

INTERVIEWEE: ALAN S. BOYD, President, Illinois Central Railroad (Tape 4)

INTERVIEWER: DAVID G. McCOMB

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Chicago, Illinois

M: Let me identify the tape first. This is a continued part of the interview with Mr. Alan Boyd, former Secretary of the Department of Transportation. The date is May 15, 1969. I am in his new offices at the Illinois Central Railroad in Chicago, Illinois, and my name is David McComb.

There's one question I might throw in about the Department of Transportation's formation. Where did you get that unusual symbol, the triskelion?

B: As they say, I'm glad you asked that question. As you recall, the department was really a conglomeration of a number of different bureaus and agencies. There was essentially nothing new being created, with the exception of Office of Secretary itself, and the Federal Rail Administration. After the law was enacted and after President Johnson indicated that he was going to nominate me, I became concerned, among other things, about how to get a sense of identity for the department. So, one of the things I concluded would be helpful was the idea of having a contest to develop a symbol for the department, utilizing as contestants, or making the contest available, to all of the employees of the agencies which would become a part of the department. We were able to get from FAA some money for prizes. In fact, actually it wasn't money; it was savings bonds. And while there was some skepticism on the part of some of my associates as to whether or not this was a good idea, and what sort of a return we would get, we put this out as a contest to the ninety-odd thousand people through

the FAA magazine and the ICC publications, the Coast Guard Monthly Newsletter and so forth.

And we had, what I thought was a phenomenal return. We had about 1500 designs submitted. And I set up a group of judges, and I'm sorry to say I've forgotten their names, but they're in the file somewhere--Nancy Kefauver was one of them. She was the art consultant to the Department of State. The chief of the Heraldry Section of the U. S. Army was one; the director of the National Gallery was one; then we had one from New York, and I wrote William Walton and asked him to serve as a member and got a very stuffy letter back from Mr. Walton, saying that he was a member of the Fine Arts Commission of the District of Columbia and, of course, I should realize that whatever we came up with would have to be approved by the commission, making it very clear to me that we were not able to move independently, which I knew full well.

We had a girl in the FAA Public Relations Department--Sue, Sue somebody, who did a winnowing process. I don't believe I set forth any standards or criteria for submissions, other than something that would identify the department, but I made it clear that I wanted something of an abstract nature--I didn't want a design such as the Department of Commerce had with a steamship and a steam locomotive and something like that, which undoubtedly were very modern in 1913 when the department was established, but it looks kind of funny nowadays. So we had, oh, I guess, about 400 designs submitted to the judges, and they came up with a design which is, as you know, called a triskelion, three curves reaching three points within a circle. The triskelion, I thought, suited our purposes very well, because it lends itself to the whole concept of transportation. The triskelion is within a circle, and some people think of the circle as

a wheel; some think of it as the world; the three points formed by the conjunction of the various curves remind some people of land, sea, and air. The triskelion itself, in a very abstract sense, with what I can identify after it was pointed out to me, looks sort of like a man running. Well, you know how it is with your own idea. I thought it was an eminently satisfactory result. The winning design was prepared by a fellow who worked for the FAA at the Academy in Oklahoma City, and he was given a \$500 savings bond.

M: What about the color of it, red and white?

B: That has no particular significance. This was based on the recommendations of the judges, and also involved some discussion with the chief of the Heraldry Section.

M: Your symbol, then, was approved without any difficulty?

B: By the Fine Arts Commission?

M: Yes.

B: Yes, although the fact of the matter is that the Fine Arts Commission has only advisory powers. It doesn't have the power to say yes or no. But we had a lot of fun with this, and as I say, I'm happy with it, and I think it's a good representation of Transportation. And I think it will be just as fresh twenty years from now as it is today.

M: In your work as Secretary, did you have any particular difficulty with other Cabinet officers since you were a new Secretary? Is there such a thing as seniority or anything like that in the workings of a Cabinet?

B: Only to a very minor extent. The fact really is that a number of the Cabinet officers are specialists in their fields, and I was in that category with Transportation, as is the Postmaster General, Interior, Labor, and so forth. There is no question but that the Secretary of State is the senior

Cabinet official. And if there was a desire, for example, to have a meeting of the Cabinet members, other than at the call of the President, why, the Secretary of State was the one who made the arrangements. But this is something that happened very rarely. You have overlaps and crossovers. I was not altogether happy in our relationships with the Department of State--I'm talking in an institutional sense rather than Alan Boyd versus Dean Rusk.

