

## INTERVIEW XXVI

DATE: April 18, 1988

INTERVIEWEE: JOSEPH A. CALIFANO, JR., with comments by Marcel Bryar

INTERVIEWER: Michael L. Gillette

PLACE: Mr. Califano's office, Washington, D.C.

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C: The President talked to me about rebuilding cities the first weekend I was at the Ranch. Now it wasn't focused; it was just, "We have to show that we can rebuild the cities of America." The first sort of serious discussion--and that was on my agenda from the day I went in to the White House, didn't know how we were going to do it. It was also in our mind that--that was one. Then came Watts [riots] and one of the things that came out of Watts, first, was the terrible ghetto problem; two was the fragmentation of federal services, the fact that federal services were all over the lot and we did not have--I think we called them one-stop centers; we were going to call [them] neighborhood centers--we didn't have one place where somebody could go that was poor and get job training or whatever OEO [Office of Economic Opportunity] had to offer or health care, or community health clinic, or labor, whatever. And that played a part in some sense, an evolving sense at least, that we had to organize all the forces that we could lay our hands on to rebuild cities.

G: Was this a recognition that the problems were interrelated: health, housing, jobs?

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C: Well, both that the problems were interrelated and that when we were talking about rebuilding cities we were really talking about rebuilding the dilapidated part of cities, which were ghettos, or the run-down areas. [Walter] Reuther then came to the White House, as you've got here on the sixteenth of September [1965], and talked at some length to Dick Goodwin and me. And he was coming in with the same sort of idea we were playing with, still very unfocused, but he was coming at it from the kind of Detroit area, where business and labor, the auto industry, and the UAW [United Auto Workers]-- basically five institutions, Chrysler, Ford, GM, American Motors and the UAW could put all that together, so you'd have the majority of the employment in the city, employers, business capital, and then take the federal programs or the state programs--there weren't many state programs then--and rebuild Center City of Detroit. Reuther saw it as the Center City. But the object was that we would take just a few and demonstrate that we could do it and then based on those demonstrations, we would spread the program out over the country.

G: Reuther's proposal embodied six cities, all large ones.

C: Well, Reuther saw it as a big-city problem. He came in in the wake of Watts. He came in with Detroit just--I guess Detroit's been on its ass for the last quarter of a century in one way or another--but with this devastated area of Detroit, and he wanted to set up a group to look at the idea, which was a task force. And that ultimately--he then saw the President the next day. Whether he--I can't remember now in terms of present recollection now whether he talked to the President about model cities or demonstration cities, whether he talked to the President about the concept. I don't know the answer to that question.

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G: Do you think that this idea would have gone forward had it not been for Watts? Was Watts an important causal factor, do you think?

C: No, I don't think Watts was a causal factor. I think it was important at a minimum in the sense that it confirmed our judgment that we should do something but, as I said, the idea of rebuilding cities--and you have to go--the text of that message that went to Congress which is in here I guess, is written in, as my recollection--it was unbelievable, the language. Gems and gleaming. We had a view. Maybe the message is in here.

G: I don't see it. It'll be in the *Public Papers [of the President]* if it--

C: Marcel, just get the first half of 1966 [inaudible] early 1966 you've got here. First half. It's right in my bookcase there. You know the *Public Papers*? Just bring it in. The volume. It's January 26.

(Interruption)

G: You want to refer to that message.

C: Well, eventually when we get there.

Reuther's idea of a handful of cities was our idea at the very beginning as well, that we would try it in a very few places. What we ultimately came up against--and we came up against it before we even--we came up against the politics of having such a small number of cities. Reuther met with the President the next day. At some point the President--we had already thought we'd have a task force on urban America. Reuther had indicated to me in the meeting, I see there, that the President had told him he was going to set up such a group. I don't know whether he had or hadn't. I've always thought that it was out of that meeting that he and Reuther had alone that Johnson got that story about Hubert Humphrey which I've told you, about the difference between him and Hubert

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Humphrey, when Walter Reuther came in the office, that Reuther probably said the cities will all burn down if you don't do something.

G: What does this say about Reuther's influence on LBJ though?

