

INTERVIEW I

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INTERVIEWEE: JOHN G. FEILD

INTERVIEWER: Michael L. Gillette

PLACE: Mr. Feild's office, Potomac Institute, Washington, D.C.

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G: Let's just start with your background and let me ask you to trace your activities that led to your work with the [President's] Commission [on Equal Employment Opportunity].

F: Okay. My career happened to have been professionally, up to that point, entirely in the arena of intergroup relations and civil rights. I had worked for the Detroit Commission on Community Relations, which had previously been called the Detroit Interracial Committee. It was established following the race riots during World War II. When I came back out of the army, after finishing my degree I went to work for that committee in 1947. So I worked for the Detroit Committee on Race Relations Problems as an official agency, one of about ten in the country, that had grown out of that period of intense racial conflict. I worked for the Detroit committee for five years. Then I went to work for the Toledo Board of Community Relations as its executive, and I worked there for four years, in the course of which I succeeded in getting the city council to adopt a fair employment practices ordinance so that we had our own law to administer in the field of employment discrimination.

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As I told you, I had been very much involved in Michigan politics back in the mid-forties, late forties, and helped G. Mennen ["Soapy"] Williams get elected in his first election. Matter of fact, I was the editor of the Williams faction's party newsletter leading up to his election. So when Michigan finally passed a state fair employment practices law, Soapy asked me to come back and I became the first director of the Michigan Fair Employment Practices Commission, and I served in that position for three years.

During that period Phil Hart was lieutenant governor. In the 1958 elections, Soapy and Phil decided between them as to who was going to run for president and who was going to run for Senate. Soapy made the wrong choice. Phil Hart ran for Senate. When Phil Hart ran for Senate and won, he asked me to come to Washington with him. Soapy approved, [I] got my leave of absence from Soapy's operation, and came to Washington working for Phil. Well, two years later Soapy's campaign had piddled out. Soapy was the first Democratic governor to endorse John Kennedy, which was a later very fortunate political benefit to the state, and Phil Hart loaned me, physically loaned me, to work in the Kennedy campaign, which I did for a period following and even up to, prior to the convention.

Following Kennedy's election, I was involved in the kitchen cabinet crowd around Kennedy. I was working closely with Sarge Shriver and with a guy named Harris Wofford--Harris Wofford was later appointed to the White House staff--and closely with another guy around town named Frank Reeves, who unfortunately is now dead. Frank was black, a prominent black lawyer. He was also appointed to the White House staff.

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Several other people around town were conferring with them on the development of a Kennedy approach. I had had an enormous amount of experience working with the old President's Committee on Government Contracts under the Eisenhower period. I worked with all the previous presidential committees from the very first word go, going back to the Truman committee on civil rights. Matter of fact, at one point Eisenhower even named me executive director of the President's Committee on Government Employment Policy, and I was foreclosed in that job by a guy named John Bricker, who was senator of Ohio. I was at that time working for the Toledo Board of Community Relations and was a registered Democrat in Toledo, and Bricker just objected on the grounds that I was a Democrat, so I never got the job, which is the luckiest thing that ever happened to me. But I was appointed by a Republican committee, and I was appointed purely on professional grounds. They were looking for somebody that knew something about the problem.

When we met with the kitchen cabinet people in evolving this idea of a new approach, we knew that the previous presidential effort was badly hobbled by, among other things, the limitation of its initiatives to the filing of a complaint by an aggrieved individual. We felt that that was an unacceptable limitation and should not be the foundation on which the new executive order was drafted. The critical shift in policy was on that issue. We wanted to give the committee the initiative to review comprehensively contractors' employment practices and to place requirements on them to meet a higher standard. As I mentioned in my little report--you can get all that information from it because I've gone into great detail as to how that evolved--there were some fascinating

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evolutions in that. We could talk about some of those later if you want to.

But I was not actively seeking a position as director of the new President's committee. I knew that there was going to be one. I was an advocate of a policy that would be affirmative--I invented the word affirmative action, by the way. It had come out of the New York statute of 1943, had never been implemented as a policy, simply had been dangling out there. When I was director of the Michigan commission we moved away from the complaint approach and began to establish a requirement that employers in Michigan had to take affirmative action to achieve results. I was responsible in Michigan for the hiring of the first two black airline stewardesses, one by American Airlines and one by Northwest Airlines. Being a Texan you'll appreciate the tragedy of my girl with American Airlines. They hired her after I ordered them to hire her, and they took her down to Dallas and put her through the training program, and the last thing in the training program is a physical examination. One little problem, she had sickle cell anemia. Now, one of the characteristics of sickle cell anemia is you pass out at high altitudes, so they did not hire her as a flying stewardess but they hired her as a ground person.

But we did that without worrying about the prosecution of complaints. We did it on the grounds that they were not meeting the standard that required equality of opportunity, and we were not successfully challenged in the courts. So I brought to the President's committee that philosophy and that approach.