M: Where did you conflict with the Department of State?

B: Well, on such things as trade simplification. We were making efforts to try to get changes in the international bills of lading and documentation for the movement of cargo, the movement of ships and planes through ports. User charges. The relationships with ICAD for example, International Civil Aviation Organization. And we had overall pretty good relations, but the Department of State, probably for good reason, insists on having the last word. How you develop a distinction or draw lines between substantive knowledge and responsibility and foreign policy is something that I don't believe anybody has been able to do. And we certainly weren't. And human nature being what it is, I think that the State Department people would tend to think that everything was foreign policy and, therefore, they should be able to say whether or not we should recommend user charges of 30¢ or 45¢ per unit; and we would tend to think that we should make the decision and then they should go out and bargain for it. And we had some difficulties in those areas, but I had nothing but good relations personally with Dean Rusk.

M: When you have difficulties between departments, are they settled between the Cabinet Secretaries or with the staff below that?

B: Most of them are settled with the staff below. We had one argument that

I finally capitulated on with Nick Katzenbach as to who should head a delegation, which was just a bureaucratic battle. By and large, I felt that even though we were right, and I didn't have any question about the rightness of our position, that these things were not of sufficient importance, relatively, for me to raise hell about it, because what the hell! Dean was deeply involved with Viet Nam, an Arab-Israeli war, and with Pueblo, and things like that, and why should I take up his time with things which, in the long run, were not truly important? So I seldom ever involved myself, and I wouldn't have gotten into this with Nick or Dean, had Dean been in town, except that at some stage you've got to support your staff, just for internal morale. And that was basically why I got into this discussion, which I lost because I just didn't see any point in making the kind of issue out of it that--

M: When the full Cabinet met, for what purpose was that?

B: Oh, we met several times to talk about really political matters.

M: This would be with the President expounding his views?

B: No. The President wouldn't even be present. But we had several dinners over at the State Department where we tried to figure out how we could get existing programs through the Congress, and existing proposals.

M: I'm under the impression that the full Cabinet of all of the Secretaries meeting happens only rarely.

B: Very rarely.

M: And really a rather awkward device to get things done, except for exchange of information?

B: No. I agree with that. I think it's a shame in a way. I think it would be better if all the members of the Cabinet had some way of communicating with each other as to what are they doing. And President Johnson required

each of us to submit monthly reports of activities to him, which were, in turn, transmitted around the various Cabinet offices, but these were very stilted and I didn't learn a great deal from reading the other Cabinet officers reports, and I doubt seriously that they learned much from reading mine.

I had a feeling all the way through that I was not very well informed about what was going on in the government, outside of my own area, and I think this was a matter. I think this probably was true of all the Cabinet members, although there were various individuals who, because of their long association, I'm sure were closer than any of them were to me. For example, Wirtz, Freeman, and Udall (I'm confident because they had come in together more or less, although Bill Wirtz came in as Under Secretary in '61), used to sit down and have a drink together and kick around a lot of things. I don't say this in any sense of feeling that I was on the outside looking in, it just was that I hadn't known these men that long with the intimacy of activity with which they knew each other.

M: Did you have fairly free access to the President, when you needed to see him?

B: Oh, yes, sure. I never had any problem. I felt about the President pretty much the way I felt about Dean Rusk, and I didn't call him or go see him very often. But any time I called and said, "I want to see you," it was right then.

M: Did you ever have any difficulties getting a decision out of the President?

B: None that I recall.

M: He wouldn't delay or neglect to make a decision?

B: Not with me. Well, now, wait a minute. Let me think back. When I went to see him, and I would say, "Look, here's a problem, and this is the

subject and these are the issues and here are the alternatives as I see them, and this is what I recommend," I never had any trouble. He would say, "Okay," or, "No," or, "Do that." We did have some problems from time to time. You never can tie down where your legislation proposals are bogged. We made various proposals for legislation, and then sometimes we would get into a guessing game, whether Joe Califano was sitting on it, and if you concluded Joe was sitting on it, then you had to try to figure out whether Joe was sitting on it because he wasn't ready to make a recommendation to the President, or if he had shown it to the President, and the President had said to put it on the back burner, or if the Bureau of the Budget was sitting on it. And so you'd start this tracing operation. And Joe was always very straightforward. He was very loyal to the President; he never would say to me, nor I'm sure to anybody else, "the President doesn't want anything to be done on that." He would say, "I just haven't had time to make recommendations," or, "I've got to send it to the Bureau of the Budget," or something. But after awhile, you'd get to where you had a pretty good idea that the President had seen it, and he didn't want to see it at that time. That never really bothered me, because it was his Administration, it wasn't my Administration. My major concern was, "What does the President want? I'm here because he put me here. I'm not the President. Whether or not I agree, what difference does it make? It's his red wagon, and I ought to help him push it wherever he wants to go."

