INTERVIEW I

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INTERVIEWEE: CHARLES FRANKEL

INTERVIEWER: PAIGE MULHOLLAN

PLACE: Mr. Frankel's office at Columbia University, New York City

Tape 1 of 1

M: Let's begin by identifying you. You're Charles Frankel, and your government position during the Johnson Administration was as assistant secretary of state for educational and cultural affairs. You served in that position from 1965 to the end of 1967?

F: That's right.

M: Prior to that appointment, before you went into government service, did you have any occasion to become acquainted in any way with President Johnson? Did you know him at all before then?

F: No, I didn't know President Johnson at all before then.

M: What were the circumstances, or what was the background of your appointment to that position?

F: In 1962, perhaps, or 1963, the United States Advisory Commission for International Education and Cultural Affairs, which is a citizen's group but established under statute to advise the President and Congress, had said that there ought to be a study of the function of cultural affairs offices overseas. The Brookings Institution was asked to perform this study. The State Department and I think the White House under the Kennedy Administration were very interested in this being done. They asked me to do it.

M: This was the study that eventuated in your book, The Neglected Aspect, right?

F: That's right. The Neglected Aspect. I did that study. They opened all

files up to me and I had just a chance to go all around and talk to everybody. I extended the study so that it wasn't just a study of cultural affairs officers, but of the functions of educational and cultural diplomacy generally. I turned it in on time. By that time, of course, President Kennedy was dead. I turned it in in June of 1965.

Shortly thereafter the White House got in touch with me and asked me if I'd take this job. Now in the interval of working on the recommendation I had met a great many people in the government, in particular my predecessor as assistant secretary who was Harry McPherson who went over to the White House. Senator Fulbright got a copy of the policy recommendations of the draft and he had also apparently read other things of mine. We'd been on symposia together, public symposiums.

M: I'm a constituent of Senator Fulbright's, incidentally.

F: Oh, are you? So, my appointment was very much the work, I think, of John Macy, in the first place--John Macy who was the President's talent scout, Harry McPherson, and Fulbright. I also had known Dean Rusk and worked once in an organization in which he had been associated. But basically I think it was Fulbright, McPherson, Macy. They then went to the President and my appointment went through.

M: Once they decided to appoint you, what questions were asked about your views on various matters outside of the strict cultural educational area? Those views, I suppose, were fairly well known, but did they ask you about your political views, for example?

F: They certainly checked to see if I was a Democrat. I don't think it would have made any difference, frankly, if I hadn't been, but they did check to see if I was a Democrat. While I'm rather independent, on the whole I usually vote Democratic and supported Democratic candidates and have enrolled Democratic. That wasn't a problem. No one really asked me my general views about other matters, but part of it is because I've written a lot and my views are known.

I, myself, brought up to the White House the question of Vietnam, because I wasn't happy about the policy, even back then. And at that time, of course, it was a relatively moderate policy compared to what it became, but I disapproved of it and I disapproved of the Dominican intervention. I did say this to the people at the White House who took it in stride. The usual response was, "the President wants peace; he's on the record for peace; we don't know what's going to happen but we can't say the bombing will continue, it may very well not." I talked to Fulbright carefully about it. He worked very hard to get me in. He and the President worked together on this. There was a division of opinion there for awhile, but then they came together again. But Fulbright said, "Why, a couple of weeks ago I gave a speech in the Senate Floor; I am unhappy with the policy, but I really think the President's in a most difficult position and is trying to get out of it, and meanwhile you can accomplish a lot of these things. In fact, he's so much an education president that he may buy some of these ideas of yours, and if that's the case we might have a different kind of foreign policy." A number of people who subsequently became his severest critics felt the same way--Kenneth Galbraith with whom I talked.

One of the things that helped convince me was John Gardner's appointment which came up just about that time, and I was a close friend of Gardner's. Apparently immediately after he was appointed, McGeorge Bundy and others in the White House asked Gardner about me. There were questions about my being taken--and of course I questioned in my own mind about going. But I think the President--I know the President was doubtful that I was the man at first. It may have been my politics. It may have been the part of the country I'm from, or what have you.

I'm not sure. No one ever told me in so many words. My hunch is, the way it was said to me, he wondered whether a professor of philosophy could manage a big administrative job, and also wondered how I'd get along with John Rooney.

M: Who's not noted as a professor of philosophy to say the least!

F: So I think that was what was on his mind and then I had--

M: Who did you talk with in the White House?

F: McPherson.

M: McPherson was the man who talked to you?

F: Mainly, and then Douglass Cater, Jack Valenti a little bit, very briefly, but my main contact was McPherson. He was the one who really recruited me. Then I went and checked Douglass Cater because he was so concerned with education. But the fellow to whom I described my views and all was McPherson. That's part of the reason why I wonder about how much of this will come out so soon, because I don't know how much Harry passed on.

M: Well McPherson, for example, has limited his I think to the lifetime of Mr. Johnson. We have completed interviewing him. This is an example of one of the kinds of restrictions that's put on.

F: Yes.

M: You said later, I believe, sometime after you'd left the government, that you understood fairly clearly at the time you came on board that the escalation that was going on in Vietnam at that time was planned as a temporary measure. Was that ever made explicit?

F: No one ever said it was planned as a temporary measure. I mean no one knew. It's very easy in retrospect to assume everyone knew what was going to happen. My judgment, and of course I didn't talk to Bundy directly about this--he was a man I knew too, but I didn't talk to him and I didn't go over it with Dean Rusk. But my judgment was that the

people in the White House thought the war would not last a long time. They were convinced that the President wanted out. They thought that he would do a number of things, even stopping the bombing. They didn't mean he would but when I asked them, "Is the bombing just going to go on?" they would say, "No, it's quite possible it would stop." Now they were right. The point was, they weren't wrong. It did stop that year for thirty-eight days. So that they were kind of banging around, not knowing the future, beginning to feel that something ominous was happening. But still in that late spring of 1965 the big feeling in the White House and in the administration was they were going forward, they were an education administration. (Interruption)

I think the feeling in the administration at the time was that this was a very successful administration on domestic legislation. Certainly Cater felt, and a number of others, that my kind of idea, my kind of approach to foreign policy, would be just what got the President's attention and interest. John Gardner felt it. No one makes any bets, particularly with Lyndon Johnson about what will interest him, but going into a government is kind of betting. You don't know that you're going to win, but you kind of bet. And it seemed like a pretty good bet that this would get his attention. And it did, almost immediately.

M: You say it got his attention, did you have direct conversations with him fairly early?

F: No.

M: What kind of specific instructions or specific interest was evidenced?

F: As I say, there was this problem about my appointment. He didn't want me at first, and I think my serving really is much more William Fulbright's work than Johnson's, although he did sign and send it in. I think when he did it finally, he was convinced it was the right thing.

Before I was appointed, while the thing was still in the air, I

think they were then just checking field clearances, things of that sort, Frank Keppel, whom I also knew, had been asked about me, and said, "Yes, that's the man for the job." I think it just grew on the President. I knew everybody in one function or another and they all, I think, supported me.