Well, Harris Wofford and Frank began to sort of sort through who they thought ought to run this apparatus. Oh, I also, by the way, strongly believed that there ought to

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be a single administration of the in-house governmental employment problems and the contractor problems. Administratively the processing of those conditions and those problems was insignificant. They were not different worlds; the government as an employer is just like a contractor who's an employer. As a matter of fact, the federal government is like a bunch of contractors, because you've got a bunch of departments with different management standards. So we agreed on consolidating the two committees. Eisenhower had the President's Committee on Government Contracts and the President's Committee on [Government] Employment Policy. The executive order consolidated both of those committees into a single committee and we established the concept that the committee could act and require affirmative action by government contractors. I didn't do very much about defining the details of that notion, but it was imbedded in the language of the executive order.

The first drafts were floated around among a lot of people, among whom were Abe Fortas, by the way, who unfortunately is now dead, who was Lyndon's lawyer. And I noticed in the materials you gave me, Lyndon also sent [the drafts] to somebody at Harvard to take a look at it.

G: Gerry Siegel, who had been on his staff.

F: Gerry Siegel had worked for him, that's right, I'd forgotten that. So [he sent them to] Abe Fortas and Siegel and--I'm trying to think of the name of one other person whose name escapes me. A Texas lawyer also looked at it. We all agreed on the concept, on the point of view. There was no divergence in policy between Johnson's advisers and Bobby Kennedy as the attorney general and Jack Kennedy's White House staff. We all agreed

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this was what we wanted to do.

I was amused at the Johnson senatorial staff people [who] were championing George Reedy for the executive vice chairman. But it was quite clear to the Kennedy people that if they were in fact going to appoint Johnson as chairman, they would want to be certain of having strong administrative control of that committee. As a means of softening the attitudinal political problems with Johnson, they designated Arthur Goldberg, the secretary of labor, as the chief administrative officer of the committee. It was a way of providing a degree of status, although de facto the executive vice chairman, the Assistant Secretary of Labor, Jerry Holleman, ran the day-to-day operations of the committee through me. I was an appointee of the President.

When I was designated, I went over to meet with Lyndon, as you might expect. Right? This is before any announcement had been made. We had a very good meeting. Johnson said, "Look, anybody that works for Phil Hart can't be all bad. There must be some good things about you, although I know you've been mixed up with Soapy Williams and that crowd."

G: Did he say that?

F: Oh, yes, absolutely flat out. But he said, "Look, all I ask is let's do a good job. And I want loyalty; I don't want you putting the knife in my back and I don't want you causing me any political problems. But as far as I can see, we're totally consistent on our policy around here. I welcome you on board." That was what he said.

Now, as I mentioned to you previously, just for the record. Our staff structure was divided into two compounds: one dealing with government contractors and the other

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dealing with the in-house government problems, because the in-house government problems were formidable. Jerry Holleman acceded to pressures from Senator Paul Douglas to designate Percy Williams as the deputy executive director for government contract compliance. I recommended the other deputy and Holleman quickly agreed to it.

The other deputy was a guy named John Hope [Franklin]. John Hope was one of the pre-eminent race relations authorities in the country. He had worked for the wartime President's committee on equal employment problems. He was a noted authority at Fisk University, and among the Atlanta universities he's known as an economist, a political scientist, a very eminent person. His father was one of the most eminent historians in this country. But basically he was a skillful, savvy, knowledgeable professional and Holleman bought that and we needed him.

We started to strengthen and expand the staff. I've checked the three professionals we kept from the old Eisenhower group. There was one person on that list that you did not have. We kept a gal named Gwendolyn Tice [?]. The reason is, you only had the contract group here. Gwendolyn Tice was the senior professional for the President's Committee on Government Employment Policy. She worked on the in-house government employment problems. And Gwen Tice was named deputy to John Hope. She had the continuity, she had the skills, she had the smarts, and she had enormous professional integrity and became John's really strong right arm. I gave John complete discretion to hire his own people, which he proceeded to do. I told Percy, "I want to check your people," which Percy resented deeply, not because I was objecting to Percy on political grounds but I had learned enough about him personally to know that he was

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potentially a problem. As it turned out, Bobby Kennedy sent over a couple of people, a guy named Jerry Bruno--

G: From the campaign, I guess.

F: Remember Jerry Bruno?

G: Yes.

F: Very interesting. And a guy named Mel Cotton [?], both of whom had been advance men in the campaign, both of whom were more closely tied to Bobby than anybody else.

Matter of fact, during the ensuing two or three years that I was director, there were occasions when Bobby would borrow either Mel or Jerry to go do advance work for Jack.

You may remember, I don't know whether this has surfaced enough for you to have caught note of it, but the man who was the advance man for Dallas when Jack visited Dallas and was assassinated was Jerry Bruno on loan from my staff. Jerry was absolutely crushed by that event and was hospitalized for several months with a severe nervous breakdown. He was an enormously dedicated guy and very skillful and a real professional in what he was doing, and he could not believe that he had not been able to prevent that event. Nobody could have prevented it. Right? But Jerry took it personally. It really broke him up and he never recovered from it. To this day he's had severe problems.

Well, we had two people sent over from the White House, but that was all from that source that we had recommended to the staff. But we just hired professionals left and right. I hired people that had worked previously for state commissions, I hired people that had worked for city commissions, that knew employment problems and knew

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the management problems and knew private sector industry people and knew what they had to deal with, because we were going to change the name of the ball game and we were going to be quite aggressive, and we couldn't send amateurs to go talk to top corporate people. So we brought in some highly qualified people.

