Can you elaborate on the relationship between LBJ and Tom Miller, Mayor Tom Miller?

B: Well, someone told me that--well, I know this for a fact, that in Johnson's first race for Congress, Mayor Miller supported C. N. Avery.

So that put him in an enemy's camp. Johnson was a man who believed in cultivating those who had been against him. In fact, I sometimes thought that he leaned over backwards as much as I did in reporting in favoring his enemies, his political enemies. And of course Tom started out as one of them. But Tom was a great Roosevelt fan, Tom Miller. He had his own particular slogan. "Prosperity's rose will bloom again with Roosevelt." So when Johnson was elected and went out of his way to call on the Mayor and show the Mayor of his determination to do whatever was good for Austin, they became very fast political friends. They worked together during the Depression days on a subject that should be explored by a historian like Bob Caro on closing the banks. They worked very closely on that with the then-publisher of the Austin paper, Martin Anderson. I wonder sometimes if Martin Anderson is still alive. Martin Anderson was a very great political figure.

G: Well, did Lyndon Johnson and Tom Miller come into conflict with each other at later stages?

B: Not to my knowledge.

G: Anything else on Tom Miller and Lyndon Johnson?

B: No, I don't recall anything. From what I've since heard I imagine that they were pretty bitter opponents until Johnson sold himself to Miller after winning his congressional seat. How long after it I don't know. I don't know when their friendship developed. I know that it was very firm and was shown in the 1944 convention in which Johnson and Miller and Herman Brown were split off from the Texas

Regulars. I mentioned that in my other script. Tom was a great Roosevelt man, as I said. I think that had a great deal to do with their friendship. I know that so long as I was personally involved that they were good friends. That would be through the 1948 campaign and through the fifties. Tom got sick, of course, and left the mayor's office. He was a benevolent dictator.

G: How so?

B: He ran the city of Austin. And he ran it. He didn't need any city manager, but he had one, city manager. He was a real mayor. But you don't want to talk about Tom Miller.

G: Well, he's certainly an interesting sidelight, an important story. I gather he was mayor for years.

B: Oh, yes. I don't know what the tenure was. I know he was a great man to quote Shakespeare. He asked me once to write him a speech. That goes back to the after-1944 period, in that area. At that time the radio office was in the Brown Building. His office was right across the street in city hall, you see. He asked me to write him a speech. I don't know what the occasion was. So I got out my Bartlett's Quotations and copied out half a dozen or more of what seemed like pertinent quotes from Shakespeare and put them into a speech, tied them all together. He said it was the best speech he ever read in his life, all because it had all those Shakespeare quotations in it.

G: I suppose they were allies in that 1940 convention fight over the third-term issue.

B: 1944, yes.

G: No, it would have been 1940 I guess the first time, and then 1944 [later].

B: Yes. That was when I wrote a little piece about Maury Maverick and Tom Miller, Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dee. I took off from Alice in Wonderland about them having a fight. I didn't cover that convention.

G: Did President Roosevelt's death affect Lyndon Johnson? Did it change him much?

B: No, I think his reaction was very like the reaction of the rest of us, politically speaking I'm talking about. There was a great fear in Washington at that time, as I recall, and across the country, that Truman was not a strong man, not a strong senator, and that he would make a weak president. Of course, he turned out to be one of the strongest presidents I think that the Democratic Party has produced. But I know that I heard Johnson speak of that feeling in Washington, that the country was not in too good a shape with him as a leader.

G: Did Johnson himself move to the right after FDR's passing?

B: He's a hard man to classify. No, I don't think so. I don't think he moved to the right. I think that Johnson was always nearer to center than most people gave him credit for. What was his new society?

G: The Great Society?

B: The Great Society. You wouldn't call that to the right, would you?

G: No. But I'm talking about in the period from when he was a congressman during the New Deal period to the period after Roosevelt's death, when you had a good deal of conservatism in the country, and he was running for the Senate and representing a different constituency.

A lot of people feel like he became more conservative. I was just asking your insight on that.

B: I don't think that he did. I don't recall it in the speeches I wrote that he was particularly conservative. The only thing that you might draw a conservative-liberal line [on] was in his campaign he attacked organized labor pretty strongly.

G: In 1948.

B: In 1948. But I think that was perhaps a concession to the times. But other than that, I can't think of any particular to-the-right movement.

[End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview I]

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