INTERVIEW I

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INTERVIEWEE: JACK HOWARD

INTERVIEWER: MICHAEL L. GILLETTE

PLACE: Mr. Howard's office, Washington, D.C.

Tape 1 of 1

G: Let's start with your background briefly, Mr. Howard. I believe all the records indicate that you're from California.

H: That's correct. I basically was a newspaperman. I was labor reporter on the San Francisco Chronicle, and in the late fifties had been given an American Political Science Association congressional fellowship for a year in Washington. During that time I obviously caught a piece of Potomac fever, but also made relationships in the House and the Senate, so that early in 1960 I was invited to join the staff of the--after I had returned from San Francisco, that is--Government Information Subcommittee of the House Committee on Government Operations. That was the so-called [Congressman John E.] Moss committee, which was attempting to suppress secrecy around the world, but principally in the United States. The situation in San Francisco had become very uninteresting for me because it was a circulation war and there was no room for good heavy news. It had to be feature and light stuff, and I was interested in more serious implications.

So I came to Washington in 1960, worked on the subcommittee, did some work in the campaign, but not too much. And by coincidence,

with the new administration, within a year or two there came a new under secretary [of labor] from California, Jack Henning. We found each other, and I came in as his executive assistant in 1963. The rest is--just moving on--that the Secretary [Willard Wirtz] picked me out of that position and put me in charge of all the poverty planning in the Labor Department in 1964, and I stayed in that until 1968, when I was his executive assistant during that last year.

G: Did you participate in the War on Poverty task force in 1964?

H: Well, actually, Pat Moynihan was the departmental representative for the top level stuff. I was at the working level, so that I got into the various meetings that we'd have over at the Peace Corps. I guess then Adam Yarmolinsky was doing a bit, and I got involved with those kinds of people more on the implementing and the discussing of how the hell we were going to carve up the pie. But Pat was the person that was representing the Secretary for the initial political discussions.

G: Do you recall at what phase you actually became involved? Did you contribute anything in the way of ideas or memoranda before Sargent Shriver was selected and the task force was officially formulated?

H: Well, I really am not sure of the dates. I know that my involvement began about as early as Moynihan--I don't know how to state it. The Under Secretary was also manpower administrator, and as his executive assistant I sort of oversaw the manpower operation. Basically we had the fighting bureaus within the Labor Department. They couldn't pull together obviously, and so they thought that the power of the

Under Secretary could pull them together, which it couldn't. But I was there sort of overseeing it to a degree.

From the outset the department also had its own youth opportunity activity. Sam Merrick had come down from the Senate as the assistant to the secretary for legislative affairs, and we were pushing some youth bills. I believe there was a hometown youth corps and a few other things, including I think [Hubert] Humphrey's S.1, which was floating around then, youth opportunity corps and so on. That had interested the department for a couple of years, and that would of course be funneled into the Manpower Administration. So when the talks started in, it became clear that the Manpower Administration would be the piece of Labor that would have responsibilities. I'm trying to think of the dates, whether it was March or April of 1964, I'm not sure. At any rate, an internal task force was set up and the Under Secretary put me in charge of it. Before the bill had passed and before I guess Sarge [Shriver] had been--I don't know if Sarge had been designated then, I'm sure he had been--the task then was to see how the hell we could do what the various pieces of legislation called for, and what instruments within the department could carry it out.

Now as for contribution, I certainly was not making any high level political contribution. My main job was to try to carry the program out and to build the structure within the department to carry it out.

G: Do you recall who else was on this task force within the Department of Labor?

H: Oh, yes. Well, we had I guess about fifty or sixty folks: Bill Hewitt, who was on it; a guy who's now deceased, Jildo Cappio; Aryness Wickens, a female civil servant, one of the highest level in government at the time. Those are just some of the names that immediately come to mind within the department. I was given carte blanche really to pick folks, the most imaginative kinds of folks, from every piece of the Manpower Administration and outside the Manpower Administration. So what I did generally was to try to get folks that I thought would really be relatively free from bureaucratic limits and could swing with something that obviously had a high political cachet.

G: In the War on Poverty task force, did people from the various departments represent the views of the departments that had loaned them, or did they more or less represent their own ideas, whatever they happened to feel should be done?

H: Well, I guess my best exposure to that would be with Pat Moynihan. His role, and it may have also been his view, was that the departments had to have a place in the War on Poverty, not only for bureaucratic purposes but also I assume not to waste existing institutions, existing staff, and so forth. Now I don't know if I can say Pat believed that or whether he was just carrying out the Secretary's orders. He's enough of an individual that I suspect that he believed it. But certainly the knock-down-drag-out fights

that we had with the whole operation was precisely over that issue, the delegation of programs and the degree of delegation and the responsibilities that went with it and the funding relationships.

Now as for the other pieces, well, I know the fantastic fight that HEW put up on the student loan program. I know the fight over the Job Corps, where they had two different agencies administering pieces of it, Interior and Agriculture. I tend to believe that in the best tradition of the bureaucracy, the personal views and the institutional views blend, and I suspect that you would be hard pressed to find someone there who didn't believe what he was doing as he spoke for his particular department.

G: I have the impression in talking to a number of people that there were representatives of degrees, that some people were brought in to represent departments, whereas other people were brought in more as free hands to contribute whatever insights they held.

H: I think that's so.

G: How about Eric Tolmach? He was with the Department of Labor also.

H: Isn't that odd? It doesn't even ring a bell. Can you identify him further?

