INTERVIEW I

DATE: March 22, 1971

INTERVIEWEE: JEROME P. CAVANAGH

INTERVIEWER: JOE B. FRANTZ

PLACE: Mr. Cavanagh's office in Detroit, Michigan

Tape 1 of 3

F: Mr. Cavanagh, let's talk a little bit about how you came to get into politics in the first place, and become a national figure.

C: The first time I ever ran for public office was in 1961, when I ran for the office of mayor here in Detroit. Prior to that time I had been practicing law here in the city.

F: You ran, I gather, pretty much as a lone wolf.

C: Yes, I ran as a lone wolf, underdog, independent, you name it.

F: During the campaign did you come in contact with the national party, or did this develop after you had been victorious?

C: It developed after I was elected to the office of mayor. We couldn't find too many people in the campaign that were willing to concede that we even had a chance.

F: In something like that, there's not really any relationship between you and the national ticket, is there?

C: Not directly, no.

F: You don't tag along, to a certain extent?

C: I think the election of President Kennedy in 1960 set the kind of climate which would allow in 1961 a young man like me, relatively

unknown, to win.

F: Did you get to know Vice President Johnson at all, or was it after he became president that you . . .?

C: No, I met him when he was vice president. I don't recall exactly the occasion, but Cliff Carter, who was an associate of his, working for him, was in the city doing something. I think he might have been advancing a trip into the city of the Vice President's. I wasn't here on that occasion when the Vice President was in [Detroit]. He was to appear at Wayne State University, if I recall correctly, for some ceremonial thing. In any event, shortly thereafter I was in Washington, where I was frequently when I was mayor, and Cliff Carter wanted me to come in and see the Vice President. And I did. I spoke with him in his office right off the Senate chambers. I recall it very vividly because I remember he said, among other things, when he sat down across his desk, "I see you wear those Ivy League shirts." I was wearing a button-down collar, and he had some, if not antipathy, maybe suspicion about Ivy League shirts.

F: Did you have any official relationship with him, as far as your own mayoralty duties were concerned, or was he pretty much out of it?

C: As far as the mayor's office and as far as I was concerned, he was pretty much out of it. We had a lot of dealings with the White House and various staff members and people in the administration under President Kennedy, and the President himself. But it would just be a rare occasion when I might encounter the Vice President.

As a matter of fact, I can't recall any incident in which it was official.

F: Did Detroit make a fairly strong bid to get any space agencies here, or did you figure that you were out of it?

C: I think we assumed, at least I probably did assume, that we were out of it. We made no effort to obtain any space facilities of any kind.

F: So you wouldn't have had any relationship then there?

C: No. And if I'm not mistaken I don't think the President's Council on Youth Opportunity was set up as yet, I think it was set up under President Johnson, and that's chaired by the Vice President. But I think during Vice President Johnson's tenure of office as vice president he didn't have that responsibility.

F: To some extent he had the responsibility for civil rights activities and equal employment.

C: Equal employment, yes. I'm sure we exchanged some correspondence and things of that kind on equal employment, especially [concerning] my conversations with some of the major business people here in the community and getting them to participate in his Equal Employment Opportunity Program down there. But that was done more informally than formally.

F: Nothing of a very intensive nature?

C: No.

(Interruption)

F: Then comes the assassination. And I should establish the fact that in Detroit the mayor serves four years.

C: Four years, yes. That's right.

F: Did you have any immediate reaction around Detroit, any problems arising from the assassination and the change of administration?

C: On the part of some of us at City Hall and the city administration that were very actively involved in the formulation of domestic programs in the Kennedy Administration, particularly the poverty program which was in the mill, so to speak, at that time, there was some concern over whether the new President would support it and push it in the manner that it was being pushed by the Kennedy Administration--his [Kennedy's] knowledge of it. There were a number of concerns like that. I can recall not long after the assassination, I believe it was Cliff Carter again, either calling him or he was here in the city, pointing out to him some of the preliminary work that had been done in the Kennedy Administration that I thought possibly the President wasn't familiar with.

The poverty program very essentially started out by having Robert Kennedy chair an administrative committee of cabinet or sub-cabinet members for the prime purpose of trying to, in a more comprehensive way, coordinate the existing federal social welfare programs. The department heads and agency heads on this committee were meeting on a very regular basis. Out of those series of meetings grew some ideas about a full-fledged set of legislation, which eventually resulted in the poverty program. The President, though, I never really heard directly back from him, but I assume he was familiar with it because the next thing I

heard was that Lee White, who was then on the White House staff as general counsel, was doing a very confidential memorandum and draft of a proposed poverty program. It was not called that at that time. I remember once I was in Washington and presented myself over at Lee White's office and he was quite surprised that I even knew about the fact that he was working on it. I had, as a number of other mayors, had a great self-interest in that program.

F: The White House though hadn't consulted mayors of the larger cities on what should go into such a program?

C: Not directly, no. It was being written rather unilaterally at that point, and that's why I was concerned about it. I did make some input to Lee White. At least we sat and talked for an hour or two, and he made some notes, mainly about the administrative features of it and making sure that it wasn't structured outside of city government and outside the control of the mayor. There was a strong feeling among some in Washington that this new effort ought to be done away from the traditional administrative functionings of city hall and away from the mayors' control. I'm sure that meeting and some other efforts by a couple of the mayors, Mayor Daley and a few more, resulted eventually in the type of legislation that was produced.

F: What was the idea, that it would be in a sense administered right out of Washington?

C: It would be administered out of Washington with a whole new bureaucracy, so to speak, locally, of social welfare people because there was a feeling, and in part it was based upon fact, that the traditional bureaucracy, the mayor and city hall, were insensitive to the needs of the poor because nothing really had been done in that area. I would say that there was a strong body of opinion among some people in Washington that were concerned about this program that it shouldn't be put in just as a traditional program in city hall. My argument was, as well as some of the other mayors, that some of the mayors at least, many of them, were doing some herculean work in this area at the present time and that it would be catastrophic to set up sort of a dual, maybe even competing, non-governmental agency.

F: Was there an understanding at the White House level, do you think, of the city administrative problems?

C: I don't think there was ever an understanding at the White House in the eight years I was the mayor, a clear understanding, of many of the problems, administrative and otherwise, of the mayor's office. I think there was an effort made, particularly in the early Johnson years, to understand and deal with this. But I think that which resulted indicated that there was somewhat a lack of understanding of what the mayors were all about.

F: Was Hubert Humphrey any help at all in this as a former mayor, or was his experience too far back?

C: No. I think he was very helpful. He was most sympathetic, which at that point in time was about all that he could be because the programs, some of them that were conceived and adopted in the very early part of President Johnson's administration, were being wound down because of Vietnam in 1966, 1967, 1968. But he was extremely helpful and most knowledgeable and had a great deal of empathy, coming from where he did and his background, with the mayors of some of the major cities. I think essentially the mayors were looked upon by both President Kennedy and President Johnson, [this is] understandable, as important political figures in their particular city. And we were dealt with principally on that basis, which was fine as far as I was concerned. I really didn't care what basis they dealt with us on, as long as we were able to get these programs and money.

F: In these early War on Poverty days did mayors like you and Richard Daley and John Lindsay pretty much support the administration's efforts?

C: Yes. John Lindsay, of course, was not in office at that point. Robert Wagner, Jr., of New York was in office. He was very close to the White House, as was Mayor Daley. They were personally much closer than I was although I was extremely active in the formulation of that legislation, testifying before both houses of the Congress and making a number of suggestions in this area, mainly because we had been at it ever since I had come into office through sort of a mini-poverty program we set up here. Many of the rules

and regulations of the poverty program were adopted from our programs. We were the first city to submit a comprehensive request for a grant and structure it, and the first to receive one. I think it was mainly because we had had some experience with what that program was all about.

F: Was Henry Ford II useful at all in channeling things towards Detroit? Did he have any sort of a special clout at the White House that you could tell?

C: He had a special clout, but he really didn't use it. He was sort of really an undiscovered asset until the President came out here in June of 1964 to make the Great Society speech at Ann Arbor. The White House had asked me to take charge of the arrangements, which I did, and also asked if I would line up some prominent businessmen, Republicans or at least non-Democrats, as most of them were, to serve on that welcoming committee for the President. Then they asked if we'd put on a rally--not actually a political rally, but gather a substantial crowd if we could for the President's arrival at Metropolitan Airport, which is sort of equidistant between downtown Detroit and downtown Ann Arbor. So all that week there was considerable planning that went into the President's visit. His aides and associates all indicated that he really wanted a large crowd. He wanted to demonstrate his acceptance and popularity, which is readily understandable.

In any event I contacted a vice president at Ford who was then

serving as the president of the local chamber of commerce and asked him as president of the chamber of commerce if he would act on this welcoming committee. He said unfortunately he was going to be away from the city that particular day; this was a few days before the President was to arrive. But shortly after I spoke with him I received a call back from him, saying that he again apologized that he couldn't make it but he'd like to recommend a substitute. I said, "Fine. Who is that?" He said, "Henry Ford himself would like to serve."

F: That's a reasonable substitute.

C: Yes, that's a reasonable substitute. I was delighted. We gathered this welcoming committee in a hangar out there at the airport away from the crowd before the President arrived. We had set some coffee and doughnuts up for these men and women, and a number of the reporters were mingling through the crowd. One of them happened to stop and ask Henry Ford what he thought of President Johnson, and Henry Ford said very directly he liked him and he planned on supporting him. He was the first major business figure, at least in this area and very possibly in the country, that came out in support of the President early. I said June, I think that probably was May of 1964.

F: May 23.

C: May 23. I recall after the President finished his speech at Ann Arbor, I did not go out to Ann Arbor. I came back downtown and then went back

out to the airport to meet him, as I was going to Washington that night to the White House press correspondents' dinner. So I flew back on the plane with the President and I asked him how he liked the crowd and he reckoned that it was all right. We were quite pleased with the crowd. There had really been twenty-five thousand or thirty thousand people out at the airport, which was really a larger crowd than even President Kennedy had under similar circumstances. And that was the measurement that the White House at that point was using on how well President Johnson was able to draw.

