INTERVIEW LX

DATE: January 17, 1990

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: I sent the President the cable of April 24, 1967, at 9:45 p.m., reporting that the Senate Labor [and Public Welfare] Committee had urged the parties to accept the [Charles] Fahy panel recommendations [on the railroad dispute]. The President's advisers internally, i.e., [Robert] McNamara, [James] Reynolds, [Willard] Wirtz, [Abe] Fortas, [Alan] Boyd, and the Fahy board, were for one or another kind of compulsory arbitration, ranging from legislating the Fahy panel report into place, to having some presidential board in effect do the same thing. [Clark] Clifford wanted to give collective bargaining one more chance and find a way to do it. And then [Wayne] Morse made it clear to me that he was unalterably opposed to collective bargaining.

G: Why was Morse opposed?

C: Well, Morse would rather have had them legislate the Fahy recommendations, write them into law. It just is an article of faith that, force involuntary, compulsory arbitration on labor.

We then, with all kinds of variations, basically--on the next night I sent him a cable which indicated that we had nine options. They were various kinds of various alternatives.

G: Any insight on how involved he was personally in this before he went to the [Konrad] Adenauer funeral?

C: Well, he was reading all this stuff. He didn't want a rail strike and he didn't want the guidelines busted too badly. The guidelines had plenty of holes in them by this time. I think he was deeply involved. I think, just looking at his diaries and the best of my recollection, he was calling me all the time. And he knew this was a dicey problem. He did not want to get stuck with this hot potato, either. I don't know whether he called me, or Marvin [Watson?], or what have you, but he told me anyway to get the Democratic [congressional] leadership, together with us and meet on it. We did, and at that point it became clear that the only thing we could do was ask for some kind of an extension--thirty days was what [Carl] Albert had suggested, I notice here--and recommend some final disposition of this thing at the end of that extension.

[Mike] Mansfield said Morse was the key to what would happen in the Senate, and that we would have trouble with [Harley] Staggers. Staggers, Albert thought, would want the President to seize them, the railroads, as [Harry] Truman had seized the steel mills. And I didn't like it and I know--I can't tell you why--but I know distinctly that LBJ did not want to seize the railroads. He didn't want the army to run the railroads.

So we were also dealing with a difficult problem--the real problem at this point now was what we could pass and what kind of a face we could put on it. [Arthur] Goldberg, I notice we brought Goldberg in here.

(Long pause) By April 26, when the President returned, I guess--by that night for sure--we were now tilting very much toward some kind of a seven-man board--two labor, two union, three public--to be named, for Congress to legislate some kind of a no-strike period, thirty, sixty, ninety days. And at the end of that period either the Fahy recommendations or something, some modification of them, to go into effect automatically if the parties didn't agree. It's interesting I note here, Wirtz was his usual difficult self. He didn't want the President to ask the parties for a voluntary extension. I don't know whether with [Larry] O'Brien or with whom I had come up with the idea--maybe with Goldberg--that the President and the bipartisan leadership should ask for the extension so they were all covered and it would be a stronger request. Then if the parties refused it was much easier to pass the legislation.

G: Wirtz' rationale was that it would reflect badly on the President if his request were turned down?

C: And the leadership. I think Wirtz was exhausted and disgusted with the parties and what have you.

(Long pause) Morse, I see by the twenty-seventh of April, is getting--the strain is showing on everybody. Morse is tired of everybody putting the brunt on him. He was angry. And I guess--

(Long pause) Morse wanted to go with just a plain thirty-day extension, and eventually the President did ask, I guess, for a forty-five-day extension, noticing that Teddy [Edward] and Bobby Kennedy wanted to stick in the resolution [the] requirement that he, the President, submit legislation to resolve the issue. What we did was simply pre-empt that by saying he was going to do it. But there's no doubt that the fact that the

two Kennedys joined with the Republicans--[Robert] Griffin who is a very partisan animal--to try to stick it to Johnson was in his mind.

Then, I guess on the twenty-eighth, we had a bipartisan leadership meeting. Johnson went through all the alternatives, and basically agreed to set up this special seven-person board. Boy, we met on this thing.

At one of these meetings, in the Cabinet Room--and I just can't remember whether this is the one or not on the twenty-eighth--Staggers really, who is usually a mild-mannered guy, made it clear that he was not going to even get close to being a strike-breaker.