G: Did Johnson have a man on that committee?

F: On the committee itself?

G: Yes.

F: Oh, yes, indeed. Johnson made several contributions to that committee. Mary Lasker was his candidate. Donald Cook was his candidate.

G: But I mean staff people.

F: Oh, no. Johnson did not send anybody over. There was one guy that was close to Johnson named George Clark, and Clark was from Texas, but basically he came to us through Jerry Holleman, which in Texas political terms meant that he more likely came from the [Ralph] Yarborough group than from the Johnson group, if you go back to those days. We had a deputy counsel, deputy to Hobart [Taylor], who was Jerry's guy from Texas, from Austin, Texas, a lawyer, begins with a K. Jerry--I'm drawing a block on his name--left the committee, went back to Texas, bought a brewery and is a beer brewery owner in Texas, was a youngish guy by the way, a good lawyer, and got along well with Hobart. They didn't have any frictions. As a Texan he handled the Johnson relationship well and so did Clark. It was kind of a healthy thing to have them feel that they had people in the staff group that they could talk to, so to speak. George Reedy came on the scene fairly quickly and was the chief liaison between Johnson and the committee,

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although George did not work for the committee staff and was not on our pay roll. When

I think about that, there's a technicality there. No, I'm sure he was not on our payroll.

See, we were housed within the Department of Labor. Everybody was on the

Department of Labor's payroll, although the monies were not exclusive Labor

Department money. We dunned all the departments across the government.

G: Where did most of the funding come from?

F: It came from prorated shares across the government, all the departments. Defense paid probably the largest share, but all the departments [contributed]. HEW paid into it. We had a fight with TVA; they objected. We dunned them for a very small amount of money, fifty thousand bucks I think or thirty thousand. They objected that they weren't obligated to contribute and they weren't part of the government. We just wrote them back and said, "From this day on you are now part of the government. Send your check." And they did. But that's how we got the money, we dunned all of the departments for equal shares--well, not equal, they were unequal shares, but they were fair shares.

Anyway, that's how it got organized. That's how it got staffed. And I think it's important to recognize that conceptually from the very earliest days we had been committed to the notion that the committee staff would remain relatively small and that the burden of the actual conduct of the interest of the committee would be carried out by staff people on the payroll of the operating departments. It took two years to get that organized. That was the critical evolution of the program was toward the development of a compliance structure that processed not just the complaints, but made on-site reviews of contractor performance initiated by our own professionals, not by any complaint, to

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establish a standard of employment performance. That was the critical difference.

G: Was there anything in the staffing up of the committee that reflected the friction between Lyndon Johnson and Robert Kennedy?

F: No. No, not particularly at all. Later on there were. You need to realize how the friction evolved, and in many ways it was not as substantive as it appeared.

G: How did it evolve?

F: Well, it grew directly out of Bobby Troutman. It grew directly out of the differences in perspective on the question of how the Plans for Progress process would relate to the committee and its obligations. That became the critical point of tension, and it provided the extremes of attitude that became a form of conflict and a form of tension. The irony is, you've got to know a little something about the history. Bobby Troutman was a roommate of Joe Kennedy, Jack's older brother, and traded on that relationship. And Troutman came into the scene, even as a member of the committee, in part I think in his own self-serving interests--he wanted to be on it as a southerner-- in part the Kennedys were looking for some southerners and they knew him, the family knew him, so they thought he was a nice guy and they put him on the committee.

Troutman was activated, interestingly enough, not out of any historical interest in the subject. And he was a relatively low-keyed member of the committee; he came to the first meeting and didn't come to the second. But on April 6, 1961 the executive order became officially operative. It was announced and filed on March 6, and there's a thirty-day gap. On the day the order became effective, the committee received thirty-two complaints on behalf of workers in the Marietta, Georgia facility of Lockheed Aircraft,

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filed by Herbie Hill [?], the labor secretary of the NAACP, as a deliberate test of the intentions of this new committee.

When we got those complaints, the prior administration's system of processing complaints was to refer the complaint to the federal agency that had the contract relationship with the employer. In this instance it was the air force. We, however, were determined to change that limiting procedural method of doing business by notifying the air force that we had these complaints and that we would expect them to participate in the investigation of the complaints, but that the committee was maintaining its own jurisdiction over the complaints, which we did. Simultaneously or coincident with the filing of these complaints--it was not an accident that Herbie Hill picked out that particular facility or that particular company; the Lockheed Corporation had just been given a one billion dollar contract, the largest single military contract ever awarded up to that time, to build what became the C-5A cargo, the first new giant cargo aircraft. Bobby Troutman's antennae came up with a quiver when those complaints hit the press.

