INTERVIEW I

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G: Mr. Hackett, let's start with your experience with the Juvenile Delinquency Committee. What insights did you gain from that that were applicable in the Community Action Program as it was planned?

H: Well, I think the insights that we gained were several. One [was] that the federal government itself--the programs that the federal government was running--were not effective, and that there had to be some way in which those programs could be improved. Secondly, I think we came to the conclusion that there was, at the local level, a good deal of ineffective programs and lack of planning and coordination. So I think the general conclusion we came to [was] that the local level lacked any planning capability and so did the federal level. We felt that what should be done--that we had to plan if we were going to make any impact on delinquency, and we had to plan at both levels. I think that would be the general conclusion that we came to.

Operationally what happened was that we set up a very basic criteria and provided planning grants to nineteen cities. The criteria for those grants was to pull together the public and private sector and to develop a coordinated attack on delinquency. At the

federal level we set up a committee consisting of the Labor Department, Justice Department, and HEW, which was meant to be a responsive mechanism to that local comprehensive plan.

G: The question of community participation and the whole thrust of self-help and community involvement, did this come from your juvenile delinquency experience?

H: Yes, I think prior to coming up for the delinquency program, or what became the delinquency program, I spent about six months talking to people all over the country, asking them what they would do if the delinquency legislation passed, and therefore traveled into Harlem and Watts and a lot of the ghettoes of the country. It became evident, at least to me, that there were a great many problems which would take a very long time to resolve, and that one of the key things that had to be done was somehow to get the participation of the people living in those areas, particularly the leadership, involved in the development of programs. So I think participation of the poor really came out of that experience.

G: How did the grants to the nineteen cities work out?

H: You have to remember that back in the sixties when you mention planning, there weren't that many people who knew a great deal about it and it was not necessarily something that they wanted to hear. I think that we learned that it was possible to develop a plan over a twelve-month, eighteen-month period, that it was possible to bring together the public and private sector to work on the plan, and it was possible to develop effective programs. However, we also learned how difficult it was and how complex it was. So in the nineteen [cities], I think that generally we came to the conclusion that what we were

dealing with was going to be a long-term operation. You also have to remember, back in the sixties, that the Kennedy Administration followed the Eisenhower Administration, and there just weren't that many people either at the federal level or at the local level who were experienced at either trying to do something about poverty or certainly about developing a comprehensive plan.

G: Did the approach of extensive planning create problems with the political necessities of achieving some sort of tangible results or putting projects into application? Was there a problem with the long-term planning nature of the programs?

H: I don't fully understand that question.

G: I guess what I'm asking is, did you feel pressure to put programs into effect before the planning process was completed?

H: Oh, yes. Congresswoman Edith Green became very critical of the approach that we developed and the approach that we implemented. We had thirty million dollars, which does not sound like very much money today, but it was in those days. I think the conclusion we came to [was] that we could have spent thirty million dollars in any one city in the country and could have legitimately responded to individual applications from a variety of organizations. I think this is what Edith Green saw as the mandate. But I think the conclusion we came to [was] that that money would have been wasted. It would have just reinforced what existed without any real beneficial results. So I think there was pressure for action. There was pressure for sort of the traditional way of granting money, and there was some resistance to go through a twelve-to-eighteen-month planning phase prior to action.

G: Now what would you look for in designing a program like this? What were the elements of success as opposed to failure?

H: Well, there are two parts. I think one was what type of programs they came up with [such as] Mobilization for Youth, which had been going on in New York City on the Lower East Side of New York. Columbia University School of Social Work and the city and people on the Lower East Side had been working on a comprehensive approach prior to the Kennedy Administration getting involved in this program.

So I think there were two things we were looking for. We were looking for mechanisms, creative new mechanisms, for how to channel the public and private sector, as well as effective programs. I think most of the programs that ultimately ended up in the War on Poverty came out of the experimental programs developed by Mobilization for Youth and HARYOU-ACT [Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited Associated Community Teams] in Harlem.

The second part of it is what we learned in the Lower East Side experiment. The board was made up of people from Columbia and people from the city, plus residents of the community. We quickly found that that was a conflict model when the city suddenly realized that some of the rent strikes were initiated by the local organization, that they were, in effect, lobbying against the city, and that mechanism therefore was not an effective one.

G: Did you therefore look to something that would lead to less conflict or confrontation?

H: One of the best models was the one that followed the Lower East Side and that was in Harlem, where we granted planning money to both Adam Clayton Powell's group and

Kenneth Clark's group. It went through Mayor [Robert] Wagner's office, and over an eighteen-month period they came up with a comprehensive plan, one of the better ones. And secondly, they came up with one organization. There was a certain amount of conflict between both HARYOU and, at that time, ACT, which was Adam Clayton Powell's group, and at the end of the eighteen-month period they merged into one organization and had on paper an excellent program. Therefore the confrontation here was between Harlem and the city. It was not necessarily a confrontation, but it allowed the city to deal with one organization rather than fifty to a hundred different organizations within the Harlem community.

That model, I think, had a great deal to do with the recommendations that we finally came up with on the War on Poverty, that it was possible within a community to involve the residents of neighborhoods in the planning process. And the confrontation, if you want to call it that, was really legitimately between the residents of the neighborhood, as articulated through a plan, and the city. What the federal government would therefore have to be responsive to would be to the city's plan that would be made up of a series of locally devised plans from a variety of neighborhoods.

G: Did you see anything inherently wrong with confrontation?

H: No, as long as the confrontation was based on a carefully thought through plan. We felt there was going to be a confrontation anyway, that the conditions were horrendous, and that they were not going to be solved overnight, and there would be confrontation of a different type without careful planning. Therefore, I think we probably opted for this process which allowed the residents of the community to become involved, and that

would lessen the conflict.