G: How did the President react, do you recall?

C: He was not happy, but he didn't take him on. I think he read it as. . . . But Johnson, as he indicated at his press conference, was opposed to compulsory arbitration. And then finally, on May 3 he . . .

G: Anything on that meeting with Fortas, Fahy, Morse, *et cetera* on the second, May 2?

C: No, let me just look at it. It was to go over the final--

I'm sure even at this meeting as well, every time Fahy saw Fortas in the room he would kind of just look like that. No, I'm sure that's what this was.

G: Would you have commented on something like that to the President?

C: No.

G: Fahy's reaction?

C: No. I'm sure he noticed it. God, I notice this was also the day of the briefing on the [merging of the] Commerce and Labor Department, our last chance. (Long pause) No.

That was the final meeting on the message, but I don't remember things that happened in that meeting. Any steno pads on that? This would be the second of May.

We reduced it from a seven-man board to a five-man board. Our concern that if the dispute was so sour and there was such resistance to government involvement, that labor and management might combine to form a majority and outvote the public members.

G: Four out of seven?

B: This. . . . Yes. Right here.

C: Johnson went over the proposal; Fahy approved them; [George] Taylor liked them. Dunlop [John Dunlap?] said he supported them without reservation. Let me just make sure it's the same thing we sent to Congress.

The basic proposal was we'd set up the board for thirty days. The board would try and mediate; if there was no agreement at the end of sixty days, they'd file with the Congress and the President a determination of the Fahy proposals and any modifications they thought were necessary. If on the ninety-first day there was no agreement, the criteria would take effect and they would continue in effect for two years from January 1, 1967.

Goldberg called it an inspired solution with a minimum of compulsion and gave people a real opportunity. Senator Morse said that the inherent merits of the proposal recommended it and its sellability recommended it. He thought this would take care of the seizure people, and easily defeat them, and take care of the compulsory arbitration people. [He] thought it was a good psychology, that he could support it. He could support, quote, "the objective of this." I wrote down the exact words he said.

G: Morse said this?

C: Yes. "The objective of this," close quote. Boyd called it an ideal solution to a bad situation, and Morse praised Wirtz and Reynolds. McNamara called it an inspired formula. He very much supported it. I should note in all these things that Morse would periodically say if we're really at war we ought to get with labor, get them to make an agreement, the way they did in World War II, to end these strikes.

Then on the third, I guess, we met with Morse, Mansfield, [Nicholas] Katzenbach, and Goldberg. Johnson wanted everybody contacted. He wanted to know exactly what the brotherhood said about the seizure. The material which I had for I guess a later meeting on the third--you want to know whether Johnson was involved. We met with--it was Goldberg, [George] Meany, Johnson, and myself. Meany said that what Johnson was proposing, quote, "This is compulsion, and I oppose it," close quote. Goldberg said that the alternatives were seizure and the unions opposed seizure, that seizure was a perpetual injunction to try to put something together that's tough but that's fair. The proposal is designed to avoid compulsory arbitration. The special board can make adjustments. It's not compulsion, that George Taylor believed that.

The President said he was afraid that [Jacob] Javits would press to have some kind of a permanent bill. This only dealt with this strike and only went for a couple of years, that George Meany ought to get on board with this thing otherwise he could get faced with a permanent law like the Taft-Hartley explosion in whenever it occurred, that this law provided the maximum incentives to reach agreement.

In the course of this Johnson took a shot at Paul Hall. Paul Hall is the head of the seafarers union and was the guy that had given us fits in 1966 on the Maritime Administration and defeated putting that into the Department of Transportation.

G: What did he say about Paul Hall?

C: I just can't remember. But I notice my note here.

Goldberg talked about the seizure as the alternative, and they wouldn't want that. Johnson said Meany should get the labor guys to recede in their opposition to this. Meany said he thought we had a deal, and Reynolds thought he had [J. E.] Wolfe committed. Wolfe was the negotiator for the railroad management. Then Wolfe backed off. Johnson then jumped in and said the railroad had not used any pressure on him, because we had felt no pressure from the railroads at all.