Frank called and said that Califano was developing a new legislative package in education for the next session of Congress. That was in the summer of '65, and would I write up the international education part? So I became a government consultant officially and worked up a memorandum that was sent to the White House. It contained the recommendation for an international education act, a recommendation that there be education officers, recommendations of various kinds, tariff legislation, and other things, also a recommendation that the President espouse this as a major part of foreign policy and that he make a speech as early as possible.

I heard that he was going to make a speech at Princeton in October and I thought it would be very good if he announced an international education program as part of his foreign policy. Cater and others had said to me, every president likes to give his own special stamp to foreign policy, which is true. This president wanted to do that and education was his kind of thing. So I sent this in. It's rather amusing. I heard nothing about it--no response at all--until the day I reported for work. He sent in my nomination. I had my hearings and went to work. I wasn't yet confirmed. It was in that interlude period.

The very first day, the very first half-hour Cater called me and said, "The President's going to give a speech at the Smithsonian next week and a lot of people sailing in with recommendations, but I think if you get a draft of a speech in in a hurry, the President will buy it."

So I worked closely with Cater. I did the first draft of the Smithsonian address and Mr. Cater put it in Johnsonian prose, which he's much better at than I am. But essentially he saved the basic ideas. There were some differences but basic ideas were there, and the President did deliver it. Unfortunately, the newspapers were on strike but it still was a big speech and got a lot of foreign attention and he immediately appointed a task force, very good people. Dean Rusk was made the chairman and I was his deputy, which really means I was the chairman, because Dean Rusk couldn't do much about it. I take it that was the idea. This is what I mean when I say I know the President was immediately interested and bought this thing and went for it.

Now, I never talked to President Johnson personally alone. I met him on a number of occasions, but I never was in a position really to find out from him how deeply interested he was in the program. But there's no question that he gave the people around him, who were deeply interested, encouragement.

M: This is the task force then whose proposals ended up as the International Education Act of 1966?

F: That's right. They made about twenty proposals as I remember. I could look it up--twenty or twenty-two. A number of the things were done, but of course many of the things weren't done. AID did change the emphasis in its programs. Of course it's always hard to know whether it's not just a paper change because the question of what you classify as national education is partly semantic, but I think they made some real changes. The International Education Act was recommended and passed, but never funded. Education officers were ordered by the President but Congress wouldn't vote the funds. We did get the Florence Convention through, which was a major change in our tariff policies,

and there were a number of other recommendations. We did more work in English language training abroad, but basically the program never took off because funding wasn't available and people's energies were distracted. This was really a problem, the war.

M: Was this administration lack of will, or was it congressional refusal apart from the administration lack of will, that caused the lack of funding of the act, for example, and the lack of appointment of the various officers which were authorized?

F: I think that the Congress grew increasingly negative towards the President--towards anything marked international. There got to be a quasi-isolationist sentiment. It was hard even to get internationalists behind the program. They came along but--for example, Wayne Morse, who sponsored it in the Senate put me--as he had every right to do and did a good job--through the ropes on whether there was a CIA tie-up. He was terribly worried about that. There was suspicion of the President as a result of Vietnam. The people who were most interested in international education were his enemies on Vietnam. You see, that was part of the problem. Then, of course, there were other people who didn't like to vote that kind of money anyway. I think the Bureau of the Budget didn't help. This program, the education officers, should have been put to the Fogarty Committee. It should have been tied in with HEW for a variety of reasons, some of them good, but I think some of them not. The Bureau of the Budget made us go before the Rooney Committee and that was the kiss of death to the program.

Now in the administration, were they serious about it? Well, the trouble with the English language you always say "the administration."

M: Like it's one man.

F: Yes. There were people who were very interested and wanted to push.

I think the President, if I may put it so, was very interested some days and forgot about it completely other days. When he was reminded of it he cared, but he usually had other things on his mind. This again was Vietnam. I think if there had been peace the President would have pushed this as a major part of his education in foreign policy programs. I think! But he simply became distracted. The same thing with Secretary Rusk, and even after a while the same thing with Senator Fulbright. It didn't make any difference which side of the fence you were on on Vietnam. Senator Fulbright backed the program, but he would have been one of the leaders and instead all he was concerned about was Vietnam.

So I think this is what happened. Money got tight, and the President's political capital went. I think that was the most amazing thing. When I first came in it the summer of '65, and went up to the Hill to present various bits of legislation or what have you, and I'd mention the President's name, and say he's personally interested in this and very eager, it was smooth sailing. By February or March of the next year when you said the President had a special interest in something you might get a negative feeling.

M: You mentioned the program might should have gone to a different committee than the State Department Appropriations Subcommittee. The legislation did make you as assistant secretary chairman of the Interagency Committee on International Education, did it not?

F: I already was before that.

M: Oh, it just ratified something already in existence then. We're very interested among other things in the relation of departments and agencies concerned with the same problem. Did that committee function smoothly and well? Was cooperation between agencies fairly satisfactory in this field?

F: Yes, in my day I think it functioned well considering. I think I was the first assistant secretary who took the mandate seriously to coordinate. This came largely from my own policies and the fact I had been--and this is no credit to me--better prepared for the job than anyone who had ever taken it. I had done a study. I realized the need for coordination. I understood the assistant secretary's work before I took the job. And I also had personal and other connections in the government that made it much easier for me to coordinate. I got along with Gardner and Keppel who were close friends. They are not bureaucrats. They don't care who does what as long as it's done. The one group with whom I did have problems were USIA and that was really a deep policy question as to what it's all about, AID with Dave Bell there and to a lesser extent Bill Gaud who was more harassed, but certainly with Dave Bell, I couldn't have had more cooperation. So at the top level this committee worked and worked pretty well, and we got out a pretty good policy statement for the whole government on the brain drain, not just a policy statement but policy on the brain drain. We did some important matters on immigration and handled some things that way. We did a good deal on getting the International Education Act launched, written, all the rest. And there wasn't the kind of pulling and hauling you'd expect. It worked pretty well. Now I think, in part, I mentioned the reasons why. One of the reasons was that I came in and as luck would have it was involved with launching a new program. It wasn't just let's coordinate. It was, here's a broad new initiative; we've got the President behind it and we've got to deliver.

That's the interesting thing about government. It's often said, well before you do something new, you ought to coordinate, and I understand that point of view. But sometimes the best way to coordinate is

to do something new and get everybody interested. Now after having said all that, I'd have to say as an ex-government official, coordination at the top level can go fine, but down at the working levels it doesn't always go so well. I think it went better in my day, but there were obviously lots of slips and falls.

Just for instance, Dave Bell and I could agree in this interagency council that there ought to be more work on teaching English in India, or English language institutes. It's very important to an Indian education. Well, the way AID is organized that has to go all the way out to the fellow who's in charge of AID in India and you have to get his approval. In fact you've got to ask him. Well, he didn't like it. Then of course I would get in touch with him through channels and say "the President wants it, I'm his representative specifically for the executive order." But there's not much point in just giving him orders. He's on the spot, If his heart isn't in it, he's not going to do a good job. So you've got to win him over. Now we did get him in. I mean, there were a number of successes. The only point to make is there is a limit to what a coordinator can do.