In other words, if you talked to Mayor Wagner and said, "There's going to be a great deal of trouble in Harlem, and you have really an option. One is to try to deal with fifty to a hundred different organizations who are going to be after funds from you to rectify some of their difficulties, or you can deal with one organization that has played a major role in developing programs that they perceive to be solutions to the problems that they face." We felt the latter was much more practical and would lessen the confrontation that was going to come anyway, or the explosion that was going to come anyway.

G: Your juvenile delinquency program was funded through the cities, is that right? Through the mayors' offices, local governments?

H: Yes. Our criteria, we dealt with mayors, but again, one of the key criteria was to bring together the public and private sector and the local neighborhoods. So most of the programs took place in local neighborhoods within the city. But the mayor, who represented the public sector, has to be involved obviously in it.

G: Did you ever see the need of bypassing city hall in this stage?

H: No. We felt the element fight had to take place--or the element programs--had to take place within the neighborhood. Therefore, one of the key things was to get the neighborhood people involved in the development of the plan. But we also saw that the public sector was critical. So the plan really had to be okayed by the mayor. Now there's been a great deal of controversy on that, and I think we've been accused of bypassing the mayor.

I'll give you another example. In Los Angeles, they set up, to meet our criteria, a new non-profit organization which consisted of a representative of the state government as well as the county and municipal government and the two school systems in Los Angeles County and Los Angeles city. The program took place in Watts. So that's an example of the type of creative mechanism that could be developed to bring together all the resources.

G: Did you have any problems with city hall during this stage?

H: I feel any problem we had was probably in Chicago. It was not with Mayor [Richard] Daley. He was a very powerful mayor, who did not look lightly on a neighborhood developing its own power base without it going through city hall. But it did not become a major problem.

The interesting thing is that the mayors, I think, were resistant to it, there's no question, but I think they fully did not understand what we were trying to do. I think the League of Cities Conference of Mayors now--and we dealt with them at that time, John Gunsler [?]--would be very supportive, and are very supportive, of this very concept that we put forward back in the sixties.

G: Where there any other components of the subsequent War on Poverty that came out of this juvenile delinquency experience?

H: Well, as I say, I think most of the programs--legal services, child care--came from the demonstrations that were set up, and a good deal of them, I think, can be traced to Mobilization for Youth on the Lower East Side.

G: I noticed one author showed a comparison of Mobilization for Youth programs, listing

work-study sorts of things, job creation, maybe a youth corps, things like this, on the one hand, and comparing them with the various titles in the act. I don't know how much realignment or readjustment there was, but was that program used as a model in preparing the act?

H: Well, what happened on the act, based on our experience in those nineteen communities--the conclusions we came to after we had had about two or three years of experience dealing with the nineteen communities--our recommendation was that, one, we did not know that much about poverty and therefore should go very slowly. Secondly, that what we recommended is not programs but a process, and that the process ought to consist of really a planning period at the local level, the development of a comprehensive plan, and the establishment at the federal level of a responsive mechanism.

That was reflected in [Title II of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964]. We wrote Title II. We made the argument that what you needed to successfully mount or develop a process--and again, it was not a program that we recommended but a process--that you needed the president of the United States, you needed a cabinet-level committee, you needed an independent staff drawn from the various agencies, and you needed some money to do research and set up demonstration projects. Our recommendation was clearly that we should move very slowly, that we ought to set up the mechanism, and I think we recommended ten demonstration projects. Through this process of having the federal government, each federal agency, reviewing its component of a comprehensive plan, and through the final decision-making being made at the cabinet

level with the full cabinet participating, and having the plans reviewed by an independent staff, as well as people at the various federal agencies, through that process reform could be made of existing programs at the federal level, and that new legislation could be developed based on the need as expressed through the locally developed plans.

I can't re-emphasize enough that what we recommend was not programs, but a process within which the best thinking in the country could be heard. That decisions could be made at both the local level and at the federal level, and that there would be some accountability for the results of those decisions. I think what's been misunderstood is the difference between process and a mechanism and programs. What we recommended was not a program, but a process. What happened was that what I'm speaking about now is reflected in Title II, which we helped draft, and that Title I and all the other titles were added to the legislation, which made it an operating agency and not a mechanism based in the White House.

G: Did you see it more as a coordinating thing rather than an operation?

H: Yes. It was to establish at the federal level a responsive mechanism.

G: Did you ever get any insight into President Kennedy's thinking about an attack on poverty?

H: Well, our involvement in it really came only after, I guess, the Council of Economic Advisors and the Bureau of the Budget had reviewed the various department plans or recommendations for War on Poverty. Although I knew President Kennedy and was obviously very close to Robert Kennedy, I think that--certainly from Robert Kennedy--our approach was looked upon as a practical, sensible way of going about developing [a

program].

That's really another thing I would emphasize, that we were really developing a program. Before you developed it, this process had to be set up and the President and the cabinet could make a decision on what type of war they really wanted to wage. Again, I re-emphasize how little anybody knew, how little experience anybody had had at fighting poverty. We thought the worst thing to do would be to rush in with a program which might raise people's expectations and not be successful.

G: Were all nineteen of these programs in operation at the time of the [task force]?

H: Yes. Once the poverty program was launched, those nineteen cities were in the lead and got a great deal of money from OEO [Office of Economic Opportunity]. They were very much sort of in the forefront, because they had had some background and some experience.

G: Don't let me skip over anything, but I gather the next stage is BOB [Bureau of the Budget] requesting you to submit this general--

H: They were very simple memorandums really. They were two or three pages. I think BOB liked them--or accepted them--because they perceived things in an entirely different way than the departments perceived things. They have an opportunity to look across the board and look more comprehensively at a variety of federal programs which are targeted at particular problems, and I think this approach made some sense to them.

G: Now you worked closely with the people in BOB. Let's go in more to their operation and their thinking on this subject at the point you were involved with them. Were they oriented more toward urban poverty than rural poverty, would you say?