You must remember a little piece of political background. There was a senator in Georgia at that time named Richard Russell. Richard Russell had been *the* foremost opponent of Jack Kennedy in the Senate, and in the lame duck period between being elected president and assuming the office of presidency, there were some severe economic issues before the Senate and Russell engineered the defeat of legislation sponsored by Kennedy and was prominent in doing so. He was also historically well known in the government employment discrimination world for having fostered and succeeded in getting passed what was called the Russell Amendment. The Russell

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Amendment provided that no committee of the federal government could continue to function beyond one year without the express approval of the Senate. It was on that ground that the Truman Fair Employment [Practices] Committee was killed. Eisenhower later on got around the Russell Amendment by creating what was called an intergovernmental committee, which was not subject to the Russell Amendment. Russell, however, had continued throughout the Eisenhower years to attempt unsuccessfully to extend the jurisdiction of that amendment to intergovernmental committees, but he couldn't do it, primarily because there were too many other intergovernmental committees that didn't want to be haltered by that limitation. Russell was *the* power in Georgia politics. And Bobby was responding pretty much to try to do what he could on behalf of the power structure of Atlanta and Georgia in general, and Lockheed, of course, was at that time the largest single employer in Georgia.

G: Well, was Troutman close to Russell?

F: Oh, he was very close to Russell, yes, indeed.

G: But hadn't Troutman been involved in the Kennedy campaign?

F: Oh, absolutely, sure he did. Played both sides of the street, typical southern style. But he was close to Russell, and he felt very close to the Lockheed interests, of course, as you can imagine. Bobby Troutman's father, as you probably know, is general counsel of the Coca-Cola Company and is very establishment Georgia. I mean, there can't be anybody more establishment than Robert Troutman.

So he plunged into the issue immediately, went out to the plant, met with the general manager and the personnel director and got the feel of the land. Now the land

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was pretty bad. I don't know whether you know the reality of that land. The reality of that land in April 6, 1961 is that the Marietta, Georgia plant had probably somewhere around seven thousand employees in it. It was totally racially segregated; the drinking fountains were segregated, the rest-rooms were segregated, the cafeteria was segregated, the recreation program was segregated. There were no training programs involving blacks at any level doing anything. There were no white-collar blacks doing any thing. All the blacks were in low-skilled segregated departments. And it didn't take a genius to identify the fact that this particular facility had some problems, which Bobby Troutman, being an experienced southern sleuth, could just figure out himself, that this was an unacceptable performance.

By the way, you should know something. The facility was completely owned by the federal government, was located on federal property, on the air force base, and from its entire beginning had done nothing but make government airplanes. It had no private world life.

G: Was it leased to Lockheed?

F: Yes, a lease arrangement. It had had twenty thousand employees at its peak, was dropping down when the air force decided to pump them back up by tossing the C-5A contract. That was what provoked it, because there were a lot of blacks on layoff and a lot of whites on layoff. The blacks were concerned that the whites would use their seniority rights to move back in and restore complete rigid job classification segregation, and they clearly would have done that without any question.

We went down on our own. I personally went down, together with Dave Mann

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and some other colleagues, to review the on-the-ground situation before deciding what we were going to do. The facts were clearly there; there was no dispute about the facts. Eugene Mattison, who later became the head of Plans for Progress here in Washington, was the vice president for personnel at that time in Lockheed at that plant, did not deny it. He said, "It's true. It is done as a matter of corporate policy. We recognize that this is in violation of the new executive order and we will change it. The only question is, how much time do we have and how do we do it?" And our answer is, "Very simple, you don't have any time. It's changed as of today, and we'll work out with you a written prescription as to how we're going to change it." We wrote that out. I wrote it out myself in longhand. It became what was known as the Plan for Progress. I called it the Plan for Progress.

G: You're the one that--?

F: I gave it the name. Okay? Bobby Troutman didn't give it the name. He loved the name, but he didn't give it. One other thing you need to be aware of. We, of course, had notified Bob McNamara, with whom we were very close. Bob had a special assistant named Adam Yarmolinsky. He's a guy you ought to interview, by the way. Yarmolinsky was involved in all this crap. He's here in town. He's a lawyer.

G: Yes, I've talked to him about the War on Poverty, but not this.

F: Oh, yes. Well, Adam was very much involved in the War on Poverty, but he was also involved in this because he was McNamara's guy. We notified them about the air force problem. We recognized the political implication it was going to have for them, not just for the air force. We had a very good secretary of air force, Gene Zuckert, and we had a

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very good assistant secretary of the air force for procurement who was top notch, a guy named Joseph Emery. So, all the Pentagon people were on board. They recognized that it was simply a matter of how do we work this out and we're going to do it fast. So Adam was assigned by McNamara to coordinate with us.

Once they realized what the situation was we recommended that what they really needed to do fast was to make a review of the internal Defense Department procedures for dealing with problems of contractor discrimination. At that point, DOD, Adam, air force, arranged a contract with Potomac Institute, the building you're sitting in. That way you know the history of it. Potomac Institute made, at our suggestion--we suggested to them that they get the Potomac Institute to do it. Harold Fleming had come up here from Atlanta, he had been director of the Southern Regional Council, was an experienced, savvy race relations authority, and he had the capacity to put together the team to do the job. Potomac Institute's recommendation was the beginning of the implementation of the affirmative action policy, because it recommended that the air force create a procurement structure that had equal employment opportunity specialists within the structure. Air force bought that recommendation, proceeded to hire the first eight specialists, put them in regional offices around the country, and we were off. From there on in we had a cookie cutter. Potomac did studies for the army, for the navy, DOD itself. Later on we did some studies for NASA and what have you. In any event, we just proliferated the number of specialized people across the whole structure of the government, and *they* became the enforcement compliance machinery of the President's committee. The President's committee did nothing but coordinate them. All we did was keep track, give

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guide lines on standards, policies, issue the rules and regulations under which they operated, that's all we did. We had no significant involvement, although there was a minor one occasionally. We reduced any direct involvement in the complaint processing. We just didn't do it.