C: Well, I mean I don't--I think Johnson liked Reuther. I think he thought he was a bit of a bomb thrower, but I think he liked guys that had come up through that kind of a hard-knock world and put it together. And Reuther had--the auto workers were nothing. They had the shit beat of them by Henry Ford's pee goons and all that stuff way back in the thirties I guess and he put a union together and it worked. At this stage Johnson was also--you got to remember Johnson's also--Reuther's going in there. He's talking about cities. Johnson's interested in auto prices. We're worried about keeping the auto wage. We want auto prices within the wage-price guidelines because we don't want a big auto wage settlement. So as with so much, he's got lots of things on his plate. But I think he liked Reuther.

G: Were the two temperamentally compatible?

C: I think Reuther was probably too much of an ideologue for LBJ. I think it's wonderful while Johnson is visualized as this great ideologue, knee-jerk liberal, ultra-liberal, big program president he was very practical in terms of legislating and things like that. And I really think Johnson tended to view people like that as--he got a firm fix as to where they were on the spectrum, who their armies were, what votes they could control, and then of what use they could be to him. If you're asking me without Reuther would we have had a model cities program, the answer if probably yes, we would have had a model cities program without Reuther. Would we have had it as fast? I don't know, maybe not. But I think we were still in a tremendous world of peaches and cream at this stage. We were

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not suffering truly hard knocks from the left on the war in Vietnam. They were still exhilarated and full of adrenaline over the programs that were being passed and what a phenomenal president this guy had turned out to be, I mean beyond their wildest expectations. The fact that Reuther's comfort level in the Johnson White House was [Richard] Goodwin is just a reflection of where he was on the political spectrum. I mean Dick would certainly have been regarded as on the left of the Johnson staff.

G: How would you contrast LBJ's relationship with Reuther with that of his relationship with [George] Meany?

C: Well, I mean I think he was probably--I think he viewed them probably--I don't know. I have no recollection of his talking about them except for his occasional jokes about Reuther, the Humphrey thing. But Meany was the labor establishment. Meany was labor, labor, labor. The AFL-CIO [American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations] was not an organization at that point in time which brought to the social agenda the kind of fervor that a guy like Reuther did. They were sure. They were with us on our social programs. They weren't against us, but they were occasionally schizophrenic on civil rights issues, although I give them credit: they stuck with us because they knew the problems this was going to raise for them in their own unions. Things like affirmative action and 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title 6--Title 7, I guess, was the employment stuff. And Meany was sort of labor. Reuther was at that point not in the AFL-CIO. He was labor in the sense that he was the Auto Workers; that was a much more progressive union. They were deeply into health maintenance organizations and prepaid care in the sixties. You know at that point in time HMOs were regarded as socialists. They were the most aggressive proponents for a national health insurance.

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They had to be talked to--I'm sure you can talk to [Lawrence] O'Brien about this; I wasn't involved in those discussions. But I'm sure they had to be talked to and mollified about Medicare and Medicaid; it's not going far enough. Meany really was--Lane Kirkland and Andy Biemiller would come to see me on Meany's behalf and most of those conversations were about labor issues, repealing 14-B--

G: Minimum wage, I guess.

C: Minimum wage issues, unemployment insurance comp issues, whether to invoke Taft-Hartley, whether to set up mediation boards, what to do about the railroad strike--that was their world. Reuther is the kind of guy that came in--and when he talked to me, he came to see me and Goodwin, he was talking about demonstration cities. It wasn't demonstration cities then; he was talking about this idea. I was the guy who brought up auto prices, and at that point, remember, we want Reuther to hang tough with the auto industry about not raising their prices. And he was the kind of guy that would do something like that, even though there was an argument that it was against his self interest because he's going to be in there for a wage increase, and the higher the prices the more he can say I have to get a higher wage increase. You would not expect to get that kind of thing from Meany and I don't think Johnson--I think Johnson viewed it that way. In any case, on the model cities after the meeting, I notice we set up a task force. I used [Robert] Wood because we knew him and he had chaired the group on the cities the year before. Charlie Haar had chaired a task force on beauty and I knew Haar as a law professor when I was at Harvard Law School and I put him on it. Whitney Young was an obvious choice, black head of the Urban League. Reuther, of course. Bill Rafsky was a guy that had, or was in the process of, successfully redeveloping Philadelphia as we saw

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it, and we put him on as a guy that was on the ground. Edgar Kaiser was a great friend of the President, and I suppose represented business. We used this group to do more than look at the demonstration cities program. We used them for metropolitan planning and a host of other things. We had a lot of other ideas.