M: That's one of the things that the White House staff is supposed to help with. Did they?

F: Yes, they would help and they would give me support. But I never really went to them often for this kind of practical coordination. I don't think that is the White House staff's job. They are staff men. They can speak for the President--have to keep you in line--but the State Department's job is to coordinate foreign policy. You don't need a State Department if they're not going to be the fellows who are doing it. And the Assistant Secretary of State, of course, had a major job to do that. So I couldn't ask White House people to do that for me and never did.

M: You mentioned a couple of times Congressman Rooney and his job as the coordinator or the supervisor of the State Department appropriations. How intelligent or unintelligent is congressional supervision of cultural and educational affairs generally?

F: Perhaps I ought to go back a step and take up that Fogarty business. You see the International Education Act would have been--well they did go for appropriations before the Fogarty Committee, but he died, and most of the good people from our point of view had been defeated in the '66 election. So we got beaten in that committee for the major part of the appropriation we were seeking. I think we would have gotten through if the President pushed. I don't think he did. Very frankly, I think that the President was always more interested in getting the legislation passed than in the follow-up in getting the funding.

But now to get to the Rooney business. The great trouble in Congress--this isn't just personal to Mr. Rooney--but the great trouble in Congress is that the way it's organized, you go before a legislative committee, a substantive committee. They authorize legislation and they make their record by authorizing ambitious legislation. You go before a committee on the International Education Act. They say, "Are you asking for enough money? This is silly. You're not asking for enough." Then you go to the appropriations committees and they're not really interested in the substance of the legislation. They're interested in making a record and cutting. Apart from personalities, Mr. Rooney does this all the time with the State Department--practically never gets into the substance of the program. He nit-picks you. He would ask me why, when last year we were giving $18 per diem to foreign visitors, this year we're giving $22 per diem to foreign visitors. Then you get into a dialogue about hotel costs in the country. That really isn't high policy.

I don't think I was wasting money, but it isn't worth the time spent on it. On the major policies, Mr. Rooney just sort of takes it for granted that you have to agree with him on major policy, and he's not happy about certain things. There is no point in talking to him about it, because he isn't going to listen anyway. It's just that kind of nit-picking and now that makes it very, very difficult in the State Department. He's as powerful as anybody in the country as far as American foreign policy is concerned.

M: Yes, I've found that out.

F: He really is, and yet it's very hard ever to argue with him on policy. My colleague Sisco [Joseph Sisco], the assistant secretary for international organizations, always had a tough time with Rooney, because he'd come in with international commitments, and we were bound by treaty to pay. Well, this would make Rooney furious. He knew he couldn't do a damned thing about it, but they would never talk about the substance of the agreement that I can recall. It was really much more a lot of snide remarks made in passing. Of course, I'd always follow Sisco in and Rooney was in a mood to get somebody.

Now, I have a number of complaints about him, as most people do, but he didn't bother me too much. The biggest complaint I have is as a citizen, he has these sessions in closed hearings. They're Star Chamber proceedings. The public can't get in. He really runs this thing as his show. He bullies. He changes the record. He'll change his question so that your answers look funny. He, one year, accused me truly of sending out people who opposed the President in Vietnam, but be didn't have his facts straight. All the people he happened to have picked up supported the President on Vietnam! We didn't have a political loyalty test of that sort in our programs. But the ones he

mentioned happened actually to support the President. He had all his facts wrong. Well, every one of those people's names are cut out of the hearings, and I'm there denying that they are of the kind that they're said to be. But there's no way for a person who reads the records to know whether I was talking through my hat or not because there's just a blank space in the record.

M: Where it says deleted for security purposes?

F: Nothing, no explanation, just a blank. There's a blank line where there were names. This is the kind of thing which, as a citizen, I object to. You get used to it and hardened to it. I don't have any hard feelings toward Mr. Rooney. I don't think he's a good congressman, but this is a citizen's attitude.

M: What about others?

F: Does that answer your question?

M: Yes.

F: I didn't want to get personal.

M: No. Of course, that part is extremely important, but in addition to that what about other congressmen? In other words, are there congressmen who really have studied and learned the details of the International Education and Cultural Exchange Program and contribute positively to your program?

F: Oh sure. By the way, I have to say this about Rooney. He does his homework. He knows the program, but he doesn't know it substantively. He doesn't know what you're doing. He just knows you have spent that much money for this.

Oh yes, there are very serious congressmen and senators who know things extremely well and can be very helpful. Unfortunately there aren't any on the Appropriations Committee. That whole crowd seems to me to be essentially antagonistic.

M: They reflect the chairman's--

F: That's right, he dominates the thing anyway. Then, I think, on the Foreign Relations Committee a number of the younger men were very lively. I think frankly Wayne Hays who has a kind of author's interest in the Fulbright-Hays Program, nevertheless doesn't understand the program--literally doesn't even understand the limitations the law places on the assistant secretary of state. You can't just do anything you want. He sort of forgets that. But there are congressmen who do know the program and care about it deeply. I think the one I met who was most outstanding in this respect is John Brademas, who was the sponsor of the National Education Act, but also knew other things. I think Donald Fraser from Minnesota does his homework, reads carefully, and is a very good man. There are a number of others, John Tunney of California; Rosenthal from Queens, here; Peter Frelinghuysen, the Republican from New Jersey, is a very responsible fellow. Congressman McCrory is a kind of bug on illiteracy, and sometimes he kind of makes it the only thing there was, but he was a serious fellow and he could pay attention. Albert Quie made problems not so much for me but for my colleague John Gardner, but I think he was always honorable, and he knew the score. He just had different views on certain things.

M: That's different from nit-picking, though.

F: Oh, he didn't nit-pick. That's right. No, these are fellows who raised real questions. Patsy Mink was excellent in the House.

M: How about Fulbright?

F: I was just mentioning the Congress.

M: Does Fulbright pay a lot of attention to the program since it bears his name?

F: Well, on the Senate side, Fulbright is, of course, very interested in the program and always has been. But there were two reasons why he wasn't too immediately concerned. The first is that he's very conscientious about not letting it be thought that he thinks that this is his domain. He doesn't give the assistant secretary instructions. I think I received fewer suggestions from him than from almost anybody else who might have been interested in the program. I would often go to him and ask him questions as chairman of Foreign Relations and keep, you know, the bridges up. But he was very careful to say, "You're the assistant secretary. I'm not telling you what to do." I think this is very much because he doesn't want the Fulbright Program to be treated as his property. The second thing is that he became very preoccupied with Vietnam. Now he might have been more concerned with international education and other things if he hadn't been confident about me. I think he was. In the end whenever I wanted his support it was just a case of going to him and saying, "I want it." And he'd say, "If you want it, all right." I went over for President Johnson a couple of times on specific requests from President Johnson to speak to him about this or that bit of legislation, mainly in my field. And he was always very professional about it.