H: That's hard for me to answer. I think where we saw eye-to-eye was on the issues of one, planning; two, I think we saw eye-to-eye on comprehensive approaches rather than categorical programs. I think we found a responsive chord in the federal government being a reactor, rather than the principal actor. And I think we saw eye-to-eye on a method of bringing about change within established federal programs.

G: Did BOB feel that the existing programs were not relevant to the poor?

H: Yes. I think that there was no question in our minds that the federal programs in operation at that time were ineffective.

G: Can you cite some examples?

H: Well, I think vocational education. I think you take vocational education; I think you take the Employment Service. Any analysis of those two organizations and structures, I think there was absolutely no question that they were not doing what Congress intended. I think the issue became how could you possibly modify or change those two institutions. What we felt is that if, through a series of demonstration projects, if the plans as developed locally were very critical of the Employment Service--which I think they would have been--and ineffectiveness of the Employment Service in dealing with poor people, and [if they] would have complained about the vocational education programs not training young people for jobs that existed, that that would have supplied the ammunition at the federal level through the cabinet-level committee to begin to modify those programs.

G: Did BOB, do you think, see community action as a means not merely of coordinating or selecting among the different services and programs what was relevant to this particular

area, but also of making the residents in poverty areas politically--I don't mean in terms of partisan politics--a factor, a force in the local political structure?

H: No, I think they were more enamored or more interested in planning and coordination, and in mechanisms as a means of making the dollars become more effective. I think that community action--[in] our early dealings with them, we really weren't talking about community action. I think that community action got all mixed up once the War on Poverty finally started in OEO, because I think nobody really understood what that meant, and nobody understood what "maximum feasible participation of the poor" meant, and it wasn't defined. The only person that really articulated what it meant was the Attorney General, Bob Kennedy, when he testified, and nobody really questioned him on it. Once OEO started, the language was there; Title II was there. Since nobody had really defined it, it became what it became. I think that if you talked to a variety of people who helped draft it that there might be some conflict between them on what it really meant.

So community action, what it meant to me was that in New York City that the mayor should design a comprehensive poverty program including the public and private sector. That he ought to, in his own self-interest, develop some means by which he involved neighborhood leaders and neighborhood residents in the design and development of that program. We weren't going to tell him how to do that, but we said that a key criteria was that it might be in his self-interest and the self-interest of New York City to have the residents somehow participate in it. My thought has always been that the HARYOU-ACT model was one way of achieving that objective.

G: What did community action mean to you when the mayor did not have this enlightened

viewpoint? You had that experience, let's say, with Chicago.

H: That's right. And I think, well, then we had lost complete, or any, influence we had over the program once OEO began. But I think what we would have recommended to the President was that he bring in and talk to mayors almost on an individual basis to explain to the mayors what was at stake and what the problems were and why. Rather than being threatened by involving Harlem or the leaders of Harlem in this proposed approach, that it might be in their self-interest. I think that educational process never took place, and the War on Poverty started, and there was Title II, there was maximum feasible participation of the poor, and I think that it was never understood and really got out of hand. What it finally meant was that the local community action board, that poor people or a third should be on that board. That's not what we meant at all.

G: But you did seem to stress that they should be involved in the planning stages, when Senator Kennedy testified before the--

H: Very much so. But again, I go back to the two models, one model being on the Lower East Side where you had a community board made up of a city, the Columbia School of Social Work, and local residents. That model was not a workable one because there was an obvious conflict between the residents and the city sitting on the same board. Therefore, we never felt that poor people should be on a board where they are outnumbered. [We felt] that it was far better to try to encourage realistic participation by providing money within the various neighborhoods to encourage the leaders and the citizens to develop their own plan for that neighborhood, and then have it reviewed by a city-wide group. That the political action that would take place would be obviously the amount of

money would be finite going into that city, and that the mayor and the citywide group would have to make a decision of how much money resources went into Harlem versus the South, Bronx versus Bedford-Stuyvesant. But I think the key thing we were advocating for was participation of people that were residents of the area in which poverty was most prevalent.

Again, that goes through a process. In effect, what we were saying is that the president of the United States would say to a mayor, "We're guilty of forcing you to go through and apply for a great many categorical programs that don't work perhaps, and perhaps you're guilty of mounting programs or implementing programs at the local level that don't work. The arrangement we will make with you is that if you pull together a comprehensive plan, that we will expedite that comprehensive plan at the federal level, and we will do that by setting up a cabinet-level committee with an independent staff that will review your plan. Each agency will review the part that they are responsible for legislatively, and we will expedite that whole process. We want to insure that you're accountable for the plan, and that we're accountable for reviewing it. But we don't want to have you accuse us of holding up, or not making grants, or whatever it might be," which is what the communities were critical of. And at the same token, we didn't want the federal government to be critical of local government, which they were. So we felt this was again a mechanism within which a process could take place.

The added thing to that would be the only key criteria we were putting on the mayor was that he, besides bringing in the private sector, ought to bring residents of particularly the poverty areas into that process in some way. So the criteria was very

simple.

G: From the time that the Budget Bureau got in all of these requests and sifted them down to basically the community action approach, were you involved in any of these meetings? I guess some of them took place at the White House.

H: Prior to the assassination, we were involved in a great many, but after the assassination, understandably, we were not, and, in effect, we were trying to salvage what we possibly could from this concept, which did not have the support of the highest levels of government, which was one of our major intentions. But to mount something that we were suggesting, that you really could not do it or achieve the goals of sort of reforming the federal government and how it operated and trying to do something about the local government and how it operated without the president of the United States. Since we no longer had the support of the president of the United States, that we were, in effect, fighting a rear-guard action and did the best we possibly could to persuade the people on the task force to our way of thinking. We were not successful.

G: How was President Johnson's lack of support manifested?