But I mentioned to him just casually flying back on the plane that had he heard that Henry Ford had endorsed him and said he would support him and work for him and so on. At least that didn't seem to make too much of an impression upon the President because he very casually responded by saying, "Well, I'll just wait and see. A lot of these businessmen love you in May but not in December." Those weren't the words he used, but that was the effect of it. That night the story was headlines all around the country. I recall after leaving the dinner that night picking up a Washington paper and it was bannered that Henry Ford was going to support the President. I went in to New York the next day, and it was carried in all the papers there. So it was more of a news item, I think, than maybe the President acknowledged at that point, and was the start of a number of businessmen that all that summer were coming out in support of the President.

F: On that plane going back, did you pick up any idea that the President realized he had coined a phrase for his administration, that this was one of his kind of landmark speeches?

C: No. Since I hadn't heard the speech, I was reading part of the text prior to the plane leaving. Of course I liked the speech because he was saying a lot of things that I was very interested in. I complimented him on the speech, as did a number of people that were on the plane and were flying back there. Senator Pat McNamara flew back, and Kenny O'Donnell; there were the four of us in the back of the plane. The President just sort of dismissed those compliments as being sort of perfunctory. There wasn't really any comment about the speech or how it was received or what it said. I think a day or two later, a week later, as the commentators and reporters started to write about the speech, that it took on the import that it subsequently has had attached to it.

F: Would you subscribe to the belief that perhaps the coining of the phrase "The Great Society" to demonstrate the Johnson domestic program was almost an incidental? It wasn't really intended?

C: Based upon my own observations from the vantage point that I was at at that time, not having listened to the speech but being on sort of the fringes, I would have to agree that it was probably sort of accidental. It was a phrase, a deliberate phrase, that was put into the speech, but I don't think anyone said, "Let's call this 'The Great Society Speech' because it will go down in history as the hallmark of the administration." I doubt that that happened.

F: Actually, later there was a lot of scrambling to figure out who had come up with the phrase to begin with.

C: Yes, I guess there were several people who have taken credit for it.

F: It had its share of authors. Does it pose a particular problem when a president, who is a member of your party, comes and you have a governor who belongs to the opposition party, and it is a presidential year? Or did everybody understand his role in this situation?

C: That posed a bit of a problem, not for the President, but just logistically at the airport. Since my staff was in charge of the arrangements I arrived at the airport shortly before the President's plane came in. There were the usual number of Democratic politicos, but the Governor appeared on the scene. I had not invited him, which didn't mean that he shouldn't be there, but he was fuming as a matter of fact at the airport--Governor Romney. Because apparently one of my staff, who was in charge of the airport arrangements and lining the people up to meet the President as he came off the plane, had naturally, since he was a good staff man, put me at the foot of the stairs of the presidential plane and the Governor one or two or three back in the early planning. Well, the Governor would have none of that obviously, and he was fuming and said, after all, that he was the governor of the state; this was the President of the United States, the first time coming into this state, and therefore he insisted that he not only greet the President but be the first to greet him. I said, "Certainly,

I won't disagree with that." I found that on those sorts of things it never bothered me too much where my position was at the foot of the stairs, since you were still at the foot of the stairs. So we did move the Governor up, and I stepped back one or two or wherever. And in any event, then, the mini-crisis passed.

F: I judge that the whole presidential visit went smoothly enough.

C: Yes. It went very smoothly, and the crowds were very good. There was a large receptive crowd at Ann Arbor. Of course it was a commencement day speech and the stadium was filled. It was a terribly hot day, I remember. The President was extremely hot and sort of rumpled when he came back to the airport, but he was, as I say, apparently somewhat pleased. But as you know, he was not given to public ebullience about those sorts of things.

F: What do you do as far as protocol is concerned with someone like Walter Reuther, who holds no official position, but who does have a considerable constituency?

C: If I'm not mistaken, I think Walter Reuther, if he was here that day and I'm not sure that he was, but if he was he would have been one of the men greeting the President, as we had representatives of labor and business among these twenty or so distinguished people. Reuther always was on such a distinguished greeting committee whenever a president or a vice president came to the city, if he was in fact in the city. It seems to me in the back of my mind that Walter Reuther might not have been here that day. If he was not, the present president, I think, Leonard

Woodcock, probably represented the UAW.

F: Incidentally, I went after the older labor leaders strictly on a chronological basis and got them all but Reuther died in the middle of that ahead of schedule. Did you ever hear him express any opinions regarding Lyndon Johnson?

C: Nothing historic, let's put it that way. Of course I'm not a historian so I shouldn't be judging whether what he said was historic. But we had many conversations, casual and otherwise, about the President and about what was happening. He was friendly with the President. The President sort of pre-empted Walter Reuther. I'm inclined to think that Walter Reuther, I know as a matter of fact, and some others who were highly liberal and very close to the Kennedy Administration were viewed somewhat suspiciously initially by, if not the President, some of the people associated with him. But Walter Reuther of course liked to be close to the White House, and the President wanted him close, too so whatever suspicion might have existed initially soon was dissipated. On several occasions when the President was in the city making speeches or something, I recall Walter Reuther and myself, on a couple of occasions that I can think of, would ride back to the airport with him and chat and so on.

F: In the second year you once protested that Sargent Shriver was bypassing the Detroit Anti-Poverty Committee in its dealings with the area. Was this a valid criticism, or was this partially your way of spurring or drawing attention to Detroit's needs?

C: I think it was more to keep Sarge Shriver and the poverty warriors on their toes, as far as their dealings with this city. There was a disposition on the part of some of the poverty people to occasionally try and develop some new programs that would bypass city government, this old syndrome about being somewhat suspicious of city hall. As I say, I know that the poverty administrators were more suspicious of other city halls than they were of this one, because they used to brag a little bit about how their program was operating in Detroit. Shriver used to frequently cite Detroit as the model and so on. I got along with him very well personally and otherwise was very friendly with him. The President asked me to serve on his Public Officials Advisory Committee. The committee had some promise but never really developed into much because Sarge and the fellows ran their own show pretty much and didn't rely upon public officials such as myself and Dick Daley, who served on it also, for any great degree of advice.

F: Were you called with any regularity?

C: No. The meetings started out somewhat regular and then as the program went on, the meetings would maybe be held two or three times a year. In the waning days of the administration it was rare that there was ever a meeting of the Public Officials Advisory Committee. But in the meantime I developed some close contacts and relationships with some of the White House staff. And I know at least the public estimation and I think their

private estimation of our administration and their programs were quite high. So the rapport was good.

I recall sometime in the spring of 1964, or in the very early summer, I was in the White House one day. We were there for a bill signing. I don't recall which bill because we were down there so frequently in those days for bill signings. The reason I remember this is because I was scheduled to catch a plane back to Detroit at noon that Friday to catch another plane for northern Michigan. I was going to take my first week off in three or four years. My then wife had extracted a promise from me that I would be there; otherwise, she wasn't going to go. So I was standing around on one foot and then another in the White House waiting for this ceremony to finish, more concerned about maintaining some domestic tranquility than the particular piece of legislation under signature. When the President did start to sign he gave me a pen, and he said, "Can you wait around a while until I'm finished?" I looked at this room filled with a lot of people, looked at my watch, it was then ten after eleven and my plane was noon. "I'd like to speak to you for a moment." I sort of hemmed and hawed for half a moment, and he was somewhat surprised I think that I didn't say, "Yes," as you normally always say "Yes" to a president. So he said, "Well, see Jack Valenti out in the hall." I think we were in the Cabinet Room or some place, so I did.

I ran in to Jack Valenti, and he took me aside and wanted

to chat with me. He said the President was interested in my view as to what would happen in Michigan if Robert Kennedy was not on the ticket with him, so I just assume that was sometime in the spring of 1964. I responded by saying that it really didn't matter who was on the ticket at that point with the President, that he'd certainly have the support of Michigan at the national convention. I recalled for him that the leadership of the party in 1960 here in Michigan was very opposed to the inclusion of Lyndon Johnson on the ticket. Valenti remembered that well, and some of the principals involved with then Governor [G. Mennen] Williams and some others. I said, "Nobody is going to make that mistake again as to whom the President selects for vice president. They're going to support him 100 per cent," I think I used the phrase "even if he were a Chinaman." That was that. I said was there anything else, and he said, "No." I thanked goodness that there wasn't and rushed for my plane.

F: And made it.

C: And I made it. That sort of stuck in my mind though because of getting back here at this point.

F: Did you have a feeling that at the White House they understood the so-called plight of the cities, or was this window dressing for them?

C: I think that there was a sincere desire to understand. I think for a short period of time, 1964 mainly, there was some direction toward developing programs and legislation that would attack

these problems in the cities. But our priorities then began to get mixed up very quickly and easily in other things. Principally Southeastern Asia soon moved to the top of the agenda, and that dominated their thinking so much that the rest of it was just peripheral, including the plight of the cities.

F: Besides the fact that you saw your needs in Detroit and the needs in other cities, and of course South Vietnam was draining off money for itself that could have gone into those programs, did you receive a lot of sort of anti-war feeling from your constituency because of the war, because of the fact that things weren't getting done in the cities?

C: At that point, no. In the mid-sixties I wouldn't say that there was a great manifestation of feeling from the constituents. I came out in 1965 and started to talk about the war, how the war was distorting priorities late in 1965. I was then president of the National League of Cities before I became president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. I detected, at least thought I did, somewhat of a chill around the White House, and I'm sure that might have been the case. I just know that I probably was somewhat ahead of the feelings of most of the constituents in this city, but I could see what was happening. Those programs that I had been so involved in and we had held out as having so much promise were just being, not gutted, but really being denuded to such a degree that the rhetoric far outstripped the performance.

F: In the spring of 1965 you and Governor Romney led a ten thousand man sympathy march for Martin Luther King's Selma to Montgomery march. Did this draw any sort of national attention as far as the White House was concerned? Did Washington seem to take more than a casual interest in this?

C: What happened was, in June of 1963 I led the first freedom march with Martin Luther King here in Detroit. That was prior to the big freedom march in the fall of 1963. Of course President Kennedy was still alive there. The Attorney General and a number of White House people were very concerned about what the impact of that march in Washington would be. We were very involved in it on the basis of our experience a few months before, what we did, and how we handled it from a police standpoint, et cetera. Governor Romney didn't march in that march and was severely criticized for it. So when the Selma thing took place, it was sort of a spontaneous march here in Detroit. I went up a few blocks from City Hall and participated in the march, and the Governor participated also. But as I recall there was nothing coming back out of the White House at that point on whither thou goest as far as the march was concerned.