G: I gather he worked more with the press or public information status.

H: Yes, I gather that's possible. I think that's right. Maybe he was a writer or something of that sort. Certainly never got in my arena.

G: How about Merrick? Didn't he also work to some extent?

H: Well, Sam was a disappointed suitor. Sam had come from the Senate committee. He was the Secretary's legislative assistant. He had

put together a small group, a small task force--John Cheston, Mark Battle, and a few other persons--who were supposed to be youth specialists. They had done work in social work and other kinds of things, and they were to be the nucleus if and when S.1 and the things of that sort passed. Sam sort of got himself named, in addition to legislative services, as assistant to the secretary for youth programs. Well, he was overtaken by events, and after Kennedy's death and the great push to create the poverty program in his memory, things went so fast that Sam's pace and I'll have to say rather narrow views were not needed. Hence Moynihan became the inter-agency thing and I became the department's person. I took his staff and just took them into my staff, I mean they became my staff plus others, and Sam was out of it. So that at least from my point of view as best I could see, Sam did not play a significant role from that time on. I mean, he was an imaginative guy, but in that particular struggle, which was the implementation and the heavy political scene, Sam did not figure.

G: Let me ask you about some of the issues that the task force dealt with concerning traditional Labor Department matters. Did the Labor Department feel that a Jobs Corps-type program would jeopardize the Youth Employment Act's chances of passage? Would they have preferred to see the Job Corps left out of the Economic Opportunity Act so that they could have a clear field?

H: I'm not certain on that, I'm really not certain. I know we certainly

agreed to the whole Job Corps thing with great skepticism. It was a source of irritation as long as I was in the operation.

G: Can you elaborate on that? Why was it so regarded?

H: Well, there are real reasons and then phony reasons. First of all, we were annoyed as hell from the bureaucratic point of view that the person running Job Corps was I think a presidential appointee class five, or something of that sort, for a much smaller program than we were doing. Secondly, they had an enormously higher per capita expenditure rate. They could just do anything they wanted. Thirdly, they hid all their figures, so that for the first couple of months the dropout rate was camouflaged. Fourthly, we felt that fundamentally it was bad policy to pick up kids from Harlem and put them out in Oregon. We felt that that magnified the separation from home, what little support they might have gotten from home, but at least from peers and so forth. It invited all the racial problems, and it was a disaster and it was fantastically expensive. I mean, the transportation costs and all that kind of crap. We thought it made much more sense if you're going to put them into a camp situation, to do it much more closely to home, where there are weekend possibilities, where there are family possibilities, where there is a greater similarity in culture and all that kind of stuff. So that all of this plus the heavy PR that was devoted to the Job Corps, and the parallel hold-down on our own operations, we saw this as the favored program that was laying a big egg, and so we had a great deal of bitterness on it.

Now before it all happened, was that anticipated? I can't say that. I really don't know. Humphrey's was Youth Conservation Corps. YCC I guess was under those bills. To be honest with you, I did not get involved in the Humphrey stuff prior to Kennedy's death or prior to early 1964, the heavy-duty work on the poverty program. I was in much broader manpower programs. So I don't know whether that had been fought out internally, that is, the residential camp versus the service work in the community. I do know that in the early stages, before things got locked into place, we were talking about hometown youth corps and our focus had been on the community and the nonresidential in the Labor Department. But I'm not sure I can answer accurately whether the department had very carefully thought through the residential versus non-residential and had opted--I know we focused on the non-residential.

G: Now the planners of the Job Corps would argue that there was a need to get the youth out of the environment because the environment was part of what was impairing their advances to begin with. It was a bad influence on them.

H: We dismissed that as just being part of the rationale for using the camps. One of the problems is they had to use camps where they existed; they had to use agriculture and forestry camps and places, they couldn't start from scratch. To a degree, one of the rationales was that's why they're all in the West, because they had all these ex-CCC camps. Well, what's a good rationale for that? Well, we have to get them out of their environment. I mean, I could invent

any kind of thing you want. I know, and there were good folks over there. I'm not just saying that they're totally misguided. I just think that that wasn't the real reason. They're getting out of the environment, that's true. But then when you end up with race riots in Oregon and other northern cities and problems down in Texas, you just begin to wonder, well, what kind of environment are we putting them into? So I don't think that was satisfactory. I would think it would take much more sophisticated screening and selection than the Job Corps people had to identify those who could benefit from a transcontinental environmental change, and they didn't operate on that basis. They had quotas and they had everything else to fill. So that I just don't accept that. And I've got some bad things to say about my own program, too. Don't get me wrong.

G: We'll get onto that.

H: I'm sure we will.

G: The Job Corps in an initial planning stage seems to have a military tone to it. They were going to use army camps. In fact, there was even discussion of using the Department of Defense to help with the program. I gather there was intense opposition to that within the administration, and that was really toned down. Do you know who opposed it and how? Was Secretary Wirtz involved?

H: I would suspect so. I can't really say of my own personal knowledge I would certainly suspect so, that both Pat and Wirtz would be absolutely dead set against it. I would suspect that. It did not come to me, because we just had nothing to do with the military. At

that stage--well, I don't know, I really don't know. I would really suggest that it's quite possible that Pat and Wirtz were certainly in that camp.

G: Now then of course there was the whole question of whether jobs should be emphasized, manpower training on the one hand, or community action on the other. Of course, Pat Moynihan and presumably others within the Labor Department were pushing for a massive jobs program.