G: Did Russell oppose this initiative?

F: No. No. He was quiet. They were quiescent. As it happened, the Plans for Progress agreement had political visibility, symbolic significance, it was a great victory for the Kennedy Administration. The President called it the best thing since sliced bread. Lockheed came out looking good. Bobby Troutman ambitiously saw in it an opportunity to provide overlooking management people with a means of coping with what he felt was going to be--they're all going to get trapped. I mean, they can't hide anymore, there's no place to hide. It was just simply a matter of time when the President's committee was going to run into every damn one of them. So he took up the evangelical posture of saying, "Well, why don't we go to all the rest of these aircraft manufacturers? Why don't we go to some of these other big contractors?"

So he came up to Washington in a whirlwind and met with Dave and I and got some feel for size of contractors and nature of the problems and sort of went through a quick study in what was reality and absorbed it. He was a good smart guy. And we saw the opportunity to accelerate our new posture of not sitting around waiting for complaints. So Dave and I, with Troutman, went off to see nine more big government contractors, and we had a very good reception from all of them. We were very hard-line. Bobby was hard-line. There was no problem, Bobby was buying it. We had an

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accountability system, we had a very detailed statistical system of looking at the patterns of employment within their operation. We required them to give us racial information on all their employees by occupation, by pay scale, *et cetera*. They had to file that in writing. We wrote all that out. We did that. And we brought the nine--we brought Mr. [Courtland] Gross from Lockheed up to sign with Lyndon, then we brought the nine more up to sign with Lyndon. At that point the whole fat was in the fire politically. Okay?

A little piece of background. Lyndon had set the stage in part for a degree of receptivity in the corporate leadership. During the month of March sometime, probably the time we had the Lockheed complaints, he had invited in the fifty top CEOs for a meeting in the Indian Treaty Room at the White House and sort of gave them a little spiel and pep talk and asked for their support and their help. And he got a good response, and he was playing a very affirmative hand. For him it was a kind of a--I'll characterize it because I had some very strong, serious discussions with Lyndon about setting the stage for that. He had some misgivings but he had a lot of self-confidence. And his concept was that he realized we had to be different from the Eisenhower committee. Politically it was unacceptable to continue to operate at that low level of performance. We had to make progress.

G: Well, when you say you had discussions about setting the stage, you mean for the meeting?

F: Yes, to set that meeting up. Who was going to be invited, what line would we take, *et cetera*.

G: Let me ask you to go into some detail on the discussions you had and what his position

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was. You said he had doubts.

F: Well, he wanted to be certain. He was moving into territory that he knew had problems, partly because of his own historical record politically, partly because he was not familiar with the new standards that were so glibly being talked about by Kennedy-type liberals, and he wanted to be sure what he was getting into as he made his move. And if he asked these employers there, what did we say to them? Do we say to them, "Look, we're going to send investigators out to go through your factories." "If they asked me a question, 'Are you going to start sending investigators out?' what am I going to say to them?" So we had to brief him and say, "No, what we're going to say is, 'Here's our policy. It requires affirmative action. We are going to ultimately end up in a situation where we're going to expect reports from these employers and we're going to find out what their practices are, and we are going to send people to go out and meet with their personnel people to see what kind of performance and what kind of practices they are following. And then we'll reduce those to an agreement, *et cetera*.'" Sort of like what ultimately happened with Plans for Progress, as it turned out.

He felt comfortable with that, and his basic orientation was, if you summarized it very clearly in one line--we broke up a meeting one time, he said, "Okay, I understand what we're going to do. It looks good to me. John, I'm going to make the damn thing popular." His approach was if you can make it popular, if you can get these corporate people to publicly express their agreement that an affirmative approach [is a good thing], that a much better definition, a much better standard of personnel performance in the employment practices world, if they would say it was a good thing, his job would be

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easier, politically it would be easier, the whole thing would work better. You wouldn't have so many cat-and-dog fights over details as to whether somebody had suffered discrimination or not. He was trying to put an overarching element of public approval for this new Kennedy-Johnson policy. He had decided that it was going to be the Johnson policy.

You know, I managed to comment earlier, there were no policy disagreements on that issue. Johnson was affirmatively accepting everything that we had written into the executive order and affirmatively expecting we were going to carry it out through whatever administrative devices we wanted to.

G: The problems came in implementation?

