

INTERVIEW I

DATE: July 18, 1972
INTERVIEWEE: DAN FENN
INTERVIEWER: Paige Mulhollan
PLACE: Cambridge, Massachusetts

Tape 1 of 2

M: You are Dan Fenn, currently director of the Kennedy Library and lecturer at Harvard Business School. Your government association during the Johnson years was first as a special assistant to President Kennedy from 1961 until October 1963, and then as a member of the United States Tariff Commission, and part of the time as vice-chairman and acting chairman until 1967, as I understand. Is that correct?

F: Yes, right.

M: You said just a minute ago that before 1980 you didn't have any contact with Mr. Johnson and little perhaps with President Kennedy, but that you got involved in some respects in 1960 and were a delegate at Los Angeles. Did you occupy a point there that was close enough to get some insight into the selection process that resulted in Mr. Johnson teaming up with President Kennedy in that campaign?

F: No, not really. I think that the feeling among the Kennedy people before the nomination was that Stuart Symington was going to be the vice presidential candidate. I remember one of them telling me; I asked him, "Well, which one's it going to be?" And he said, "It's going to be Symington." I remember a good deal of surprise

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among a lot of Kennedy people when it turned out to be Lyndon Johnson. I remember the really very strong attacks of the liberals and the ADA people. As a delegate I got, I remember, a couple of mailings from them on why Lyndon Johnson would be unacceptable to them.

M: You said shock and surprise. It was a good deal more sort of anger, wasn't it?

F: Well, no, not among the Kennedy people. When I talk about the Kennedy people, I'm talking about the people who had been working on the campaign and who were the old Massachusetts people, who were my friends and associates. They were pretty surprised.

I recall a certain amount of anxiety on the floor of the convention about the possibility of--I don't think anybody thought it would be a real floor fight in the sense that [the Johnson nomination] would be upset, but there was concern that some of the liberals would make things unpleasant. I talked to a few of them whom I knew, and tried to help head off that possible effort. Then, as you know, nothing really developed.

M: Did President Kennedy ever take any pains to try to justify the choice to his old Massachusetts friends who had been with him, some of them for a substantial number of years, and who had been caught off-base by the selection?

F: I don't really know. My impression was that their loyalty was to him and if he said, "This is who it is going to be," then as far as they were concerned that was who it was going to be. And their job was to make things stick. No, I don't recall being involved in

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anything like that.

M: Did you work then in the campaign that fall?

F: A little bit, not very much.

M: Nothing that involves you with Mr. Johnson and his part in the campaign?

F: No.

M: You were for a short time in 1961 assistant to Senator Smith. When did you go to the White House as a special assistant to the President?

F: August of 1961.

M: Were you brought in primarily as a result of the need for appointments work, or did you just happen to evolve into that after you got there?

F: No. Ralph Dungan called me on behalf of Ken O'Donnell and the President, saying that they saw, this is in July of 1961, that they were going to have a continuing need for some kind of real recruitment program. They wanted to set up some kind of shop that would do this systematically. I remember Ralph citing the example of needing a commissioner on the SEC and just sort of making haphazard calls around trying to find somebody who would fit the kind of thing that they wanted over there. No president had ever done this before, so it was kind of a departure. I remember John Macy saying that if we could pull this off it would be a real landmark in the history of the presidency. And as you know, Macy continued what we started and kind of expanded it and built on it.

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M: Formalized it, really, by the time. . . .

F: Well, no. We'd formalized it, but he did some things with computers and things which we hadn't done. And then, Nixon has made a big project out of it. So I went down specifically to do that, set up that operation.

M: And you were domiciled in the White House for that?

F: I was in EOB.

M: EOB. Did Mr. Kennedy give you any specific instructions in doing this that related to the Vice President's part in recruiting the appointees?

F: No, and we never would have thought of asking the Vice President's judgment. We didn't consult him on appointments.

M: Did not consult him?

F: No. Nobody ever suggested that we should. As you know, the vice president is an uncomfortable kind of job, and the secretary to the deputy special counsel thinks that he or she is more important than the vice president. So it really, literally, never would have occurred to us to call the Vice President's office and say, "Hey, do you guys have any suggestions for such-and-such a position?" We just felt that we were running our ball game. What the Vice President was doing we really didn't know.

M: Did it ever come the other way? Did calls ever come from there saying, "Hey, I've got a good, loyal Democratic friend somewhere who needs a job."?