F: Any reason why either you or Romney did not seek a parade permit?

C: No. Mainly because I think the march was a more spontaneous thing than anything else. The police here in the city, as in most cities, are traditionally against, at least at that point, all sorts of marches, because they say it represents a security

problem, and so on. I think if there was application for a permit to the police, and I'm not sure that there was, I doubt that there was, the police didn't indicate any great desire to give one. The march was going to be held anyway. It was a peaceful march. I saw nothing objectionable to it, although there was some criticism of me and of the Governor for having marched and headed up a parade that didn't seek a permit. My inclusion, as I'm sure the Governor's at that point, was at the eleventh hour, so to speak. I think frankly what it was were a couple of political figures reacting to a fact rather than anything else.

F: You and the Governor didn't in a sense join hands to plan to? You just both showed up?

C: Yes. It was again a case with the Governor and myself of sort of one-upmanship in all of this. He was of a different party than I was. He felt very keenly about making sure that I didn't gain any one-upmanship on him in those things, and I suppose, to be honest, I'd have to acknowledge the same feeling as far as he was concerned. I had a more proprietary sense to things that happened in Detroit since I was the mayor and he was the governor stuck away in Lansing some place. But he's a very assertive sort of man, and to merely hold your own with him you had to compete pretty hard. I don't want to paint myself as a fellow that wasn't competitive, because I was.

F: Did he hold any special advantage, or did it disadvantage him, the fact that he had been head of a half-way major automobile

company and was competitor to two of your biggest employers in this state?

C: It was an advantage, I'm sure, with the Governor coming from business and from the automobile industry such as he did when he moved into the political arena. It was a decided advantage. It helped him from a publicity standpoint in the media. And many people assumed that since he headed up a major automobile company that he just had to be far superior to most traditional politicians in running the state. I'm sure that did help him. And the fact that he headed up American Motors, they never really were looked upon as serious competition by the Big Three. They just would sort of tolerate them.

F: What does the National League of Cities do besides talk?

C: The National League of Cities initially was more of a service organization, a resource agency for cities, mainly some of the smaller communities. It has about thirteen thousand members. Although traditionally it's a big city mayor that normally heads up the National League of Cities, there was a strong feeling on the part of a lot of the big city mayors that the National League of Cities had sort of a small town orientation. Out of that feeling arose the creation of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, which is dominated more by big city mayors. It's far more political, not political in a partisan sense, but using whatever clout they do have with the Congress or the White House in a more traditional political sense.

F: When 1966 rolled around and you presented yourself for senator, you had the option of going for governor at that time. Any particular reason why you chose the senatorship over the governorship?

C: I had the feeling then, as I do now too, that the action, so to speak, as far as these cities were concerned, as far as the utilization of resources, really was in Washington rather than Lansing. The governor's seat in Lansing just didn't enchant me at all. I would have preferred to be mayor rather than governor anyday, but the Senate was something else. I saw an opportunity that I thought existed there. I used to kiddingly say later on that all my instincts were right; I knew it was the time to get out of Detroit, a year before a lot of things happened. But not enough people agreed.

F: Did the national administration show much interest in the Michigan primary between you and Soapy [G. Mennen] Williams?

C: It was assumed that they would show more interest than they subsequently did. Since Soapy Williams had not ever been very close to the Johnson Administration and hadn't supported the President when he was a candidate for vice president, or at least at the convention, and since I was quite close to the White House and the President in some ways, there was an assumption by some of the reporters that the White House would use their influence to give me some help. I knew that that just would not be the case. And I particularly knew it very early in the campaign when I staked out some positions that were somewhat critical of

the national administration, particularly Vietnam, which was a strong part of our campaign. And it was then obvious, would be obvious to everyone, that the President or his political operatives weren't about to help me directly or indirectly. But I don't think really that they would have anyway.

Prior to that campaign there is something that might be of some interest to you in relation to the Department of HUD, unless you want to get to that subsequently.

F: No, go ahead.

C: During the summer of 1964, early in the summer, Dick Goodwin, who is still with the White House, called me one day and said that they had set up a task force on urban problems. The idea was to develop for the President after the election a series of programs and new policies and so on in the field of urban affairs, as they all assumed he was going to win. He said he had just looked over the list and there wasn't one non-academician on the list, and he thought that was bad. He thought that someone with some practical input ought to be named. So he asked me if I would serve. I naturally said yes. I found that it served me and the city, I think, much better to be in there on the formulation of some of those things, I know it did. So I did serve with Bob Wood, who chaired it. This was 1964. There was another urban panel subsequently in 1965 that Bob Wood again chaired, but 1964. And there were a number of very distinguished academicians on this panel--Marty Meyerson, who is now president of the University of

Pennsylvania, Nate Glazer, Ralph McGill was the other non-academician with myself.

In any event we met all summer, generally at the Executive Office Building across from the White House, and developed a lot of proposals, including a recommendation, which was not an original recommendation but it was the first time it formally had been recommended to the President, for the creation of the Department of HUD. That was where the Model Cities idea came from, that year. The academicians on the committee didn't like that. I suggested it one day to them. I said that these wilder federal programs really weren't having any real impact in these cities. But I guessed that if we picked out a couple of cities in America and heavily programmed all of the federal programs in and did it with some additional cash and well-administered in a coordinated way, that you could show some progress in these things. Politically I was looking at it from their standpoint. They didn't like it, but I argued for it, saying it had the kind of political sex appeal that a political figure like President Johnson or anybody else might go for because it was something a little different.

My idea, of course, was rather obvious to myself and everybody else. And that was that if they were going to pick a couple of model cities Detroit might well be up on that list. I suggested they pick three. I figured that would take care of Detroit and Austin, Texas, and maybe Minneapolis, Minnesota,

Vice President Humphrey's town. Then Bob Wood, because he and I were good friends et cetera--the committee wanted to reject this idea--included this in a series of eight or ten recommendations to the President. Nothing much was ever heard about that again for a long period of time. Bob Weaver liked the idea; he was then head of Housing and Home Finance.

In any event, the President in January after his election, January of 1965, had a special address to the nation on urban and domestic affairs [and] recommended the creation of the department and some things like that, if I'm not mistaken, but a series of things, most of which came out of this committee report. But model cities, he was silent on that. I was checking constantly around Washington and around the White House, "What ever happened to this great idea?" Nobody seemed to know what had happened to it. In the meantime we took it to Weaver and sold him on the idea that he had the authority to do it himself under some demonstration money he had.

Now in the summer of 1965 they had another task force that recommended this again, and nothing happened. You know, they recommended the creation of the department again. I think HUD was created in June of 1965, if I'm not mistaken. The President delayed somewhat in naming a secretary and there were a number of names mentioned. My name was mentioned speculatively a couple of times.

I know the story I was going to tell. I was renominated again in September of 1965 for the mayor's office. The day after that I

went up to a Michigan Municipal League convention in Grand Rapids here in this state. I recall very well that that evening myself and a couple of staff members sneaked away from the hotel to have dinner. I was having dinner in a rather obscure restaurant up in Grand Rapids when I got paged over the phone. So I sent the police officer who used to travel with me over to the phone. He came back, and he said, "The White House is on the phone." I laughed and said, "It's some drunk. Go on back there, Sergeant, and find out who it is." He came back, and he said, "No, it's the White House." I went up to get the phone, and the phone was right at the end of the bar. It was a noisy restaurant and bar, I recall that.

F: A good place to take a call from the White House.

C: Yes. White House Assistant Doug Cater came on the phone. And then the President came on and asked me if I could come down to dinner the next evening at the White House, very mysteriously. I said yes, certainly I would come. I did. I went down there the next night.

F: Was it a more or less private dinner or a public affair?

C: It was some kind of a businessmen's dinner, I think. There were probably thirty or forty people there, all men. In any event I kept wondering all evening why would the President hunt me out way up in Grand Rapids, Michigan to ask me to come down. So at one point in the evening, as we were going by one another or something in the hall, I think it was after dinner, he said,

"I want you to talk to Doug Cater," and that was all. He has always moved in such mysterious ways, we were supposed to figure out what we were supposed to do. So I did talk to Doug Cater. He said, "The President wants me to talk to you about HUD." He didn't suggest that I take on the job or anything. I don't mean to imply that.

Tape 2 of 3

C: I'm sure that the White House was probing it, that is, to ascertain my reaction and so on. Doug Cater said, "What the President would like to know is what kind of a man you think ought to be secretary of HUD; what qualifications should he have?"

I had said publicly in response to some reporters' questions either here or in Washington, I'm not sure where, when someone said, "Your name has been mentioned as a possible candidate, would you be interested?" and of course I was riding sort of high at that point here, having just been renominated, and it looked like I was going to be re-elected handily, as I was--I really didn't have any interest, even if it was offered to me. Not just for that reason, but having been associated around Washington for those four years, working very closely with some of the Johnson Administration. It was a boiler factory, as far as I was concerned. I didn't want to get chewed up as the secretary of HUD by this president. I liked the relationship I had because we dealt not as equals, but on a little different basis than if you were working

for him. I didn't have any desire to do that. That was a part of it. In any event, I made that known publicly, not that reason, I just said, "No, I wasn't very interested in that job."

I think had I expressed an interest there might have been more of an interest on the part of the White House. Because around that time John Macy told me, he was in town and he said . . . Well, the President told me one night, it might have been at the dinner, I don't know, "You've got a very interesting file. I spent last night reading your file, your dossier." And that's all. He left it there. He said, "Very interesting," and walked away or somebody else came up. You know, to have the president of the United States say, "I spent last night reading your file" and leave it there. But that was typical of President Johnson, I guess you'd know that better than I would.

F: Half flattering and half sinister.

C: Yes. You don't know really what he meant by it. In any event, the only reason, he'd be reading my file, I assumed, was maybe because he was reviewing a lot of potential candidates for that job.

Most of the mayors were opposed to Bob Weaver because they didn't think he was an activist. And they let their feelings be known, some of them who were close to the White House, Dick Daley, I have a hunch, did.

F: Do you think that's what delayed Weaver's appointment?