Goldberg said that he thinks the only way to get the railroads to agree at this point is that somebody has to impose a settlement on them, and that this two-year deal would be the best solution. Meany said, "Somewhere down the road this railroad situation has to be settled, and the solution may be national legislation." I don't know what he meant by that. Johnson said that the government has selected the best board this government ever had. Meany said he wasn't complaining about his action. Then Johnson came in again and said, "The Fahy proposal was a generous proposal. We must have a procedure to keep them talking. This provides the machinery." Johnson said he was going to put a top labor man on this board. The guy he had in mind was Meany who we ultimately put on. And the top three people will be pro-labor he told me. He put three pro-labor people. And he said that the Republicans wanted him to go further.

Johnson said that Meany had to tell the labor people that we were, quote, "talking about a few lousy pieces of silver," unquote, and there had to be some give here. And before this is over if he didn't get on board, "you will holler, 'Come help us.'" Should I go through the rest of that? I'd forgotten; this is remarkable.

They then got into a fairly detailed discussion of the issues. Meany said that the railroads--Wolfe, the negotiator--proposed a job evaluation study which he dropped, that he wanted to cut out thirty thousand people and fire them. And Johnson then took credit for getting the railroads--our mediators--getting the railroads to drop that. And Meany said he would not tell you, the President, that this is not the best approach. He did say, "This is the right thing for you to do, Mr. President." Johnson said, "We will never get a deal to satisfy [P. L. Roy] Siemiller, who he was--we hadn't yet gone to war with him on the airline strike, had we? That came in June or July.

B: That was in 1966.

C: Oh, 1966. So we had. He clearly didn't like Siemiller. And the other five we'll have to take him--the other five will have to take him, Siemiller, with them. Meany said he didn't understand Siemiller. He said, "Siemiller is after Wayne Morse very strongly." Meany said, "Siemiller was supposed to have agreed with the extension."

Then Johnson said to Meany, "Don't oppose this too damn much." And Meany said he would talk to Biemiller--Biemiller was his legislative guy, Andrew Biemiller--and see how we could handle it. Meany said he would not testify unless he had to testify. Johnson did not want Meany to testify; it was one of the reasons he was meeting with him. And Johnson said, "Meany can't testify because he needs to be influential in the

dispute," still not being able to get out there what he really wanted, which was to make Meany a member of this board.

G: Why not? Why do you think he--?

C: Because he thought Meany would have really opposed the whole damn thing completely. Just bring him as far as he could bring him, and the first step was just get him to accept this. Then Meany told Johnson that Javits was trying to embarrass LBJ and the meeting ended.

(Interruption)

The next notes in here are stuff about [David] Ginsburg. Then he has, "Let's get the Model Cities Bill on track, get the senators in here, [Stewart?] Udall, and others. Where does the summer program stand?"

Because of our various battles with Clark, Joe Clark is calling me up saying some guy named Fred [Fredric] Mann wants to be ambassador to Barbados. He's willing to kick in fifteen to twenty grand. (Laughter) And that John Macy is holding it up. Isn't that incredible? You're just sitting by the phone and you're writing these things down.

G: Who was he going to kick in the fifteen or twenty grand to, I wonder.

C: See, that's why I need time. Once I get something written sort of roughly from beginning to end I really need to go through--

(Interruption)

--on any of those meetings with Staggers or the leadership.

G: The other one is that earlier meeting with . . .

C: This was not Staggers; this was the joint leadership. Who was speaker? Boyd or . . . oh, [Bourke] Hickenlooper. It's not Staggers, but we might go through it quickly. Let me see where we were on April 10.

This is before he goes to Punta del Este [Uruguay] so we're faced with whether to make the request for an extension before he goes or afterwards. This is pre-the Fahy board. Okay.

There's a meeting on April 10, I guess. Let me just check one thing here. This is the meeting with the bipartisan leadership. Earlier that morning we'd had had our regular leadership breakfast. This is the bipartisan leadership meeting at 10:25 a.m. in the Cabinet Room.