F: Yes, and from Walter Jenkins. I had only a few contacts from the

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Vice President or from Walter, who did most of this kind of thing for him, relating to any key jobs, any key presidential appointments. We took care of presidential appointments, and we took care of a few sort of "must" cases that came up. They were congressional "musts" really. And we took care of a handful of other jobs that weren't presidential appointments that the President was particularly interested in, AID Mission directors and that sort of thing. But I was not aware--and this does not mean that it didn't happen, because the personnel thing was fuzzy, Kenny got into it a lot and various other people--of the Vice President ever putting forth a candidate for any presidential appointment after the time I got down there. Now, I think it's pretty clear that he must have been influential in some of the earlier appointments.

M: I was wondering about Connally, for example. Connally was already in office by the time you got there.

F: Sure, right. Connally and Moyers and Jim Webb and some of those people. Ken Belieu was sent over to Navy. So I think that at that stage of the game there was some involvement. But certainly at the level at which I was operating I didn't get anything. Now Walter would call me from time to time and he would say, "Look, we've got this guy who wants to be on the Subversive Activities Control Board," or "We've got this guy who wants to be on the Canal Zone Commission," or on the Traffic Safety Committee, or something like that. Or "We've got this guy who's just bugging us for some kind of a job."

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One of the things that was always very impressive to me about Walter--I must say I think that the loss of Walter Jenkins was a real tragedy for the administration--was that Walter always told me exactly what the situation was. If it was something that was really important to them, he'd say, "Look, this is one we really need." And if it was something where he thought that the guy was a dog, but he was a real pain and he just wanted to get him off their backs over there, then he'd tell me that. So he was always very frank, very candid, and set up, told me what the priorities were. Most of them were situations where it was either, "Gee, if you can do something for this guy, fine, it would be helpful to us;" or he'd say, "This guy is a real dog, but will you at least see him and be pleasant to him so that we'll fulfill our obligations to him."

M: What you're describing is sort of contrary to the idea that there was always a great suspicion and distrust between the Johnson staff people and the Kennedy staff people.

F: As far as Walter Jenkins was concerned, I felt a great deal of confidence in him. Of course there wasn't that much of a Johnson staff. It was pretty small.

M: When he was vice president?

F: When he was vice president. I never sensed any great warmth in the attitudes of the Kennedy staff people toward the Vice President and toward his operations, but Walter and I worked extremely comfortably together. I only remember, I think, one instance where Walter said, "Hey, look, you know this is one which is really

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important. We've just got to do this." It was some kind of agriculture thing, and the Vice President was going back to Texas for the weekend or something and he wanted it done by the time he got down there so that he could telephone. We managed to work that out all right. I remember that was the one occasion where I had any direct contact with him, because he was in the White House Mess. Walter brought me over, and the Vice President was very firm and said that this was one which was very important, and he really needed this by Thursday afternoon or whatever. But I always appreciated the way Walter handled that whole situation. Then after Dallas, Walter and I continued to get along really very well.

M: I've heard an awful lot of people say what you said earlier; the real tragedy of losing Walter Jenkins and the blow it was to the administration.

F: Yes.

M: Because he apparently worked well with a great number of people the same way that he did with you.

F: Yes, and you always had the feeling that he really was speaking for Mr. Johnson. If he said, "Yes," it was going to be "Yes;" and if he said "No," it was going to be "No." It was a great advantage.

M: You did say in passing that you thought the general relations between the Kennedy staff and the Johnson staff were never very warm. Was it worse than that? Was the Vice President sort of the butt of all the jokes around the White House during the period

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1961, 1962, early 1963?

F: No. You have to remember it was a very buoyant, very irreverent, very bright, competent, poised group of people. I made a tape which is in the Kennedy Library on the whole business of appointments over the course of that time with four or five people who were working on that with me. And it's a pretty irreverent tape! So that I don't think--I wasn't conscious of any, you know. continuing stream of jokes or anything. But I think that there was a feeling that the Vice President was really sort of irrelevant, and there might have been an occasional little sort of tweeking of the tail. But I don't think he came in for any more disparaging comments than anybody else around the country.

M: Anybody was fair game.

F: Yes, that's right.

M: He did have certain specified jobs, I suppose, either that President Kennedy gave him or that were statutory. He was chairman of the Equal Opportunity Commission and the Space Committee, for example. Did you ever get involved with him on any of the activities in regard to those?