M: So you weren't too worried about the decisions being made?

B: No. Well, sometimes, I was. Let me go into another one. As we talk, I recall. And that was a cutback on the highway funds. I did have some agony over that, because I'd keep hearing from Charlie Schultze, and subsequently Charlie Zwick, that the "President wants \$600,000,000 or

\$800,000,000 cutback." Well, the timing on this became very important, because of the impact on the states. Then I would hear from Charlie, "Well, the President doesn't know what he wants to do." Then two days later, "He wants this." And finally I just said, "Look, I've got to know what's going to happen," so I sent a memorandum to the President, and I said, "This is what's going on while Rome is burning. Now, we've got to know what to tell these people." When it became clear that we were going to have to reduce some of the expenditures in the Highway Trust Funds, I started a, I won't say a softening-up process, but that's about what it was. But I started preparing the State people, the highway people, and so forth, and, of course, this was creating pressure from return pressures, and I was getting into an untenable position. But you couldn't tell the President, "You've got to do something." Now, that was something you just couldn't tell the President. But I laid out what all the problems were, and how much difficulty was being created by not having a decision. So, we got a decision, I think, the next day in both cases. But this was one of those indications, I think, the President wanted to keep his options open.

And this complex personality we've discussed before, he liked to keep things sort of sitting on the shelf while he ruminated as to whether or not he could use something over here as a lever to accomplish something over there. And, of course, I couldn't have the whole picture, and I wasn't really concerned except that I had a limited flexibility. When you're talking several hundred million dollars, when you're talking in the context of spending, where you're spending \$50,000,000 a day on the road program, and where most of your expenditures are for past obligations, and yet you're talking within the context of a reduction of hundreds of millions of dollars within this fiscal year-- . You start out, for example,

on July 1 with an expenditure of, say, four and a half billion dollars, but 80 percent of that is for obligations which were made in the prior year, so you've got 20 percent to fool with. And each day, that 20 percent is being reduced. So this was the nature of my problem.

M: Was there ever any doubt in your mind that Lyndon Johnson was in control of the government, that is, that he was a strong leader?

B: No, none at all.

M: There was no hesitation that he was controlling the levers of power?

B: No question, no question in my mind. I think in the case of Viet Nam, he was dealing with a circumstance which was beyond his control, but in terms of the function of the Executive Branch of the government, it was his baby.

M: Did you ever have any trouble with White House staff interference?

B: No.

M: Did you ever get the feeling that they were trying to do something with your department that you didn't want done?

B: No, never.

M: Did the White House staff operate efficiently from your point of view?

B: Yes, I was very well satisfied with the operation of the staff. I have nothing but praise for Joe and for Larry.

M: This is Larry Levinson?

B: Yes, and for Harry McPherson. Gee, I think they're wonderful people and just as straightforward and honest as they could be.

M: Did the war in Viet Nam interfere with your programs? Did you feel it?

B: By a process of deduction, yes. The war in Viet Nam, I think, had some bearing on inflation and obviously it had an effect on the budget. And this made it impossible for me to get the kind of money which I felt was essential to make any sort of a breakthrough in the transportation area.

- M: Did you feel any increasing pressure in that respect due to the escalation of Viet Nam?
- B: Well, that's hard to answer, because the department got started after rigor mortis had set in. The budget thing I felt particularly in the area of highway safety. But I tell you, I think the federal government has got to spend a tremendous amount of money on research, and we just weren't in a position to do it. I have to confess that I didn't have my organization too well set up to spend a lot of money on research, but it's sort of a chicken and an egg proposition. I couldn't get the people to outline and administer research, because I couldn't get enough money for research to justify the people. And this was a part of my problem, and I never did solve that one. Then we got hit, of course, with the reduction of personnel-- the ceilings on personnel, and this was painful because we hadn't even been a department at the time the level was set, as of July 1966, and that complicated my existence.
- M: Did you play any role in the beautification program?
- B: Yes, let me put it this way. I didn't play any role in the conception of the program, because I was at the CAB at the time that was conceived. I played a major role in the obtaining of legislation. Lowell Bridwell, Bill Moyers and I were the major characters involved in the beautification legislation. Lowell was my deputy at that time, and I had just moved to the Commerce Department. And that was the most traumatic experience I ever went through in Washington.
- M: Why do you say that?
- B: Oh, boy! Well, first of all, it was not a popular program with the committees with whom we had to deal, the Public Works Committees.
- M: Popular? Not because of the idea of beauty? It's hard to be against beauty.

