

INTERVIEW I

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INTERVIEWEE: DONALD J. CRONIN
INTERVIEWER: Michael L. Gillette
PLACE: Washington, D.C.

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G: Mr. Cronin, let's start with some general biographical information on you and an explanation of how you ended up working for Senator [Lister] Hill.

C: We'll start at the beginning. I graduated [from] the University of Alabama Law School in 1953. Prior to that, at six, six and half, seven years on campus, I had been fairly active. I had run for two or three student-elected positions. We were in the era then when we had an inflated enrollment because of the veterans all returning. Here also in town was a fellow named Foots Clement [Marc Ray Clement]. If you haven't run into Foots in any of your interviews, Foots Clement was what I'm going to call the Hill-Sparkman political boss of Alabama. But you must remember that all of this was in the days before the Republican Party, for all practical purposes, so that the head of the Democratic Part--the political head, let's say; not the state chairman but the political head, which was Foots Clemen--he was pretty much the political guy, the kingpin in Alabama, and he was.

Foots during all this period, of course, observed younger people on the campus as Senator Hill got older, and he purposely did this. In the process of course I caught his

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eye because of my activities and activeness on the campus. And in so catching Foots' eye then came the time I was graduating and--it happened to coincide. Foots was looking for somebody to send to Washington. I agreed to come, but only for one year because I wanted to get back to Alabama and practice law. So Foots gave me a package deal. He said, "I'll put you in my law firm. I'm guaranteeing you right here and now you've got a place, you've got a desk as soon as you get through with that one year." So with that, I shook hands with Foots and said, "You've got a deal. I'll do it."

Well, like so many others--that was 1953 and this is 1989--I'm still here. You're sitting in my office here in Washington, DC, talking to me. I never got back. But there was a circumstance each time, and each time Foots, on whom I would rely and to whom I had a great allegiance--I would talk to Foots and he'd say, "Stay one more year." Of course, one more year then got in to a reelection year. "We've got to have you that year; leave the year after." Here I am. I never got away; I never got back. I'm still hoping to go. I don't know when, but I'm still hoping to get back to Alabama. Foots is dead now, too. Unfortunately you won't be able to interview him.

So that's how I initially got to Washington.

G: What were your initial responsibilities?

C: My initial responsibilities when I first came here weren't much because, as I said earlier to you, Senator Hill was a very busy, serious, conscientious guy and he pretty much ran his own show. At that time, he was getting older and at that time he was needing a little bit of help in the political areas and so on and so forth, but he stayed almost too busy to really train anybody, and I happened to be the fellow moving into that area *vis-a-vis*

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Foots Clement. So initially I think you might say that the job description of my particular position could have been most anything you wanted. I sort of took hold and tried to surmise what was necessary. I kept in touch with Foots, of course, and tried to put together a position that would serve what I thought Mr. Hill was looking for. Apparently it was, because it worked out well and I stayed with him until he retired in 1968.

Initially, I don't think you could have had a job description. I think most of it was a little bit of this and a little bit of that and whatever I thought was necessary to further Lister Hill, to make it easier for him in these areas I'm talking about, to leave him to do the legislating, for me to do more of the other. I think I probably kind of developed the job into that as we went along.

G: What did he have in the way of staff when you arrived in Washington?

C: He had an executive secretary. He had an administrative assistant. Neither of which I was, of course. He had maybe a half a dozen secretaries who doubled as case workers--what they used to call case workers; I guess they still have such things on the Hill. And then eventually he took over as chairman. I'm trying to recall the year. You probably have all that somewhere. He took over [the job of] chairman of the Labor and Public Welfare and with that, of course, he inherited and replaced and/or added to the committee staff.

At about the same point in time he became chairman of the Appropriations subcommittee. In fact, I think it was like the same point in time, but somewhere close in, at which time he inherited Herman Downey, who was a one-man chief of staff. My guess

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is--and I don't know--my guess is today that's probably ten or twelve people. But back in that day and time it was a little different than it is now, a little different insofar as TV and all that kind of stuff.

(Interruption)

G: You were talking about how different it was in those times with the small number of staff.