F: No. I used to get involved with Ed Welsh a little bit, and I knew he was working on the SST thing. We used to see the people moving in and out of his office there on the second floor of the EOB, particularly on SST. But I was almost exclusively on the people side.

M: He didn't need people for those functions?

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- F: No. I never did any recruiting for him as I did for some other people, for Mac Bundy, who was looking for a couple of people one time, couple of blacks for his staff. So that I'd get into those things for Walter Heller, but I don't remember Johnson's people, or Johnson or Walter Jenkins, ever asking me for help trying to find somebody for them.
- M: Anything on his various travels for President Kennedy when he needed staff people from the administration to accompany him to, say, Vietnam, or to Berlin?
- F: Yes, he did take one of my staff people on this trip to the Dominican Republic for the Juan Bosch inauguration. Dick Barrett went along on that. As I remember, he wanted Crockett and Henry Ford, whom he got along with very well. So Ford took Barrett from my staff and advanced the Dominican trip and flew down with him and so forth. That came through the State Department route that they picked Dick Barrett up, not through the White House, really.
- M: Did you get involved in legislative programs at all from your position as looking for appointees?
- F: Very little. A little bit on the possibility of a sort of a super Civil Service academy and a little bit on pay rates, but not very much.
- M: Was President Kennedy using Johnson at all in the legislative role? That was the public image, that he was to be useful with the Senate or useful with Congress in some ways. Did you see any of that aspect at all?

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- F: No. I remember hearing the story about that early episode where he involved himself with the Senate on some piece of legislation and was, according to the reports, surprised to find that his role and relationships had changed from the time that he was majority leader to suddenly becoming vice president and president of the Senate. But I don't recall hearing any discussion of use of him.
- M: So obviously it wasn't very great.
- F: That doesn't mean that there wasn't.
- M: No, but if it was very great you would have been in a position to see it going on.
- F: If you haven't talked to Chuck Daly, on the other side of the river, that would be worth doing while you are here.
- M: His position was?
- F: Well, he was one of Larry's [O'Brien] people particularly responsible for the House, and came off the Democratic Advisory Council on the Hill, Study Council I guess they called it.
- M: Right.
- F: He's now vice president of government relations at Harvard. So that he would have some thoughts on that.
- M: He'd be in a better position to see that type of thing.
- F: Yes, much better position.
- M: What about the campaign of 1962? Were you involved in that when the Democrats were presumed to be going to lose a lot of seats?
- F: No. I got involved in the aftermath with a few people who became ex-congressmen.

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- M: You were just exactly the one they would want to go see first.
- F: Right.
- M: I am certain. But none of those favored Mr. Johnson as an entree to you?
- F: No. There were some placement things which had Johnson implications though. Homer Thornberry had somebody whom he was very anxious to take care of, and that was important partly because of his position on the Rules Committee and partly because of his friendship with the Vice President.
- M: Right.
- F: So we'd do a few of those.
- M: You went over to the Tariff Commission in August, 1963--
- F: October.
- M: October you said. So then you'd be working from that point on, the assassination occurring only a month later, with the Johnson Administration. Can you describe generally the way the Johnson Administration related to an independent commission such as the Tariff Commission through the STR office in the White House with its various special trade representatives?
- F: Yes, I think at least as far as our place was concerned that-- of course there was kind of a transitional period in there, Bill Moyers came in and Jack Valenti and Walter Jenkins, but Kenny O'Donnell was still around, in and out, and Ralph Dungan and Lee White, Mike Feldman, Dave Powers--it wasn't a very abrupt change. I think that President Johnson's relationship, at least toward our

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agency, was no different from what the Kennedy relationship had been. There were some sort of sticky problems that came up, but I could never see any effort for the White House to involve itself in substantive decisions with us.

I remember one incident when I was acting chairman, or presiding commissioner, or whatever we called it, on the Canadian agreement, auto parts agreement. The commission really was opposed to this for a lot of reasons, and some of our staff people were being called to the Hill to testify. I got a call from somebody in the White House saying that they wanted to brief our people before they went up to the Hill and I said, "Well, you know that's okay if that's what you want to do. But the first question that they're going to be asked on the Hill is, 'Have you had any contact with the White House on this?' Because you know that Congress is very sensitive, particularly in our agency, but in all agencies, about White House involvement, and I'm going to tell them to tell the truth. I'm not going to have our staff people up there saying, no, they hadn't had any contact when they have had. I'm not going to put them in that kind of position." And so this guy said, "Yes, well, okay. I guess maybe we'd better leave it alone."