B: Well, it was based on a couple of things. One, of course, we were trying to get the money out of the Highway Trust Fund; and this was a frill operation, and most of the highway community was against it.

Second, there were a lot of projects that various members of Congress had which they figured were of a higher priority than beauty. And so when we lost on the Highway Trust Fund, we went to General Fund and we created opposition there because we were digging into the budget. If we used it for beautification, it couldn't be used for other "worthwhile" purposes, which to the individual Congressmen, many of whom felt was of a higher priority. Our problems were exacerbated by the attitude of the President, I think. He was bound and determined to get the bill, and he put on all sorts of pressure.

M: What was his motivation?

B: Well, I guess that it was threefold. I don't know how to order these. One, Mrs. Johnson was very much interested in it; two, he was very much interested in it, largely as a result of his work with the NYA in Texas in the thirties, where he built hundreds of wayside parks. And this made a lasting impression on him. Also, he had had some battles with somebody back in the thirties about a dam somewhere, which was going to take out a grove of big old oak trees. I've forgotten how he got involved in that, but he decided that they ought to be saved, and I'm sure he didn't have any less energy in the thirties than he had in the sixties. Plus which I think that as President one of the things he wanted to be known for was advances in conservation and the preservation of natural resources. And beauty is right in the middle of that. So I would say that's what was behind it. All I think very noble.

It got to be terribly complicated though because prior to the time I

came to the Commerce Department, it appeared that an agreement was made on what could be accomplished. The Executive talked to Jennings Randolph who was chairman of the subcommittee of the Senate. Jennings got a bill to do this through his committee, then, my understanding is, Bill Moyers told the President, "We can do better than this." So, Bill and Mike Manatos and I went up to see Jennings Randolph one day when the bill was on the floor of the Senate to tell Jennings he had to amend his own bill! Now, this is really rough going, and I tell you, I wasn't happy about that a damned bit. Jennings made a statement which I'm sure I'll never forget. Since I was the newcomer, I was the furthest removed from the White House, so I had the privilege of being the spokesman. So I said, in my most diplomatic manner, "Jennings, you've got to change your own bill." And Jennings looked at me just as if he had been hit in the head with an axe. And then he said, "I want you to remember one thing! I was elected; you were appointed!" And he was so right.

M: He put you in your place?

B: Yes, and I didn't blame him a bit, didn't blame him a bit. But with all that, he went out and tried to amend the bill. But we created, God, I don't know how much ill will with that!

Also, we were having a lot of trouble on the House side, and Mayor Daley got hold of John Kluczynski [D-Illinois] who was chairman of the subcommittee in the House, and apparently put the heat on John because John wasn't in favor of this bill; and yet he was in a position where he indicated that if he didn't do what Daley wanted, he was dead, and he knew it. So we had his vote, but you can imagine how much he was trying to sell the bill.

And the President called George Fallon [D-Maryland] who was chairman

of the full committee. George and John Kluczynski, Bob Jones [Democrat] from Alabama, who was the senior member of the full committee, and John Blatnik [D-Minn.] went into a room together for George to take the call from the President; and apparently the President really read George the riot act. I mean he just skinned him, using the language which he's reputed to use so often, but which I never did really believe was normally true, but I was standing outside the door of this room. And these fellows came out and their faces were either white or red, and it was apparent that the President had said something more than just, "Good morning, George, I hope you'll give this support."

And we got the bill through, but, boy, what a price we paid in ill will!

M: Was there some kind of crisis there at the end in the final vote, delay, and that sort of thing that you recall?

B: Well, it took a long time to debate, because the President had invited the Congress down to some sort of shindig that evening at the White House, and there were a lot of the wives sitting up in the gallery in evening dress, and this thing went on until about one o'clock in the morning--this debate.

M: So you had ill will on the distaff side, too, I would say.

B: Yes. It was an unhappy situation all the way round.