The press at one point thought--and had it in the paper--that it was an effort on Johnson's part to thaw relations and I was a go-between and so forth. I think they were just two men doing their

jobs. Johnson wanted the legislation through. He hoped Fulbright would support it. In fact, the International Education Act I asked Fulbright on the President's behalf to sponsor it. And Fulbright said, no, on the grounds that he thought it would be better if it were treated as domestic legislation. He said his committee had an ancillary interest in it and would have hearings if needed to be but "shouldn't someone on the education side sponsor it."

So we went to Wayne Morse, whom the President was perfectly happy to have though he, too, was a dove. So Fulbright was cooperative, but he didn't get into the act closely. I think the people who were interested--and George McGovern was very interested in the whole area. He was interested in it partly from the point of view of the farm programs, but he had introduced a bill a year or two earlier that was a kind of prototype of the National Education Act. It was a bill to strengthen American university resources for overseas work. It had an agricultural slant, an AID slant, but it was the basic idea. He was very easy to interest and he was right on the ball. Wayne Morse was wonderful and really does his homework.

And Robert Kennedy was extremely interested. He introduced me and spoke for me in very high terms when I was at my confirmation hearing. I didn't know that he was that interested in my appointment, but he was. It was the first time he and I had ever met. It was actually at the hearings when he talked for me. He knew

about me. And almost immediately after that, he said, "Come on over and let's talk about foreign policy and youth." And he was always very interested in that side of the thing.

M: I know that the CU division has been very concerned to keep the selection of applicants separated from the political process as much as possible, but how much does political pressure influence the selection of programs in fact? Particularly cultural exchange programs.

F: You mean music and that sort of thing?

M: Yes, this type of thing, or any types of things?

F: Well, let me say that, to go the whole way, there are roughly three kinds of grants, depending on the order. We could do eight kinds of grants, but roughly three. There's one kind that's the academic exchange grant, and this is made by the Board of Foreign Scholarships. I was called a number of times, and quite unpleasantly, by congressmen, and told, "We vote the money," "I want so and so," "that lovely little girl who's a friend of the President's." I'm sure the President didn't know a damned thing about it. But "she should have a grant for. . . ." So that sort of thing. Sometimes they'd get quite unpleasant. In fact one of the fellows who did it was Wayne Hays, who should know better--knows the [inaudible], ought to know it. I had to tell them, "I don't take people out of the hat. It's a selection board of citizens who pick these people."

"Well, you can work on it." Well, first of all, I wouldn't work on it. It was against my policy. And secondly, it would have been the surest way I could to have lost the board, have them resign, and all the rest. So I think the Fulbright Program was clean. I don't know of any political kind of influence. Now, congressmen write letters. If somebody is recommended by Hubert Humphrey, you're bound to take that into account. It isn't that you're paying off political debts but if someone says "this is an unusual young citizen," and he himself is an outstanding citizen, you take that into account. But I don't know of any political pressures of any sort.

M: You would pay attention to that the same way you would Henry Ford or somebody.

F: Anybody. When I look over applications for grants here at Columbia University, if it's an outstanding professor or an outstanding citizen who's known to be a judge of character [who's recommending], you don't give the grantee the award automatically, but that's in his favor. That's just the normal way of getting jobs, applying for things. And I don't think there's anything more than that ever in it.

You'd be surprised how many people--Vice President Humphrey is as good a case as any; he didn't write a lot of letters, but as he once said to me jokingly, "Doesn't anybody I ever recommend get an award?" It wasn't any pressure or anything. He was just kind of kidding. I don't think there was any political pressure while I was around. I don't know about my predecessors, but my impression from what I saw was that

it was always a clean program. I'd be very surprised if I were any better.

Now the second kind of grant is the so-called "specialist program." That's where in principal you can pick them without an outside board. Again, we set up a committee in the department--not outsiders, in the department--to pick these people. I would try to say that it wasn't just my appointment and, of course, it wasn't. In fact I didn't make them. I'd stand behind them. I didn't make them. I'd deputize this to other people. I tried to get closer and closer control of it though, because I did notice they weren't sending out the best people often because they didn't know the right people as well as I did. And, also, there was always the danger that, one, they would get scared by certain kinds of people--a congressman wouldn't like that--or, secondly, they might want to please a congressman by sending a friend. That kind of pressure was steady.

I think I managed to keep it pretty clean, but we did have one big fight about it that came out of the White House. I was away at the time, but I had to fight it when I came back. A chap named Sterling Tucker, who's out of the Urban League and is a very good fellow, went overseas for us to talk about urban problems, and there was a great complaint over at the White House about his going out. I think it was factionalism within the Negro groups. There were a number of such cases. This was the outstanding one.

M: That was the after-the-event type pressure, really, in that case.

F: Yes. Well, they tried to stop his going. They got in touch with me overseas, and I said, "You can't do that to him. We've made a commitment and that's that. I'll fight this when we get home." I got home and said I wouldn't have changed it in any case, even if it had been a month or two. Well, there was then an effort to grab all these

specialist appointments. Marvin Watson wanted to look over all of them, and there's a fellow named Chaplinsky (?) who's Rooney's man in the State Department who said "Why can't you run them through me?"

M: Where did he work in the State Department?

F: He worked in the administrative office for--

M: Deputy Under Secretary--

F: Yeah, Rimestad at that time. Crockett and Rimestad. And I think he's one of these fellows without enough to do. He's the Rooney contact man and this was a lovely bit of patronage if you could get it handled that way. Of course, I wasn't going to let it be treated as patronage. It got to be a pretty good fight before it was through.

Finally, I just called their bluffs. I said, "If Marvin Watson wants this done, let him say so. I'm not going to do it." No one ever quoted Marvin Watson. They'd refer to him, said "the President was furious and Watson was, too." Well, okay, let him tell me! Then what will I do? Well, I told them I wouldn't have anything to do with any program that was run that way. They knew I would leave. He knows I will resign. It's ridiculous, but let them tell me. There's always that kind of effort to get political control. The boss is quoted, but you know. Meanwhile I checked with McPherson, told him about it. He said, "Well, that's ridiculous." He went and checked with Watson who said there wasn't anything to it. Now I don't know whether there was anything to it or not, but--

M: There wasn't when you got down to asking for specific--

F: "Are you going to give me an order like that?" They didn't want that fight. I had to fight them two or three times before this issue came up. I think they made trouble for me with Rooney over it. They did slip in some of the names of people I sent out and the like. That's the second sort of thing. That could be a pain in the neck, but you

need a tough assistant secretary who won't let it happen. He uses up some of his capital fighting that kind of thing.

Now the third big group are the cultural exchanges, the dance groups, the orchestras and the like. There are two kinds of problems here. One is regional representation. If you get Cleveland represented, Cincinnati wants to be represented. If you take Philadelphia, Los Angeles says, "How about us?" You do have to be political at least to the extent of spreading it around and the real question is is there a cut-off place? We followed the policy, with the help of the Advisory Committee on the Arts--you need these outside groups so you can say this is public policy--of cutting off, saying, "We're only going to send the first-rate orchestras, and we've got twelve orchestras of world stature and we're going to circulate it." So that more or less handled the thing.