H: Well, he appointed Sargent Shriver to head up the task force and to make some sense out of all the chaos that was going on and all the conflicts that were going on between the various agencies. I think we were unable to persuade Sargent Shriver. What we had recommended and what we were recommending, he just did not accept that as a practical approach.

G: Why was this, do you think?

H: Well, I think you're going to have to talk to him. But I think it basically was programs, I

think the conflict between programs and action. Sargent Shriver is a very action-oriented person. I think it's very hard to say to anybody that what we ought to go through is a long period of planning, that what you're taking on is a very difficult, complex thing. You asked earlier about planning. Planning falls on deaf ears, because most people want to move and solve problems and move into action.

G: Was there a consideration at all of the 1964 presidential campaign?

H: We've always been accused of that. We never considered it. Well, I mean in 1964. . . .

G: I'm not stipulating who. I'm just wondering if you felt any pressure at all during this whole time span.

H: Well, our pressure was that we did not want President Kennedy--and I would make the argument any president--to make mistakes, or make foolish mistakes, and we felt maybe one of the real mistakes that could be made was to rush into something that had not been carefully thought through, that was major and was very complex. So I think we--based on our three and a half years of experience--were sort of humbled by the magnitude of the problem. I think that what happened after the assassination was that there was a rush for action. We felt it was premature. But once the momentum gets going and President Johnson gave the green light, there was no stopping.

G: That would seem like too much support rather than a lack of support.

H: I think that's correct.

G: Was Sargent Shriver skeptical of the community action approach when he was first appointed?

H: Yes, I think so. I think again, in the nineteen communities where we had demonstration

projects--one of those was Chicago, and I think the Chicago project was not that successful, and I think he'd probably heard from Mayor Daley or had gotten wind that Community Action, or the approach that we advocated, would just cause a lot of problems. There would be a lot of confrontation and [it would] not be workable. So I think he was persuaded, and I think that often happens, that he had a mandate, and he wanted to get his own people and develop his own approach.

G: There is some suggestion that it was the Attorney General that convinced him of the importance of community action. Do you recall if this took place?

H: Well, again, community action--I think part of the problem is just on the semantics of what community action was. Again, I repeat, we never, or hardly ever, to my recollection, talked about community action. What we were talking about is the process of setting up the mechanism within which that process could take place, which is basically that local communities involving the poor would develop something that's never been done before: first of all, going through a planning process and developing a comprehensive approach to a series of problems, and then, rather than have the federal government dictate, the federal government became responsive to those plans.

I think community action has been overstressed and overblown. Just like this conversation taking place here, part of the reason we were unable to convince the task force that the approach that we were talking about made any sense, I don't think it's that difficult to understand, but we did not have the ability to articulate it. I think that what did happen was community action was perceived as sort of a confrontation politics, that community action was a lot of people causing a lot of problems, rather than what we were

talking about.

G: I have read in a number of different accounts--I think it's in Arthur Schlesinger's biography of Senator Kennedy--that the Bureau of the Budget people and some of the other people who were on the task force prevailed on the Attorney General to convince Mr. Shriver to leave that approach in, community action. Do you know if that took place at all? Do you have any recollection? I'm not so much interested in the nature of it as the details of whether or not that took place.

H: Right. That's actually what did happen after the task force I attended--I was the [inaudible] representative on the task force. I think what happened--and obviously due to the Attorney General--was that they allowed us to write Title II. We wrote Title II basically in the Justice Department with Norb Schlei. So I think the conclusion they came to [was that] rather than fight these people, we may as well live with them, so let's have them write down their title while we really get to more serious things. That's when they decided in order of priority to write Title II, Title III, Title IV, which again changed the whole thing. Title II would have been the whole thing as far as we were concerned.

G: I would like as much detail on that chain of events as you can recall. Do you recall who talked to the Attorney General and asked him to pursue this point with Mr. Shriver?

H: Well, that's a very good [question]. I can remember a conversation in the Attorney General's office with the Secretary of Labor and Sargent Shriver in which Sargent Shriver described the Job Corps, which sort of illustrated the different ideas and different approaches people had. You could sort of feel the Secretary of Labor--because what we were arguing for was that it was possible to have coordination between all the

departments of the federal government if you had the president of the United States there and an independent staff. That you could bring support to, or you could have programs modified or improved if everybody took a look at them and if the pressure was there and the evidence was there that they should be changed. But the Shriver--I don't say the Shriver approach, but the approach of the task force was that, in effect, federal agencies do not operate programs very well, therefore we will operate them.

I think it's a bit of a slap in the face and wholly different from our approaches if you're running or if it's in your area of interest, which Job Corps certainly was, to say, in effect, that your department should not run it; we will run it ourselves. The whole idea, the whole concept of coordinated federal approach or coordinated federal responsive mechanism was pretty much down the drain. The whole idea of comprehensive planning went down the drain with that one decision to take away from the Office of Education education programs, and we'll set up these programs, because obviously you can't run them effectively. But we can. Ironically most of those programs were returned from OEO to the departments. Now that's a completely opposite approach to it.

G: You felt that they could run the programs given the right process, is that it?

H: I felt they could run the programs given the right process if they were forced to modify them. The way to modify those programs was to be responsive to a locally developed plan, and to have them scrutinized by a full cabinet, by the staff of the various agencies plus an independent staff where it became obvious to everybody that there should be a modification in how the Employment Service operates. That was the method of bringing about change rather than saying, "Okay, we're going to take the Employment Service

away from you and we're going to set up a parallel organization."

G: And yet it seems like those programs that were delegated to the departments, the Labor Department, the Education Department, were the ones that were the least successful in many respects, and the whole process of overseeing or forcing these departments to comply with the legislative intent seems to have been secondary, perhaps because they were operating their own programs and couldn't oversee what Labor was doing.