H: That's correct.

G: Do you recall any of the efforts here to make that a more prominent part of the War on Poverty?

H: Well, there are plenty of efforts in terms of individual lobbying and struggling and PR and everything else. The Labor Department, philosophically Wirtz felt that training and jobs and minimum wage and so forth were much more fundamental to increasing employment and defeating recession and so forth than investment and tax credits and so forth. His fundamental position was the full employment philosophy, that is, that certainly the earnings from jobs and resultant tax revenues, et cetera, et cetera, the resulting shift of people off unemployment and off welfare and so on, that all of that made much more sense than practically anything else including community action and so forth. Hence the whole manpower program that had just come in a couple of years before, and the intense attempt within the Labor Department to convert the Employment Service into a useful bureaucracy, which we were doomed to fail.

But within the whole Economic Opportunity Act structure there was constant pressure, of course, by the Labor people, to my best knowledge, to enlarge the Title I-B, which is Neighborhood Youth Corps, to enlarge whatever programs we had, as well as not to diminish what we were doing under the Manpower Development Training Act. And the struggle was the allocation of funds, of course. We would get a budget cut, and then you had to split it up. We always felt we got hind tit, naturally being in Labor, to the more expensive per capita things, like Job Corps was five, six, eight thousand per capita, and we were held to--I don't know, God--sometimes four or five hundred in Neighborhood Youth Corps. So we were constantly pushing on that. We made sure when we testified before Congress that they saw those figures, that they knew what we were up against. So that in that sense we were constantly pushing for jobs. Now it's true it was youth jobs. It wasn't a public service job at that stage. I guess at that time--I'm just trying to think it through--I don't know at that time whether we were prepared or whether the country was prepared for public service employment. Later on in the second or third round of the EOA, we had the beginning of some jobs; we had New Careers and Green Thumb and began to have pieces for adult employment kind of snuck into the poverty program. But my best recollection is that we did not have a massive public employment program, although Wirtz pushed for it. But it didn't seem to fit into the poverty program at that stage.

G: Did the Labor Department have any input that you recall in the planning of community action?

G: I certainly didn't, no. Now whether Pat got into it or not, I don't know. I have a feeling we were fairly well excluded.

G: I gather that the Labor Department did have a version of its own, the Youth Opportunity Centers. Do you recall that in neighborhoods?

H: Yes. I had a hand in those, too. Harry Krantz is one of the boys who was working on the Youth Opportunity Centers.

G: Can you recall how that program originated and its purpose?

H: Well, under the Manpower Act and under Henning, we were trying to break down in the field the rigid, narrow bureaucratic lines that flowed from the way that we were organized in Washington. The Employment Service did certain things and the unemployment insurance compensation operation did certain things and the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training did certain things. We had set up a Manpower Administration to try to coordinate and pull them together. It was not succeeding. We had set up another bureau which was supposed to be the overall research and evaluation, OMAT it was called then, O-M-A-T, Office of Manpower Automation and Training I think, something like that.

But the thought was that fundamentally as we were trying to move the Employment Service into the twentieth century, the traditional ways didn't work. One of the ways that it didn't work was the increasing youth employment had reached a level of a nature that was not susceptible to routine treatment by the way that the Employment Service was operating. Therefore, two things were thought: well, we need different kinds of people and different

kinds of services, and perhaps we need a different location. Perhaps the youths walking into the long auto worker Detroit model--as we see it today--unemployment office is turned off by it and so on. So we talked about setting up centers, YOCs, Youth Opportunity Centers, which would be either adjacent or a different part or something, where people of different disciplines would come in, Employment Service people, counselors, maybe some social welfare people. The theory was that we would attempt to begin to broaden the ability of the Employment Service and the Manpower Administration to give services. That I guess--I'm just trying to think--started before Poverty because I was kind of overseeing it in the Manpower Administration and I recall the initial kind of hesitating steps. We diverted money from the MDTA, discretionary funds or something of that sort, to try to set up these centers. I don't have the feeling it was an enormously successful or extensive program, but it was an attempt to deal with our bureaucracy.

G: I gather during the course of the planning that there was a rift between Pat Moynihan and Secretary Wirtz with regard to how the program was evolving. Do you recall the specifics of that?

H: No, I'm sorry, I don't. I know that was so. Pat originally was an assistant to Wirtz. I really don't. I suspect there were some personal things involved in Moynihan's close relationship to the Kennedys, that <u>he</u> became the department in those terms of things rather than Wirtz, I suspect, but I don't know.

G: In one of the biographies of Moynihan it states that he was more or less prevented from continuing with the task force by Secretary Wirtz. Do you recall if that's accurate?

H: I certainly don't. I can't imagine who replaced him. I mean, I'm sure the department wouldn't go without a representative. Is there a suggestion that someone else is--

G: I don't recall.

H: Because I certainly picked up--you know, once we started going I started dealing with the Shriver and [Jack] Conway and Dick Boone and all those people. But that was after the early stages. I do not know. I have no indication of that.

G: One explanation for the conflict was that Moynihan in the task force supported the notion that the Labor Department was simply not equipped to run the Job Corps, and gave in on this issue. Do you recall anything on that score?

H: No, I really don't. I guess I wouldn't be surprised, because it probably didn't coincide with what we thought was the important things to be done. But I really don't know.

G: Do you think that the Labor Department should have run the Job Corps?