C: Yes, I'm sure of it. But Doug Cater asked me that night, "What about Weaver?" Well, since there was no other candidate that I was familiar with that I thought was any better . . . They had mentioned a couple of names, Jim Webb and people like that. And I thought that would be disastrous because Webb was a top administrator, but didn't have any conception of what the problems were in these cities. At least Weaver had some empathy with the big city. But he was more a bureaucrat than me too. Anyway, I gave Weaver some very high marks to Cater. That is, I didn't mention anyone else. I said I thought Bob Weaver would be fine. Somehow I think that word got back to Weaver. Because he subsequently has said a number of times, "The only mayor that supported me for that job with the President was you," which was fine with me because he wound up getting it and he helped us and helped our relationships.

But to make a long story short, to shorten it a bit, while Weaver was waiting for the other shoe to drop and all sorts of names were being mentioned, he was becoming increasingly more upset over the fact that he wasn't getting named and he didn't know where he stood. I talked to him about using some of this demonstration money on this Model City idea of mine that was still ruminating around. He went for it, called me one Friday and said, "I'm going to designate you and Dick Lee in New Haven as the two model cities under a special demonstration grant of our funds here. I'm tired of nothing ever happening over at the White

House on this idea. It'll be announced Monday. I just sent the press release over to the White House for clearance." Everything had to be cleared there at that point. He was still the director of Housing and Home Finance.

It came Monday, and we waited around, Tuesday, Wednesday. Nothing. Called Weaver a couple of times and he said, "I haven't heard a thing." Well nobody had heard anything. The press release went over there and nobody saw it again or anything else until a couple of months later Weaver or Bob Wood or someone called and said, "The President's to make a speech this week or next week, very soon, in which he's going to unveil a model cities program." So that was the next thing directly that we heard about it, which was fine as far as I was concerned, except we had our hot hands on that money and we wanted it then. But I think what sort of pushed the White House on model cities to come up with some legislation was the fact that Weaver, being somewhat upset about that, was going to exercise some independence and go ahead and designate a couple. They thought that, I guess, would have been awful. But I'm sure it sort of moved them into a little haste.

F: Why do you think the White House delayed on the Model Cities Program? Any insights?

C: I think the funding requirements of any new program just were not compatible with the efforts of the White House to find more money for the military and the rising expenditures in Vietnam. Although I think the program had some, as they finally conceived it--they

figured that it had some political sex appeal, and they could spread a little money around and get some political mileage out of it. But when the program finally came out and was recommended to the Congress, it was far more watered down than anything some of us had imagined, and far different than what we had wanted it. And then the Congress watered it down even further money-wise by spreading it so thinly across the country that some of us, including myself, said right at that point that it would never achieve what it was intended to achieve. And I think that's been demonstrated.

F: You spoke that summer, testified before a Senate subcommittee on the crisis in the cities, headed by Senator [Abraham] Ribicoff.

C: Oh, yes.

F: And you gave the figure that summer that Detroit needed fifteen billion dollars in the next decade. Is that hard reasoning or is that a figure that you were guessing at?

C: No, that was hard reasoning. I'll tell you how we arrived at that. The President, by the way, reacted to that, too, to me at one point. What we did is our staff went through the ten major federal urban programs that Detroit was involved in, it was involved in many more but these were the ten major ones, urban renewal and things like that, and looked at what we were presently getting as opposed to our projected needs, our plans, what we could actually spend. We came up with this figure of fifteen billion dollars over the next ten years for those ten programs.

Now Senator Robert Kennedy was serving on that committee, and he's the one that elicited that figure from me. But I knew he would ask that question because he had asked John Lindsay, who was the lead-off witness, the previous day what his city needed. Lindsay had to fumble a bit because it isn't a figure you can have off the top of your head. But I had had the experience of that question being asked the day before, so I sat up that night with some of our staff people and worked out this answer. So then Robert Kennedy multiplied that roughly in his head by either the number of cities or the number of people in the country, I don't know which, to come up with this trillion dollars, that the cities using my estimate would need a trillion dollars over the next ten years. And that got some considerable play in the papers.

Not long after that, I forget the occasion, I think the President might have been out here or maybe I was down there at some meeting or something, but I remember him saying to me, "These fellows that talk about a trillion dollars all the time . . .," in effect. I wasn't sure whether he was referring to me. I assumed he was referring to me because he wouldn't have directed it to me. It might have been Senator Kennedy too. But frequently that was his way, as you know, that he made some criticism of you without identifying you as the person he was making the criticism to.

I recall in 1966 when he was here speaking at a Labor Day rally, and he spoke on Vietnam, his policies and so on. As we left the podium and walked through the Cobo Hall, where he was speaking, out

to his car and I rode out with him. I remember because I have a picture some place around of me walking beside him and he's making a point by punching his fist. I smile every time I see that picture because he was saying, in effect, "I sure gave those Vietnam types hell in that speech. I told them, didn't I!" Of course I had just come out of an unsuccessful campaign being very opposed to his policy. I had sort of a stupid look on my face, sort of glum, saying, "Yes, you did, Mr. President." But the trillion dollar thing came about the same way. He sort of obliquely referred to "These fellows that like to talk about a trillion dollars, they don't know what they're talking about," or something like that.

F: Does a mayors' conference, doing one just to discuss mutual problems, have more impact than the League of Cities?

C: I would say the U.S. Conference of Mayors does have more impact, more political clout, because the big city mayors are all very actively involved in it. It is an organization, for example, that's very close to Dick Daley's heart, and of course he's a very important, probably the most important mayor in the country politically. And a very good mayor, too, as far as I'm concerned, although on some philosophical things we have some disagreements. But I think the most effective mayor is Dick Daley. He did serve at my request when I was president of the National League of Cities on their executive board, but traditionally he has no interest in that. He and a number of other mayors that aren't involved very actively in the National League of Cities are involved in the

Conference of Mayors, and at certain times they use that involvement with the Congress and with the White House. Although when I was president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, Joe Barr, then mayor of Pittsburgh, and Dick Daley and others, although they were very good friends of mine, still I was like an erring son to them. They sort of kept the lid on me.

I recall in January of 1967, I was still president. There's the annual winter meeting of the executive board in Washington, and the president of the Conference normally meets the press and makes a statement about cities, problems, programs and so on. Well, since I was president the White House was very concerned about what I'd say, because they knew my position on Vietnam the previous year and I was increasingly making speeches that the White House interpreted as being critical. And they were, I guess, on this priority system. During that meeting I noticed--it was in Washington in the Madison Hotel I think, during the course of the morning one by one a number of the mayors--well, Joe Barr got up and left for a while and came back; Dick Lee got up and left, and Dick Daley. What was happening [was] they were being called over to the White House. The White House was very concerned, and they were making great efforts at that time, especially among their friends, to keep the lid on criticism. I was not called over or asked because I assume they thought I was a lost cause anyway.

But what the President did very effectively, and some of his staff, was cut the legs right out from under me. So at the

conclusion of this all-morning meeting now, when we drafted a statement as to what this meeting was about, I had this statement in my pocket, a response statement, and normally in other kinds of meetings like that the rest of the mayors certainly didn't disagree with me. They were inclined to let me speak and speak in my own language. But they were very adamant at this point that this statement that was made to the press be very carefully couched, no criticism of the White House, implied or otherwise. And I was to deliver it.

I remember, it was so wild going out, because there were tons of press there because they were anticipating a tough statement. Of course they're always looking for a fight on an issue. The press conference attendance was exceptionally high, and I'm sure that was the reason for it. I came out and read this statement, and it was a lot of nothing. It said nothing. And they tried to draw me out with some criticism. I remember Lindsay sitting on a couch over at the back of the room while I was carrying this thing on, and he was laughing about the whole thing. Because here I was, had been sort of denuded, and he knew it of course. But I stayed within the bounds of exactly what it said.

But I did subsequently find out, I think Joe Barr told me, that the President had called him over there that morning and he had called Dick Lee and had talked to Dick Daley, that he under no circumstances wanted any statement of criticism coming out of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and put it to them basically on a Democratic Party basis, that it was going to wreck our party.

Dick Daley later told me a year or so later, maybe a year and a half later, and he said it to me a couple of times, "Jerry, you were right. We should have at that point taken the lead. We were familiar with the problems, what was happening, and I think that the fact that we all sat silent and nobody spoke up is what contributed to a debacle in 1968 for the Democrats." He said, "You know, probably had we spoken out, we might have been able to move the President a little bit at that point, but we didn't. It's ourselves we have to blame." Well I didn't disagree because I thought that that's exactly an apt characterization of the situation.

F: Daley's own personal views really were relatively dovish?

C: Oh yes. He told me early in the game when the President was eliciting from everyone, this was back probably in 1966, "What do I do about Vietnam," Daley's suggestion to the President, he told me this and I'm sure it was right, that his remark was "Get the hell out of there. It's going to kill our party." The President said, "Well, it's much more complicated than that." Dick Daley is not a guy that would volunteer in a lot of advice, but the President asked him and he said this would kill the party, get out. But the President made a decision subsequently not to get out, to escalate the thing, and Daley, being a very loyal party man above all else, just shouldered his share of the burden.

F: You were early on fairly critical of the administration on Vietnam. You were also somewhat critical on the matter of space spending as having a priority over city needs. Did this throw you into any sort

of a--I'm trying to think of a nice word--did it cause you to get the cold shoulder around the White House, or did they just understand that this was your right to express your views?

C: No, I don't think they understood that it was my right to express my views. I assume that it was the cold shoulder. In 1966 at the conclusion of my term of office as president of the National League of Cities, I gave the presidential address in Las Vegas at the convention. Jim Webb, the administrator of the space program, was on the program that morning, up on the platform with me. After I finished I introduced him to speak on the space program, and he tossed his prepared speech away and proceeded to lace into me, not by name, but the fact that I had been critical of spending in areas of space and so on. It drew a lot of attention.