H: Again, it's philosophically--I think the choice you had, or the choice the task force had, in mounting the War on Poverty is that either the executive director, which we had in Title II, would be responsible to, as we wrote Title II, a cabinet-level committee, which obviously the chairman would be the president of the United States, and that you'd have an independent staff plus a good deal of experimental money for demonstration projects. The option you had there, and this is the case we tried to make, [was] that you would have an influence over all federal domestic spending, all, rather than have an appropriation to a new department. That's exactly what happened. So I think that our option was that reform was the key thing, the design of a new way of doing things.

G: But was this realistic given the cabinet member's tendency to run his own program the way he [wanted]?

H: Absolutely, because I think, again through our experience--I go back and repeat that there were two areas we were working in: one was program development, and the other one was mechanisms. I think what we had on the delinquency committee--there were three departments, we had three cabinet secretaries, we had three special assistants to those secretaries, we had a small staff, and we had some influence over money--was a workable

thing, there was no question. We did have local plans coming in and we would farm out various components to departments within HEW and within Labor to have them take a look at it.

I think that there was no question that the chairman of our committee, the Attorney General, if he called, the other two secretaries would come to a meeting and there could be various briefs put forward by the independent staff, *et cetera*, so those meetings were staffed out. I was convinced, because in addition to delinquency, we set up a task force on the domestic service corps, and following this same model of having the president interested in it, the cabinet-level committee, the independent staff, *et cetera*, we had two full cabinet meetings of all the domestic cabinet on a Saturday morning in the Attorney General's office, where carefully developed plans laid out by that independent staff were [presented].

It can be done. I just repeat what's essential to it, to make the cabinet work together, is that you need an independent staff and you need the president of the United States. You cannot go into a cabinet-level meeting where each secretary is there without any prepared agenda and without something to review. So the ingredients--besides the mechanism and the president and some money and an independent staff, there had to be something to respond to that they could react to. That was the locally developed comprehensive plan. Then you had a process which was workable. We had tested that through the delinquency approach, and there's no question in my mind that it could work. However, if you didn't have one of those four or five ingredients, it would not.

G: Why do you think Lyndon Johnson named Sargent Shriver the head of the War on

Poverty?

H: Well, I don't really know. I would just speculate that he was related to the Kennedy family, and there were a good many Kennedy appointees or residue that he'd be a good bridge between the two. And also, he'd done an excellent job on the Peace Corps.

G: Did he serve as a bridge between the two?

H: Well, I think he did on hindsight, because I think the fact that we wrote Title II, and Title II got into the legislation.

G: At the time you didn't see it as a move to checkmate your work in the Justice Department?

H: Well, no. I think it was understandable. I mean, I think that we lost influence. I think that's an understandable--

G: But do you think that that was part of his motivation?

H: Part of his motivation how, to checkmate--

G: The Attorney General. Say, rather than the Justice Department and the Juvenile Delinquency Committee taking more of a lead here. I'm just wondering if this--?

H: I don't really know. I don't really know.

G: You didn't think this at the time?

H: No.

G: Was Secretary [Willard] Wirtz bitter about losing, say, the Job Corps?

H: Well, I think yes. I mean, I saw his face fall. I did not discuss it with any detail, but I can vividly remember that meeting. I think that again is understandable. I think that went to the heart of the problem, because--not necessarily on hindsight--our whole

argument to the task force, and particularly to Shriver was, again, having direct control over programs versus having an influence through the process that I've described over all domestic spending. Our argument is that, just like delinquency, that you could not have a categorical, single-shot program, that delinquency was caused by a great many conditions, and certainly poverty is caused by a great many conditions. Therefore, there is no single program that could solve poverty, and therefore, it had to be comprehensive, there had to be a comprehensive approach to it. And therefore, our conclusion was that the only way to do that was the one--and I still believe that's true now--that any problems that we're faced with, that planning has to be a part of it and it should be comprehensive.

G: Were these decisions made by the President rather than by Shriver?

H: I have no idea. I have no idea. But Sargent Shriver is a very strong person, and I think it was understandable what he did. I mean, I certainly understand it. If you're given an assignment I think you like to bring your own people in. I think that he did feel and he was not convinced, based on the evidence, that what you call community action was a conflict model that would cause problems, and he wanted to be far removed from that and get a completely fresh start on it.

G: Do you think that the nature of the program--having programs that would yield more immediate results, having Sargent Shriver as director, having an independent agency in the executive office--that these were more designed to get congressional support, to get the legislation passed, to make it acceptable to the Congress?

H: As I say, I think what was amazing is that the OEO package, the legislation, went through very quickly with not a great deal of scrutiny. And I think Title II went through without

a great deal of scrutiny or understanding of it, and that may be the genius of President Johnson. I think it did. I think what is too bad from our point of view is that again, our recommendation was that this was awful tough stuff and awful complex, and the thinking of it should go on well beforehand. But as I say, it went very quickly and very easily and without a great deal of scrutiny.

I might add, I think the same thing happened with Model Cities, that OEO became conceived of, and I think rightfully so by all the other departments, as just another federal agency. What we argued is that no one department or agency can coordinate all the others, and you needed all the other agencies to work together. That when Model Cities was designed and developed and implemented the same mandate was given to HUD that HUD was going to coordinate the federal effort. The idea was basically the same. You had a targeted neighborhood and you had local involvement in it. But the basic fallacy was the same as OEO, that you gave the responsibility to one agency to try to coordinate, which is just not workable.

G: Let me ask you about the task force [the President's Task Force in the War Against Poverty]. I gather it was set up after Shriver, or as soon as Shriver was named, say around the first of February. Do you recall how you were drawn into it, who called you?

H: I certainly was not a major part of the task force. Not that we were [not] tolerated, but we were not influential in the task force.

G: Who were the influential ones on the task force? You have a partial list.

H: I think Adam Yarmolinsky. I think that most of the people on this list were influential. I certainly was not, or the people I had worked with certainly were not.