M: Now this would come from the President's immediate staff or through some of his trade people?

F: No, that came from immediate staff. Our liaison with STR with Herter's shop and later Bill Roth's shop was very close. Now I'd known Bill really very well anyway, because I'd been as

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responsible as anybody, I guess, for bringing him into the government.

M: It was his shop really a long time before he was actually STR, I think.

F: Right. When he was deputy.

M: Yes.

F: That's right. And so we did a great deal of work for them on the technical side, and were deeply involved in the whole effort to develop a new national dumping code and worked very closely with them. We also began to establish some liaison with other parts of the government that were concerned with trade policy. I remember having Sandy Trowbridge over one time to talk with our staff. So that there was a very comfortable working relationship there. But the White House itself certainly never intervened in a particular decision, even in a sensitive one like the Swiss watch business, and in which Abe Fortas, of course, was deeply involved as a lawyer.

M: But not in relation to Mr. Johnson?

F: No, presumably not. Presumably just as, you know, a practicing lawyer.

M: Did Mr. Johnson ever make clear a position, a bias, a policy, toward which he wanted the government to move, say, that was different from President Kennedy's?

F: No. Our feeling was that in terms of a generally free trade stance that there was a continuity there. He never had any questions about it. I think that this is true though: I think in

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terms of making changes, I think in terms of controversy, sort of bringing a fresh look to things like that, I don't think that we felt quite as assured of support as we did during the earlier years. Now this may just have been because obviously I had more confidence in my relationships with the White House in the Kennedy years than I did in the Johnson years. But I remember going through a pretty serious effort to bring the Tariff Commission into at least the nineteenth century, if not the twentieth century.

M: That's a tough job.

F: Yes. In that effort, I would have had the enthusiastic support of the [Kennedy] White House. You know, people would have said, "Gee, that's great." And so there was a little flak about it, and so there was some dissension, and so the Chairman didn't like it; and maybe there'd be some flak on the Hill and that kind of stuff, but I had the feeling that was fine because something was moving. Maybe we were going to make some mistakes, but at least we were trying to do something. I didn't feel that sort of back-up and that sort of atmosphere as much during the Johnson times. We went ahead and did it anyway, and we didn't get any flak over it.

M: You didn't get any sense of direct presidential interest in that?

F: No. That's right. I think he did view the regulatories a little differently from President Kennedy. I think President Kennedy's view of them was more of an activist's view, more of an advocacy of the consumer view, that Mr. Johnson tended to see them more as a judicial kind of function. We weren't strictly speaking a

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regulatory agency, but we were in that sort of tradition. And I think that his feeling was that they should be kind of judges and umpires in differences of view between consumers and business, or between different segments of the business community. Whereas President Kennedy aggressively was looking for the pro-consumer, pro-public regulatories.

I recall that much discussed, much quoted meeting in the Cabinet Room perhaps a month after Dallas, when the President had met with the Cabinet, and then he met with the heads of other agencies, essentially independent agencies--Bernie Boutin and Alan Boyd, and I guess Joe Swidler, and Minow had left so I guess it would have been Bill Henry by that time. And it was an extraordinary performance. He was unbelievable with that group of people in the sense of involvement with the administration which he provided for them. They were a group originally called the Tightrope Club, which was a group of people heading up these independent agencies. John Macy, I think, had been instrumental in putting them together originally, and this was their first meeting after the assassination and he had them in the Cabinet Room. I think I had something to do with that, as a matter of fact. I think I suggested that that be done. He was really superb.

That was when he told Alan Boyd he was going to get reappointed, and he was dealing with the Panama crisis. So he briefed us on what was going on in Panama; I guess he had somebody in. He talked about the role of the wives, and he talked

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about the role of--

M: What did he say about the role of the wives?

F: Well, he said it was terribly important and that the wives should be active and involved in things and talked a lot about the importance of Mrs. Johnson in his own career. [He was] very anecdotal, very informal, and very winning, very effective.

M: Profane?