G: Now, Steven Currier was not a member of the--

C: I can't even remember who he was. [Jack] Conway was not yet in the poverty program. He was still with the AFL-CIO as listed here. Kermit [Gordon?] we did put on. [Charles] Haar. Yes, we added [Benjamin] Heineman. That was probably because Edgar Kaiser himself couldn't give it much time. We had a guy from him. Rafsky, we had Reuther. I don't remember who [Oscar] Stonorov was. Wood. Whitney Young. I just don't remember who--were Chester Rapkin, Grace Milgram, and Jack Noble [?]-were they from OMB [Office of Management and Budget] or were they from . . .

G: [Robert] Weaver was not a member of the task force.

C: What dates were those, ninth and tenth? No.

G: For this one?

C: Yes.

G: November 26 and 27.

(Interruption)

C: I doubt that I sat through the whole meeting. While the group started with a focus on the demonstration cities, proving that we could rebuild a part of a city, it was out of that meeting and maybe out of other thoughts that we really did focus on three things: the rebuilding the ghetto, the demonstration city, the idea of metropolitan planning, whole area planning together and doing things together, and third, whether we could create

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entire new cities. And that ultimately evolved among other things into the "new-town-in-town" concept which I guess comes later somewhere.

G: And the block grants as well.

C: Well, we talked about block grants but I don't think anybody was--at that point in time we were still flying in a mode of not completely trusting either the states or the cities because we were so concerned about their reaction on racial stuff and how "the poor," in quotes, would get their share. We were still full of community action. We were still full of--we had to make sure that the poor got their piece of it. We couldn't--when I say "we" I'm not talking about the President now because he increasing would press me. "We," I mean the social planners, the Reuthers, and the Califanos at that stage. The President would increasing press me to say, you know, you got to work more and more through elected officials. You have to because they are there. They have the authority.

G: He didn't see them as part of the problem?

C: Well, he saw them as part of the problem on issues like race--yes, he did see them as part of the problem. That was the whole concept of community action and the poverty program. But he didn't want us to completely destroy that apparatus. I think in the back of his head he always thought that everything we were doing would encourage people to get involved in the process.

G: Was there a feeling that urban renewal had not accomplished the right objectives, that it had just resulted in demolition of low-income housing rather than rehabilitation and rebuilding?



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C: I think there was a great sense that urban renewal wasn't working, and that urban renewal wasn't renewing the Harlems of the world. It may be making the east side and the west side a little better but it wasn't--yes, I think it would be fair to say that.

G: Why wasn't Weaver on this task force?

C: I think Weaver was regarded--one, it was an outside task force so nobody in the government was on it. That was the main reason. I don't think--if we had put people in the government on the task force we would have put Weaver on. I don't think we would have kept him off, although we, as you know, very much did not want to put him out front. It was an outside task force. Yes, we had a sense that we had to get our ideas from outside, that the bureaucracy was not going to be a source of great new ideas, that's not where they came from. As it turned out we got a mix and there were people in the bureaucracy that were imaginative and--

G: Why were both you and Harry McPherson involved with the task force?

C: Harry was probably interested in it. It had a significant civil rights component. Basically I would put on these task forces anybody on the White House staff that was interested, that you really were talking about McPherson and [Douglass] Cater, [not] belittling the other people on the staff, they had other things to do, but anytime they were interested I think I put them on. I don't why. Does he have some recollections as to why he was on it or--?

G: No, I just wondered why there were two of you instead of only one.

C: Well, I mean I think that and--you know in the real world I'd kick these things off. I'd get a periodic report from [Lawrence] Levinson or whoever was watching it or Charlie Schultze's guys or what have you and I wouldn't really get involved again until we had the

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report, unless they were going off track or something. You don't know the dates of these notes, do you? My notes?

G: We think it's October 5--

C: Same thing as the date of meeting. I notice something here that I . . . We were talking a little bit in terms of a Marshall Plan for the cities. And a phrase that I notice here--I think that was my phrase--at some point Humphrey, before we unfolded the Model Cities program and in connection with some speech he was giving somewhere, talked about a Marshall Plan for the cities. And Johnson went through the overhead, and I ran Humphrey down and told him not to talk about that. One, he didn't want the Vice President pre-empting him, and two, he didn't want us creating an expectation of something we weren't going to be able to deliver.