H: Well, I'd have to clear my mind of a lot of prejudices I guess to think that through. I feel, first of all, if we had done so it would have been quite different, probably a lot less dramatic, less PR, and less expensive. Now, could it have been done in a lower key by us? I think it could have been done, yes. Now, should it have been done? I really don't know. I really don't know. I'm sure

there are benefits from every program, so I can't write off Job Corps. I think it would be foolish to do so. But I don't know. I really don't know. But I don't have a feeling one way or the other.

G: The argument that the existing departments couldn't do it was that they were not geared to focus on the poorest of the poor, that they were designed more to help the mainstream of the labor movement, or the middle-class kids in education, whatever. Do you think that this was the focus of the Labor Department?

H: Oh, sure, no question about it. That's why they had to put a political person like me in charge and why we had to create a new bureau. Yes, no question about it. It was the focus of the bureaucracy. It wasn't the focus of Wirtz and the political leaders. The Labor Department is a mess right now. It has never really responded to its new responsibilities. The fundamental mechanism of the Labor Department was a complex federal-state bureau which was more built into the state governors than it was to the federal government. It was terribly unresponsive. Oh, sure.

G: Was this particularly true of the Employment Service?

H: Absolutely. Absolutely. The Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training was worse in a different direction; it was totally beholden to former business agents. It was absolutely unresponsive, absolutely. At one time Henning, who came out of the labor movement, early on, I don't think I had been there six or eight months [when] he wanted to upgrade the kinds of folks in Apprenticeship because he saw new responsibilities coming down the road. So he assigned me to the

job of negotiating with the various craft unions a change in the qualifications for recruitment. For the first time we would permit some college training in lieu of time as an apprenticeship representative with a building trades union. Christ! I went to meetings of the AFL-CIO, I went up and down the Hill, I wrote letters, I did everything, and eventually it was absolutely shot down. We couldn't in any way touch that, because it was the haven for all the building trades business agents who were fired or retired or got too old to do the job for the union. They came into that goddamned bureau, and that's what we were faced with, precisely. As I say, we created a new bureau, which is the traditional bureaucratic response. But also, they gave it enough political pressure--I was an assistant to the under secretary, and when I was put in there I was just given absolutely carte blanche. It worked just fine. Well, it worked as well as I think we probably could have worked.

G: As long as you're talking about the Labor Department, let me ask you to what extent organized labor was able to influence the department at the higher levels?

H: Very great extent. Sometimes achieving its objectives, sometimes not. I can recall Wirtz' frustration on the lettuce boycott. He could not get the Department of Defense to cease buying scab products from Cesar Chavez' operation. I can recall the frustration that we had under Kennedy on the adverse effect rates for the importation of foreign nationals to work in orange fields and places like that. That was not a direct--it was a moral position of labor that the

whole programs were disruptive of decent labor relations in the United States and so on. I remember standing beside Wirtz when he got a call from Jack Kennedy telling him to reverse himself in Florida on a so-called adverse effect rate for importing Jamaicans or some other Caribbean people to come in and pick oranges. Senator [George] Smathers had intervened. On that particular aspect it was completely reversed under Lyndon Johnson. Under Lyndon Johnson, where he had enormous personal interest in Texas, for example, we priced Texas out of migrant labor for cotton. Cotton was mechanized as a result of our taking a fifty cent and forty cent adverse effect rate. Our department said that if you paid them any less than forty cents an hour that would adversely affect Texans. But we finally got it up, you know. So they went to mechanization.

G: This was in spite of LBJ's natural interest in his home state?

H: He never interfered with the department. He never called, he never pulled the thing that Jack Kennedy did. He never interfered. We killed the bracero program, the department. He let us alone. Either Wirtz got a commitment from him, or else LBJ gave it, I don't know what. But he let us alone, and we set the administration position, which was a two-year phase out. We killed the program, the bracero program was killed in our days. And the labor movement was tremendously interested in those kinds of things.

Well, the minimum rate in the Neighborhood Youth Corps, I well remember we had been rolling along on a dollar an hour. We figured that's a nice round figure. We'll get more bang for the buck on that

and so forth. So we were going into a meeting one day with--I don't know whether the labor people were there, but Wirtz and I were walking down the hall and he said, "Jack, what are you doing on the minimum rate?" I think this was in the early planning stages. We'd just signed a few contracts. I said, "Well, we're doing a buck an hour, because we're getting so forth." He said, "Well, guess what? It's now a dollar and a quarter, it's now the minimum rate." I said, "Okay." That was straight from [George] Meany and 16th Street [AFL-CIO]. Well, I had no problem with that at all, that's great. That gave us a whole series of moral arguments. I mean, minimum rate, we're not having a scab youth rate. We're teaching them work habits, et cetera, et cetera.

But here again, we had enormous problems in Texas, and not once did the White House intervene. The Texas school boards were paying their janitors sixty, seventy cents an hour until we came in. What we did was, I know I was summoned to Austin to meet with Governor [John] Connally. I don't know whether he did it through the White House or whether the Secretary of Labor would respond to the governor of the home state of the President, but I went down to Austin to meet with him and made it very clear we were not interested in screwing up his labor relations, but we did have a national program, we had national standards. I said, "We'll phase it in." We had maybe a dozen contracts in Texas that were eighty-five, ninety cents an hour. I said, "We'll phase in, we'll go to a dollar next year, and we'll go to a dollar and a quarter in the next year. That will be in the

terms of the contract, in writing, so you will know what's coming. That's the way it will be."

G: Was that allowable under the terms of minimum wage?