The President summarized the whole strike situation and the recommendations of his cabinet. [Everett] Dirksen asked him whether Taft-Hartley applied, and he said no. Hickenlooper said, "When do we face up to the destructive power of unions in this country? We've got to deal with this." Johnson said, "I've asked all sorts of experts to look at this. I've been looking at it. People have been looking at this problem ever since we've had a country," he says. Hickenlooper says, "We must face up to the problem now. The arrogance of labor are overriding the interests of the public." Johnson said, "If I had a solution, I would submit it." Gerald Ford said, "Why does the country have to be at the mercy of a limited segment of the labor movement? The others are all agreed to settle for 5 per cent." The other smaller unions had; this is a reference to Siemiller. "Why wasn't the crisis foreseen? Why are we here at such a late date?" The President said, "This is a Monday. The no-strike time expires on Thursday giving you"--looking at them--"two days." Ford said, "We need something to take care of this problem." Wirtz says he had

good reason to believe--no, I'm sorry; "There is *not* good reason to believe it will be settled in thirty days. There is a likelihood of legislation on a narrower basis of this." Ford says to the President, "Will you send a message up?" And the President looks at Ford. The President actually is sitting there--now I remember.

(Interruption)

Johnson is sitting there, leaning back in his chair, and he's got a paper in front of him which is the typed version of the message he's sending to Congress this day that he's meeting with them. He asks for a joint resolution to extend the sixty-day no-strike period for an additional twenty days.

G: You said Ford had asked him if he would send a message?

C: No. Johnson, in the beginning of the meeting, summarizes the labor situation. But he's doing it from this paper and he's saying, "At 12:01 they can go on strike. 95 per cent of the railroad will be affected, the danger to defense, to food, to all the commuting," and all that stuff. He goes through all these numbers in here and he said, "We think that Congress should extend the no-strike period for twenty days." As I said, Wirtz being Wirtz says, "no indication that will settle this thing." Johnson is sitting here like this, turning one page after another, and Ford says to him, "Will you send a message up?" And Johnson looks at Ford, not saying these words, "You goddamn fool," but he says, "I'm reading from the message now." (Laughter)

Literally, I forgot all about that; it was just incredible. It's what led him to all those comments about Ford. The Lego blocks. Have we done Model Cities? Did I tell you about the Lego blocks?

G: No.

C: We had a problem with Ford on the Model Cities program; I can't remember what it was. And Johnson says to me, "He doesn't understand it. I want you to get some Lego blocks and you take the Lego blocks up to Jerry Ford's office and you build a little city for him and explain to him what we're trying to do."

(Laughter)

McNamara talked about the production and shipment of weapons, and made another point, which was morale, that this would be very bad for the morale of our people in Southeast Asia; they needed support. Boyd said he had nothing to add and Clark said he was concerned about the--the trucking strike was a coincidence and he was concerned about it. Instantly--let me just see if that was Ramsey Clark. Yes. And Johnson instantly turned him off on the Teamster's strike and said, "No. We're not going to have any Taft-Hartley with the Teamsters. We're not going to apply Taft-Hartley to the Teamsters," because he didn't want a problem with the Teamsters as well as this problem. And Ford says, "Why hasn't Siemiller been equally impressed with the danger to our national security?" after McNamara does this briefing. And Johnson says, "I don't know. Meany's tried to talk to him." He said, "Meany talking to Siemiller is like you trying to talk to Gross." There was a congressman--

G: H. R. Gross.

C: --H. R. Gross, who was impossible to deal with. "Or me trying to talked to [J. William] Fulbright, and you have to understand those things." Again, he was really talking down to Ford, and he thought Ford was so terribly partisan.

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C: --we meet with--yes, we did. The House and Senate Labor Committees. That's the meeting. But you know, all I have here--"LBJ with House and Senator Labor Committee. LBJ reviewed the situation."

(Long pause) This is the meeting with Staggers. Then right after the joint leadership meeting we had a meeting of the members of the Senate Labor [and Public Welfare] Committee and the House [Education and] Labor Committee. Johnson again reviewed the situation, and. . . . In the course of that meeting people said that before Congress acted, the President should ask the parties to do this voluntarily. I can't remember who suggested that, but it was in the course [of the meeting]. But Staggers and Teddy Kennedy both agreed with that. I do remember that. And I think it was in that connection, when Johnson kind of went around [the] room, [that] Staggers made it clear that he didn't even like the idea of the twenty-day extension. He even was troubled by that.