C: Much, much different. Recently I saw some figures that I don't have available here, but we're talking about probably a multiplication of at least twenty to one, staff-wise, from 1953 until today. And those numbers you can get somewhere, but I'm going to say they're probably twenty to one. I think our old committee staff would have increased by twenty-fold from what it was at the time I was here. It's totally different.

G: You'd indicated before we turned on the tape that Senator Hill spent a good deal of time on the floor, that he really was his own legislator.

C: I think that's right. Back in those days, Senator Hill not only spent a lot of time on the floor, but he spent a lot of time in committee. He pretty much ran his own show although he had a full complement of staff, not as great as today. Although he had the full complement, he seldom used it as such. He pretty much was a one-man show insofar as health legislation and really insofar as any legislation went. He really didn't need--we had what we called a legislative assistant, but really that person, in fairness to the person, was not turned loose to legislate. This was pretty much Senator Hill's show. It was when I came in 1953 and it was throughout the sixteen years or whatever I remained with him.

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G: So was your primary responsibility that of Alabama, looking after the home state political needs?

C: Primarily. Of course that included Alabama--what I'm going to call casework, what I'm going to call Alabama projects. If we had a waterway development going that was something that, if the timing were right and we needed it for whatever reasons, then I was the guy who honchoed that and tried to see that we got it. We had a close working relationship with Senator John Sparkman so it was easy in that regard. We pooled our efforts. And we tried. Of course he had housing--[the] Banking and Currency [Committee] which included housing. We had health, primarily health and education. I'll get into the education if you'd like because that's really where Senator Hill was moving, in the direction of education; that was really where we were going until we ran into civil rights. And I think with the advent of civil rights, when it became as much of an issue as it was, which includes the inflammatory aspects of it in that day and time--right now it's much quieter; it's pretty quiet, period. But back then we had some very difficult times with civil rights, and we had a guy by the name of George Wallace running the state of Alabama. Those were not easy times; believe me.

But back then at that time we were headed--as I started to say--down the road of education by and large. This was the Senator's strong suit of interest insofar as legislation.

G: Even more so than health, would you say?

C: I would say, at a given point in time, yes. He was easily diverted because his father was a doctor after whom Lister Hill--Lord Lister [Dr. Joseph Lister], who had taught the

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father in Edinburgh, Scotland, when Senator Hill was born sent him a letter, and he was named Lord Lister after the Lord Lister, who was at that time the father's instructor in Edinburgh, after which Listerine comes and so on. There was that influence insofar as health. There's no question about it; there was that. There was the motivation there.

But going back to what I just said, as I recall, I think education would have come first had it not been that we ran into the civil rights issue, had it not been that we were from the deep South, had it not been that we had a lot of rumblings there, like Martin Luther King and George Wallace and so on. I think we had to decide whether or not, one, you want to stay in Congress under the circumstances and try to do whatever you can, or whether you want to join one side or the other and just admit defeat in the next election and take your stand. Here enmeshed in all that was the education issue, and I believe it was then that the Senator tended to leave education and divert more to health, feeling that here he had some opportunity to make some contribution. Under the other, if you were going to stay true to your people, you could make no contribution because you had to defy all of that in that day and time. Any medical education, anything that had to do with education was taboo.

G: Give me an example of the kind of dilemma he faced here on a particular piece of legislation.

C: I may have some particular piece--I'm thinking in terms of something like the Schoolhouse Store in Tuscaloosa at the time. Of course, there was never an issue in that day and time, and in any day or time--there was never an issue such as that, that was headline-type issue wherein they didn't go with George Wallace in Montgomery or they

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didn't go to the two Senators, "We want a statement." As I say, you either had to say pretty much what the people wanted to hear--and in that day and time they wanted to hear only about one thing in the deep South, in Alabama. They were only looking for one thing, and you had to hopscotch a good bit to stay alive politically.

G: Let me ask you to describe Senator Hill's political philosophy or at least his thinking on domestic issues, the whole range of issues that came up in the 1950s and 1960s, social legislation.