G: I had the impression that not only did you come in with some pretty experienced ideas, but that you were responsible for bringing in a lot of other people like Sandy [Sanford] Kravitz and Lloyd Ohlin and Richard Boone.

H: Well, Dick Boone ended up in OEO and Sandy Kravitz ended up in OEO. As I say, a lot of the nineteen cities that we worked with and a lot of the people that worked in the federal government obviously were utilized. It had to happen that way, because again, the number of people who had experience were very, very few. That was one of the strong arguments we had. I mean, it's hard to think of now because there are many, many more experienced. I think that's one of the positive results of it, that there are a great many people with experience. But in those days there were just a handful of people who really had experience.

G: I think you're being too modest though. As you look down that list, can you trace ideas that came from individuals here? Can you recall input, for example? Did [Christopher] Weeks have a particular--

H: Well, as I said earlier, none of these people really were involved in the design of the delinquency approach.

G: Yes, I know. But I'm talking about the package that went to the Hill.

H: Well, none of the people here with the exception of Norb Schlei were involved. We were then limited--not necessarily limited--just to Title II. So the people I worked with worked really on Title II. I think the balance of the people on the task force were working on all the other titles, so it became sort of a segregated thing. Now that may have been a compromise. I can't really. . . .

G: The task force first met at the Peace Corps building?

H: I think so, yes.

G: Can you recall the atmosphere of those early meetings? Who ran the meetings? What the format of the task force meetings were?

H: On hindsight, I think probably typical meetings, there was a lot of excitement. There were a lot of position papers and a lot of ideas, again, all programmatic ideas coming forward. And again, I always go back to the difference between the two, because I think a lot of criticism of our approach is perhaps because we were too inarticulate in making the case, and particularly Pat Moynihan, who was critical of what we were talking about. I think [they] all perceived what we were talking about as programs. It was just the opposite. So I think we had a hard time trying to get across, and I think I can understand how people do not get excited about . . . .

G: Sure. Well, Moynihan saw the evolution of two groups, as I understand his book [*Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding*]: your group as an initial one, and then another group that was largely headed by Jack Conway that took over, I suppose, after the legislative work of the drafting was done and formed the guidelines and this sort of thing. But that group also included Dick Boone and others that had been on your group.

H: Right.

G: Did you think that there was a shift in the focus of the community action aspect of the program?

H: Well, I think so, I think so. I think that again, [there was] that confusion between really what that meant, maximum feasible [participation], and I think it justifiably meant

different things to different people, even under the people who helped draft it. My whole concept of it was based on setting up the mechanisms and trying to push for the bottoms up approach to it.

G: Did you think it meant something else to Dick Boone?

H: I think it did. I think he would agree basically with most everything I've said, but I think he felt stronger about community action. And I think again, without having it carefully thought through, these confusions or misinterpretations or differences of opinion certainly were there. Certainly after it passed, I think that it caused a great many problems.

G: But in the task force meetings, these differences did come to the surface on the nature of community action, is that right?

H: Well, now, I don't--I'll just go back and say that I think they were perceived as confrontation.

G: But was this difference between their version of a confrontation in programs and yours in terms of long-range, carefully thought out planning and more coordination? Was this an issue that the task force focused on?

H: No, no.

G: Then how did you know and how did anyone else know that there were all these differences, if they never came to the surface?

H: As I say, I think what happened was that they were obviously discussed, but I think the decision was made, "Okay, we'll have six or seven task forces, and those task forces will spend their time on particular aspects of the legislation." We were assigned Title II. I think it was perceived as sort of not dissimilar from Title I or Title III or Title IV. I think

it was perceived as an action-oriented thing, and I think in that confusion that's pretty much the way it came out. Because that's probably inevitable that it came out that way because Title II, the way we conceived it, would not work if there were other titles attached to it. So it became confusing. I know administratively afterwards, even though I had left the government, just in visiting OEO, that since it hadn't been carefully defined that they had to keep redefining it and declaring what it was and what the policy was going to be.

G: Here is a list of some of the background papers that were assigned to task force members. Do you recall any particular discussion on any of those papers that might have been significant in the way the legislation evolved?

H: No.

G: Dick Boone--

H: Right.

G: --did the one on community action, is that right?

H: Yes. He did on work-study programs and community action. But I think that lends evidence that it was considered--it's number five, and it's one of a number of programs. So I think in explaining that there were really two separate things, and you could draw the line at the assassination, is prior--what would have taken place or might have taken place was a further study period. The study period would have consisted of--without any new legislation--a cabinet-level committee, an independent staff, some money, and there would have been ten or twelve demonstration projects undertaken. Plans would have come in. The federal government through this new mechanism would have reviewed

those plans, and through that process what would have evolved would then have been recommendations by that independent staff to the president and the cabinet on what a war on poverty should consist of. What we hoped would have happened to that process [is] that it would have been just a continuation of it, with modifying existing legislation, modifying existing programs, and the introduction of new legislation based on the reaction of the federal government to the locally designed plans.

G: Would the coordination have come through the attorney general's office or where would it--?

H: No, it had to come from the president. It had to come from the president. Again, I go back to that--I did not sit through very many cabinet-level committees, but I sat through a number of meetings on the poverty program when the cabinet did meet. I would say that they are not as effective, or they're almost non-workable, unless these other parts of the puzzle are there, and that is one, something to react to. Secondly, having an independent staff who can do all the work on the meeting prior to the meeting taking place, and then having something to decide.

So I think part of the confusion there's been is what we had recommended, which had been accepted, which was not a program. It was really a question of further analysis and study, and to set up a mechanism within which that analysis-study could take place prior to launching any war on poverty. We were very much against announcing any war on poverty.

G: Let me ask you about the Job Corps Title I proposal. From your experience with juvenile delinquency, was the question of Job Corps recruits with criminal records

brought up--the fact that so many of the youth that would naturally be considered for the program had already gotten into trouble and would therefore be excluded? Did you discuss these guidelines and where to draw the line?