F: No. No. That's not quite true either. Okay. We brought the next nine [?]. We had ten Plans for Progress companies. Right? At the same time we had that, we had the Potomac Institute review going on internal policies. We had meetings with various departments, Army, Navy, Air Force, Defense. We had the Department of Labor already moving, we moved over at HEW. We had a subcabinet committee on civil rights that met in the White House in the Cabinet Room once a week. Every under secretary of every department either personally came or sent his deputy to review the whole posture we were going to take, not just on employment, but on every other service aspect of the federal government. But employment was the obvious rallying point around which all the departments moved. So we were activating a very expanding structure, network, of government compliance machinery. At the same time, we were meeting on a so-called voluntary basis with big corporate leaders. Bobby [Troutman] got Lyndon sold that he

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could produce fifty Plans for Progress companies. Lyndon said "Fine, let's produce fifty." So Bobby, Dave Mann and I gradually had to enlarge the number of people working on it because you had to have other people go to some of these companies at least in advance, tell them what we wanted and how the system worked, what they had to do to put their data together, *et cetera*. So we did, we got fifty.

Now, in the course of expanding all this, Troutman began to eulogize this effort on the ground that it vitiated any conflict over this so-called compliance problem, this so-called legal requirement. After all, these men were doing this voluntarily and it was fully within keeping with the standards that the committee expected under executive order. He began to give the impression that maybe if the companies could give enough evidence, public evidence, of their commitment to this process and to this policy, we didn't need to expand the compliance machinery. And in fact at one committee meeting [he] suggested as much, because it was becoming evident as we were reporting at each committee meeting that more and more departments were hiring more and more specialists. It became quite clear that the federal dynamo was on its way toward a very large compliance network. Holleman was sensitive to that and was suspicious of Troutman. Bobby Kennedy became quite suspicious of Troutman on the ground that he was selling voluntarism as against compliance. Burke Marshall was suspicious of Troutman on that issue. And it was that suspicion and that tension that produced the ultimate tensions between them.

Now, I'll give you an interesting question. I never felt Troutman would be any great threat to what I was doing in large with the government apparatus, because I didn't

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see how he could possibly stop it. That dynamo, the logic, the internal governmental understanding of the necessity to have a bureaucratic structure that could support your policy objectives was so easily understood in government that it was going to go. And in fact it did go. I should tell you something. By the time I left the government, which was only after a little less than three years, there were six thousand full-time compliance people.

G: Did Johnson become suspicious of Troutman?

F: Yes, he did. I've got to tell you a couple of little small things that become interesting big things. Johnson began to be suspicious of Troutman, and George Reedy became suspicious of Troutman, and they wanted to know were some of these deals that Troutman was making with these companies phony deals. Were these guys really going to execute this plan that they were signing up to or did they have a handshake agreement with Troutman? So much so, as a matter of fact, that Reedy was assigned at one point to go around and double check with some of these corporate officers what were their understandings about this agreement. I was put under some suspicion because I had the appearance, the public appearance, of being Troutman's buddy-buddy. I mean, I was going everywhere with Troutman, I was visiting him in his home, I was going to his riding club down there in Atlanta with him for dinner parties, and I was going all over the country with the son of a bitch. So they wanted to check up, did I make any deals with any of these damned employers? Here I am the hard-line bastard!

But the reality is I did not regard Troutman as a threat, but he was considered to be suspicious because of the way he handled himself. He is very flamboyant, he's very

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colorful, and he's very aggressive. He's a salesman, he's a super salesman. The processes of the administrative regulatory compliance machinery side were put in a sort of a contrasting balance between the Plans for Progress. This was further computized [?] in the minds of some when Troutman persuaded some of the key leaders in the Plans for Progress corporations to put up the money, basically in the form of in-kind personnel, but some cash, to create in Washington a full-time staffed Plans for Progress office. Gene Madison, the vice president of Lockheed, became the first full-time director of Plans for Progress here in Washington, and other corporations loaned him key specialists, and they became the instrument of expanding the Plans for Progress involvement.

Now, there were minor little evidences that would lend credence to those with highly suspicious minds. We had begun to develop internally in the government a compliance reporting form, later became EEO-1. This is a statistical form that must be filled out by companies, contractors, for each facility. It gives the job classifications, the salaries, the racial breakdown, a very detailed report, facility by facility. The Plans for Progress format, having been done earlier, required reports to be filed on an aggregated basis; that is, it could be done by regions within a corporate structure. Most corporations operated their management by zones or by regions. It was therefore a lot easier for them to assemble their data out of a regional or a zone office, and we accepted that in the Plans for Progress agreement in the early days.

When we got around to running a comprehensive program for all contractors, we decided it'd better be a much more detailed form. As a matter of fact that form was devised by Dave Mann. But we cleared this development and were heavily involved in

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day-by-day discussions with Plans for Progress people here in Washington. They knew we were doing it. Because they saw we were doing it, they began to sell their idea that it was less onerous to sign up in the Plans for Progress than it would be to continue in the regular compliance program, because if they signed up with Plans for Progress they were exempted from filing all these other reports. It was that little kind of suspicion, as you can imagine. Well, that's what it basically was. It grew out of those suspicions.