C: I'm going to draw some on what I just said, because I think you almost have to. I think Senator Hill was much more in the direction of John Sparkman than perhaps the political world knew, or than perhaps Alabama knew, or than perhaps Senator Hill wanted them to know, because John Sparkman was from North Alabama, which has always been much more liberal. Lister Hill of course was from Montgomery; this is a good balance. Montgomery has always been very conservative. It's what we call the Black Belt. It's conservative old Montgomery, from there on south, very conservative. John Sparkman could afford to be a little more on the liberal bend because, after all, he was from North Alabama, and there were those politically who felt, "We've got one of each and we can kick the guy we don't agree with." But not a bad balance, to have one guy out a little bit more one way and one a little more the other way. So I think what I'm saying to you is that Lister Hill grew up with the silver-spoon type image from Montgomery, Alabama, which almost locked him into being more conservative than a John Sparkman. Alabama in this day and time was not liberal. It really wasn't as conservative as it is today.

G: Why do you say that?

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C: Why do I say that? Playing on the ideologies, more than anything else; I say it because today we have a Republican governor. That's the first time in 101 years, first time since the Civil War. Republicans normally are more conservative than Democrats, but the majority of people in Alabama went to the polls and elected a Republican, and the Republicans run the state government. The Governor in turn appointed his own people. It's a Republican-oriented government. The Governor is up for reelection, I believe, this next year. The odds are he's going to get reelected. That's why I say it, because this would have been unheard of not too many years ago in the solid Democratic South. There would have been no way a Republican could get elected. He's elected. He's governor. He's going to be reelected.

G: Let me ask you to talk about Senator Hill's relationship with Mary Lasker, and Florence Mahoney, and the other advocates of health legislation.

C: His relationship with Mary Lasker and Florence Mahoney I've touched on some, maybe off the tape, but I'll be glad to do that. And that is that Senator Hill relied very heavily on Mary Lasker. Mary Lasker, including Florence Mahoney, Mike Gorman--they were all a team. He relied very heavily on her. Just how much of the health legislation she was responsible for and/or initiated, I don't really know. With the right amount of research I could make that determination. But she had an influence on him; there's no question about it.

In my own opinion, from what I saw, by and large, as I said earlier to you, he separated a lot of this from the everyday routine, in other words, legislation, and especially health legislation. Sometimes I wouldn't see him for two or three days. He'd

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call me in every hour, every half hour, whatever, on this or that issue or whatever's coming up on the floor, but I physically wouldn't see him. The office would run regardless, and that's the way it was supposed to be and meant to be, I think, in our particular situation. By and large, that's the way it was in that day and time. I don't think that's true today, from what I understand, but by and large that was the way it was.

And the guy who had what I'm going to call the top job, the A.A.'s job, he was supposed to be the political guy. He was supposed to understand and know all these things. He wasn't supposed to make mistakes. Of course, with Lister Hill you didn't make mistakes anyway. He was supposed to be the guy who could make all those determinations, or know where to go to help himself make them, but then he made them pretty much. Depending on this every six years, the guy returned or he didn't. So there was very little room for slippage, and this was true with Lister Hill, too. As nice a guy as he was in the elevators and so on, he was tough in this regard and he had to be or he wouldn't have been there all the years he had been. See, he came in 1923 and left in 1968. That wouldn't have happened if he hadn't done his homework and watched over things, which he did.

We were talking in the general area of Mary Lasker and--you keep mentioning Florence Mahoney. She was part of that team. I never saw that much of Florence Mahoney. I would see her socially from time to time. I would see her every now and then, but rarely in the Senate. Mike Gorman was the guy who kept contact with me and with our office.

G: He was more visible.

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C: Yes. Florence, I might see her once a year, once every two years. I never saw much of Florence.

G: How about Mary Lasker?

C: Mary Lasker stayed on the phone all the time, and especially when health legislation was up. Well, when I say all the time, [I mean] during the times that there was something of interest to her pending, whether it be in committee or on the floor or whatever. But this would include not only health legislation; this would include appropriations. She worked just as hard on appropriations as she did on the substantive legislation. So Mary stayed very visible, either by phone or down there in person, whatever, but she was always around.