F: No. No, very charming. It was really extraordinary. But I remember in the course of that meeting him saying, and as I say this has been pretty widely quoted, that he looked for kind of a judicial atmosphere and attitude on the part of the regulators. Now this didn't have too much effect on us.

M: No.

F: So I think that there was a difference in his view, and I think that the kind of appointments that were subsequently made reflected that rather than kind of an activist view. But the only thing that I ever remember him doing as far as the Tariff Commission was concerned, was one situation where it just made much more sense for us to initiate an investigation than for him to call for an investigation. And somebody called me, and I guess I was still then Yes, I was running the commission at the time, and--(Tape ends abruptly)

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M: Back up to the beginning of the story about his wanting to get you to initiate an investigation.

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- F: Yes. This is the one involvement that I remember, when Mike Feldman called and said it would really be much easier for the President if we would initiate this particular investigation--I can't remember really what it was, it may have been watches again-- on our own rather than him asking us to do it. I thought that was all right.
- M: This investigation you didn't object to?
- F: No. No, it was fine, and there were various routes he could have gone. He could have asked the Ways and Means Committee or the Senate Finance Committee to ask us to do it. But they chose to do it that way informally, and I didn't see any problem with that.
- M: As far as I've heard, he did give rather active support to some of the activities of Kennedy Round, for example. Did the Tariff Commission get involved importantly in these types of things, foreign negotiations that the STR shop was carrying on, or were you clear out of that?
- F: Oh, no. But it was much more at a staff level. We had some statutory responsibilities, ran through a whole series of hearings and made recommendations; actually they were not recommendations, they were binding on excluding certain products from negotiation. We never had any White House involvement in that at all.
- M: They weren't trying to get you to come out where they wanted you to on that?
- F: No, not at all. Not at all. I don't think that President Johnson had the interest in the whole tariff thing that President Kennedy

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had. I think that it was also true that by that time the international economic picture had changed because Britain was not going to be in the Common Market. It was both a political and an economic program in Kennedy's mind, and both of those were considerably tainted by Britain's noninvolvement in the Common Market. So it was obviously not going to be anywhere near as big a deal. But we were deeply involved in the whole negotiations, particularly at a staff level where our people were in Geneva and were working with the STR people. We had several people assigned full time just to the negotiations. Then Glenn Sutton and I went over there one summer and consulted with them.

M: Is my impression correct that the mission was getting, you know, perhaps not full time involvement, but reasonably strong White House support for what they were doing there, or am I off base?

F: Oh, yes. I think that would be my impression. It is just that I have never got the feeling that he had the intense personal interest in the thing that Kennedy had had. And it might perfectly well have been true that Kennedy wouldn't have had either, because of the changed situation, once the thing actually got going.

M: What about the events surrounding the assassination period? Do you have any vantage point observations there regarding the Kennedy staff's reaction or your own reaction or anything that can flesh out that story a little bit?

F: Well, not especially. I don't have any particular recollections. I remember President Johnson getting off the helicopter on the

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South Lawn and Mac Bundy coming up and greeting him with a good deal of alacrity to talk about some things, and they went off. It was a very hard period for everybody. I think that both the President and the President's staff people treated the ex-Kennedy staff people really with the utmost sensitivity and concern, at least in anything that I ever saw. I think that the transition worked out pretty well.

M: What happened then? By 1965 it's fairly clear that a lot of former Kennedy loyalists were relatively active anti-Johnson people. At least around town, Georgetown dinner circuit and whatnot, [they] begin to show up.

F: Well, I don't know. I'm just talking about the people right there in the White House at the time. I don't know. I suppose some of these long term antagonisms were pretty hard to ease. Certainly the feeling was that by 1965 there was an effort on the part of some Johnson staff people, whether the President himself was involved in that I have no way of knowing, to move Kennedy people out of the positions that they held throughout the government.

M: That was in the reverse. Rather than the desire of the Kennedy people to get out, it was a desire of the President's people to get them out?

F: I'm not talking about the White House, because that had pretty well turned over by then.

M: No. Sure.

F: But there was some feeling that this was going on. One thing on appointments which is interesting. President Johnson got quite

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interested in the women thing. You remember the whole business of, "I'm going to appoint fifty women to fifty presidential positions in fifty days," or something. We had tried, probably not always with success to sit down and consult with the agencies where there was a vacancy. I think by and large John Macy did not do that, so that we had some appointments which were made without talking to us. I don't think that's necessarily bad, and it may have been because--my memory is so fuzzy on this point--we didn't have an actual chairman at the time. So that whether he talked to Paul Kaplowitz about the Bruce Clubb appointment or not, I don't know. My impression was that there wasn't any real difference, at least for the first years when I was pretty close to what John Macy was doing and what we had been doing in terms of quality appointments and that kind of thing.