M: Well, in the carrying out of the bill on beautification, there was also difficulty, was there not, especially in regard to billboards?

B: Yes. We had an awful lot of trouble with the billboard people. And there again, the billboard people said, at least, that they had been doublecrossed; that they had made an agreement with the White House and gotten a commitment which was subsequently abrogated by our changing the bill. Now, I wasn't

in on any of this, and I don't know whether it was true or not, but I think this ties back to the language in the bill that Jennings got through his committee. And the billboard people were satisfied with that, but then we went and upped the ante, so to speak.

M: You apparently also had some difficulty with the maritime program of 1968. Is that putting it mildly?

B: Yes, you phrased it very diplomatically. We got clobbered! I thought this was a great victory, just to get the bill before the Congress as an Administration bill. We're wasting all sorts of money today on maritime subsidy.

M: This bill came out of your department, not out of the Maritime Administration? Was that part of the difficulty? The origin of the bill itself?

B: No. It may have been a stated objection although I don't recall a great deal about that, but that wasn't really the problem, believe me. The problem was that we wanted to change the system of licensing routes and of payment of subsidies. It was just that simple. And we wanted also to have authority for U. S. flag operators to purchase abroad, purchase their ships abroad, and them under the American flag. That was the crux of the problem.

M: So the heat then came from the shipbuilders?

B: Shipbuilders and the unions. And the problem was further exacerbated by the fact that the Maritime Union, the SIU, Paul Hall's union, joined forces with the shipbuilders unions, for what reasons I don't know, because this, in my judgment, was against the best interests of the members of the SIU. The gossip around Washington was that Paul was trying to consolidate his strength to become the next president of the AFL-CIO. Now, I don't know whether this is true or not, but looking at it objectively, there was

no basis from a Merchant Marine point of view for him to support the opposition. He should have been in on our side, because we were talking about more ships. We were talking about fewer jobs per ship, but we were talking about a great deal more ships.

M: Did this idea of McNamara's that ships could have a capability for military use also figure in?

B: Oh, yes, that was a part of it. The ship operators were opposed to that. They did not want the Department of Defense to have its own Merchant Marine, in effect, and McNamara felt very strongly that really ships was a misnomer. These were floating warehouses, and they would have all sorts of capabilities which ships would not have, such as helicopter landing pads, air-conditioned warehouse space with humidity control, and things of that nature, and that they would be stationed off the coast of various areas. The logistical supply, not supply, really, but provision of equipment and armament for troops to be airlifted into the area if there were to be difficulties. Now, of course, a large group of people, I don't know how large, but very influential, headed by Senator Russell, opposed it on that concept, on his belief that we shouldn't try to be the policemen of the world. That had nothing to do with the Merchant Marine except that it was tied in as a program, part of the program, to get some shipbuilding capability in this country on a systems basis. But we had to carry that one on our back, too, and we lost some support on that.

A large part of the problem, in my judgment, was that many of the members of both the House and the Senate committees are captives of the maritime elements. I don't mean in any venal sense, but people like Tom Downing, for example, of Newport News or Norfolk, Virginia. The biggest single constituent is Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company.

Biggest employer in the area. The thought of foreign ships under any set of circumstances is just anathema!

M: I have heard that you were more or less abandoned in this program by the White House. Is there any truth in that? That after you ran into all the flak and the trouble that the White House just gave up?

B: Well, no, I don't feel that I was abandoned. There was never any indication from the President that he could do anything for me; and all I was seeking was the opportunity to submit this as an Administration program. I didn't think we had a ghost of a chance of getting it through. And, of course, his influence had waned tremendously at that stage of the game. So, the idea of abandonment, I think, is completely wrong. I don't know what he could have done anyway. You can slice it any way you want to, depending on people's interests. They say, "Well, this is Boyd's program and not the President's," but the fact of the matter is that no Cabinet Secretary is going to submit an Administration program if it doesn't have the approval of the President on it. It's just that simple. And I had strong support in the White House--Califano, the Bureau of the Budget, the Department of Defense--they were all just right there. But we weren't able to move it. And yet it was the right thing to do. And the reason I wanted to get it out as an Administration program was to spread it on the record and have it there with whatever opposition came with it so that hopefully the next Administration would have a base to work from if they saw things in the same light.

M: You wanted the ideas out then?