H: I didn't. Again, I just would go back--when I saw that being done--to the argument that the Job Corps by itself is not going to solve our problem, that Job Corps has to be interrelated to a whole host of other programs. Therefore you can't take a look at it, and it didn't make any sense saying that Job Corps was going to be a solution.

G: How about VISTA [Volunteers in Service to America]? The concept of a national service corps or domestic service corps was an idea that had been discussed for some while I understand.

H: Right. I headed up a task force, again to study national service, and Dick Boone was already the staff director and did all the programmatic work. But that again was based on the model that I keep going back to, that that's where we had two cabinet meetings on two Saturday mornings in the Attorney General's office, where the staff made the presentations, and that's how that program was developed. It was only a five million dollar program, which convinced me that this larger concept that we talked about could work if you had the various ingredients I talked about.

G: Did you see the national or domestic service corps as something that would be plugged into a community action concept, or did you see it as something by itself, such as the Peace Corps?

H: I saw it as something that would be plugged in.

G: Okay.

H: I saw everything being plugged in, because I think the larger question, what we were talking about was what is the responsibility. That what you really wanted to do was to put as much responsibility as you could in a neighborhood, and that you wanted to figure out over a period of time--and it was not going to be done quickly--what the responsibility was of the neighborhood, of the mayor's office, of the county and the state and the federal government. I think there was a question as to putting as much responsibility as you could at the lowest common denominator of the political structure.

G: Was there much application of the Peace Corps experience in that task force?

H: No.

G: Did Sargent Shriver draw from that experience?

H: No. The Peace Corps had been going on; it had been very successful. So he did not. I think probably the people working on it drew on his experience.

G: What was Adam Yarmolinsky's role in the task force?

H: It is my memory it was a very big one. It was a very big one.

G: Did he more or less chair the day-to-day--

H: He played a major role, particularly on the Job Corps and on the Defense Department's involvement, *et cetera*.

G: Did he lean toward one view as opposed to another?

H: Well, I think he certainly was not on our side of the whole thing. It's just evidenced. I don't think we had very many supporters.

G: I'm going to skip ahead as long as we're talking about him, and ask if you have any knowledge of what happened when he was jettisoned or sacrificed or whatever the term

one should use on that during the legislative fight for [OEO].

H: No, I don't really have any firsthand knowledge. I wasn't involved. My role really, when the Attorney General left, in effect I was pretty much out of it.

G: Do you have any views on how that affected the program, his leaving?

H: No. You see, again, I will just go back, that I--and this is not hindsight--just strongly felt that once the decision was made to put another title on and not go with the Title II approach, that there's nothing really that could happen that would retrieve it, that it was inevitable that it be not--I'm not going to say a failure, but I'm going to say it did not have the potential to live up to what might have happened.

G: Again, Moynihan, in his book, contends that after the act was submitted to the Congress, a lot of the original task force members returned to their departments, and the most forceful advocates of community action gathered. He includes you, Dick Boone, Sandy Kravitz, Fred Hayes, [Harold] Horowitz and Eric Tolmach.

H: But you see, it couldn't work. That's what the difficulty is, when they start talking about an advocate for community action after all those titles have been put in. It was all academic; it didn't make any difference, because there was no responsive mechanism at the federal level. There was no criteria for a comprehensive plan from a municipality. What you were dealing with were a new bureaucracy created by OEO which were the CAPs. That was so completely contrary that I think the difficulty is you wanted to hang a little bit on to the idea of local planning, local *et cetera*, *et cetera*, but that's not what we were talking about. Therefore it's completely alien in concept to what we were talking about.

G: It wouldn't have been possible to draw the community action guidelines in such a way as to force this sort of cooperation?

H: No, because again, the CAP could have been a combination of the public and private sector and could have developed a comprehensive plan, but you had no mechanism at the federal level to be responsive [to]. What you had was one agency, an operating agency, OEO, who could not deliver the other cabinet-level committees and therefore the other programs. That's just a non-workable [plan].

G: Well, why did you all stay then?

H: That's a good question. The hope was, and I think you do the best you can, and you fight for what you think makes the most sense. I think on hindsight, maybe that was a mistake. Maybe we shouldn't have written Title II.

G: And did Jack Conway feel the way you did?

H: Well, again, he had never been involved with us prior. Again, it's always a question of whether that real understanding was there. But the basic decision, once you added an operational program, and you used the Job Corps as an example, that the money that we advocated through Title II was for experimental demonstration projects. They would have funded the demonstration projects. It would not have been a grant program, therefore, it would not have been competitive to existing programs, and therefore would not have been a threat. As soon as you become a threat to the other federal agencies by competing with them and running your own programs, then any hope of coordination is down the drain.

Therefore the basic question was if you're going to solve poverty in the United

States, our approach was that you needed every single federal program there was and more. Therefore you could not compete with the agencies running those programs or be perceived by them as being a threat. Therefore--again, I go back to that mechanism--that was a non-threatening mechanism. The secretaries may not have liked it, but they couldn't fight it if the president of the United States came to a cabinet-level committee, and if there was something to react to, which was a comprehensive, locally developed program with the participation of neighborhood residents in some fashion.

Now what became community action got all mixed up. I mean, OEO is still there, and I think there's no question it's had some impact. But I think what it's left with is another bureaucracy in communities across the country, and it's spent a great deal of money. And we're further away, much further away, than any--we still have categorical programs, we still have revenue-sharing, I think we have things that are not working. I think the ironic thing is that we have the same problems, if not worse, today than what we were faced with then.

G: The Urban Areas Task Force was, I guess, the name given to this group that you were a member of or chaired?

H: Right.

G: Why did it assume this name? Why didn't it just continue on as a subdivision or what have you of the War on Poverty Task Force? Or how did it assume this name?