G: Did she lobby with individual senators and congressmen?

C: She did. And generally the way that would start, she would have her opening session with Senator Hill and ask him flat out, "Where do you need your help? Where are the weak points? Where can we help?" And then he would in confidence--and sometimes it would be broken, but you can't--that's not inviolate there. You do the best you can. Then he would set out, "I need some help here, here and here. I think I can handle so-and-so, and so-and-so, and so-and-so. But these are some people that I'm having trouble with." And Mary would go to work with or through or however, with Mike Gorman, and they would translate all this out and go to work with it, which was very helpful. So Senator Hill had a good built-in working relationship with Mary and with Mike, and that's what prompted me to say I don't know how much of this may have been initiated by, or how

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much of it was facilitated by, Mary Lasker. But there was definitely a working relationship there that was beneficial to Senator Hill.

G: How was she effective in persuading other senators?

C: I'm going to answer that as a practical politician, because these were days when you could afford to be much more practical as a politician than you can today with all the reporting process. But Mary wasn't slouchy about contributions. And again, in that day in time, you could give contributions in a way you can't anymore. I think that Mary took care of--of not only friends but she converted some people with the dollar. That's my own impression. I think it's pretty close to accurate.

G: In the days before political action committees she had sort of a financial--

C: Yes, sir. She had her own PAC. Yes, she did.

G: Conversely, did she contribute to the opponents of senators or House members who opposed health legislation?

C: I don't know. I'm going to guess that she did, because Mike Gorman was her guy. And I said to you earlier, Mike was a volatile, tough sort of guy. My guess is that either she did or he tried to persuade her to. Now whether she ever did, I don't know. On record I just have no idea. But I would guess that she did.

We had in 1962 a very difficult race and Mary called me and said, "How much do you need?" Well, I said, "I need twenty for starters, twenty thousand." Of course, this was back when you weren't using a lot--we were just getting into TV politically. I was figuring some TV budgeting in there. Unfortunately, the Senator didn't realize--nobody could get Senator Hill to realize he was in trouble. I knew he was in trouble because

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everybody of that ilk called me and said, "You ought to get down here. You're in trouble. You're in bad trouble. You could lose, even."

G: His opponent was--

C: Jim Martin, the oil man from Gadsden. Jim was an attractive guy. Finally the Senator went, but we had one month before election day, before November 5. One month, and it wasn't much time. We had to do a crash program and had to be doing it fast. Everybody was upset, of interest that is, including Mary Lasker. And she called, "How much do you need?" "I don't know, but give me twenty thousand to start with." She sent it down on the next plane. She had one of her people in New York get on the plane. [She] had called my office and said, "So-and-so will be at the airport at such and such a time." I drove out, picked up the money, and went back to work. She was for real and she was serious. And it was a good thing because we won that election, as I remember, by 3011 votes. I think that was the margin. Then you take that in half and you're talking about fifteen hundred votes out of like--I think there were four hundred, 450,000 cast.

So we went to work and did the best we could. We knew we were in trouble. The Senator never realized he was in trouble until it got toward the end, the last few days. But up to that time he just felt he was invincible because for all these years he had done for the people of Alabama, and therefore they were going to turn around and thank him. But as you and I know, it just doesn't work that way. You can't take anything for granted in politics. There's always somebody around the corner who's going to peck at you.

G: In terms of health legislation, who were the primary opponents of it?

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C: Well, our colleague--who wouldn't be "opponent"--was John Fogarty of Rhode Island. I can't answer your question, but I'm just trying to think as you're asking me that question who may have given us the most trouble. I'm not sure really that anybody gave us that much trouble. I just don't recall any real, hard-knocking fights over health legislation. I'll tell you why. First of all, Senator Hill was conservative, which he had to be, because in 1962, when we nearly lost that election, the people out ringing the doorbells, knocking on doors throughout the state were the medical auxiliary people, the Women's Auxiliary of the AMA [American Medical Association], that sort of thing. This was because Senator Hill had been for some of these measures and that made them socialized medicine. In fact, this was a very conservative guy who with all of his five first-cousins who were doctors and the whole influence of having grown up in a medical environment, this was a guy who was more aware of socialized medicine than any of these people screaming it. His own family wouldn't let him think of it. So he tiptoed and had to tiptoe a lot, but in 1962 that issue almost beat us.