B: Yes. And also I was very much concerned about getting some thought in the maritime industry about where the hell are we going? And until I could get an official program, there was no hope. I'm not sure how much there

is now, but prior to that, it was just a matter of everybody saying, "Well, Boyd doesn't know what the hell he's talking about; he's off on a frolic of his own, and this doesn't mean anything; there's nothing serious to it." But I figured that after I got it out as an Administration program, people were going to have to sit down and think about it.

M: Did McNamara's cost benefit theories have any application to the Department of Transportation?

B: Yes, through the requirement of the Bureau of the Budget that we each set up PPB programs from each department. Now, going from there, it didn't have a great deal of application for several reasons, one of which was that the PPB, the cost-benefit approach in the Department of Defense, operates as a part of a closed-system operation. That is to say, "You establish in Defense what do you require for the security of the United States, and you break it down." What do you require for continental defense? And you come to a conclusion that you require so much fire power, so much time, response time, and things of that nature. Then you figure out, how do you accomplish that? What are your alternative ways of doing this? And you come up with a cost-benefit analysis, which you can relate to all sorts of things.

Whereas in the Department of Transportation, we can't set our own objectives. We couldn't set our own objectives. Transportation, as I have said and will say again, I'm sure, looking at the urban area, is a very powerful tail, but it can't wag the dog. Land-use planning is what dictates the kind of transportation that should be provided, and transportation can't be used to dictate what kind of land-use there will be. It shouldn't be used. So we were unable to grapple with an objective; we were unable to say, "This is the objective now. How do we accomplish that objective?"

We couldn't set the objective. In safety, for example, we were making good headway on PPB in safety. We could say, "Our objective is 30,000 deaths a year on the highway instead of 55,000." Then you've got something, you've got some parameters, but in dealing with the great portion of the operations of the department, it was very difficult to get a handle on PPB.

One other thing I wanted to mention on the PPB was that the Bureau of the Budget circular on PPB was grossly inadequate, which the Bureau of the Budget finally appreciated. But we spent the first year at the department stumbling around all over ourselves, trying to understand what the Bureau wanted of us, and trying to advise the agencies in the department what we wanted of them to submit to the Bureau. And we really got nowhere on it. Finally I wrote the Director and said, "Look, (a) your circular doesn't make any sense as far as we're concerned. These are the things that are wrong with it, as we see it; (b) because of our inability to state our own objective, we can't do this on a global scale; (c) we're going to take some of the things we can handle, such as Coast Guard vessel replacement, such as safety, and work on them, and give you that so that you and we can both know what we're doing in some areas."

M: Did the Bureau accept this all right?

B: Yes. I think they were quite happy with it.

M: When you were Secretary, did the President ever use you for a special job or mission outside the realm of the Department of Transportation? For example, a steel price rise, or oil price rise.

B: Well, only to the extent that on several occasions he asked me to have a press conference or put out statements on what we were going to do with highway construction in the event steel prices went up. In fact, I sent out wires to the states several times saying, "Start using substitute

products for steel." Of course, that got a lot of publicity in the steel industry.

Well, the only thing really outside that I did was on this panel which the President set up to try to bring young executives into the government for a couple of years on a transfer basis, transferring young management people from the government into industry for a couple of years.

M: Did that work?

B: I don't know. It was set up in October, and we submitted a report in December. It was left for President Nixon. There was no way to put it into effect.

M: Just a shot in the dark. Did you play any significant role in the Paris Air Show? Was that any problem?

B: Personally, I did not, although I directed and supported Don Agger, who was my Assistant Secretary for International Affairs. Don was the ringleader in maintaining our continuing support of that. I guess I should say, personally all I did was to call a couple of aircraft companies. I called Lockheed, and I called Donald Douglas and I called Grumman, I think, and LTV, and got their commitments to provide aircraft on the basis of me being able to commit to them that the Department of Defense would bail planes to them rather than leasing. This made a tremendous difference in insurance.

M: At the end of Johnson's Administration, what did you do to prepare the transition to the Nixon Administration?

B: We followed the instructions that we got from Charlie Murphy, preparing papers on what's the law under which we operate, what are the organizational charts and all that stuff. And then in addition to that, I had prepared for John Volpe, as it turned out, issues papers on all of the projects and programs which were current at the department, setting forth the backgrounds

and what difficulties we had run into, what we were trying to accomplish, who we were coordinating with, and things of that nature. Then I also had prepared a set of papers on, it might be called, things that are going to hit you in the face.

M: That would be the future problems?

B: Yes.

M: Were these well received?