G: Where did Humphrey get this knowledge that the--?

C: Probably from me. I mean I probably told him. But what the result of that was--it also resulted in an order from the President to me not to let Humphrey know anything we were doing in connection with the legislative program. Maybe it was just--no, I was going to say it was just the cities. I think it was just the legislative program. He couldn't keep his mouth shut--and so I didn't.

G: Charles Haar in his book on model cities describes another incident wherein a White House staff member called him and other members of the task force asking if they had leaked information about the task force to a *New York Times* reporter. And subsequent shaking revealed that the President had casually mentioned it at the Ranch to a reporter there and that's how the story had gotten out. Any recollections of that?

C: No, it doesn't surprise me.

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G: Was it difficult to maintain secrecy with this assorted group of well known people involved?

C: I hadn't seen these before. These notes should go in the D.C. Home Rule file. This is the President telling me what to do about the--this is a conversation with the President on the alternative on D.C. Home Rule.

G: The [B. F.] Sisk bill and--

C: Yes. I didn't realize I had those but I remember that.

Was it hard to keep the task force secret? Yes, not as hard as it would be today, but it was hard sometimes. We never announced them. The reason for keeping them secret incidentally was not simply the President's desire to control everything that he put out and the timing that he put it out and what have. All of that was certainly part of it. There were several reasons. One was we always charged these task forces with coming up with good ideas regardless of the politics--that we'd worry about the politics; the President would worry about the politics. Their job was to get good ideas and that meant that we wanted fairly uninhibited recommendations from the task forces. I'm not talking about the presidential commissions which we wanted to control basically, what they wrote. We didn't want to control what these people wrote. We wanted ideas, and we didn't want--they could easily blow themselves out of the water before we would even have a chance to orchestrate some public understanding or congressional understanding of the idea. That was number one. Number two, timing was very important, *vis á vis* other things we were doing. When would we unfold this? How would it relate to what else we were dumping into this congressional committee or that? And so that was

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important. And three, obviously we thought we knew better how to unfold any idea we used in terms of the press and everything else than our task force members did.

So we tried very hard to keep them secret and we did. I think by and large we were pretty successful. I mean, there were leaks here and there, but maybe it just seems that way twenty years later. When there were leaks I'm sure either I or other people--I mean the President would call us. And when we leaked stuff, we wanted to leak it. I think I told you the story about the education task force. Maybe I didn't. We had a task force on education. I don't even remember what it said, but at some point the President said to me, "I want you to leak it. Get it out. Let's see what reaction we get and get a good story in the *New York Times*." And you can't do that overnight. You've got to wait. And I don't remember at what point, I think it was Max Frankel, but it will be in the *Times* somewhere. And the *Times* did a terrific story, left-hand column, a big story. And I arrived at the White House and Cater was in a terrible stew and the President raised (inaudible) hell with him for the leak of this education task force report and he was trying to find out who had leaked it to the *New York Times*. And I said, "I did." He said, "Oh my god, I'll never tell him." I said, "What do you mean, tell him? He told me to. He told me to put it out. He's probably forgotten because it's taken me a couple of weeks. He really wanted it to get in place so we'd get reaction and have a sense of what was out there." So I sent the President a note which should be somewhere in the archives--maybe it isn't--reminding him about this, sort of enclosing the story and saying, "Here's the story." I didn't say, "Here's the story and we're getting reaction or something." I never got that note back. I mean it may have been one of those notes that Marvin Watson destroyed; I never got it back.

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But by and large we kept and wanted to keep those things confidential for those reasons. The Marshall Plan for the cities is an example. It was one of the things we looked at, but it's not the route we took. And then when [Bill] Moyers would ask me for--you know, "Here's some background information on the President's special panel on the cities." I mean he obviously wanted [it] because he was going to give it to some reporter or maybe this was when the President talked to the *New York Times* reporter. He didn't want it because he was interested in the cities. Not that he was disinterested; he had a lot of other things to do.