And then he had a press conference later. The press invited me in to it and I wouldn't go, simply because I thought it was bad form to go in and carry on an argument with a fine man like that. And they started to pepper him. He gets a little hot anyway on questions about . . . . His main theme was that the space program was going to have great technological impact upon our domestic economy and domestic affairs. Reporters who later came and talked to me about it were laughing about the fact that when questioned closely, Webb could only come up with the Teflon frying pan as being the technological breakthrough that would mean something. I'm sure he could have come up with much more, but that's all he thought of at that point. Anyway, out of that speech and

Webb's answer, which I think sort of highlighted my speech, there was some [coverage] I know in the Las Vegas papers, and it was picked up around the country, that I was blasting the administration on this whole thing. Being the president of the National League of Cities, I suppose, gave it a certain status which otherwise it might not have.

But because of the campaign in 1966 and my speeches as president of those organizations, my testimony in the Congress, I detected a real chilliness where I used to be rather frequently consulted or called by various staff people and so on in the White House, received a lot of social invitations to dinner and things down there. I didn't get them any more, so I assume there's a connection.

John Macy, who was the chief talent scout for the President during that period of time, used to call me about once a week on anybody in Michigan or the Midwest that they were thinking of naming to some job. Originally he said, "The President suggested that I call you." He used to do that frequently, even though it might have been a party appointment that he should have been checking out with somebody else. I don't know that I had veto power, I don't mean to imply that, I just gave him my opinion. Sometimes it did amount, I suppose, to a veto power. But the calls from Macy and people like that stopped, although some of Macy's staff still continued to call me when they were charged with some responsibilities on an appointment.

F: Moving down to 1967, in May of 1967 you made a public statement in

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F: Moving down to 1967, in May of 1967 you made a public statement in

which you warned of summer violence. Why the warning? Was this based on some information you had, or was it just a general feeling, intuitive?

C: It was a feeling I had. That coupled with the fact that the real winding down or cutback in these federal programs was coming in the spring of 1967. The summer programs, the Youth Opportunity Programs, the poverty program funds were being cut back up and down the line. I equated these cutbacks with increasing numbers of young people out on the streets and a greater possibility for conflict or violence in the summertime. I was roundly criticized by some parts of the media here who were suggesting I was hollering wolf. They were held to the theory that if you didn't talk about it, it would go away.

But I recall that spring very well, and it did no good when it did break out to say "I told you so." But at least there were some of us talking about it. It was mainly those federal programs. We were submitting applications trying to maintain even what I considered an inadequate level of services in the poverty area particularly. The administrators of the program would come in every day and point out where they were getting cut back here and cut back there.

F: City finances, already disastrous, looked as if they're going to get worse instead of better?

C: Absolutely.

F: Along in this period, this woman council member took in after you.

C: Mary Beck.

F: Did that have any effect or was it just a nuisance?

C: It was a nuisance obviously, but I think it was the--

F: People rallied for you, but I wonder what that's worth.

C: I think this, it's the cumulative total of a lot of things. You had Mary Beck peppering away and trying to start this recall thing, and the rumblings about the domestic situation which hadn't surfaced publicly, but the town was rife with a lot of rumors, some of which were being spread by Mary Beck.

F: A town can be awfully small at a time like this.

C: It really is a big small town in a lot of ways. There was a TV personality, a fellow by the name of Lou Gordon, who was, I was going to say associated, but he really wasn't associated. He and Mary Beck and this crowd were peppering at me.

F: Gordon had worked with you at one time, hadn't he, fairly early?

C: Well, yes. Early in my campaign in 1961 he mildly supported me. I say mildly because he really didn't support me all-out, but in any event he was considered friendly. Then he turned, like almost the spurned suitor, just went the other way and was peppering away at me. He and Mary Beck were very close to my former wife, or my former wife was close to them, and whenever she had a complaint or whatever, you could be sure that it would be fed on the television through this commentator or through Mary Beck. They were using her and she was using them, I suppose. It was sort of that triumvirate.

But in any event, I think the cumulative total of these things

as I mentioned, coupled with the riot . . . . The "blue flu" first, which was a police strike, police work-stoppage, the first one of its kind in the country I guess since Boston, that came in June of 1967. That contributed, to put it mildly, I suppose, to a rather unsettling sort of a climate in the city, political and otherwise. And we were suggesting that the potential for some disorder was greater in the summer. Our programs were being cut back, and I was beleaguered, the city was, financially and in a lot of other ways. We didn't give any pay raises that year to our city employees. That's what sort of triggered the "blue flu," and then coming right on top of that was this riot in July of 1967. There are some that suggest that those things I just mentioned contributed to the rioting, and the "blue flu" thing. I just don't think that's the case, but in any event it was an unsettling climate.

F: There weren't any rumblings of danger at the time of the police strike, which would have been a good time to riot in a way, except I guess you need something to trigger, don't you?

C: You do. You need some kind of a little spark, and Newark hadn't happened yet. These things have, you being a historian would know better than I do, sort of a chain reaction, what starts in Newark could land out here two weeks or a year later, as the case may be.

F: It gets to be almost fashionable.

C: Yes, that's exactly right. Actually, during the police strike, or the "blue flu" thing, we had more men on the streets than we normally would have, simply because we put the police officers on

two twelve-hour shifts. At the height of the thing there were only a thousand men out, so the balance of the department, including the executives and detectives and so on, were out on the streets. So interestingly enough, although a lot of people didn't realize this, we had better police coverage during the "blue flu" than we normally have.

F: You actually were able pretty quickly to neutralize the effects of the police strike?

C: Yes. But I got done out of a trip to Hawaii on that damned "blue flu" thing. The mayors' conference was in Hawaii, and I was just finishing up my term as president. I was looking forward to going out there and taking a couple of my children. I had made some arrangements to take a few days off after the conference. Well, the Police Officers' Union, knowing this, orchestrated their thing beautifully, and I don't blame them. It was a tactic. But the day I was to leave was the day they walked out.

So I sent my children on ahead with one of the officers, and I stayed and negotiated the thing out, tried to work it out. Until finally we got them back to work on a Sunday morning at eight o'clock and I left at ten, dead tired; hadn't been sleeping for two days. I got out to Hawaii, and I no sooner got out there than I had a call from my commissioner that the thing was back on again. They waited until I got out of town and pulled it again. So I made the speech the next morning, got back on the plane, and came back here. We finally got it into arbitration where it was buried for

a while. You know how you do deal with these public problems; if you can move them from center stage off. It's no solution, but at least it diffused them somewhat.

F: Do you want to get into the riot now?

C: Sure. Well, you know the history of the riot without getting into that, the federal aspect.

F: I'm interested in Mayor Cavanagh and where he is in the middle of all of this.

C: I didn't have any realization of the extent of the thing that morning, Sunday morning. I came down to the office, and we went through the sort of maneuvers that we had set up, setting up phone batteries and things like that, rumor control centers, all of these rather classic things. Then I moved my office here in the City Hall over to police headquarters and was getting sort of fragmented reports out of that riot area. It wasn't until I held a press conference, about one or two in the afternoon, the riot really had started early that morning, and the reporters came in from out on the street. They listened to me when I said, "I think this thing is under control." We had ordered up some state police to come up and help us. Because we had put those things in motion [I thought it was under control]. We had contacted the state police, National Guard; there were some procedures for that.

F: Had Romney been utterly cooperative to this point?

C: Yes, he was. There was no problem there. He didn't have any realization of how vast this thing was either at that point. But

the reporters told me, "Mayor, you're kidding yourself if you think this is an incident that can be put down. They're rioting on the street out there." At that point I told the Police Commissioner, "Everything we have, we have to throw in out there." By that point it was too late, even when all the police were thrown in and mobilized. Mobilizing a police department on a hot Sunday morning is almost like Pearl Harbor Day.

In any event the Governor arrived in the afternoon, and he's sort of a take-charge fellow. Although he and I got along publicly well enough initially that Sunday, he never trusted me. I know what it stems from--the poverty program. Sarge Shriver told me about it. At one point, maybe a year before that, a number of prominent Republican governors were going to exercise their veto power on various poverty projects. Rockefeller did, a couple of others, Scranton did.

F: John Connally did on the other side of the fence.

C: It was the summer before, or that summer, I'm not sure which. Romney told me on a Friday that if we didn't present some better reasons for a couple of summer youth programs he was going to veto them. I thought it would be a mistake, but he had the cards at that point. The deadline was on Monday.

So what I did is, over the weekend I leaked to the press that the Governor was contemplating vetoing these programs, and that if there was trouble that summer, indirectly the lack of these programs might be the cause of it. Well that was sort of a shot to the groin as far as Romney was concerned, but it was using a

technique that he uses a lot. I didn't feel any compunction about it at all because I was intellectually and morally convinced these programs were good and needed, and he didn't have any understanding of them. Well, the papers all came out over the weekend that programs might be vetoed, and the long hot summer and all of this. Romney was furious but he couldn't do anything else on Monday but approve the programs. He later told Shriver, a few weeks later he ran into him and he said, "I don't trust that guy down there. Do you know what he did to me?" And he told this story. Shriver laughed about it because he was in support of the particular programs. I know that that was the thing that caused Romney to figure that he had to be careful in dealing with me. Because I had access to the media just as he did. He utilized his access; I utilized mine.

So in any event, when he came on the scene Sunday afternoon in police headquarters we met constantly. We were together. We were trying to get the National Guard in here. It was very slow at that point; they were being mobilized and brought in. So by the time they did get in late Sunday night, large parts of them, the thing was a mess. That section was spreading, fires and everything else. It was very bad. I suggested, I think, that we consider calling in some federal troops. And about midnight I called the Vice President. I remember it was after a press conference in one room with Romney. The Police Commissioner had gotten him for me. I had asked him to get him in another room down the hall, but Romney was one of those

fellows who wouldn't let you out of his sight. He didn't know what I was doing. I was on the phone talking to Humphrey, and Romney came barging in the room. The door was shut and everything. I didn't care whether he came in or not. He was suspicious of whom I might be talking to or what I'd be doing in there. I said, "Well, Mr. Vice President, the Governor just came in," and I gave him the phone. He talked to him and described the situation, although no request had been made. I was inquiring about how you go about getting federal troops in here.

He called back and told me the Attorney General had been designated, Ramsey Clark, to deal with him. I talked to Ramsey Clark, and then the Governor started to talk to him on and off all that night, starting about two in the morning. Ramsey Clark at one point, maybe about four, after he got the telephone calls, said to the Governor, "You will have to certify that there's an insurrection and you can't handle it." Here was a governor running for president, and he quickly calculated, I'm sure, as anyone would, in his own mind what that would mean--that they were trying to put him into a corner. The Governor said, "I'll call you back."