H: See, they weren't covered by minimum wage. So that was strictly policy on us. I negotiated that wherever we had to. Every other place we just held it to a buck and a quarter.

G: Was the question of minimum wage a problem with Neighborhood Youth Corps, where you had trainees who were making a dollar twenty-five working side by side with full-time people under minimum wage who were making less?

H: Yes, it was a problem, and we delighted in that problem. We felt we would be creating pressures to improve wages.

G: It didn't just cause resentment against the Neighborhood Youth Corps then?

H: No, we would try to channel that.

(Laughter)

That's why we're the Labor Department.

G: Were you successful?

H: Oh, yes. We really raised wages all throughout Texas in the school boards, sure. Janitors were getting eighty-five cents an hour, and they raised hell--they didn't raise hell with us, you know. We had our field agents there, and we'd just tell them to put pressure on the school boards. It worked. It reinforced our line, too, against the youth minimum. You know, there's always pressure for a youth minimum wage, and the department was adamantly opposed to

that. So this was consistent. That was a labor impact that I was delighted with. Our previous pressure had been from the Bureau of the Budget, so we would get more folks through, you know. The whole idea was cut the hours and cut the wages so you would get more numbers. We were going through the numbers game in the poverty program.

G: Traditionally when labor wanted to influence the administration, would the major leaders go to the White House or would they go to the secretary of labor? Where would they exert their influence?

H: Well, certainly under the minimum wage that came direct to Wirtz. Later on in the Wirtz--I can't say Wirtz administration, I guess the LBJ Administration--but later on, the relationships between labor, between 16th Street and Wirtz were so bad that they dealt directly with the White House. Wirtz made some unforgiveable errors of judgment with respect to Jack Henning, his under secretary, and with respect to the labor movement as such. He was a totally admirable guy, I just have the greatest respect for him, but he had a piece of arrogancy and he had some insensitivity in dealing with the labor movement.

He plucked me out of Henning's office to run the poverty program without even telling him. I was called in and said, "Okay, you're in charge," and Jack didn't even know it. Jack and I had been friends, and he hardly speaks to me to this day. Jack was a captive of the labor movement. Everything that happened, Jack would tell 16th Street, so Wirtz stopped talking to him. In fact, he stopped

having staff meetings because he couldn't trust Henning, his under secretary. So for a couple of years the only communications with him was between the two executive assistants, John Donovan, who was Wirtz' assistant, and I, as Henning's assistant. We tried to communicate to keep the department going.

Then several years later, just in a gross miscalculation, in a meeting at the White House with Meany and LBJ, Wirtz announced he wanted to get rid of Henning, right in front of him, in front of the President. And of course Meany couldn't take that. He had to say, "Well, over my dead body you can remove Jack Henning." So Jack Henning was forced onwards for an extra couple of years, because the ambassadorship to Israel was open and Jack would have killed his mother-in-law to get to that job. So he sat in the department beyond his time because of that miscalculation. He finally ended up as ambassador to New Zealand, and Wirtz got the man he wanted, Jim Reynolds, a very fine person. But during all that time the direct contacts with White House people, they didn't bother with Wirtz.

G: I gather Wirtz' relationship with LBJ was stormy, also.

H: Very stormy, yes. Very stormy. The campaign days were fierce. Well, Wirtz was against Vietnam and against the escalation that was going on. We rationalized it within the Labor Department on the basis we were doing other good things domestically, and we had good support from the President and we had good support from the Congress, and therefore we were achieving things. We just in effect put

blinders on and said, oh, that nonsense over there is terrible, but. . . . And of course LBJ was helping us with that by having guns and butter and setting us up for what happened later on.

After LBJ pulled out in the end of March, Wirtz immediately announced for Humphrey before he felt LBJ could stop him. As you know, an Agriculture guy [John Schnittker] I think announced for Bobby. Then the order came down from the White House that cabinet officers could not campaign and could not announce and so forth and so on. So Wirtz just kept on. I was a liaison with the Humphrey campaign. I used to take speeches over, and I worked with Ted Van Dyk and others. Wirtz wrote speeches, wrote the Salt Lake City speech. But it did not come out the way it was written, because the Salt Lake City speech [had] Humphrey had the guts to deliver [it] would have disassociated himself from the Vietnam situation and from LBJ. That's what they were all doing. As a matter of fact, there were four cabinet officers, I guess [Stewart] Udall, Wirtz--who was at Agriculture then?

G: Freeman I guess it was.

H: Yes, I guess it was Orville Freeman, and I don't know who the fourth was. I don't know who the fourth was who proposed to Humphrey that they resign, the four of them resign and announce for Humphrey and go full-time campaigning for him and openly, and Humphrey wouldn't let them. They'd all prepared to do that. Wirtz resigned again, right after the election he resigned, and Warren Christopher brought

back the letter of resignation. I kept it for about two months. It was very rocky, very stony.

G: Did LBJ have his own man in the Labor Department?

H: No. Not in the sense that Nixon did, where he set up a director of communications and so forth. Wirtz and [Arthur] Goldberg came in with Kennedy. Then when Goldberg went to the Court and Wirtz came in as secretary, then Henning came in. Henning was not Wirtz' man, Henning was Meany's person. Henning had been originally picked for an assistant secretary from Texas [Jerry Holleman] who got caught with campaign funds or something of that sort, and he was picked as an assistant. Wirtz wanted Jim Reynolds as under secretary. So when Goldberg went to the Court, Meany or 16th Street somehow told the White House, "Well, you've got Henning there, just bump him up. He's already named and cleared." I don't think he'd been confirmed. That went through despite Wirtz. I know Jack has told me a couple of times that his official notification was, he was attending a state-fed meeting in Fresno. Wirtz called him, so he went out and called him from a phone booth, and Wirtz said, "I want you to know you're not my man, but you're going to be the new under secretary. The President has decided. You're not my choice, but I just want you to know it." From that day on they fought like dogs.