G: You made the point that LBJ either before or right after his gallbladder operation--

C: Here it is. This is to my secretary, Evelyn Irons. December 10, 1965. McPherson is sending me a clipping from the *Detroit Free Press*. "The Vice President in New York told the *Free Press* the cabinet had already spoken with him about the idea [inaudible] asks Congress. The Vice President, designated by President Johnson as his liaison with urban officials, could not be reached immediately but his press secretary confirmed that the plan designating one or more pilot cities is under consideration now." And I have a note here, 12/13, "Ev, Remind me to call VP." I'm sure I called the VP. I'm sure I didn't think of calling him myself, although--12/13, I don't know when I'm talking to the President. "Call VP." Here, she notes it [in the] notes on the fourteenth of December. Well, I probably placed that call myself, so she wouldn't have it here, but I'm sure I called him.

I don't know what was going on with all these calls from the President. God, isn't it funny to see Thomas Wicker, *New York Times*? He was the bureau chief then I guess or a reporter. He didn't have his column.

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In any case, I'm sure I called him [Humphrey] and said, "For god's sakes, Mr. Vice President, don't talk about this." Now, either the President told me to call him or by that time, by December, I knew the President well enough to know that if we started seeing stories about programs that were coming next year, the programs might never come next year because he just would be ornery or would take another, longer period of time to get him to agree to the program. At some point in 1965 we cut him off with everything to do with the legislative program or everything to do with cities programs. I don't know. I can't remember when, and it was this kind of story that created that problem. We made [Abraham] Ribicoff actually part of this process and I see in Harry's [McPherson?] note to me of December 13, "Ribicoff made a good contribution yesterday. His main concern however would probably not be reflected in the report. He has a practicing politician's fear of a contest in which some cities win and others lose. He was inclined to escalate a demonstration program into a come one-come all program but this has murderous budgetary implications and we would not in any event achieve our goal of stimulating (inaudible) take new and drastic steps to gain massive federal support." An interesting note from Harry: "This has been the hardest working group of volunteers I've ever seen. All have contributed. Heineman has been outstanding. He and three professionals, Wood, Haar, and Rafsky, wrote the organization chart. Reuther has supplied the vision drive and sometimes mere rhetoric that has kept us going."

By this time, and this looks like a Levinson paper in late December--this piece and then I don't know--in our heads we're talking about six big cities over a half a million, ten cities between a quarter of a million and a half a million, and fifty cities under a quarter of a million. We're talking about shoe-horning in with planning grants so the budgetary

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implications are very small in the first year. And we're talking about a three-year program up close to a billion. I don't think the President cared much about how HUD [Housing and Urban Development] was organized. There was also thought of moving the Community Action Program into HUD.

G: The task force proposed this--

C: The task force recommended that to give HUD--but remember they were all sort of HUD-oriented people. Wood and Haar didn't know they were going to HUD at that point. There was a repeated desire, and this may have been an early reflection of it, increased desire, to move to get poverty into the mainstream and to move poverty programs into appropriate government departments--get Head Start into Education--as soon as those programs matured. The idea of CAP [Community Action Program] and HUD was to--we wanted HUD to be the Department of Urban Affairs. We wanted it not just to be a FHA [Federal Housing Administration], financing, housing and mortgages and stuff like that.

G: Was it a way to humanize HUD, to give it--?

C: Yes, that was exactly the idea, to give it a bigger human component.

G: Why didn't the White House go along with the suggestion?

C: I think--boy, I'll have to go back into my notes. My recollection is partly it wasn't worth the bureaucratic fight with [Sargent] Shriver. Partly Weaver and Wood really weren't fighting hard for it. They were so overwhelmed by just putting a department together. I mean they didn't even want to go with the model cities legislation as we came up to it in January. I think that combination of reasons--

G: Kermit Gordon opposed it also; would that have carried a lot of weight?

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C: I'm sure that would have had an impact. Aside from quick, swift, monumental changes in organization my own view is that more time is wasted on organizing in the government. You get it done in the first thirty or sixty days and forget it. Then it's worth it.

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G: Another proposal, that was not adopted, was to take over the urban functions of the Bureau of Public Roads.

C: That I'm sure was pure politics. I mean we just didn't want to--it just wasn't worth the fight. I don't think it was anything more.

G: Now, would these two issues, Community Action and Bureau of Public Roads, would those items be decided by the President himself or would it be something that the White House staff would simply bury, do you think, and not send forward with the--?