M: I think you had indicated the types of pressures in the various areas. You had just mentioned, and I think handled probably, the pressures for geographical balance in the cultural--

F: I think you have to have geographical balance and that you can handle most of it that way. The only thing is there's an internal politics in the art world, which you have to be aware of. That's why it's a job that you ought to get someone savvy. I didn't want to send big orchestras out for a lot of reasons--not as many as we'd sent. Well, big orchestra managers really organized quite a drive against us.

M: So it's not just politicians.

F: That's right. It's all the interest groups. I wanted to send out smaller groups, you know. You run into problems. You take a dance company of a certain type, the other dance companies want to know. Well, that's politics, too.

M. Right.

F: Here I think you just have to go on what you think is right. You have

to try to explain yourself as best you can and you try to get your Advisory Committee on the Arts behind you, so it doesn't look like a bureaucrat making decisions. But you do the best you can.

M: You have written in several things--your Foreign Affairs article a couple of years ago and also Neglected Aspect--that the obstacles to accomplishing the mission of educational and cultural exchange are only formidable if you look upon the program as a means rather than an end, a means of selling an idea like MLF or something like this nature. Do you think that the Johnson Administration as a whole, if you can talk about it as a whole, do you think the people who counted in the Johnson Administration foreign policy operation looked upon cultural education exchange as a means or an end?

F: Let's go down the list and talk about the top people first. I think the President didn't give it much thought. He was interested in education, and he didn't think beyond that. Dean Rusk had thought about it, and would have been sympathetic with my point of view up to the point of it making any real bureaucratic changes. I thought he might want to make changes when I first came in but I became progressively convinced that he didn't. Now this may have been the war again. But in principle he agreed with me, no question about it. Eugene Rostow, the under secretary agreed. George Ball saw the point. So in the State Department at the top level, I had agreement in principle.

In the White House, Harry McPherson felt very strongly about it on my side. After all, in my position--of course, Fulbright thought about it, believed this very strongly. Douglass Cater was unequivocal about it. The big problem there was that the USIA was opposed and, of course, Leonard Marks was opposed. I think he was opposed, not just because he was head of USIA, but because that was the way he thought about it. He

was, of course, the President's lawyer and much closer to the President than I. The President always identified me with Fulbright, as far as I could tell he did anyway. Really what's wonderful, I think in retrospect, is that I managed to make my case reasonable successfully given the difficulties of my political position--what seemed to be a Kennedy connection, Fulbright connection.

Now when you got down deeper at the operating level, you really ran into problems. Here you were really dealing with a situation in which CU for twenty years had been used to playing second fiddle to USIA. You had all these hard-boiled bureaucrats in USIA--products of the psychological warfare era and the Cold War--who really found it difficult. It was like occupational reassignment to get them to think differently. So this was different.

The cultural affairs officers, I know, were perhaps two-to-one or three-to-one on my side, but they were all under the thumbs of the public relations types. Then, of course, in government, as you've probably discovered, squatters rights is three quarters of the--. I had to be four times more powerful than they in logic to get a change because they were in. So, I really did buck up against considerable resistance, I think my point of view made great progress. If the International Education Act had been funded and education officers had been funded we would have accomplished fifty to sixty per cent of the thing. Then, of course, if the Rusk committee, which was founded after the CIA thing, had gone through with what a majority had wanted them to go through, we would have won it again, because I sold this point of view in the Rusk committee. But, once more, the administration didn't want to act.

M: How much of the truth is there to the belief that many of the cultural

exchange programs had been CIA-operated. After the National Student Association exposé, there was the claim that there were all sorts of CIA participation in the cultural program, the educational program, and everything. Did you lose a lot of programs when they exposed the other?

F: Well, these charges were made. They were not true. I mean CIA did have many programs of that sort--not as many as was said, but they did, most of them made public. But they certainly did not get into the Fulbright programs, or any of the others. I had a clean mandate from the President on this from the first day I came in. The CIA had to report to my office regularly about this sort of thing, and I really did throw fast balls and curves and everything else too, but I think they did level with me. And the programs were policed. It was my job and I had orders to do it. And by the way, it wasn't me that did it, I think the fellow who really drew the line was Lucius Battle--

M: Your predecessor once removed.

F: I don't know what kinds of evil things existed at that time--and perhaps not very much--but at any case, he made it very plain that they were to stay out of those programs, and got a presidential directive, so he did the big job. I just carried that on.

M: I think it's important to establish, though, due to the claims that were made.

F: No, I think the open programs were clean. It was these closed programs. There wasn't a dirty side to the open programs at all. Now, what surprised me, however, since we raised that question, was that I did go around inside the government after the CIA revelations, saying this hurt all the programs, open and closed, and I found very few people who were ready really to believe me. Everybody it seemed to me knew it. Everybody was saying it, and you only have to say it to make it true. That's

all. They refused to believe it. There's an insularity inside government sometimes that's quite astonishing. But on the whole I think we got that point across pretty well. I don't think CIA ever really realized what it would look like.

M: When it got exposed, you mean.

F: Yes. I did tell them. I was told about this. It was part of my job policing my own programs--and also as the chairman of the interagency group. That's interesting. I didn't want the CIA involved in any interagency group at all. Sometimes they are involved in interagency groups but they were not on the Council on International Educational and Cultural Affairs. I didn't want the suggestion we were working with them, and I didn't want to work with them. But they did come around, and in the course of checking my own programs, they did level with me and told me the NSA thing had been done in the past. I didn't know what they were doing right then and there, and I think actually it was in the past. They told me a number of others. I said, "I don't know what other ones you've got going right now, but if you've got any, unwind them fast because with the country being as it is, and the mood it's in, it's bound to come out in six months or a year. Some kid is going to break it--that's a silly thing--every move done which they didn't agree with." But I did say that to them. "And you better unwind it," and they didn't. For the record it should be said that they were warned. And there were others who warned them. I warned them pretty hard in my own office a couple of times.

M: It didn't take obviously until--

F: I think it was just bureaucratic drift.

M: Things get in the saddle.

F: That's right.

M: I think quite clearly what happened to the CU program as far as funds are

concerned, can be laid at the door of Vietnam.

F: The big cut came after I left.

M: Right, I understand this last cut is the significant one. But do you think that it's the lack of money because of Vietnam which has done this, or is it more congressional and administration way of punishing the colleges for leading the dissent on Vietnam? Or is it punishment of individuals like Fulbright?

F: I think all those things are involved. I don't think it's conscious, usually. I do think the President was pretty mad at Fulbright. You couldn't go and ask for money for the Fulbright Program. You had to talk about International Exchange or something. But I think the President on the whole is statesmanlike, and the administration, which had made commitments that would lead you to think they were going to raise the budget, didn't deliver. But they did keep it fairly stable on their side. Where they fell down was in administration pressure, in statements to Congress--"Look we think this is important!" It was clearly not. You'd think it would have been, given all the things the President said the day after I was sworn in, but it didn't happen that way. That's where the whole administration is responsible. The war, the distraction of effort and energy, their inability or unwillingness to work hard, and probably the facts you mentioned were part of it.