H: Well, which one are you referring to there?

G: The Urban Areas Task Force.

H: Which came up in what year?

G: That was, I gather--

H: 1964?

G: 1964, spring, 1964, after the legislation was submitted. That was consisting of the group that I named.

H: I think what Sargent Shriver did was to bring in, as those names suggest, people. And obviously you do set up task forces. But they were thinking programs.

G: It was a task force within a task force? Wasn't its main focus Title II?

H: Well, it may have been, but my recollection was that Title II was basically drafted in the Justice Department.

G: But this was after it was sent to the Hill.

H: All right, well, then I was out of it then.

G: Oh, you were?

H: Yes. I only really [participated] during the drafting of Title II, but afterwards then my role diminished very rapidly.

G: Anything else on this Urban Areas Task Force?

H: No.

G: Did you participate in that?

H: No.

G: Really?

H: I played a lesser and lesser role even on the larger task force.

G: As we talk about this, do you recall anyone on the larger task force or the smaller group anticipating the turmoil that later came about?

H: I guess the ironic thing, and a lot of people have wondered about it, is that really on the part of the congressional committees, that they did not really query what Title II was all about and what community action [was], what the language really meant.

G: One man was quoted as telling a senator that if the Congress really understood what this language meant that it would never pass.

H: I think that's correct.

G: Do you?

H: As it was thought of then, when the legislation was presented, and if interviews are done with all the other participants of what they perceived it to be, and again, I go back to what I think is fairly true, that everybody perceived it slightly differently.

G: Do you think that as you perceived it it would have passed?

H: I think Title II as we perceived it didn't require legislation. It could have been done by executive order by the president of the United States. I think really, there is a domestic council now, there has been one, and all we're really saying [is] that there would not have been a big hue and cry. It could be done by the president saying, "I want this done. I want my cabinet to meet. We will detail these people from the various federal agencies, and we will conduct some demonstration projects." So one of the beauties of the approach was that it did not require all this hustle and bustle to come up with--in a very brief period of time--a plan that was going to solve the poverty problem of the United States.

I think the disservice sort of done is that the Kennedy Administration had been accused of, and I think has been subsequently accused, of raising people's expectations. I

don't think based on the evidence that that was an accurate interpretation of what really happened. Because again I repeat, we were not shell-shocked, but we were smart enough to know that from our experience over the three or four years that it was an immense problem, and the worst thing you could do is say that we can solve this thing.

G: Did you have any involvement in the legislative side getting the bill through?

H: No. No, again, as we discussed, I think the Attorney General's testimony--I think he understood it, obviously, but I don't think a great many other people obviously did.

G: You were on the Hill I think when he testified, weren't you?

H: I think so, yes.

G: Was there any strategy, do you think, to play down the community action part or the maximum feasible participation?

H: I think certainly they gave greater weight to all the other titles and again, those were all programs. I think that's a natural [thing to do]. I'm not being critical. I think what's fascinating is that I think that we were talking about a budget then that just went over a hundred billion dollars, and we're talking about a budget now that's going over six hundred billion. You're talking about in those days not a great number of programs dealing with poverty, and now we're talking about an immense number of programs dealing with poverty. I think that we face the same issue.

G: Do you recall the origin of the term "maximum feasible participation"?

H: I think that's a very good question. I can't really, nor can I. . . . But the people who were involved in that were Lloyd Ohlin and Dick Boone, Fred Hayes. There were about five or six people. But it came from that group. But I can't remember who developed it.

G: Was there any input from the Congress in developing the legislative package before it went to the Hill that you recall?

H: No.

G: Was there anyone who represented the Congress in dealing with the task force?

H: Well, Edith Green, of course, didn't see eye-to-eye with our views, but Congressman [John E.] Fogerty from Rhode Island was very supportive of what we were talking about. But basically, no.

G: How about the White House? Did Bill Moyers or any other presidential assistant play a role in the task force negotiations?

H: Now with--well, with the task force but not the Title II part.

G: Anything specific that they did with the task force that you are aware of?

H: Not that I can recollect.

G: Was the maximum feasible participation concept, do you think, introduced because it would insure participation of blacks in the programs in the South?

H: No. The nineteen cities that we made grants to, none of them were in the South. I don't think we did any work at all in the South or the Southwest, which is not necessarily to our credit. I think our major focus was in the large urban areas. I don't think it was--we've been accused of being political. That was not a motivation at all. I think probably--at least I was struck that poverty was most evident in the large urban ghettos.

G: And yet the statistics would seem to support the opposite.

H: I think that's incorrect. As I say, I think that a failure we had--we had a program we worked in Los Angeles with Chicanos, but we did not make any major effort in the

Southwest or in the South.

G: But do you think that the task force considered the problem of blacks being excluded from the local process themselves?

H: I think so. Again, we're in a different time frame. I was talking about the delinquency program. I think there's no question rural poverty was considered by us, and a number of demonstrations of the ten that we recommended should take place in rural areas and should take place in the South, because of the obvious reason of the migration of citizens from rural areas to the urban.

But I think the issue was one of really governmental reform and changing the way the government functioned. I think it was based on the conclusion that the federal programs at that time were not working, were not reaching the poor, and that something had to be done to insure that they did. So it was not an argument that--it went back to Pat Moynihan. Where we disagreed with him is that he conceived us to be talking about programs. Our argument was not programs, that there should be a place where Pat Moynihan or the Pat Moynihans of the world, who have a hundred different ideas, could either communicate them to a local planning [board], become a part of the planning process at a local level, or become a part of the reacting group at the federal level. There would be accountability of both.

Again, we felt there were more brains, more intelligence, more capability at the local level than there was at the federal, and that will always be true. The effort was to involve as many people as possible in at the local level, including the poor, and to have their aspirations reflected in a comprehensive plan.

[End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview I]

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