There are some little side things. Troutman was always masquerading to the committee that he was doing this out of the goodness of his heart and that it wasn't costing the committee a cent. That's bullshit. The reality is Troutman was submitting expense statements to Jerry Holleman's office. Holleman would send them to me, and I said, "Wait a minute. Troutman has been saying to the committee publicly at meetings that there's no cost to the committee involved. I'm not going to sign these expense vouchers. As far as I'm concerned Troutman is just doing this out of the goodness of his heart." I refused to sign them. Holleman refused to sign them. They piled up.

Twenty-five thousand dollars worth of expense vouchers. We wouldn't sign them. We finally got a little note from the Secretary of Labor, "I understand that Mr. Troutman has filed expense vouchers. Are they being processed?" Holleman sent them all, a stack of them that big, to Goldberg's office and said, "You sign them." Goldberg signed them.

G: Did he really?

F: He did. But that created further uneasiness and feelings among committee members, and it also created this whole notion, was there really a substantive conflict between voluntarism and a genuine, comprehensive, single-standard compliance requirement? It

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was that tension, along with this flamboyance of Troutman, along with his expense account, and along with his notions that he was going to build a big propaganda posture around voluntarism that created a lot of unease. The Kennedy people saw that basically as a threat to their posture in the black community.

Now, the black community had had a lot of experience with voluntarism, all of it bad. In the black press and in the black media across the country, there was enormous suspicion about Troutman and Plans for Progress, all of which was filtering back into the political side of the White House and the political side of the Attorney General's office, as you can imagine. And it was on that level that the conflict arose.

G: Did LBJ--?

F: And by the way, LB[J] was caught in that. He was looked upon at that point as the big sponsor of Troutman. Troutman assiduously cultivated Lyndon, assiduously, and Lyndon knew that he was being cultivated. Lyndon was a very shrewd judge of character, and in my mind Lyndon was also very suspicious that Troutman was trying to use him, and Lyndon didn't want to be used either. He had no desire to be used by Troutman. That's why they began to check up on whether side deals had been made and began to raise little flags and questions here and there. Troutman was very smart. Troutman would go to committee members and get them to lobby Lyndon on behalf of his little program.

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G: As a practical matter, was it really important what the motives were of the people who were signing all these Plans for Progress, if their motive was to get around certain

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compliance requirements?

F: It didn't matter, because they'd be caught in the loop anyway. They were all continually subject to complaints. They were subject to compliance reviews. At any given moment an air force officer could walk into Boeing, even though Boeing had signed up among the first ten, and one was walking into Boeing!

G: So on that basis Plans for Progress really did have teeth in them?

F: They were useful, sure. They were very useful. And what it did was-- apart from the immediacies of the competition for who was going to be the spokesman for the committee, who was going to be the spokesman for the Kennedy-Johnson Administration, was it going to be Bobby Troutman or was it going to be Lyndon Johnson or was it going to be Bobby Kennedy or was it going to be Jack Kennedy in the White House? The White House people and Bobby Kennedy's people were understandably protective of their posture as being the advocate spokesmen and the rightful recipient of whatever marginal political credit might abound out of this effort. They wanted to get that credit. They didn't want any diffusion of the leadership from that reality. To that degree I felt Troutman was a threat. I did not see him as a threat to the actuality or to the problem of creating a process of providing compliance, that didn't bother me for ten minutes. I had more troops by far, at that juncture, than I'd even thought I would ever get, and I didn't see anybody impeding the enlargement of that base.

We implemented the EEO-1 form requirement. We had a hell of a lot of struggles with that, by the way. There had been a long- standing black leadership opposition to racial identifications on unemployment records. We had the Potomac Institute do a

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special study for us on that issue. How could we do this without being caught up in the problem of using records? Well, we never used records. We used visual identification, we used just enumeration tallies.

But we implemented that whole structure. We had personnel all over the place, we had a reporting system finally working, which was not easy. Christ, General Motors, we spent months working with General Motors on getting their reporting system organized. They had six hundred thousand employees; they had two hundred facilities across the country. It was not easy. We were imposing a requirement on them that they in their wildest dreams never envisioned would ever occur growing out of a civil rights executive order, because in the past nobody ever had met them. The Eisenhower committee literally--I mean, just look at the reality. There are something on the order of sixteen thousand contractors and a hundred thousand facilities. The Eisenhower committees had a compliance staff of five or six people. If they had found one-half of one-tenth of one percent of those facilities in the course of the entire time they were in existence, it would have been a miracle. They'd never find them. And in fact they never did find any of those people. They never found American Airlines. They never found Northwest Airlines. Here they were hauling the mail left and right.

There were all kinds of limitations that had existed which we were gradually just grinding into by just changing the administrative posture of the government. We just created a whole new administrative structure and a whole new way of relating to the problem. As it turned out, in my view Plans for Progress was helping, as Lyndon Johnson said, it did help make it popular. That was why he bought it, it made it popular.

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And it did make it easier for big corporations to begin to see the need to have major corporate responsibility taken. Most of these companies didn't have any written personnel policies on discrimination at all. It never occurred to them to have one. Now they were required to have one. Not only to have one but to post it all around, to run training programs for their supervisors, to go out and actively recruit minorities. It never occurred to them to go out and recruit minorities. They may hire some dumbbell if he walked in the door and looked like he could hold a hammer.