Now in Congress I think it was really very much anti-internationalism, anti-AID. We got some of the kickback from the feelings about AID. We got some of the kickback from the feelings about France--"why send money, why have exchanges?" I think there was pettishness about professors and students and "they're not good citizens; why should we be giving them grants, and won't they go abroad and talk against us?" All of that was part of the story. But I think the basic story was the

need for economy, on the one side, the tax bill, other things, the need for economy. The people who never liked the program would find this a very good program to cut.

M: Sure.

F: And the people who did like the program weren't fighting for it because they were mad at Johnson, and so forth.

M: You, apparently from the very beginning, had considerable opposition to what the administration was doing in Vietnam. How widespread was that feeling in the government or in the State Department in your circle of acquaintances?

F: Well, I knew one assistant secretary of state who certainly shared my views.

M: Can you mention his name?

F: Yes, I think Tony Solomon certain shared my views--assistant secretary for economic affairs.

M: I interviewed him, too.

F: Well, he's told you. I know he mentioned me, but he--

M: No, he didn't mention you.

F: But he was open. I think there were two or three others who from things they said felt that way. And there were a number of people in the department who were very much opposed, but on the whole the State Department is marked by two features. One, it is a very well disciplined, almost semi-military group. You don't go around rocking the boat and you don't go around shooting off your opinion on things that you're not going to have a vote on. If you have a vote, I think most of them, but not all, are courageous guys. Most of them aren't going to bother, because they're using up their capital, number one. Number two is that they're all so damnably busy that it's almost impossible to get a chance to talk about

anything like that. It isn't as though you ever sit around with your feet up as I'm doing now! You're always talking business. Then when you meet at night it's protocol, there were foreigners present, or press men present. The next day you're back at your job at 7:30 in the morning. You can play tennis with a guy and not know what he thinks about these things.

M: Do you think the people who did dissent from policy got to the stage of making their advice known to the President? Did their advice get to the President?

F: George Ball's did. By the way, I talked to him, of course, and he knew what I thought and I knew what he thought about Vietnam. Eventually I had a long talk with Eugene Rostow, who knew, too. Just a list of people. I must have talked to twelve people who had direct access to the President, which I didn't have, about Vietnam. In fact, I used to have a little memo in my pocket, hoping they would take it to the President. And I talked to Eugene Rostow--got nowhere.

M: His views matched the President's, I take it.

F: Matched Walt's and the President's, sure.

M: Would he then kick your view up to a higher--

F: No, there was no point. There was no point in my even giving him the memo. I mean, you knew what would happen. You wanted to try to get it favorably presented and he was always gentlemanly--I don't mean that--but we must have debated for two hours one night. We did find two hours to talk about it, and there was just no meeting of the minds at all. It was another world. I talked with him. I talked with Sol Linowitz a good deal, and he was close to the President. He listened much more sympathetically, said he would talk to the President and try to get me in, but he never got the opening. He talked to him once and mentioned me. The

President said to him, "Well, what would you do?" That kind of thing.

I talked to John Gardner, who knew my views, at length. I talked to Abe Fortas.

M: Now, Fortas could obviously get his views--

F: Abe said to me--and we were good friends--"Well, you fellows over there aren't doing your jobs. You ought to try to extricate us. It's a diplomatic matter." But he did not volunteer to talk to the President.

M: An important question is how often, if ever, did President Johnson get contrary views from people who were reasonable dissenters within the government.

F: I think very, very seldom. I talked to Rusk, and it was very plain he'd never get it from Rusk. All I got from Rusk was what he was saying in public. He's a lovely man. He took a lot of nonsense from me in the middle of the night--I don't think we had an unpleasant conversation--when you think of all the troubles the guy has to have to sit around with the Assistant Secretary of Cultural Affairs and talk about Vietnam. But he did, and in a fair way. But like dropping water on a rock, I got no place.

Harry McPherson was friendly to me. He's the most, of the people close to the President except for Linowitz and Gardner--Gardner, Linowitz and Harry McPherson. Harry listened, but he got mad at me once. He said I was just giving him Fulbright's line. John Roche I found very difficult to talk to. He was really terrible. I talked to him about it. So you see, it adds up to quite a list of people I tried to reach and reach through them to the President, and didn't have any luck. I think from that experience that he got very, very little negative advice, particularly after George Ball left. And I think even in George Ball's case, what happened was it got to be formalized.

M: Sort of the house dissenter.

F: That's right. "All right, now, what do you say?" Then George would speak. Now, I've seen his briefs. He's showed me some of them. They're brilliant pieces of work. The guy represented the anti-Vietnam views very persuasively, to me. But it's very hard to buck those generals and all that power. I don't know where McNamara stood. I gathered he wasn't happy about the war, but I just don't know what he said to the President.

M: You said, I believe, in one of the interviews you had after you left the office, that you felt that the Department was run by sincere men who kept escalating in the hope they could overcome past mistakes. Do you think they did this consciously, that they realized a mistake had been made, and not knowing what to do but more of the same, went on with the policy anyway?

F: It depends whom you're talking about. There are some who did and some who didn't. I think there were a number of people in the department who would have granted you, indeed I asked them, when I think about it--other assistant secretaries with whom I sometimes argued, or under secretaries, or even Rusk--"If you'd known where you were going to be right now, would you have gotten in way back then, and would have done all these things? You have to admit you're confronted with a situation you didn't want." Some of them would agree and from that point of view would be consciously playing a game of trying to get out as best you can--maybe by escalating.

But I don't think that was the usual pattern. My own feeling is that it was an unconscious kind of betting. These fellows got carried away. They always were telling you how well they were doing. Henry Cabot Lodge came back in June or July and we had a regular department meeting. He was called on to report and said our situation was so improved--this was June or July, 1967--that by January 1968 it would be sensational, both in a military and a political sense. He said, "I don't know why it is we

can't seem to get this idea across to the people, and why the press finds it so hard to be convinced everything's going well." Now, that was the line they were giving one another. I don't know how many seriously believed it, but--you follow me?

M: Yes.

F: So you get into a poker game and you kind of say, "I'm the richest guy around here. My luck's been good all the time, and I'm a known guy who walks off with the winnings in poker." I mean, it's the United States of America. You don't say, "Well, I shouldn't have gotten into this one. It's kind of an accident. It seems not to be going the way we want it."

M: Just keep on betting.

F: "I bet, really bet, a lot. That little guy across the table, how can he stay in the game?"

M: I see. You mentioned Ball as being persuasive and being also one who could get his viewpoint heard, but of course even before you left, he was gone. Is that what happened to dissenters who got their word to the top?

F: I don't know. I think so. I don't think that Lyndon Johnson likes people to disagree with him, unless it's done in a certain way. He can domesticate them later. I think Bill Moyers left for that reason--and other reasons--but it just got to be too much. I think McNamara began to show loss of faith. I don't know what he ever said, maybe nothing, but somehow the President sensed it. Now this, for the record, for anyone who looks at it, is speculation, talk. I don't know that directly from Mr. McNamara.