G: They worked for his opponent?

C: Yes, they did. Jim Martin.

G: Did you regard the AMA as being a strong lobby against health legislation here in Washington?

C: Yes. You use the word strong; I don't remember in that day and time how strong it was or wasn't. In its efforts you're talking about.

G: Yes.

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C: *Per se*, it's strong. Sure it is. In its efforts, I don't recall just how strenuously they opposed what we were doing, but AMA would have automatically been against just about everything that Lister Hill was trying to do.

G: What other groups lobbied against health legislation?

C: The only one that really comes to mind would be AMA. Again, I need to point out, even on the Republican side, for example, Bob [Robert A.] Taft on the Hill-Burton construction act--Taft was the guy who got the *proviso* in that the South get two dollars--for the poorer states, which was us--that we get two bucks for every buck that the federal government puts in. This was Bob Taft. And Bob Taft was the guy--when they talk about the Hill-Burton Act, he was the guy who said, "Don't make it the Hill-Taft Act. Leave me out. Put my colleague [Harold H.] Burton on, because right now with all this presidential stuff going on and all this political stuff, that would be a drag on you. Make it Hill-Burton." Well, old Burton--in all kindness to him, and I knew the fellow before he died--he got appointed to the Supreme Court before he ever had anything to do with Hill-Burton, which is all right because it meant then that Hill could pretty much call the shots on this legislation. And he did. But the guy who helped so much was Bob Taft, a Republican, who made the bill possible, really, and who made that formula in it possible.

Now, what I'm saying is--and this is a long way around answering your question--Hill had the kind of rapport, bipartisan, Republican as well as Democrat; he had the kind of rapport whereby they would pretty well work out all the various conditions of the piece of legislation. Again, this was the hard, conscientious worker that Hill was. But pretty much by the time it came out of committee, it would all be resolved

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so that all the various factions--a few may still have some chips here they didn't like and so on--but by and large everybody was kind of in a consensus agreement on the thing. And Hill had a beautiful knack at that. He was respected by both sides of the aisle. He was conservative and yet he voted liberal. He had a personal way about him that was appealing to his colleagues. So that he was able to get a lot of these kinds of things we're talking about here in a posture long before they ever became legislation or a legislative issue. For that reason, I give you the answers I do. I don't really recall, by the time anything ever came to where it had to be voted on, anything really strenuous against or really for. It was pretty much in place by then. This guy was a master at that.

G: Tell me about his relationship with Lyndon Johnson during the 1950s when Johnson was Democratic leader and Senator Hill was a leading Democratic senator.

C: I think his relationship with Lyndon Johnson in that point in time--I haven't rehearsed any of this, but I can pretty well envision that period you're talking about. As a matter of fact, I think in that point in time I believe Senator Hill may have been majority whip under Lyndon Johnson or majority whip right before Lyndon Johnson became majority leader. I know he was majority whip and I think it was pretty much in that same period of time. His relationship through that period, I think, was better than through the presidential period, because Lyndon Johnson, during the presidential years of course, had to meet head on with certain issues that still hadn't been resolved in Alabama and the deep South.

G: Civil rights.

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C: That's what I'm talking about. And he had to bite the bullet and take a stance and make the best of it. We didn't necessarily have to do that. We didn't have to take Vietnam on, for example. I'm glad we didn't. But Lyndon Johnson did and he did it his way. Whether the majority agreed with him or not, that was his way so he did it his way. But in that point in time--I think up to this period you're talking about when civil rights really heated up in like 1956 under Eisenhower; they didn't really heat up then, but the public psychology was that they had heated up. So actually the 1957 Civil Rights Act which I was very much involved in--it actually didn't do anything. Or let me put it this way, it was a lot of window dressing for what could have been much stronger legislation. I think this was Eisenhower's and his people's way of throwing a scrap but not worrying much about what was in the scrap.