C: Well, I notice that Harry's memo to the President lays out this as one of the recommendations, but by the time I get to the Ranch on December 29 we're down to a model cities program limited to--of six large, ten medium, and fifty small cities which I'm proposing to him. Okay? Focus on the slum areas, coordinating all the federal programs, shoe-horning in with the ten million dollar fiscal 1967 budget costs for planning to give them planning grants and low costs until fiscal 1989. I'm trying to read my handwriting here. I can't . . . . And secondly, telling him how we'd organized HUD. That is not the way HUD got organized because the Community Action Program never got moved over. It may well be that this was knocked off at that meeting with the President. I just can't remember.

What I can answer in terms of your question, certainly in later years--1966, 1967, and 1968--I would have made all those decisions with a minimum amount of



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conversation with the President, because by that time I really knew what he wanted or didn't want. In this year my hunch would be that even before I put that book together to brief him and get his decision, so to speak, I was talking to him. So in terms of dropping stuff out that wasn't there, I had talked to him enough to have a sense it wasn't just being cut out by the White House staff. And McPherson was talking to him, too, so between the two of us we probably had a pretty good idea. The demonstrations cities is the--(long pause)--I wonder if we indicated--I just wondered whether we had the number of cities in the President's message. Maybe not, I don't see it. We went with new cities, a supplemental appropriation for rent supplements. The Demonstration Cities Act of 1966. The thing we never--I'm sure other people have told you this--the bill got into deep trouble because it was called the Demonstrations Cities Act and congressmen were opposed to it, attacked it, on the grounds that it was a response to the demonstrations in the cities. It was literally passed as that. You out to double check this, Marcel. The name of the act to this day is called demonstration, or what was passed as the Demonstration Cities Act. When the President signed it we called it the Model Cities--we started calling it the Model Cities Program to get away from the term demonstration because that evoked all the riots and the ghettos and everything else. It created a hell of a problem for us.

G: There were other names under consideration. Pilot Cities, All American Cities.

C: Were there? There were. I think All American rings a bell. The answer is no.

G: Now was it after the initial report that the President asked this group to work on the HUD organization?

C: No, I think we had them working on HUD organization right along.

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G: Was it assumed that Haar and Wood would stay on and work with the program?

C: No, I can't--I mean we should really scour the files on Wood and Haar. I'll give you my best recollection right now but I would appreciate it if you'd go get what we have, [John] Macy [files] or anyone else.

G: Okay.

C: HUD was one of the few departments that we staffed largely from the White House. We picked Wood and Haar and maybe some others--you might get all the original staffing--and in effect gave them to Weaver. Indeed, I think Wood may have been announced right the same day Weaver was. Was he?

G: Yes. Did this reflect a lack of confidence in Weaver?

C: No. What day was Weaver announced? January . . . . [1966]

G: Thirteenth, according to this.

C: Okay. Let's just see here a second. (Long pause) Just when I look at some of these wild nights. The eighteenth of January, 11:50 p.m., to Mansion to meet with President. The nineteenth, 11:00 p.m., dinner with the President. I mean it was really . . . . Twenty-first, 8:30 p.m. meeting with the President; out to home 11:00 p.m.

Well, we gave him Wood as the undersecretary. We thought that would provide a kind of--Weaver was the housing guy, the government bureaucrat. We wanted to provide intellectual bolstering. We thought Wood was a good match for him. Haar we wanted to be the metropolitan development guy. I remember the President talking to Charlie Haar--that's what I was trying to look up--and asking him whether he could bring--I told Haar we wanted him to do that. The President bringing him into his office. Haar said he had to talk to his wife to the President, and the President said, "That's like Roger Blough

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telling me he has to talk to his board of directors before he can roll back the price of a steel increase. That's bullshit. You can decide it." And finally Haar went off into a room, called his wife and came back, and said he was ready to do it. It was not a lack of confidence in Weaver. I think it was a desire to put as strong a foot forward as we could. I think by the--I don't think any of us thought Weaver was a strong secretary of housing and urban development, or was likely to be a strong secretary of housing and urban development. He was good. He was competent, and it was very important to put a black in that job or in a cabinet post to hold him up. And he had had a good career as a government bureaucrat. He wasn't in a class with John Gardner or [Secretary of Defense Robert] McNamara for example. Wood turned out not to be a good federal bureaucrat. He turned out not to be a good administrator. Neither Wood nor Weaver wanted to go with the Model Cities program once they were announced. They were so worried about their ability to organize HUD, especially in the wake--and I guess we've covered the appointment of Weaver in 1965 and the discussions with Weaver in 1965. They were so worried about that. That's another thing I ought to start writing, Marcel, to digress. There's stuff in the oral histories, maybe it hasn't come back, of Weaver. Have you seen that?