I think the President's relations fell off with a lot of people who weren't hot and heavy on that. For example, I think they fell off with John Gardner. I don't know. John Gardner's a close friend of mine and he's been very responsible just as I've been with him. I've never talked about my leaving details, nor has he to me, any details, so I don't know what happened. But my own hunch is that relations got very strained because it was plain that John did not approve of governmental policy. He may not have gotten into the Vietnam problem, but he did think the cities were all priority, and I agree with him. So the President didn't like that. There's no question about it.

M: This was the direct cause of your decision to leave--your Vietnam views?

F: Yes. Reporters have asked me that, and I was always careful about how to answer because it sounds as though I had been consulted about Vietnam, and they have not taken my advice or that I had a direct responsibility. And it wasn't my business at all. I can't really complain. They let me come up to bat in areas that weren't my responsibility. I talked to twelve at least--I could count them--but at least twelve men close to the President, all of whom heard me out, including Dean Rusk, and never held a grudge against me, never called me names. Some once in a while would get mad and talked about "summer soldiers" and things. But, on the whole I couldn't say these guys hadn't been gentlemen. So you can't say to the press, "I quit in protest," because the next thing you know you're calling your colleagues a bunch of bums--morally and every other way, and you're adding to the hatred in the streets, which I didn't want to do.

But there were two basic reasons I left. One was I didn't like the war, and with a campaign year coming up I wasn't going to campaign for it. And I would have had to. Also, I wanted to speak out as a citizen.

The other thing is my integrity was involved in my own programs. They were going downhill. I would have had to front for them and say everything's fine, when I thought it was rotten. Now, if there had been a war, if we had been attacked in some dastardly fashion and my programs suffered, I would have been a good soldier and stayed on. The cause of it, though, was a war in which I didn't believe, so the war obviously was the cause of my leaving, of course, I mean in that sense. As I say, the only thing that's hard about saying that is that it sounds as though I was called upon to initial memoranda saying "Yes, it's all right to escalate, and I don't agree." This was not my area.

M: What about the practice of leaving for reasons of that kind, quietly, which seems to become the standard method--George Ball, you. There are others, too.

F: I didn't feel my departure was so quiet, and by the way neither did certain people in the White House, including the boss himself.

M: Well, he was fairly quiet for a month or two or so, wasn't he?

F: No. Well, I spoke out explicitly after I left, but the press had the story, and most of them had the story right. I didn't have a press conference or anything. It was said I did, but I didn't. But the story leaked. The President took too long to acknowledge the resignation, I guess. They had the right facts, basically, and what I wouldn't do is deny it. They called me on the phone or tried to reach me during the day. Marvin Kalb who broke the story first said he picked it up in New York, came in and wanted to go on the air with it. I said, "Hold off, let me tell the White House, so that they can get a statement out first." It didn't happen. I didn't get a statement. He broke the story, and then I was asked by half a dozen people in the administration in order of rank on up and up, and each call got a little higher, to deny

the story. That I wouldn't do. I thought I was being very quiet in a sense by not affirming it. But I wouldn't deny it.

Of course, sometimes reporters tell you what they're going to say. You have to talk to them to get it straightened out and to get the right tone into it, so I did talk to some on the phone. There was no reporter in my office that evening. Fortunately, from the President's point of view, I guess, the McNamara thing broke by accident the same day, so mine was a little bit hidden.

But there could be very little doubt in any knowing person's mind, reading the stories, that I quit over Vietnam--very little doubt. There are people in the White House who haven't forgiven me to this day. It's not causing me any pain, but they regard it as a terrible thing to do.

M: Those people aren't at the White House anymore either, incidentally.

F: No. But they regarded it as a terrible breach--some of them. I don't think everyone. Now, why is that?

That is a very interesting question. Well, I won't speak for others. Let me speak for myself. I didn't follow the pattern of silence, and when I got out I spoke. I thought it was necessary to do so, not only because I was opposed to Vietnam but because someone should put it in a way that wasn't the usual wild man's way of putting it. I respected the people with whom I worked. I thought it ought to be possible in this country to say you're opposed to even something like a war and not call people on the other side bums, or worse.

So I wanted to do this. I think a man lives his own life. He doesn't sell himself out to a government or anybody else. This war is a cruel thing, causing terrible devastation and suffering. I'd been quiet for two and a half years about it. I had my rights to speak up as a citizen. So--I think it's odd that people don't speak up more. Now why is it?

Well, in my own case, I, number one, was terribly concerned about the divisions in the country. And you throw yourself at the mercy of press men who like sensationalism. That's number one. And it would have been embarrassing to me because they no doubt would have made it seem as though I was the center of the anti-Vietnam cabal, as it were, in the State Department. And I wasn't at the center of any cabal, but it could have come out that way, particularly because of my close relations with Fulbright. It would have been said, "well, I was Fulbright's man in the State Department," which is true. But it would not have been true to say that Fulbright was getting me to do his work dealing with State Department. So you have to handle the story well. From that point of view if you call a big press conference and make a big deal about it, you're off to the races. It's not yours anymore. That's point one.

Point two, I thought it would have almost laughably exaggerated my own importance in the Vietnam thing.

Number three, we were in a war. I do know how those things are interpreted. I didn't want North Vietnam or the Soviet Union or anybody else to get any wrong signals. As it was they took some wrong signals out of it because McNamara and I left the same day, or it leaked the same day. I've seen intelligence reports since, of things said, Russian speculation about. . .Here it's not a question of helping or hurting. You just know in international affairs people have got to get the facts. And there was at that time not the slightest sign inside the administration of a change in Vietnam policy. Now all of these are reasons why people particularly in State act quiet and responsibly. But I don't think responsibility means being absolutely quiet. But they try. It's a delicate and difficult problem.

Then, of course, I think the final thing is, if you get into a fight with the President--particularly this president--God damn, you don't know what the hell's going to happen. He's got more access to the press than you have. He might have gotten out, you know, of control and said things--well, some things that were said at the White House weren't true about me, fortunately. I don't say the President said them, but they were not true. Only one columnist that I know published this untruth--that I hadn't talked to anybody about it. That was--I forget who they are now. But they gave the story out to others, I assume. Well, I heard they did because reporters called me up, but they believed me. They didn't believe the President. But if you get into a big public fight then you're kind of--

M: You can't win in a public fight.

F: You can't win. It isn't a question of whether you win the argument with the President. If you're in that kind of a match, nobody wins. It was the issue that counted and not me personally. And you don't want to personalize issues, you see. I think all that's involved is why people tend to get out quietly. But as I say, I didn't. It may look to the outsiders I got out quietly, but from the inside it certainly didn't feel it. They were angrier at me, I think, than almost anybody about that time.

M: One further insight that you might have better chance to give than most people I've talked to. You're a member of the intellectual community; your friends are in the intellectual community. What's in your opinion--I understand it has to be speculative largely--but the basic reason why Mr. Johnson could never get along with the intellectuals

F: Golly, this is hard. Let's start with the simpler things. I think there's an element of snobbishness in it. He has the manner of a South Texan.

M: Snobbishness on the intellectual side.