When you got into voting rights and that sort of legislation, then you were getting right to the heart of it, because here [it] gave people something more than some banners to carry; it gave them a ballot. If they exercised that ballot, they could be heard. In my opinion, that's what made the big difference. The civil rights stuff really didn't make a whole lot of difference. So it wasn't, in my opinion, until President Johnson got into the posture where he had to take some of those things on, head on, that civil rights really made a whole lot of difference. It was a good forum politically for the people to banter around back and forth and take a vote on something that really had no teeth in it, but in fact it really didn't make any difference, in my opinion, until they were given the right of the ballot. That's what made the difference. So it wasn't until then that anybody locked

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horns with anybody else, because I think these pros on the Hill, in the Senate, all felt it was more show than substance anyway.

G: Were you in a position to assess Johnson's performance as majority leader?

C: Well, yes and no. I'm just trying to reflect backwards on that period in time. If I remember much about it at all--and I spent more time on the floor then than I suppose most staff members do now--but if I remember backwards in that period of time, he was recognized as a pretty aggressive type leader. I remember Bobby Baker pretty well. I guess I saw as much of Lyndon Johnson on the floor as I did Bobby Baker one way or the other. About the only thing I remember, to be honest with you, is that he was noted to be capable and to be pretty aggressive.

G: Any examples of his aggressiveness?

C: I don't have any specific examples, but as I remember from what I've picked up here and there, on the floor, off the floor, from the Senator, wherever, Lyndon Johnson was a pretty good arm-twister. He had a reputation of getting things done whether people liked it or not. I don't have specific examples, but I think that reputation generally was part of Lyndon Johnson. I'm not saying that's bad; in fact, I think it can be good, depending on how you twist the arm and for what reason you're twisting it. I think generally--that's what I meant by aggressive. I think he had that image of being a pretty aggressive, get-things-done kind of guy. And I think his legislation--which as I recall stands as a record of more legislation than any president who's ever held the office--I think this was Lyndon Johnson.

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C: --any particular thing that made any difference. One thing that I do recall: going down to the White House with Senators Hill and Sparkman, and we had a meeting--Foots Clement, to whom I referred, was on his deathbed in Birmingham Hospital, and he wanted one of his partners to be appointed to a federal judgeship. We didn't have a judgeship but we had a judgeship bill which expanded [the] judiciary. I came up with the very simple idea, "Why not add another judgeship for Alabama?" That's a way around it, and then we appoint the fellow. That takes care of everybody.

Anyway, to make a long story short, we went down to the White House and we were ushered in through the cafeteria. I had been to the White House and wondered why we were going this route, but I was in good company. I had two U.S. senators--and two senior ones--with me, so we went. We sat down there and the President came down. We found out afterwards--and talked about it on the way home because John Sparkman lived out in Spring Valley, where Senator Hill did, and I lived right over the line, so it was easy taking them both home. We wondered why and then found out the next day that Martin Luther King was at the White House at the same time we were waiting, and obviously for political reasons somebody wanted him to leave before we made our appearance.

G: Maybe they didn't want it to look like you had been meeting with Martin Luther King.

C: Well, that's true. It wasn't necessarily bad. It could have been either way, sure. Other than that I don't have any particular recollection of President Johnson.

I remember I was president--we had what we called an Administrative Assistants Association, we did then.

G: Was this the Burro Club?

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C: No, this is different. This is purely each administrative assistant, both Republican and Democrat. For a number of years of course we were heavily in favor so it gave us what we considered a better club. I remember the year my buddy in the White House who is now dead also--he was [with] Proctor and Gamble--Mike Manatos. Mike and I had been very close, so when they took over the first thing I did was call Mike. The year I was president, we were supposed to get together socially once a month. It's not difficult with this group to find a forum or to find somebody to sponsor it because anybody will take them; they'd be delighted to.

So I got hold of Mike Manatos and asked him if he'd arrange for us to come to the White House, have a White House briefing and then have a reception and then have a dinner, buffet. In fact I've got a picture somewhere around here. Is that Lyndon Johnson over there?

G: Shaking hands? Yes.