I'm sort of on the sidelines at this point. Not really on the sidelines, but I'm like the third party here, saying, "I don't give a damn what has to be certified, let's get those federal troops in. Don't play games." And Romney had other fish to fry. In any event, he then got back to Ramsey Clark and said he couldn't do that because all the insurance coverage would go down the drain. That

was a new twist. I had never heard that before, but he might have been right. At least it was a damned good excuse not to say insurrection.

F: At that point you didn't have time to argue with him.

C: Right. So back and forth. Until finally the language in the request [was agreed upon]. The Governor worked out a telegram with his legal staff, cleared it with me, and I signed it. He wanted me to sign it. I said, "Certainly, I'll sign it." And away it went. Which might have been like Monday morning at seven or eight o'clock. I don't know what time it was. A good part of that day [there was] a lot of calling back and forth between Washington and Detroit.

That night, about the time I was talking to Humphrey, I talked to Walter Reuther. I think he had called in wanting to know how to help. I said we wanted to get some help out of the White House, some federal troops, and he could use his good offices too, which I think he did. I think he did call down there. He told me he did, and I'm sure he did. But I was trying to convey the seriousness of the situation to the White House and using every means I could, including a fellow like Walter Reuther.

The troops did come out that day, as you'll recall, and went to Mt. Clemens. Cy Vance came into town about five o'clock, representing the President, with General [John Lathrop] Throckmorton, who was the commanding officer of the federal troops. Romney, Vance, Throckmorton and I toured the riot areas about five in the afternoon, a nice, warm sunny day and nothing was happening. They said, "Well, this looks pretty calm." There were

National Guard and police all over the place.

F: You felt no personal danger?

C: No I didn't. The crowds were very friendly, to me, because I had pretty good rapport--to be in the black community. I didn't feel any personal danger because I had been out in that area several times since the day before.

We came back, held a press conference with Vance, Romney and myself. Vance had decided the situation was under control and that the federal troops were not going to be moved in, and Romney agreed with him. They asked him for some comment and he agreed. They then asked me at the press conference, sort of as an afterthought, I guess, "Do you agree, Mayor?" I remember this because we kept the tape and the transcript of it. It later became a little bit of controversy as to what was said. I said, "I don't want to be discourteous to our distinguished guest, Secretary Vance, but I completely disagree. I think the troops ought to be in here now, rather than out at Mt. Clemens." My reasoning was simple. I knew that as soon as darkness fell, bingo, it would go again. If you brought the troops in at that time you'd have another night of rioting you couldn't handle. Well, that's exactly what happened. And Romney started to catch hell, and naturally Vance did the next day.

F: Caught hell from whom?

C: From the local press, TV, people.

F: Did Throckmorton make his own views known, or did he have any particular . . .?

C: Throckmorton made his views known to Vance, and Vance made his views known to the President before the press conference, that he thought things were under control and there was no need to commit federal troops. The commission of federal troops was a major policy decision. The President didn't want to do it, as any president wouldn't, I suppose.

Romney started to back pedal the next day, calling press conferences all over the place, that he hadn't quite said that and blamed me for sandbagging on him, thinking that my public disagreement with him was to set him up. He interpreted these things always that way. He's an odd sort of a fellow that way. If you disagree with him publicly and it turns out you're right--

F: He sees plots?

C: Yes, he sees plots in everything. All that week columns would be written by guys like Jimmy Breslin and fellows like that who are good friends of mine, who were critical of Romney. He accused me of planting this stuff. But Romney was not the kind of guy, for example, that a guy like Jimmy Breslin would like or go for. It so happened that Breslin did like and go for me, and his writing would reflect that. It's just that simple. I'm not sure in point of time, you would know this, when the President came on TV. He made his TV speech on the riot, whether that was Monday night or Tuesday . . . .

F: I can check that out.

C: Romney and I watched that together in police headquarters. He was

getting furious, because the President, if you will recall, whacked the hell out of Romney, mentioning him ten or fifteen times, really the traditional Johnsonian overkill. He mentioned me twice in it. But [Johnson said] that Governor Romney couldn't handle the situation, "He has requested help, it's beyond his control." He was really killing him. When the TV set went off, or the program went off, Romney just stood up and walked around in circles, just mad as hell. I sat there and didn't say anything. I don't think I had any kind of smile on my face. I might have, watching him perform. He was furious and made his feelings known, but there were just a couple of us in the room, about what a terrible thing this was that the President did at this point, to get political about this whole thing, and so on.

Well, I think Romney's reaction was the rather common reaction of a lot of people. It suddenly engendered more sympathy for him, made him into the underdog. Now the press bounced back. After criticizing Romney, the next day came to his defense and was criticizing Johnson, both papers and the TV stations and so on, for injecting politics et cetera. Romney really never would have recovered very well from that riot had it not been for the President and the overkill. I'm just convinced of that. I know that to be a fact.

F: Do you think that the President was playing politics? Do you think this was just his penchant for overstating when he gets wrought up?

C: I think it was a combination of both. I think he saw a chance to

prod a pretender for the presidency here and he did it, went after him.

F: Was Vance circumspect as far as you could tell?

C: Very circumspect all that week, he's a Harvard Yard style you know. He's a nice fellow. He was very circumspect. As a matter of fact, I think a lot of the intensity with which the Governor responded to the President sort of overwhelmed Cyrus Vance. He hadn't been in that kind of a milieu. And the intensity of some of the feelings between Romney and myself during the course of that week I think sort of surprised the Secretary. I'm sure it did. He sort of was taken aback because at one point, after the President had taken off on Governor Romney in that TV speech--Romney let it rest as far as Vance was concerned, but at some point in time during that week, a couple of days later, Vance happened to say something casually about the President and Romney just got livid and almost went for Vance's throat. Vance was just horrified, "What is this man doing?" You know, he didn't attach the same significance--he's a non-political fellow--that Romney did.

Then Romney and I got into a tough, table-pounding session near the tail-end of the week. We were beat, tired, and we were forming this new Detroit Committee. And Vance was taken aback at that. He was a gentleman at all times under the circumstances.

F: Was it General Throckmorton who in effect disarmed the National Guard?

C: In effect he did. He talked to me a couple of time about getting

the lights on in this riot area. And I said, "If you get those men to stop shooting those lights out. We send all the crews out during the day and replace all the street lights, turn them on at seven o'clock or eight o'clock, and bingo, they go out again." He did issue that order. He talked to me, he talked to others about the National Guard, and I said, "They're trigger happy, they're shooting at each other out there," as they were. So he did issue that order.

F: Did you have the feeling that the Army at this point or the National Guard knew their business in a riot situation, or were they still sort of feeling their way toward a method of operation?

C: The National Guard did not. The Army, much more highly disciplined, much more professional, they did. Except that a common error is made. General Throckmorton likes to mention this frequently. That when he came into the city, and the Army came in, he divided the city in half. The west side was where most of the rioting was taking place, but there were some outbreaks on the east side, a coordinator was out there. So just logistically he decided to let the National Guard stay on the west side where they were, and he put the Army on the east side. Well, the east side was never really upset; there wasn't that much trouble out there. He liked to point out that the Army had a relatively quiet time because of their professionalism, yet the National Guard continued to have all sorts of trouble on the west side. Well, that was like comparing Vietnam with some minor brush fire. There was just no comparison.

But for his purposes he made that comparison.

But the Army was very professional, very disciplined, as there were a number of good crack troops and had good command, and so on whereas the National Guard was highly disorganized and not very well trained. Then, too, I think I have to give some due to the National Guard. Here you have a lot of kids, mainly from rural areas. They would be frightened to death on any night walking down a main street in Detroit, let alone walking--

F: They're just frightened to be in Detroit.

C: Sure. And they had no idea of what this city was like or all about. A lot of them were refugees from the draft, you know, had joined the National Guard.

Tape 3 of 3

C: I think most of the looting and vandalism were highly disorganized. There were elements of criminality involved in the looting, once the riots started. There were a number of people, both black and white, that took advantage of the situation, moved into other areas and were breaking into stores. But on an organized basis, as far as large numbers of people, I doubt that. I think it was mainly individual, mainly spontaneous.

F: Did you have up to this time what you felt was a reasonably good relationship between the police and the black community?

C: I think reasonably good. It would be a relative sort of thing. There was the usual inherent antipathy on the part of the black

community toward the police and the police toward blacks, although we had made what we thought was some great strides. We had promoted a number of blacks to high ranking positions in the department, had opened up the department with far greater black recruitment than in the past.

F: Had you tried to make any kind of a pattern of black policemen in predominately black areas?

C: I don't think we really had the number at that point to allow us to do that to any wide degree, of having black officers in black precincts. But we did mix black officers all through the city in squad cars and so on and tried as best we could to put as many black police officers into the black precincts as possible.

I think what probably lulled us and our police department into sort of a false sense of our ability to handle the riot was that the previous year, 1966, there was an incident which easily could have become a riot which broke out in the city and our police handled it magnificently. We utilized community leaders to talk the neighborhood down, and it was rather widely acclaimed. People from all around the country between 1966 and 1967 came in to find out what our techniques were. So we tried that same technique that Sunday morning, but it just did not work. We were blessed of course in 1966 with a torrential rainfall that night and of course normally that's what stops riots. New York that same day that we had this riot started had a similar riot start, but they had the biggest rainfall in the history of the city that year.

F: Just washed everybody off the streets.

C: Yes.

F: Any particular reason why your curfews seemed to be ineffective?

C: I think in the main it was effective, but we had such a wide area

to patrol with limited numbers of people. The first night, Sunday night, we had to rely upon our police and the state police. The National Guard really wasn't in in force adequate to enforce that curfew. So the curfew the first night was far less effective than it was on subsequent nights when we got more numbers of men in there.

F: Did you and your Police Commissioner, Ray Girardin, get much criticism for not shooting?

C: There was some, and most of the criticism wasn't direct, although it was implied, that we carried a big stick but didn't use it. Of course that was normal police procedure, not to fire into crowds. There would have been a veritable blood bath in this city had we gone charging in firing into mobs of people, with women and children cavorting around on the streets, also looting, with adult males. Shooting was just out of the question. I hate to contemplate what would have happened to this city had we shot. There were forty-two people, I believe, that were killed that week in the riot, at least those were the ones that we found. The number would have been, oh, double, triple , maybe ten times that.