I should give you a little piece of history about the real world. As director of the Michigan FEPC [Fair Employment Practices Commission], a job I'd left only two years prior to becoming head of the federal program, I got treated to a sense of great reality. I was responsible for changing General Motors. The Michigan FEPC went to the General Motors Corporation because we had a couple of complaints, but we didn't go there on that basis. We went there on the basis that we did not believe they were operating a fair employment personnel system. General Motors' headquarters at that time was in Detroit; it was not in New York. They had a huge building, ten stories tall, one block, five thousand people worked in that building from nine in the morning until five at night every day. There were exactly two blacks in that whole building, one maid and one janitor. That was the real world out there. You didn't have to go to Marietta, Georgia. That was Detroit, Michigan, 1958.

G: Getting back to the Lockheed situation--

F: Yes. The Lockheed people were great, by the way. They really did a job.

G: Was there any pressure--did Johnson feel that Troutman was not going fast enough?

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F: No, not in the Lockheed thing.

G: Really?

F: No, Lockheed moved fast. They were top-rate professionals. Once they made a shift in understanding their obligation, they moved.

G: Was there also some problem with making compromises on the plans in order to get support on the Hill for legislation that the administration, the White House, really wanted?

F: No, not to my knowledge. I didn't know anybody that did it. It would have been a marginal game to play. It didn't matter one way or the other. The contractors knew that they were subject to the requirements of the executive order. They knew the agencies were beefing up a big compliance operation. They perceived this more readily when they started to have to file EEO-1 forms, because the game was up. The minute you get a profile, it's like putting a company's operations on a computer. By the way, they've now done that.

G: What was the Chamber of Commerce reaction to the Plans for Progress?

F: They ultimately became quite supportive. You've got to keep something in mind, once again, I need to give you a little piece of history. I've been talking about the beginnings. Jump a bit. Jump from 1962 to 1967. I'm off the scene. I left the scene at the end of 1963. Troutman's off the scene. Plans for Progress has been bumping along. The elaboration of administrative structure within the federal establishment has been moving at a pretty rapid pace and is achieving a great deal of comprehensive capability. Then the question comes about coming into much more sharp definitions of your requirements of

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the employer to verify whether he is or is not complying with the intentions of this policy. It became possible for the committee to begin to elaborate its notion of goals and timetables. It became possible for them to begin to give instructions to the agencies and to the field as to how they should evaluate these statistical reports that they were getting, what should trigger them off to enable them to make a stronger representation to a company. On what criteria should they issue orders to companies that they had to do X, Y or Z? Okay?

By 1967 that was well in the works and it was being discussed in Washington with the Plans for Progress people. As a matter of fact, when George Shultz was secretary of labor he issued *the* order requiring goals and timetables. The committee promulgated that regulation under his leadership. By that time the committee had been disbanded, the program was being operated out of the office of contract compliance within the Department of Labor, so the regulation was his regulation. The Chamber of Commerce and the National Manufacturers Association jointly sponsored a telecommunications network into something like ten cities, closed-circuit television viewing in Chamber auditoriums to which government officials in the agencies, to which ranking citizens were invited. George Shultz spoke from the Chamber of Commerce's television studios to the world saying, "Here is the new standard that we're promulgating today. It's supported by the Plans for Progress and by the National Manufacturers Association and by the Chamber of Commerce. We're confident that American industry is going to abide by this standard and will help us implement this new way of evaluating performance and we're going to get better results." That was 1970, I shouldn't say 1967,

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by the way. By 1967 the regs were out there, but they were further defined and refined in 1970 under the Nixon Administration.

G: What did Johnson do for Plans for Progress to make it popular? What were his ideas or input?

F: Basically it was visibility. They had had an annual meeting here in Washington, an annual dinner. That's all it was.

G: The notes that I have seem to indicate that Adam Clayton Powell was interested in the Lockheed Plan for Progress. Do you recall Powell's interest specifically?

F: I don't remember particularly but it's quite likely he would have wanted to know when it happened. The Commission on Civil Rights did make a study of what had happened at Lockheed, by the way.

G: Oh, did they?

F: An independent study, and it showed that Lockheed had moved very rapidly and they had moved comprehensively. And they had done it very quickly. It was not something they dragged out for several years.

G: Was this throughout Lockheed's installations around the country?

F: Nationwide.

G: Is that right?

F: Joseph [James Patrick ?] Lydon was the corporate VP for personnel, one of the top guys in the country. He had very clear management control of that company everywhere and there was never any question raised about their recruiting practices, their promotion practices, their training programs. They involved blacks, Orientals, everybody in that

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program. They became a full-tilt operation, and they were, and they knew how to do it, which was more important.

And by the way, General Motors you know resisted the devil of filling out EEO-1. That's why we spent months negotiating with them, because they knew the game was going to be up, too. They were not a signatory to the Plans for Progress.

End of Tape 2 of 2 and Interview I

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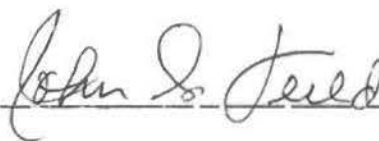
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