M: I've also been told a number of times that Mr. Johnson was far more interested in the woman business than President Kennedy.

F: Oh, there's no question about that. I think there's no question about that. And my impression also is that he involved himself directly in a lot of appointments more than President Kennedy did. I remember trying through Charlie Bartlett, Ralph Dungan and other people to get President Kennedy to go the Truman route. Truman had an absolutely superb device, I thought. That is, people would do the staff work, and then, you know, even [with] an assistant secretary of commerce or something, he would have the prospective appointee to see him. They'd chat, and then, the man having been

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sounded out beforehand, the President himself would make the offer,
"I want you to be my assistant secretary of commerce."

M: Even if it were that level?

F: Right, for every presidential appointee. And so there wasn't any question in that guy's mind as to where his loyalties lay and whose appointee he was. My impression is that the Nixon people have really way departed from this, [and] that Johnson was as sensitive as Kennedy to the fact that these were presidential appointees and that they were going to be made in the White House and not in the agencies. The impression I have is that he carried his personal involvement in a broad range of appointees further than President Kennedy did.

M: He was bringing the guy's kids up and letting them rummage through his desk drawer and things like that that I don't think Kennedy did too much of.

F: No, I think that's true. But I think he was interested, and I think Macy made a real contribution over there, so that by the time they left they had a really good shop.

M: Have you had any contact or involvement with Johnson since you left your position on the commission in 1967?

F: Just down at the Library. Let's see. I can't really remember anything except down at the Library this spring. There was a meeting down there.

M: Not the opening of the Library?

F: No. No, there was a director's meeting in Austin this spring. I

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had a chance to visit with him. As a matter of fact, I spent more time visiting with him on that occasion than I ever had before. We had dinner together, and I just happened to be sitting next to him.

M: What did he talk about then? Did he recall your role from an earlier time?

F: Either Harry or somebody had briefed him or he did recall, because he greeted me very warmly and said, "I'm glad to see you again," and so forth and so on.

M: So no animosity?

F: Oh, no. No. Actually the one other thing that I should just mention I think is a little flak in 1967. There was a reorganization plan for the Tariff Commission which was sent by the President to the Hill.

M: Was this one of those that didn't require action by the Executive--?

F: Well, no. It was one of those things where if the Congress vetoed it within so many days then it would fall. And I took the lead in opposing it on the Hill. Not waging any crusade, I didn't stir around and try to get support from anybody for my position. I sort of hoped that there wouldn't be hearings on it. But when there were hearings they asked me to testify. It was something which I had felt very, very strongly about; I think it was a bad mistake. I did testify, and the thing was defeated by the Senate. Not I think through any doing of ours; I think that there was just a combination of things that were coming together at that point.

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Abe Ribicoff was mad at them.

M: By that time everybody was mad at them.

F: Yes, and so I think this is really what happened. But my relationships with some of the White House people and with Larry O'Brien and particularly Joe Califano were never quite the same again.

M: Yes, you don't make too many little mistakes with Joe Califano.

F: Well, I didn't think it was a mistake. I thought it was his mistake.

M: Had they consulted you and your commission on doing it at all beforehand?

F: No, that's the point. It was a very unfortunate thing, and it was mishandled, not essentially by Johnson's people, but by the Bureau of the Budget people. Because the first we heard of it was when the Bureau of the Budget fellow arrived in the commission and said, "Okay, here's the plan which the President has sent up." If we had had a crack at it, and we'd talked about it, and we'd had some input into it, and then the President or the presidency had decided to go a way differently from the way we wanted to go, then none of us, least of all me, ever would have continued the battle. But I felt no responsibility to support the program since it was a program which I hadn't been involved in at all and since I thought it was a very, very bad misreading of what the Tariff Commission needed at the moment.

M: But the highhandedness or lack of communication was not the President's direct staff's fault as far as you're concerned, but one

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agency removed, the door across the street, the BOB?

F: Yes, I think so. I mean, the Tariff Commission's not the hottest agency in town, and I don't think anybody thought The story that I've heard was that the President had been told that there was no opposition on the part of the commissioners. Well, there was no way of knowing that, because nobody ever asked the commissioners.