F: When your Army units come in, do they come in more to make their presence felt, just the sheer numbers and sight of the federal force, or do they send in themselves certain trained snipers? Counter-snipers, I guess you'd call them?

C: They had trained men that could be characterized as counter-snipers,

but their principal purpose here was their presence by sheer numbers.

F: Just sort of showing the flag.

C: Yes, that's exactly right. By the time really that the Army came in, which was a day or two later, it naturally was starting to burn down. These things all are the same. They're like a fire. They slowly will extinguish themselves even if you leave them alone, which you can't do obviously. I'm not derogating the Army's role in it; they were very vital. It continued for many more nights. But it was mainly their presence, and their professionalism I think, that helped.

F: This matter of the delay in sending in the federal troops because of almost the semantic argument over whether or not you had an insurrection, was this a political maneuver in your feeling either on the part of Governor Romney or of the administration in Washington? Is this real and legal?

C: I thought there was a genuine concern on the part of the federal officials, the President, the Attorney General, and others, a genuine legal concern about the commitment of federal troops for this kind of a domestic outbreak. On the other hand I'm not so naive as to assume that politics didn't play a part. I don't think though that politics was the paramount consideration. I think, as I believe I mentioned, that the President probably saw some slight political advantage in the whole situation and proceeded to use it. And I'm not saying that the Governor didn't use what

political advantages he might have, or that I would not have. After all, we are political people. That's not to say though that politics was the paramount consideration and we were making decisions on the basis of what would be good politics. The politics of the situation as far as I was concerned, and I'm not trying to paint myself altruistically, but I was in a different position obviously than both the Governor and the President and called for federal troops very early, as I mentioned. It was interesting that most of the recognized and identified leadership of the black community right from the outset agreed with me that we should have federal troops in here. They were highly supportive of my efforts to get them in very early.

F: Did you feel that the slowdown on this sort of legal battle, verbal battle, on sending in the troops was at Ramsey Clark's level, or did it extend on to the White House?

C: I think initially maybe some of the questions were raised by Ramsey Clark and his staff. But the decision-making was obviously vested in the White House, although I'm sure the Justice Department provided the President with some questions that tended to slow the thing down. But it was basically the President's decision.

F: I know the Detroit press criticized the President for being unduly harsh with Romney when the President went on the air. Did you get the feeling that Johnson was trying to throw it all on Romney's shoulders?

C: Not when I listened to the television broadcast. I really didn't think of it at that moment. Subsequently, a day or two later the dust somewhat settled and the media and the Governor himself and others started to respond to the President, I gave it a second thought. At that point I thought that in all probability the President probably did see an opening there and drove for it in the course of his remarks. But that is not what struck me at that time because I just was not thinking of that in the midst of the crisis here. That was the last thing in the world I was thinking about.

F: This goes back to the year before, but why did you run for the Senate and not take on Romney?

C: There were a couple of reasons. One, I had a far greater preference for the Senate, if I was going to serve in public life, than I did the governor's job. The governor's job, as I believe I mentioned earlier, just had never interested me. I'd had an opportunity to run for governor a number of times since I was first elected as mayor, in 1964 and again in 1966 and again in 1970. Large parts of the party asked me to run just this last year. Lansing and the governor's seat just didn't interest me, principally because you're dealing with a balky legislature, no matter which party controlled it. It was sort of a no-win sort of position. You had to balance so many interests in the state that it was very difficult to achieve things. The power wasn't as centralized as it was in the mayor's office. Those were some of the reasons.

Plus the fact that I did personally prefer running and going to the Senate; that coupled with the fact that there was a vacancy in the Senate. Senator [Patrick V.] McNamara had retired and then died. And I thought, I knew, our polls indicated, all the polls indicated for that matter, that I could beat [Robert P.] Griffin. Soapy Williams could not. The polls also indicated I couldn't get by Soapy Williams in the primary.

F: To come back a minute to the riot time, was the riot more or less responsible for the passage of the stop-and-frisk ordinance that came on?

C: No, not directly. Stop-and-frisk had been discussed several years prior to that. As a matter of fact, I had instituted an internal study of stop-and-frisk, to see if it would be of any assistance to us, and its constitutional implications. Subsequently there was a great furor in the community. Even though I felt it was constitutional I said at the time that I thought it would be too disruptive to enact it. But the climate had changed radically three or four years later, certainly the riot helped to change the climate, in which you had a number of even leading blacks support the enactment of stop-and-frisk. Psychologically, even more than legally, more than practically I should say, I felt stop-and-frisk might be worthwhile.

We were faced in the fall of 1967 and the spring of 1968 with literally an arms race there inside the city, in which there was a

tremendous purchase of individual guns, handguns on the part of citizens, not just here in Detroit but in the metropolitan area. Some positive, affirmative steps had to be taken in relation to that. I proposed a series of gun control ordinances which were not adopted, but in any event stop and frisk was adopted. There was still some leadership in the black community that opposed it and do to this day, but there were interestingly enough a number of black people that had been opposed to it but now supported it. I said I believe at the time that I didn't think it was that effective a tool as far as the police department was concerned. I doubted that the police department would even use it very frequently because of its constitutional implications. Although another thing that I think is important, the legal philosophy of stop and frisk had been upheld in the meantime by the Supreme Court and the constitutional implications were now assured.

F: Has it been an irritant as it's continued?

C: No, it's not. It has worked just the way I assumed it would. The police don't really use it. They had basically the same power to begin with. Every police officer, if he has reasonable cause to believe that a felony has or is about to be committed, has the right to stop and search and frisk you. So the police rarely use that ordinance. The last time I looked at some figures, just before I left the mayor's office in 1970, the number of arrests under that ordinance were relatively slight.

F: To what do you contribute the fact that Jerome P. Cavanagh and

Lyndon B. Johnson and other prominent people who have been though some seasoning have tried to get some sort of gun control and have just not been able to make it? Is this just good lobbying? Most people don't really carry guns.

C: I think it's good lobbying. No, they don't carry guns. But there's that traditional old American syndrome that almost has become an ethic in America, that there's a constitutional guarantee of the right to bear arms--which is not actually, as you know--a right to maintain your person and your home or the safety of it, and highly effective lobbying. Then in a state like Michigan, as I assume in a state like Texas and a lot of states, the number of hunters that have guns, and they saw this as an encroachment upon some of the things they thought were their rights. It's a highly emotional, volatile issue. We just were never able to settle it, even though the statistics dictated that there should be far more control.

F: This is skipping ahead, but you had a really first-class emotional issue after Martin Luther King was assassinated, and Bobby Kennedy just a scant two months later. Johnson at one time had been quite skillful in using emotional issues to get things through, but even with that sort of impact he couldn't make it. What's required that you don't have, or do we know what's required besides a long education?

C: I think one of the things working against the President probably at that time, and in turn working against maybe a person like myself, was the fact that the President has lost to some degree

some of his credibility with the public, he had certainly lost some of his effectiveness in wheedling things out of the Congress. Had, let's say, Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy been assassinated in 1965 when the President was at the height of his power as far as his legislative relationships were concerned, I'm inclined to think this situation might have been different than it was in 1968-1969.

F: Leaving out the personal element and looking at it historically, they were shot two years too late.

C: Almost, yes. At that point the Congress was very distrustful of the President. In my case, our town council was much more distrustful of me. Not for that reason, but for a variety of other reasons. For the first six years of my administration anything I wanted from the council I got, they didn't open their mouths.

F: There is just basically a kind of a wear-out quality anyway in public office.

C: Particularly if you're an activist and you're riding hard all the time. You tend to dominate the legislative branch over a period of time if your public image is high and the publicity is good. But when you begin to slip a little, the legislature has a natural inclination to go for the jugular at that point, probably because finally the hero has developed some clay feet. There are all sorts of people waiting in the wings with long knives which they couldn't use when he was riding high. I'm sure that's the case frequently. I know it was the case in my instance, and I assume if you were to

analyze the President's relationship with the Congress that might be the case too.

F: When the Kerner Commission came in to look into the Detroit situation prior to making its report, did you get the feeling that it came seeking just open information? Or did it come with a line?

C: No, I think it came seeking open information. I think that we were the second city to testify in front of the Kerner Commission. We did a considerable amount of work in our presentation. We went to Washington. And not only did I testify, we spent a whole day, early in the morning until late at night in front of the Kerner Commission, but I took with me some citizen representatives. And not the traditional kind, some identifiable black militants that were not too pro our administration. Because I thought we were going to present a case to the Kerner Commission that had to be a very representative case.

F: Did you have any trouble getting these militants to go, or did they in a sense compromise themselves with their following by going along with the establishment?

C: They were delighted to showcase themselves.

F: Looking for a forum.

C: Sure. They were quite pleased and honored that I would even ask them to go. We had our police commissioner and myself and some staff members. But I think the big thing is that we approached it very professionally. The Kerner Commission said, and has said,

that it was the best testimony and presentation that they had received. We made a series of recommendations. Our testimony was quite voluminous, with its prepared testimony and then our spontaneous testimony. But I think the best evidence is the fact that of a number of the recommendations we made, practically all of them wound up as recommendations of the Kerner Commission. You could almost take our presentation and change the title on it and you'd think it was the Kerner Commission Report.

F: From the questioning did you get the idea that the Kerner Commission was pretty much of a single mind in this, or did it have its own fragmentation?

C: I think it had its own fragmentation. Early in the testimony, at least when we were there, and we followed Newark if I'm not mistaken, I don't think they had any idea of where they were going or what kind of report they'd come out with. But after lengthy hearings and the taking of testimony they eventually wound up with the report of course that you know. But early in the game I don't think they had any real understanding of what it was all about.

F: You went down to Washington in late August, after the riot, and conferred there with congressional leaders to a certain extent on behalf of the Urban Coalition,[with] people like Carl Albert and Hale Boggs and Russell Long and so on. I rather gathered this was virtually a stand-off sort of a performance.