B: Uh, no.

C: Have we gotten that back yet?

G: I don't know. I'll check.

B: Most recent oral history stuff?

C: There's stuff in some of the oral histories I did with Mike about our appointing Weaver. We ought to put that together in a Weaver, the appointment of Weaver [file]. Because

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that's clearly worth writing about. I mean that's Johnson sort of--it's almost malice, it's unfair, but it's sort of breaking down somebody and then building them up again.

[In] any case, they didn't want to go with it. They thought it was too much for them to carry. But if my recollection is right, we even wrote the testimony, not me but Levinson or people in the White House staff even wrote the testimony for the Model Cities program. Even though Haar chaired the task force I have a vivid recollection that by the time--

G: Wood chaired the--

C: Even though Wood had chaired the task force I have a vivid recollection that by the time the program went to Congress with the changes we'd made--this was not true of just this but of other programs as well--I knew and Larry knew--Levinson--more about this program than Bob Wood did or Weaver. In any case, we overrode their objections and requests for delays and not sending it up and this was one of our gem programs and we sent it up early.

I notice here a memo to the President dated January 25, which is the night before the program goes forward, in which we'd invited the senators and congressmen who were on the appropriate committees, the housing committees, to come to the White House. This was a typical action before a program was sent forward. We would bring them in down to the White House Mess, have a drink and some light *hors d'oeuvres* and the President would come down, introduce, say something, and I would then give a briefing on the program that was going to Congress the next day. Now before we even did this, I had talked to the more critical members, the chairman and what have you. I also note that this was--to some extent this was not a Democratic group. We had [Leverett] Saltonstall

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and [Maurine?] Neuberger and [inaudible] Scott here, [Jacob] Javits. And you know they'd react. There was no chance for change then. I mean the President hopefully had signed off on the message by then. There were occasions when he didn't sign off a message until midnight the night before. We did this and it was very effective. They got a chance to ask questions. They were ready when the message hit the next day. It was scheduled for late in the afternoon, 6:30, because the *Washington Post* closed at 6:29, something like that. There was no way, unless it was a story of such monumental importance that papers for the next day would get something out of this. I mean, the evening news was done. It was all done. And it helped and we did that there.

G: Were they all willing to come down that late?

C: They all came down, yes. They'd all come down. We had very good attendance at these things. This list to the President--I'm sure that we invited more than these people, but this list is--that two, four, six, eight, ten. That's probably virtually the entire housing committee of the Senate.

G: I notice that [Edmund] Muskie is not on here.

C: Who became our great savior. He became the guy that carried the bill. I'm sure he was invited.

G: And [John] Sparkman is not on here either.

C: Well, I'm sure they were invited. They just didn't come.

I see the note from [Governor Nelson?] Rockefeller. We must have gotten it--maybe you can get this editorial on the *Washington Post*.

G: Is that January 27?

C: Yes.

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G: I've asked for it. It should be here in the morning.

C: Get the *Post* editorial; it must have blasted us on the money. Maybe we could . . . . I  
think we ought to . . . .

G: Do you want to stop?

C: Yes.

End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview XXVI

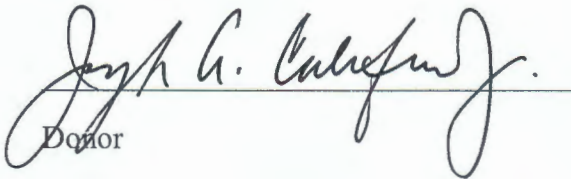
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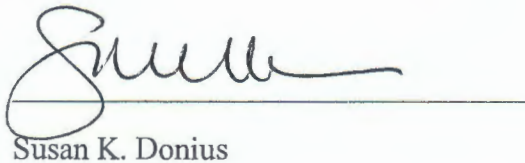
Joseph A. Califano

Interviewed by: Paige Mulhollan, Joe B. Frantz and Michael L. Gillette

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