This was a big joint meeting. I don't know how he engineered this, but that meeting was in the Cabinet Room and that lasted from 11:30 to twelve noon. And somehow or another from 12:30 to 12:40 he met just with the Democratic members--he met with the Senate committee people alone. And here Kennedy said to him--Teddy Kennedy--picking up on the [question of whether the] President should ask people to extend, Teddy Kennedy said if the President brought the labor members to the White House and asked for a no-strike agreement for a certain period of days, they would do it. That he, Teddy, had talked to a labor leader named [Michael] Fox--he must have been the head of one of the unions--in his office and Fox said that he would. Then Johnson looked

sourly at Teddy and distrustfully and said that the President of the United States should not have to see each labor leader in the country one by one and ask them to extend.

You've got to check the clippings on this to make sure my recollections are right, but I think it's right. I think this is what happened. He then turned that on the Senate committee, and he said the Senate committee should call the labor leaders in, and that evening, or whenever they held hearings--I don't know whether they did it that day or the next night--ask them if they would voluntarily extend, if they didn't want to pass the resolution, which I remember as being just very--and Wayne Morse picked up on it. He said that was a good idea; they should do that. I believe they then did it and were turned down, and then passed the congressional resolution. I think Lister Hill or--

G: Yes. They enacted the extension the next day.

B: There are a lot of notes on this railroad strike.

C: (Long pause) Prior to the ninth of April and prior to the tenth of April, we had asked--I see here in notes of April 7 of my conversations with Wirtz and Reynolds--we had asked labor if they would extend and [Joseph] Ramsey, who was one of the labor leaders, said he would, but Siemiller said he absolutely would not extend. So we knew that going in. And for whatever it's worth--there's not much notes--I clearly had conversations with the President on Saturday about the railroad thing and about the Teamsters. And Meany on the ninth of April, if I understand these notes correctly, at our request had taken a shot at trying to get them to agree to extend and they wouldn't do it, but he didn't want us to tell people that he'd done that.

Then, for some reason on the eighth of April, we got into a discussion of--let me just get my own calendar for April 8. Christ, he's got [Walt] Rostow. Well, I was in his office for the postal reorganization thing for thirteen minutes.

On April 8 we started--because we didn't know what was going to happen with the Teamsters. We're getting rumbles that there was going to be a general lock-out of the Teamsters. The Teamsters, if my recollection is correct, really didn't want--weren't going out on strike. It was the business side that was locking them out. And the question was whether we should invoke Taft-Hartley. And the President said no, that I should tell the Teamsters, or Wirtz should tell the Teamsters, whoever, that we'd be glad to consider anything, but that our position would still be no ten days from now. And his reasoning was he didn't want to look like he was in partnership with the Teamsters against the business people.

And on the eighth of April for some reason it was the first time he raised with me whether he should go to Punta del Este. We then ended up in this long meeting; he came back from Camp David on Sunday and we ended up from 7:25 here to 8:55. This is where we have Larry's very detailed memo. Do you have that Levinson memo? Let me just give you what I have in my notes so we don't duplicate all of Levinson's stuff.

Taft-Hartley was not appropriate for the Teamsters because the lock-out turned out to be erratic, just a few companies in Chicago or somewhere else. So it wasn't enough, and Katzenbach said that. The President said he wanted to get the leadership, the joint leadership, the committees, everybody in the next day. I think the only disagreement of any sort was that Katzenbach thought we ought to go for more than twenty days, for thirty days. Ginsburg thought that this was a very major problem for LBJ, that this issue

of how he handled this labor strike went to, quote, "his ultimate relationship to the President--the ultimate relationship of the President to labor and the posture of the President with the country." He said the President obviously had to go to Punta del Este. He, Ginsburg, would have invoked Taft-Hartley against the truckers and the trucking companies.

Rusk said that if he didn't go to Punta del Este there would be, quote, "great problems. It would be disastrous if he never came down there because of the great feeling in Latin America because the real job is up to Latin America and they could do it with our help." He suggested putting the Vice President in charge of the strike situation, something incidentally LBJ was not about to do.

G: Why not?

C: I don't know, but he didn't do it. He left me in charge of the situation; I don't even think he did anything nominally with the Vice President. The Vice President came back from some trip the next day, from somewhere. I don't know where he was.

G: Do you think he felt that Humphrey was too associated with organized labor?