F: That's right. He has the manner of a South Texan. To a northern eastern seaboard intellectual and the people who copy them, it sounds like the accents of ignorance. His rhetoric is inflated. The present rhetoric among intellectuals is the understatement. They liked John Kennedy, and it was three-quarters style that they liked. So there's that surface problem and it's regional snobbishness, I have no doubt.

The second thing is that I think the intellectuals quite correctly perceive Mr. Johnson as unintellectual--but deeper than unintellectual anti-intellectual. Now, not anti-intellectual in the usual sense. Johnson respects Ph.D.'s. He's scared of them to some extent, in my view. He wanted people like that in the government. It isn't that. He's not a Joseph McCarthy at all. But when you get down to the ultimate issues Johnson goes from sentiment, from feeling, from gregariousness, from "I like him," "I don't like him," from a club feeling, and the intellectuals correctly perceive that. Now, of course, that's even a little ironical. The intellectuals do the same darn thing!

M: I was going to say, there's not a clubbier group in the world!

F: They're terribly clubby. Look at them on politics. They're sentimental; they talk about reason while shrieking quite unreasonably. I have very few illusions about that club. Nevertheless, they, priding themselves rather self-righteously on their purity, see in Mr. Johnson a fellow who basically is unreasonable. I think that's part of it.

But I think the biggest reason is really a quite simple one. The intellectuals after all might not have adored Harry Truman, but they stood for him and voted for him, liked him. The biggest reasons are his policies. There's no mystery about it. The Vietnam War hit the intellectual community hardest--not just morally; they would be the first,

just as with abolitionism, to get mad--it hit them practically. Most of them are in universities. And the groups that are most hit practically is the eighteen to twenty-two/twenty-three year old age group. The government never seemed to understand that objections among the young were not objections to the draft or having to risk your life, maybe some, but that isn't the issue. The issue is kids not wanting to fight in a war they don't think is a just war! I don't remember any generation being put to that kind of a test before. I wasn't. I fought in World War II. I didn't like it. Well, in fact, I was very proud of it after I was through. Once you survive, and you're proud and even when I went in I was proud to go in. You know, you don't like having to spend three or four years of your life that way, and it was sometimes pretty rough. But I never had a moral problem about it. I did it proudly--my country and a good cause. Well, the kids don't feel that way now. The first generation in America that probably has been pushed this way.

M: And the intellectuals hear it first.

F: We have to live with them every day. So I don't see any mystery about it. And then Johnson's explanations got harder and harder to take. Now, then we talk about a credibility gap. My own view is that I think it's important that people in the administration give their view about the credibility gap. I never thought the President told untruths or lied or anything big. He did have peculiar ways of saying "I'm not going someplace," and then turn up there, which was unnecessary. I understand that he did say in his office at the time the Dominican intervention certain things "a lot of people being killed," and it wasn't true. But, by and large, at least in my experience with my stay, he was on big things meticulous, saying what he thought was true on anything really important. But he certainly thought some very strange things were true,

particularly about Vietnam. I think it got harder and harder for citizens to believe that the President of the United States could be so wrong and so they thought he was trying to pull the wool over their eyes. Now I think the wool was pulled over his eyes. He was believing what he wanted to believe.

M: And what he was told.

F: What he was told. And it is true that he cut off people who were disagreeing with him. But every president's in that spot. Even the assistant secretary is in that spot. You only know what people tell you. The question is whether you use your brains enough so you don't believe everything you're told. Or you get some bright guy and say, "Go look into this one again from another point of view." And, you know, you read the newspaper and you don't believe everything you read in the newspaper. I think Mr. Johnson wanted to believe this. Now why did he want to believe it? The poker-playing syndrome again, "the next pot's mine."

Also, I think he's a conscientious man. I think the same thing for Dean Rusk. They are both men of great conscience. And if you have been giving the orders that are leading to a lot of deaths you don't like to believe that it's been a terrible miscalculation or a bad cause. So your every instinct is to defend the position, you see.

Then of course the intellectuals didn't help because they made it a moral thing. It is moral. I'm not denying that, but you're not going to convince men like Rusk and Johnson to change their minds by calling them immoral. They don't feel immoral. They're not immoral in any ordinary sense. You just stiffen them.

M: You've been extremely patient, and my quarter of four is up. Are there any subjects you think are important to put down we haven't mentioned.

F: There are a lot, but I think I would like to mention just one thing, because in my corner of the Johnson Administration we really had two great opportunities to get important policies through despite the war. By the way, I think we did accomplish a good deal despite the war. But the other great chance was right after the CIA blow-up when the Katzenbach committee was formed. I don't if it was my suggestion that eventually turned the scales, but I did make the suggestion--maybe others did too, that John Gardner be on that committee. John Gardner and I talked about it and that committee did come out with I think essentially the sound decision to stop that kind of thing. I think John had a lot to do with it.

They also recommended that a new committee be formed to come up with a positive proposal, a new way to do this job. Dean Rusk was made chairman. I think the committee was unfortunately composed right from the start. Rusk was too busy and in no mood to make changes. The secretariat was provided from the Bureau of the Budget partly because, I guess, CIA stuff is hidden all through the budget and they're the only ones who know. But it may have been other reasons. They, too, were in no mood for really tinkering. The congressmen who were put on it, with only one or two exceptions, men with no interest in the subject who never showed up. The citizens' group was good, but they weren't free to act without the others. Rusk asked me to act as kind of a brain trust for the committee and for him, and I pushed very hard for the most ambitious possible change. I thought it might not be politically right at that moment--that's what people told me--but that maybe Congress would be pleased to get something new and fresh for a change, rather than this warmed over stuff they were getting. And I thought the time was right. I had a lot of support from Republicans as well as Democrats

on the committee and in Congress. Fulbright on this was a prince. He just pushed, even though it meant major reorientation of the Fulbright program and maybe even loss of that title, and all the rest. He showed no proprietary interest. The Rusk Committee just never made its report to Congress or to the President. They just dropped it. It was almost a perfect illustration of what happened in that government. It just sort of petered out. The war just took everybody's energies and attentions and in the end when I left the government it was sleepwalking, to my mind.

M: And still had a year to go.

F: Right.

M: Okay, sir, I certainly thank you.

[End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview I]

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In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 21 of Title 44, United States Code and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth, we, Susan Frankel Hunter and Howard Owen Hunter of Atlanta, Georgia do hereby give, donate and convey to the United States of America all our rights, title and interest in the tape recording and transcript of the personal interview conducted with Charles Frankel on January 29, 1969, in New York City and prepared for deposit in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

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Susan Frankel Hunter
Donor

May 20, 1980
Date

Howard Owen Hunter
Donor (Co-Executor)

May 17, 1980
Date

acting James E. O'Neill
Archivist of the United States

June 30, 1980
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Legal Agreement Pertaining to the Oral History Interview of Charles Frankel

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 21 of Title 44, United States Code and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth, I, Carl Frankel of New York City do hereby give, donate and convey to the United States of America all my rights, title and interest in the tape recording and transcript of the personal interview conducted with Charles Frankel on January 29, 1969, in New York City and prepared for deposit in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

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Carl Frankel
Donor

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Date

acting James E. O'Neill
Archivist of the United States

June 30, 1980
Date