Now, I know of no real planting of LBJ people in the Labor Department. Certainly none of the executive assistants, assistant secretaries--well, not really. Esther Peterson was consumer adviser

to the President as well as an assistant secretary, but I wouldn't call her LBJ's person. I don't think there were.

G: I noticed in some of the other departments he seems to have had a very loyal old ally in there at the secondary level.

H: I'm not sure there existed one in Labor. You know, in the Senate days he had never figured largely in our operation. We were in Labor-HEW committees and all that sort of stuff. I don't think he figured largely with us. We orbited around other kinds of people, [John] Fogarty in the House and the Appropriations Committee and of course [Gaylord] Nelson in the Senate and a few others. And Kennedy, who was on the committee, too.

G: On the whole question of delegation to the Labor Department, did LBJ leave the department alone for Wirtz to make the decisions? Not just in terms of Texas, but overall. Or did he in fact attempt to run the department?

H: In my experience I would say the latter was so. I saw very little interference in the poverty programs or in the other programs at all. When I was in the Manpower Administration clearly we had no interference at all. But that we were just getting going on the MDTA kind of thing. In the poverty task force, we interrelated and again, I didn't see much White House guidance. I would see Shriver and others and the theoreticians who were attempting to put it together. In the early days after delegation when we started operating, the interference or coordination, take your choice, came from OEO, not from the White House. It came from people at the OEO headquarters

who felt that we should do things differently. I never got a bit from the White House. Maybe Wirtz did, but I sure didn't hear about it. As the program matured, there was less and less interference because we had developed frankly our own support and we just didn't brook interference from OEO.

The last year when I was his executive assistant, I can recall a call from [Joe] Califano to come over to the White House. He'd call us all over and say, "Goddamn you bureaucrats, I want a program for Chicago. Now where can you scrape some money together?" Once, once or twice at the most. Usually that was done by Conway or somebody at OEO, and we'd work cooperatively to do it. In this case there was someone from HEW, and I was there and someone from OEO, and Joe was trying to crack the whip to get something going. We put something together; we always have money around we can find. But certainly my last year I didn't see any interference. That was going through the Poor People's March and the assassinations and that terrible year, and the campaign. I saw no interference. My operation, the Neighborhood Youth Corps, eventually had about six hundred people. I was the director and Mark Battle, the assistant director. I never even had one piece of suggestion of whom to hire or whom to promote, and we had half a dozen supergrades, which was very big for Labor, because we were held down.

G: How about pressures on the location of projects?

H: Not any more than usual, no. I don't recall any, never from the White House. A lot of things we took--one thing is we had an allocation

formula, I mean that was written in the [law], there was a lot of that in the law. And the people running the program were political animals, we knew that we had to take care of Providence, Rhode Island, where John Fogarty lived. We knew that we had to get a spread because poverty was everywhere. We had very, very strict guidelines and standards, and we enforced them with mixed results, but by and large fairly well with respect to income and welfare eligibility and so on. So that no matter where we went, we could go into the richest part of the country, you could always find some kids who needed help. So we rationalized that rather easily. Conway set up the big million or two million dollar program for Chicago before the--I forget which election it was, probably in, I think it was late 1964. That didn't bother me at all, because our main problem in those cities was to find someone we could deal with that wouldn't just take the money and run. Sometimes there was interference in that way in that they'd say, "Well, we've got to go with the Mayor. We have to go with the Mayor's program," even though we trusted it about as far as we could throw the Pentagon. But again, that interference came through Shriver rather than from the President. I never felt the President.

G: Early on in the planning of the War on Poverty there was evidently a deal struck where OEO would run Job Corps and Labor would run Neighborhood Youth Corps. Do you recall how or why that decision was reached?

H: I suspect that it was the feeling that the Job Corps, as they envisaged it, was just foreign to what we thought made sense and to what we thought we could do. I suspect that. I really don't recall getting involved in that too deeply. I suspect that was Pat. And it had to do with perceptions both of our own capabilities and perceptions of whether the program was the kind of program they wanted to run.

G: And of course OEO would be responsible for oversight of the delegated program, the Neighborhood Youth Corps. Was this aspect successful?

H: From OEO's point of view I'm sure it wasn't. Once the delegation was signed, from that point on it was lip service to oversight. My position was I guess bureaucratic. My position was I was working under the direction of the Secretary of Labor, that the program was delegated to the Secretary of Labor and he delegated it to me, and therefore I looked to him. I did not take direction from Shriver, I did not take it from anybody else, and since the Secretary of Labor didn't give me any direction, that left me in that particular situation.

We had a constant battle about the philosophy of the Neighborhood Youth Corps, whether it was a training program or whether it was a transfer payment program. I refused to pretend that we were going to provide meaningful training and skilled training for kids working a couple of hours after school five days a week, or for the summer program. For one thing, I had seen the failures of the manpower training program, which we trained for jobs that weren't there.