C: No, I think he just wasn't going to put him in charge. And with cables--[we] ended up sending these long cables to him, and I'm sure talking to him on the phone when he was in Germany. And Clifford said the President must go to Punta del Este and he must go on Monday night as scheduled, that a railroad strike under any circumstances takes time before it has any impact. He said--Clifford--if there was a lock-out of the Teamsters he would go for Taft-Hartley. And he said maybe the people don't feel the situation enough in their daily lives. Go to Punta del Este; even if they do strike, let them strike and then

let a little pressure build up before you do anything and you can submit the matter after you come back.

Johnson then divided up people to call that night to get over the next day and to brief him about this thing. I see that. I really got quite a--I got Albert, Dirksen, Mansfield, [John] McCormack, and Morse. Wirtz got [Ralph] Yarborough, among others.

There was some more discussion of going for more than twenty days, but the President was not buying that. He was going to go for the shortest period he could.

G: Why was that?

C: He just didn't want to become a strike-breaker; that was all part of that. This is April 9, April 10. April 8, 9, 10. That's the eleventh. Okay.

All right. We're back in May 4, the day after he proposes this. Yes, see, here's Staggers on the day after the President sends it up on May 5. Staggers reported in the [*New York*] *Times* of May 6, page 36. "Representative Staggers declined to give his views on the President's bill but said, yes, that he thought it would call for compulsory arbitration. He opposed such a step. Staggers said some committee members believe Mr. Johnson should offer permanent transportation strike legislation." There was a kind of funny pincer, it didn't really take off, but Javits wanted permanent strike legislation because he wanted it and wanted some kind of permanent legislation that would create some no-strike situation. Staggers was suggesting it because he thought it would get bogged down and nothing would ever get passed.

Here are some of our problems with Staggers. The unions did go to Staggers and then say that they would move the Vietnam stuff, military stuff, and public health, as an

attempt to kill our bill. And then that precipitated--this is not the final text but that precipitated a letter from Vance to Staggers saying that would not work, and laying out why, you can't break stuff down in smaller shipments and what have you.

Then Boyd sends Staggers a letter saying we're going to have a transportation crisis, and we're turning everything we can on Staggers to make him the public brunt of this thing because that was the place where we thought we might break down. Fox was the president of the Railways Employees Department. Meany did not testify, per the discussion with Johnson, and he had one of his aides go up and testify. We then had this little blip of a strike, possible strike, on the Long Island Railroad. Nice note from Fahy.

Then Paul Hall said the President was, "trying to do to the railroad unions what Hitler did to the German free labor movement prior to World War II: destroy it, using the Vietnam War to shackle the labor movement." Wirtz wanted to blast him back but Johnson told him not to.

Staggers kept dragging this thing out. God, I remember we got George Higgins, Monsignor Higgins. We had another little flap with some union we whacked him in under the Railway Labor Act.

(Long pause) Our bill was reported out. Okay. Wayne reported our bill out. We used everything. I remember calling [Dean] Rusk. Then the Mid-East War broke out in the middle of this thing. The Six Day War in early June. In the midst of everything concerning the Six Day War, Johnson said, "Call Rusk. Tell him to write me and express concern about any interruption in rail service with the Six Day War going on now on top of the Vietnam War," which I got from Rusk on June 6 and which we promptly whistled up to the Hill. I got one from McNamara, too. I got a great one from McNamara, utter

folly. In fact, I think I whistled those up to the committee and we got our bill out that afternoon. We beat three seizure proposals: one by Yarborough, one by Kennedy, and one by Javits.

G: Was Yarborough's position essentially the same as Staggers?

C: I think Staggers didn't want anything, nothing. He wanted to let the strike--I mean labor wanted seizure. Kennedy made a seizure proposal, [was] defeated. Staggers admitted here that his problems were coming from Siemiller. Okay. (Long pause) Staggers would not be the floor manager for the bill; I remember that. He refused to. . . . God, [inaudible] strike settles at 25 per cent. Then we finally got our bill out on June 12 out of the committee.

(Long pause) This is [Robert] Kintner on June 13--Kintner obviously calling [Everett] Hutchinson over in the Transportation Department asking him for a memo on where the railroad legislation sits. Johnson immersed in it. We had a three-hour rule. Then we got some more letters from McNamara and [Earle] Wheeler for use on the floor of the House by Carl Albert. We had to mount a major effort. (Long pause) Boy, then you really see the . . . (Long pause) We had a hell of a battle. This is the Wirtz letter to Albert. I've talked about that, haven't I?