C: Okay. That's where that was taken. So we did. We had all this and we had Dean Rusk and different ones brief us on Vietnam. Vietnam was big then. I really can't tell you how sad this guy looked and how sad he acted; and this was Vietnam.

G: This was March 1967?

C: It must have been.

G: Late March.

C: Whatever. I don't recall the year, but it was Vietnam. With that, things had gotten so awfully bad that I got up and said a few words to get the thing kicked off and then presented the President. He came in, and [I] presented him. He just said two or three

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words, so on and so forth. Then we had the briefing and then we had the cocktail party. At the cocktail party, I stood and chatted with the President, and I chatted and I kept looking over my shoulders and nobody was coming up. I kept making small talk, waiting for somebody to relieve me, and nobody ever did. Finally something happened whereby I could break away and I had to go over and tap people--Republicans and Democrats alike--on the shoulder and say, "Get the hell up there. This is the President of the United States. Whether you care about Vietnam or any of this stuff, this is the President. Get up there and talk to the guy. He's standing all by himself there." Here's a tall, imposing looking guy anyway, and he's standing there all by himself. I went around and got people and finally different ones went up and chit-chatted or made small talk or whatever. I thought that was sad. I thought that was sad. I thought it was bad. I thought it was bad for our crowd. Partisan or non-partisan, it makes no difference; this is still the office of the president of the United States and it should have been respected as such. But the division was bad.

G: When you and Senator Sparkman and Senator Hill met with the President about this judgeship, how did he react to the suggestion?

C: As I remember, thinking like he would do, I think he thought it was pretty good. It was a good way out.

G: Did you get the judgeship?

C: We got it. Yes, we got it. A sad aside to the whole thing is, the fellow I'm talking about, Fools Clement--we got it; it came while Jack Kennedy was still president. And Jack, who had been on our committee too, by the way--Jack and Bobby and Teddy, all three

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were on it at one time or the other. But it came before the assassination and Jack Kennedy called from the White House and said, "I want you to know you're going to get this. We got the bill amended. It's all taken care of. Tell the chairman everything is okay." Well, this is one of the days the Senate went in at nine or nine-thirty and the Senator went straight to the floor. I called over there and left word. I called a second time at ten o'clock and left word. No return, so I just took it upon myself to call Foots Clement and tell him, "This has been taken care of. The bill's going to be passed today. Your guy is going to be appointed. We're not going to have any problem with them." Walter Gewin is the judge I'm talking about and he was a scholar; there's no problem with that. He qualified beautifully.

So I finally called Foots Clement, because I couldn't get the Senator and I didn't want somebody else to jump the gun on us. I talked to his wife. She said, "He just came back from taking the children to school." Foots was a great big guy, like this. "He just came back from taking the children to school, and he dropped dead of a heart attack fifteen minutes ago." Foots died without ever knowing he got the judgeship.

End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview I

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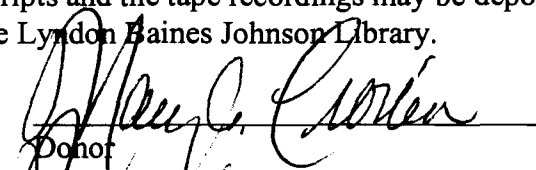

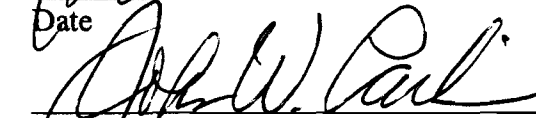
Legal Agreement Pertaining to the Oral History Interviews of

DONALD J. CRONIN

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, Mary Cronin of Bethesda, Maryland, do hereby give, donate and convey to the United States of America all rights, title, and interest in the tape recordings and transcripts of the personal interviews conducted with my late husband Donald J. Cronin, on September 14, 1989; December 4, 1989; December 14, 1989; February 15, 1990; March 14, 1990; March 29, 1990; April 17, 1990; and May 16, 1990, 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 have been deposited in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.
- (2) The tape recordings shall be available to researchers.
- (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.
- (5) Copies of the transcripts and the tape recordings may be deposited in or loaned to institutions other than the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.


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