B: I only had one comment on them, Dave. The people who came in for Mr. Nixon and formed his cadre in the White House told Charlie Murphy that our set of transition papers from the Department of Transportation were by far the most superior of those that were made available.

M: Then the transfer of power was a smooth, amicable affair?

B: Oh, yes. I had known John Volpe for a long time, and as far as I know, we're friends. I always held him in high regard. I didn't get a chance to tell John a lot of the things I would have liked to, but just because he was unavailable and that indicated to me he wasn't interested in what I was thinking, and I can understand that. I mean, what the heck! These people were part of a team that got elected, to a large extent, on the theory that we didn't know what the hell we were doing, and what we were doing and knew about was wrong. And so really what did I have to offer him?

M: Did you have any parting meeting with the President?

B: Not on an individual basis, no. No, we had a small dinner at the White House for the Cabinet, and then lunch out at Clark Clifford's on the 20th, and I haven't seen him or corresponded with him since then.

M: That exhausts the questions I had for you.

B: Let me go back and say one thing. I never really did get into relations with the other Cabinet Secretaries to any great extent.

I had tremendous support from both Freeman and Udall on various conservation measures. I had considerable difficulties with Udall, again, in the bureaucratic area, over who should have what responsibilities in areas such as oil pollution control and the water pollution control, the role of the Coast Guard vis-a-vis the Federal Water Pollution Administration.

M: Well, now, water pollution was an Interior program, was it not--the Department of Interior?

B: Yes, and the real issue was what was the role of the Coast Guard? And this got to be pretty difficult, because water pollution people had never been involved in oil pollution. And they wanted to take over the direction of the Coast Guard, which had been dealing with oil pollution for a good many years, and yet they didn't have the facilities to do it. You can't always have a ship dump some oil where you've got a Department of Interior office. And one thing, we had a bad situation down in the mouth of Port San Juan, Puerto Rico. There wasn't a water pollution man from Interior within 1500 miles, and we went ahead and did what was to be done, and then this fellow comes bustling down there, nice fellow; and after it's all over, he wants to take over. Well, the Coast Guard said, "To hell with you!" And I finally told Stewart, "We're going to handle oil pollution, and you can take the credit if you want to, but just don't get in our way." I never did quite figure out how far I could lean on him. I needed him desperately in D. C. Highway arguments. And the more I would talk to him about getting out front with me, the more difficult he became to reach. But we never really got to a crunch. I had a feeling that I had lost him, but it never got to the crunch.

Bob Weaver and I had very good relations personally. Our two departments didn't get along very well.

M: Yes, the Urban Mass Transit problem--that was the thorn right there.

B: That was the thorn, and that will work out over time. I had personally good relations with everybody on the Cabinet. Bill Wirtz was a difficult man to work with, one of the most delightful, sensitive men I've ever known. I never felt I really understood what Bill was trying to accomplish in certain areas of labor negotiations, and I was always uneasy because I just didn't know where we were going. And I never felt that Bill had necessarily told me all he was thinking about trying to do. But I think a brilliant man and a very decent man. In fact, I have a high regard for all of them. And I would say that if I could go through life with relations as good as I had with the President, the White House staff, and the Cabinet, I'll have no complaints.

M: Do you have any comment about Mrs. Johnson, incidentally? Did you have any contact with her?

B: Yes. Had a lot with her.

M: You might make a comment then about Mrs. Johnson and her role as First Lady.

B: Well, first of all, I would like to say that I don't think it would be possible to know a more charming, wonderful in every sense of the word, person than Lady Bird Johnson. I just think she is one of the great women I've ever been privileged to know. Her role in the government, I would say, is intangible, but very, very great in the Johnson Administration. I think that she provided the President with a great deal of balance. I think she made his living atmosphere as pleasant as it could possibly be made, and I think because of her personality and her intelligence, she was able to give the President a very substantial amount of advice which he followed, I believe. Now, I obviously can't prove this, but I saw enough of the two of them to form an impression that he very much valued her

judgments. I doubt seriously that he would ask her for an opinion on whether or not the Department of Defense should buy fifty-caliber machine guns or thirty-caliber machine guns, but on many basic issues--what's the government all about, what are we doing here, what should the priorities be--I have a feeling that she had a great deal to say about that. And I think part of it was, I would guess that she didn't volunteer an awful lot, and this probably helped.

M: Thank you very much.

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By Alan S. Boyd

to the

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

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