G: I don't think so.

C: We really are in an intensive fight over trying to get this bill passed, and on Wednesday night, the fourteenth of June, I flew out to L.A. to have one of our dinners on preparing the legislative program that Warren Christopher had set up. And, in that connection I might note, while I was having dinner at Chasen's in L.A. the President called me.

G: At the restaurant?

C: I believe he called me at the restaurant. (Long pause) He talked to me at 7:52 long distance. So he got me either at the restaurant or--eight, that would be five--or on the plane. In any case, he told me to--

G: There may be a later call, too.

C: No. The later call is to Levinson. It says "PL" but he could not have talked to me in the PL at that time.

G: What is the PL?

C: Private line. 7:52. 7:53.

B: What does it say on the plans when you left?

C: No, it just says, "informal dinner in L.A." Depart Andrews Air Force Base, two o'clock, by JetStar. Wait a minute. Let me just see. He may have--5:32. He never . . . (Long pause) He either got me on the plane--the PL may be wrong, I guess. But he talked to me. He talked to me either on the plane or while I was down out in the restaurant. Maybe Levinson called me, but he's marked with about three calls to me when I was clearly on the plane. In any case, he told me to bring Warren Christopher back the next morning and I didn't see Chris until I got to the dinner and I told Chris at the dinner, "You're going to fly back with me," that night and we announced him the next day as I recall. Didn't we, the fifteenth of June?

G: Yes.

C: That's the digress--

G: Was Christopher surprised?

C: Flabbergasted.

G: Was he reluctant to do it?

C: I think he was interested; he had been doing stuff with us--I think he was interested. I think he just never expected to be, swish, like that.

In any case, at some point that night he calls Levinson. I notice he had dinner with Levinson that night, and at some point in the course of that dinner he tells Levinson he wants Wirtz to send a letter to Albert on--

Tape 2 of 2, Side 1

C: --to oppose a resolution, a resolution being suggested by Brock Adams and John Dingell and John Moss which would have gutted our proposal. Albert wanted a letter. Levinson calls Wirtz, and I get back to the White House the next morning, and--this can't be right. 1:06 p.m., this must be out of order. And he calls me late in the morning down to the office and among other things asks me about Wirtz's letter to Albert, which he had asked Wirtz to send. I said I didn't know anything about a letter; Larry may have told me he had trouble with Wirtz. In any case, he hits the goddamn--he calls Wirtz on the phone and says, "Did you send this letter to Albert?" And Wirtz says he had gotten a call from Larry Levinson, he didn't know that he was really speaking for the President, and Johnson just exploded. He said, "Goddamn it, you know I give orders to everybody. If you get a call from the charwoman over here and she tells you that I want you to do something over there, you do it. [If the] charwoman tells you to clean the floors"--I mean really tough. In any case Wirtz had that letter over to Albert within an hour. It was there.

What I'm looking at here--I know that's the letter. I just don't know how good these phone records are of LBJ. Maybe it's over here. Him calling Wirtz. I must call her. (Interruption)

(Long pause) [Inaudible] just dump a lot on the President. We started to get some settlements.

G: The House dropped a binding settlement provision apparently on this bill.

C: (Long pause) The Newark riots. I think we ought to do this right.

End of Tape 2 of 2 and Interview LX

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Addendum to the Legal Agreement Pertaining to the Oral History Interviews of

Joseph A. Califano

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

I, Joseph A. Califano, hereby remove the restrictions on the use of the transcripts and recordings that states, "During my lifetime I retain all copyright in the material given to the United States by the terms of this instrument. Thereafter the copyright in both the transcripts and tape recordings shall pass to the United States Government. During my lifetime researchers may publish 'fair use' quotations from the transcripts and tape recordings without my express consent in each case." of the sixty-three personal interviews conducted with me by Paige Mulhollan, Joe B. Frantz, and Michael L. Gillette, currently at the Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library. (see attachment for interview details)

Joseph A. Califano Jr. — Donor

5-28-19 — Dated

Susan K. Donius

Director for Presidential Libraries

July 17, 2019 — Dated