C: Right. Nothing happened because the leadership of the party at that time, those men, Hale Boggs and Carl Albert, and the Speaker,

were operating within the purview of the framework that the President and his advisers had set in relationship to funding of programs. They were usually sympathetic in the sense that they were very courteous and so on, but nothing really happened. It was just the exchange of a lot of talk. We were there for the purpose of trying to impress upon them the gravity of the situation in these cities. And if these programs were not funded, and if more help wasn't given to the cities, we were going to have a continuation of some of the things that had occurred. I'm sure that probably intellectually some of them might have granted that that was the case, but most of the money at that point was going over into Southeastern Asia. Without any rise in taxes, I'm sure that's where it was going.

F: Toward the end of 1967 you and six other mayors accused Congress of inaction. How did this get initiated? How did you all get together on this?

C: I don't really recall that, because I was often accusing Congress. I recall the Sunday after the riot I was on "Meet the Press" and made some comments about the inaction of the Congress. The response was predictable and rather vocal from the distinguished congressman from Lubbock, Texas, George Mahon, who said I was quite arrogant to be suggesting that the Congress was not performing its duties, things of that kind. But as to that instance, I assume that it was probably done through the United States Conference of Mayors. I don't have any great recollection of it.

F: With Detroit's fairly recent experience in the summer of 1967 and Martin Luther King then getting shot, of course Washington had its experience then. But Detroit I don't think got beyond an alert. To what do you attribute that, experience, or the fact that they were just burned out on rioting?

C: I think it was experience, and possibly some of them were burned out. The town itself and the people themselves were frightened to death of the reoccurrence of a riot. We moved very rapidly. The night that Martin Luther King was assassinated we mobilized the police immediately. The next morning I declared a curfew in the city; the Governor then joined me in the curfew. We brought the National Guard in immediately and clamped the lid on the town very quickly and stringently enforced the curfew. It wasn't as difficult to enforce as it was in the previous summer. But I think those two things, the fact that we moved very rapidly and we had far greater sophistication on how to move, coupled with the feeling of the city itself, that they just didn't want to go through another thing like this.

F: Did you get the feeling that the Guard had learned something in the meanwhile?

C: Yes, there's no question about it that they had learned a great deal. The relationship and the coordination between the Guard and the police department was far superior to what it was in 1967.

F: Do you have an inherent problem with the Guard in its political involvement and its political influence? In other words, to be

effective should the Guard be removed, say, from the state control?

C: It seems to me that I think it could be more effective and professional if it was removed from state control. It isn't often, at least in this state, that it has manifested itself politically in some of its actions, but the potential is always there. It is responsive and directly responsible to the governor. And I think in situations like that it probably would be even more effective if it were an independent force.

F: Do you have any problem with the Guard from, say, the old sergeant or the major or somebody like that who sees a chance to come back out and have one great bloody fling before the rocking chair gets him?

C: I didn't see too much of that. But between 1967 and even the spring of 1968 there were a number of Guard officers that retired and left the Guard, and newer officers and younger officers were in command. I think this was an improvement in the administration of the affairs of the Guard.

F: On the presidential level you didn't declare yourself for anyone before Johnson removed himself, did you?

C: No, I did not. Then in June of 1968 I endorsed Robert Kennedy and made a film for him, which he ran in California. I was the only mayor, I guess, in the country to do that. Most of the mayors were endorsing Hubert Humphrey.

F: What were your relations with Humphrey?

C: They were very good. Personally I like him a great deal. He likes me. He was very helpful to me. I think he was greatly disappointed, not even so much from a political standpoint as from a personal standpoint, that I did not come out and endorse him.

F: But there was not any kind of basic coolness here between the two of you?

C: No, there was not. I just was not convinced that he really represented the kind of wave that was abroad in the land at that time and could do things to pull us out of the malaise which we were in. I thought he was a traditionalist kind of candidate. There was one other mayor who did not endorse Humphrey, and that was Dick Daley. Daley endorsed no one. The state party asked the leading Democrats in this state to observe neutrality in this state, really it was a Humphrey ploy to keep people from going to Kennedy, until at least the state convention was held. Well, the state convention was held and finished the weekend before Bob Kennedy died. I had taped on Friday a piece endorsing Kennedy and released it then Sunday night after the convention ended so it could play Sunday and Monday in California. It was about one of the last things that the Kennedy operation out there worked on. Frank Mankiewicz and others told me that that was their last sort of big push.

F: When Bobby was killed, was there kind of a scramble to enlist you by Humphrey and McGovern, or were you pretty well left alone to decide which way you were going to go after that?

C: There really wasn't an immediate scramble, but I'd say probably three or four weeks later there were serious overtures again made and efforts made to enlist myself, and some others who had supported Bob Kennedy, in the Humphrey candidacy. Of course at that point the Humphrey forces seemed to think, as they had, the nomination locked up. They didn't need people as badly at that point. But I was just not interested, really, too much in either one of those men. Although McGovern I went to as a place to hold, just to be with. I voted for him at the convention. He had asked me to even nominate him at the convention.

F: Did you have any further personal relationship with Johnson, or had your stances on these several issues sort of driven a wedge there in your relationship?

C: I think my stances had probably driven a wedge. I didn't have any personal relationships that I can recall at the convention of 1968. No, I don't even think I saw him after that, you know, during 1968.

F: Did you ever talk with Humphrey after he received the nomination about his problems with Johnson?

C: No, I never did. I was rather discreet in that. I saw him a number of times and introduced him here, campaigned for him here and in Ohio.

F: Did you get the feeling that he was a captive of Johnson to some extent?

C: Yes, I think I sat in on some strategy sessions locally here when he would come to town. I was with him a number of times. I did

get the feeling that he was sort of chomping at the bit, and some of his advisers, of course, were as well. But I never got into any discussion with him or with anybody. I was not that overwhelmingly interested in the campaign. I liked him. I thought he would have made an excellent president, far better than Richard Nixon. I campaigned for him, as I say, here in this state and down in Ohio. But my enthusiasm was waning, or had waned , I think.

The death of Robert Kennedy, even though I had prior to that time never really been too personally close to Robert Kennedy--I, as a matter of fact, had some reservations about him--but his death, not just the fact that he was shot but the manifestation of this sort of sickness in the country really almost decimated me personally although publicly I [inaudible]. I'm sure it was a factor in my eventually making up my mind to leave the mayor's office and start afresh some place.

F: Did you get the feeling that it affected the whole party, that it was just sort of ready to let go for a while in some ways?

C: I think, yes, that's an apt characterization. Then of course the things that happened in Chicago just solidifed that sort of thinking. There were so many people that just left the convention in a total state of sort of emotional disarray. I know I left the convention the day before it ended. I flew black to Detroit, just left and got on a plane by myself. I had just sort of had it.

F: Did you get the feeling that the convention did sort of sit under the heavy hand of LBJ, or did you think that he was out of it?

C: No. The presence of, for example, John Connally there as one of the President's principal operatives, Carl Albert operating the chair, the influence of LBJ had to be there. You could recognize that.

F: But you didn't feel that he was sitting down there at the Ranch pulling all the strings?

C: No, I did not. I went over to Chicago the week before the Convention had started and testified in front of the platform committee. Dick Goodwin had called me on behalf of Gene McCarthy and said that the witnesses were sort of rigged as far as the platform was concerned, which isn't an unusual thing, and asked me if I would go and present the city side to the thing as I could see it in its relationship to Vietnam. And I did, but it was a minority position among the members of the platform committee. I can recall seeing Governor Connally there that day; he was testifying on something else. You know, my impression, a very subjective impression, was that the thing was pretty well organized by the Johnson administration. A platform was going to come out that in no way, indirectly even, criticized the policies of the present administration.

F: Was it your impression that he should have stayed on the Ranch or that he should have visited the Convention?

C: I think from a practical political standpoint he was wise to stay on the Ranch. I think had he visited the convention, the emotionalism was running so high, I just wouldn't want to contemplate what

could have happened. It could have been embarrassing to him, certainly to the party. I just think he was wise to stay on the Ranch.

F: Did you see any evidence that he tried to undercut Humphrey during the campaign?

C: No. I didn't see any.

F: This charge was made, you know, that he was pushing Nixon covertly.

C: Yes, many people said it and so on. But I certainly didn't see any evidence of it. I was not that close to the Humphrey picture that I could ascertain whether that was a fact or not. But there was no evidence of that, at least out around this part of the country. Humphrey was trapped and didn't know how to get out. Or if he knew, he couldn't get out until I think he felt he sort of emancipated himself somewhat with that Salt Lake City speech. But by then it was too late. Had he made that speech three or four weeks before, or had he not actively opposed the minority peace plank and just laid off of it. But of course word came down that that majority plank had to be adopted and labor people and others at the convention went for the majority plank. Humphrey was a very active operative then, making sure that that majority plank was enacted, I assume because of his relationship with the administration and what he thought the President's reaction would be.

F: Was it your impression that Humphrey was in the kind of bind where if he took off in a new direction from the President in a sense he renounced his own recent past because he was part of the administration?

C: Yes, that was obviously the major bind he was in. And I think he also made a miscalculation. Since he was a part, he was an actor in that whole scene, he naturally felt justified about a number of things that had happened. He wasn't about to repudiate them because he didn't have any understanding that maybe some of them should be repudiated.

[End of Tape 3 of 3 and Interview I]

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Legal Agreement Pertaining to the Oral History Interviews of Jerome P. Cavanagh

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 21 of Title 44, United States Code and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth, I, Jerome P. Cavanagh of Detroit, Michigan do hereby give, donate, and convey to the United States of America all my rights, title, and interest in the tape recordings and transcripts of personal interviews conducted on March 22, 1971* ~~and March 24, 1971~~ in Detroit, Michigan and prepared for deposit in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

This assignment is subject to the following terms and conditions:

(1) The transcripts shall be available for use by researchers as soon as ~~they~~ it have been deposited in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

(2) The tape recordings shall be available to those researchers who have access to the transcripts.

(3) I hereby assign to the United States Government all copyright I may have in the interview transcripts and tapes.

(4) Copies of the transcripts and the tape recordings may be provided by the Library to researchers upon request.

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Jerome P. Cavanagh
Donor

3/6/1979
Date

James B. Rhoads
Archivist of the United States

March 22, 1979
Date

* Agreement has been corrected since all three tapes were recorded on March 22, 1971, and there is only one interview.