They'd go through this training, and then where were they? I felt it was just completely bullshit for us to pretend that in this poverty program we were going to train them, and then not have jobs for them. So we severely limited the Neighborhood Youth Corps to a transfer payment program. We refused to build in expensive training and expensive counseling, because I was convinced it was a grab by the administrators, especially by the school bureaucracy which administered our in-school programs, so that we cut out all that overhead. We refused to pay overhead. We set as our minimum, 85 per cent of every dollar had to go into payroll for kids, so we cut out their overhead. OEO wanted us to build in another 10 per cent for training, and we refused. We just said we're not going to waste that money, because it will be wasted on the training bureaucracy, it will be wasted on the teaching bureaucracy, and we want it to get into the kids' hands. That was a constant running battle. I'm sure that OEO would say in that sense that oversight did not work.

Oh, now and then Bill Haddad, who was inspector general one fabled time in history, would want to do a job on me. What I would tell him basically was that I was just as interested in finding out what was going on wrong as he was, and I would check it out. If I felt like I couldn't check it out, then I would invite him in. But meanwhile, he could go to hell. So I did not turn over papers, I did not do those kinds of things with his office. Because very frankly, he was beating his own particular drum in that particular

case, and I knew it, and he knew I knew it. The fact is that when he went out and a new inspector general came in--I forget his name.

G: Edgar May.

H: Ed May, really a sweetheart, a decent, decent person. He and I just worked beautifully together. We swapped information. I shared it completely because he was an honorable guy. He wasn't out there to try to embarrass me or the Secretary.

So oversight worked when you had people that were working together on an objective.

G: Well, do you feel that there was sufficient training to make Neighborhood Youth Corps worthwhile?

H: Well, we rationalized it on the basis of attitudinal training, on work habit, work attitude, and so forth. The in-school program was--I think one would be hard pushed to overstate the training component and the attitudinal component. There were certain things that were valuable there. There was work around the school. There was a time factor; they didn't show up, they didn't get paid. There was the factor that if they dropped out, we wouldn't let them go into the next program unless we'd try to get them to sign up to go back to school, et cetera. So there were some pressures there for staying in school, for showing up on the job, and for taking direction and doing what the people told them to do, and that's about all. I'm not going to call that skilled training, but it may be some attitudinal training.

The out-of-school program was a little different, because there they were working sometimes thirty, thirty-five hours a week. They had to show up on time, they had to perform functions, in the best programs. There were lousy programs, too. But as theoretically designed with adequate supervision, there should have been some attitudinal kinds of--

(Interruption)

G: Were there any jobs to be had after the training?

H: No, by and large. Certainly the in-school program there were no jobs. The summer program, which we developed and which became very popular and which is about the only thing that now exists from the Neighborhood Youth Corps that isn't called that, the summer program was just that; it was a summer program principally for in-school people. The idea was we did not want seniors going in. We wanted seniors to go into manpower training or something like that. It was aimed for sophomores and juniors, and the hooker was to get back to school in the fall.

The out-of-school program, which was the more expensive program and hence was always limited in number--I don't know if we ever got over a hundred thousand, because we were limited to a couple of thousand a year on that, compared to the Job Corps' seven, eight, nine, ten thousand. That program, we tried to link it with MDTA, with manpower training. We tried to tell ourselves that our effort would be to pull the various programs together, either through the Youth Opportunity Centers where they existed, or through enhanced

sensitivities of the local Employment Service, because the Employment Service was involved in the out-of-school program. So the theory was that if we could get these youngsters who had nothing some kind of job, some kind of beginning of an attitude toward work, an attitude toward showing up, then if we could with some money from HEW or even out of the program, we'd build in some basic education, some kinds of remedial education.

The theory was we would then at least perhaps get them to a point where they could move into Manpower Development and Training and get skilled training. In theory MDTA slots were keyed to needs in the community, in theory. So that that was a job development aspect that the Employment Service was supposed to undertake that we didn't undertake. We were to get them up to a point where they could go into manpower training. In other words, some of the disadvantaged young people we were working with couldn't even get into manpower training, because they were just so really, really not with it. So we did not have jobs. We tried to get training opportunities for them, and that's about it.

G: I know it's hard to generalize, but how cooperative was the basic school system in working with NYC?

H: I guess by and large very cooperative. By and large they helped us turn on a politically sensitive program fast and big. Now. . . .

G: How did they help?

H: They would help by accepting our assignment of get X numbers of people and find X numbers of jobs and administer this program for

no overhead. They accepted the fundamental idea that it would be helpful for kids who needed money to earn a little bit in a school setting and with school people. See, we didn't reject out of hand the school system for the Neighborhood Youth Corps, even though we had a lot of reservations about schools that had not changed to reflect the community of the kids that were in the schools. For example, New York City where the schools were largely black and brown, and the hierarchy were largely white, middle-aged Jewish teachers. That's a big thing about the problem in New York. We didn't just reject that out of hand, maybe practically because we couldn't. We had to move fast. The bill was signed I guess in August, the appropriations was in August, and we had to get a program going by election day, which we did.

So they helped us by running the program, by accepting the program, by accepting a lot of trouble. They accepted payroll problems, they used their systems for payroll, they accepted separate books, they accepted direct federal control, because we didn't sub out these things. The Neighborhood Youth Corps was run directly from Washington until we set up our regional offices. We could freeze bank accounts, we could review and hire and fire their staff. They accepted that, I would say by and large. Of course, there were places that didn't.