M: Right.

F: The feedback I got from the White House was that they were, how upset he was I don't know, but these other people there were really livid that I would take the stand that I did on it. And I think it was all tied up with Bobby Kennedy, because, see, Bobby was on that committee. I think that they had a feeling that either Bobby put me up to it or I was trying to zing the President on a very minor little thing, that I was trying to zing him on Bobby's behalf, or that I was really sort of a mosquito stinging. And I think that made it even more irritating to them. So I think that they felt that it was Bobby's doing. It was not. Bobby didn't have a single solitary thing to do with it.

M: How close were you to the Bobby problem with the President?

F: Close enough to know that it was a difficult problem.

M: Dating from how far back?

F: Well, I don't know. The things that I see and hear went back at least to the convention.

M: And got no better?

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F: They got no better.

M: Got no better fast from then on?

F: Got no better.

M: What was it, things like the vice presidency in 1964, or was it just a different chemistry that never could have worked?

F: I don't know. I suppose it was certainly different chemistry. I think there may have been some things said and done during that pre-convention, convention campaign for the presidency that upset Bobby, but I don't know. Kenny would know an awful lot better what the history of that thing was.

M: I don't want to have you leave out anything you feel is worth saying, but I don't want to keep talking to you, either. I know you've got an appointment across the river.

F: No, I don't think there's really anything else. He did appoint me vice chairman of the commission and didn't reappoint me vice chairman.

M: Did he talk to you before he appointed you vice chairman?

F: No, there was a little. . . .Anyway, the Chairman resigned, and I was then vice chairman, and there was a fairly long period of time, probably four, five or six months, before they appointed a chairman, maybe even longer. I hoped that they might see fit to appoint me chairman, but they didn't. I don't know really quite why. I think that it was true at that point that they were not in

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the business of appointing Kennedy people, and I think that's all right. I have no objections to that.

M: Sure. Rules of the game.

F: Well, it's not just the rules of the game, but I think that a staff and a cabinet and a group of presidential appointees who are put together for one man do not necessarily, in fact almost inevitably they don't fit the needs of another man. I think that some of President Johnson's problems arose out of that fact. That these were Kennedy [people], and not because they were loyal to Kennedy and not loyal to Johnson or something like that, but because they talked a different kind of language. They were people with whom President Kennedy felt very comfortable and with whom he could argue and so forth and so on.

I can appreciate his care, both from his country's standpoint and from the standpoint of the relationships with the Kennedy people and so forth and so on, in not making abrupt changes, and I think he probably did the right thing, because I think he would have had a whole range of other problems. But at the same time I think he paid a very high price for it. So that the fact that they wanted their own [person as chairman], if that was their reason--maybe they just didn't like me, maybe they didn't think I was able to do the job--whose relationship was to them, I think makes perfectly good sense.

M: But did they ever talk to you about this at all?

F: No.

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- M: Anybody ever come around and say, "Gee, we're going to do this" for some reason?
- F: No.
- M: You were left sort of without direction for a fairly long period of time.
- F: Yes. That's right. The guy that they picked, Paul Kaplowitz, is just an absolutely superb fellow, and I was delighted.
- M: Did your term just expire in '67?
- F: No, I resigned in '67 for a couple of reasons. One of them was that I felt Kaplowitz was going to stay, and I felt that the things that I was most interested in were really in train over there in terms of getting the commission going and getting it active and getting it involved. And he was an activist and he was interested in a lot of the same things that I was interested in. If I had known that he was going to leave--I didn't find out until after I made my decision--I would not have left. I'd been interested for a long time in seeing what could be done with a kind of consulting practice in business-government relations, not in terms of doing lobbying and representational work, because it seemed to me that wasn't very interesting--
- M: There are a lot of people doing that.
- F: That's right. But to help companies establish themselves so that they had the capacity to do their own government relations. This thing came along that summer, and I had always planned to go back and teach, and it seemed like a good transition for me. So

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that's why I left. It was not over the reorganization plan or appointments or policy differences or anything else.

M: Anything else you'd like to add?

F: I don't think so.

M: Well, it's very kind of you to have given me this hour and come into town and whatnot. I appreciate it very much.

F: Not at all.

[End of Tape 2 of 2 and end of Interview I]

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