We did not use the school system for the out-of-school program, and in that sense there was some struggle because the school system wanted it and we didn't trust them. They wanted to give I guess

year-round employment or summer jobs and so forth. But I don't know, as a general characterization it seems to me through the years of history that they were cooperative.

G: How about local government?

H: Local government was less cooperative, because they were less sure that they wanted to be involved fooling around with a bunch of disadvantaged kids. Also, some local governments saw it as a great rip-off opportunity and would use it for sons of chiefs of police and things of that sort. We still got some good cooperation. I guess basically the smell of money attracted most of them. We would make our allocations down and we would tell our field people where we wanted to be, we wanted to be in these cities and we wanted to be in these areas. We knew the poverty populations and so on. Especially in the South, some of the local governments gave us a lot of problems on our race situation. But on the other hand, there were some remarkable instances where either under the guise that they couldn't control it or what, but southern cities and counties would have black kids in white offices. So, it was mixed. I would say it was somewhat more resistant, but still, the program rolled and so we couldn't do it by ourselves. We had to have their cooperation.

G: How about private business?

H: We didn't deal with private business.

G: Initially there was a proposal that private business would run a lot of the manpower programs and this was. . . .

H: That was a big deal over at OEO and Job Corps especially. They were going to go to universities and private business and know-how and stuff like that. That didn't enter into any of our figurings at all. We used the Community Action agencies because we had to. Their theory was nice, but. . . . . We had a lot of trouble with Community Action agencies. We used cities, we used school systems.

G: Why did you have trouble with the Community Action Program?

H: They were used to the way that the Community Action, the CAP in Washington dealt with them, where they got a lot of money for overhead, they got a lot of money for staff, and they got a lot of stuff like that. And they weren't used to dealing with us because we wouldn't pay for that bullshit. We wanted program, we wanted kids working, and we wanted all the money going to them. Also some of them felt that we were too narrow, that we weren't philosophically attuned to the notion of more training and more counseling and all that kind of stuff. And quite frankly in the in-school program, of course, it was difficult to work with community action, because often the school system didn't necessarily appreciate the Community Action Program, and so we couldn't get the jobs in the school. When the kid is working two days a week after school, it doesn't make much sense to move him across town to a park or some other place. The best job is going to be in the school, whether it's on the grounds or whether it's in the library or whether it's whatever, whether it's maybe helping the teachers with the younger kids on the

playground or something. But we needed the cooperation of the school system and Community Action couldn't provide that.

It was mixed. There were some great Community Action programs and there were some lousy ones, but that could be said for any sponsor.

G: I suppose one of the big problems with the Job Corps was recruitment. Was this also a major problem with Neighborhood Youth Corps?

H: No, we always had more than we could get in the in-school program. No, we were always limited. We never could fund all the projects we had.

G: Was there a dilemma within the program or within your own mind with regard to what sort of corpsman you should get for NYC? Should it be someone who just needed the money to stay in school, or someone with really cultural disadvantages who perhaps had a criminal record or part of a criminal record, and was in fact somewhat of a risk?

H: Oh, I'm sure there are program books and papers on that, because we did an awful lot of stuff in the early days. We did a lot of consulting people in on how we deal with it. My best recollection would be that we stated general principles, and the principles were that the enrollment should be limited to the people who were at or below the poverty line, that there must be an equitable performance on men and women, boys and girls, and that there could be absolutely no race discrimination. Now, in the in-school program it was largely left to school--

(Interruption)

In the in-school program we would leave it to the school counselors. We would say, you know the kids that it would really help them stay in school, motivate them to stay in school and so forth and so on, use it. Obviously if they were good counselors and good people in the school they would see it as an extra tool for motivating and working with difficult cases. We did not though go beyond them to go in that sophisticated an analysis. We looked frankly superficially. We had race, we had sex, and we had income. We would moniter that from Washington to make sure that they weren't skimming. I'm sure there was skimming.

G: Let's talk about the funding relationship with OEO. They were responsible for submitting the budget. Did you ever get as much money from them as you wanted?

H: No. Did anybody?

G: Did you have any way of appealing to OEO?

H: Oh, sure.

G: How would you work this?

H: Well, we had internal meetings where we talked about budget, then we'd have our budget hearings at the--then it was the Bureau of the Budget. We would push for our amount and the budget examiners would do some cuts. OEO had problems with BOB, too, I'm not saying it's all OEO's fault. So that there were those kinds of struggles back and forth. Then of course the ultimate struggle was on the Hill, because after Sarge introduced the measure then each of his program managers did our own thing, and inevitably John Fogarty would

say, "Well, Mr. Howard, how much did you ask for from OEO and the Bureau of the Budget?" I'd tell him. "And how much could you use?" And I'd tell him. So there was that. That was always on the record, and Fogarty made it a flat rule. Anyone going up there knew that they were going to be asked that question, Sarge knew it, everybody knew it. So that there were those kinds of avenues.

G: BOB seems to have really been down on the Job Corps. Would it be safe to say that BOB thought more highly of Neighborhood Youth Corps than the Job Corps and would have liked to have seen more money--?

H: Oh, I'm not sure of that. First of all, they were pretty down on the Labor Department anyway. They were desperately opposed to the Employment Service in the Bureau of the Budget, with fairly good reason. We had to live with them and we had to try to make them work, but the Bureau of the Budget examiners could sit there and throw bombs at it. I don't know, frankly, I never got any encouragement from the Bureau of the Budget. I never got any indication they thought we were doing a goddamned for the program. In many senses it was a fairly lonely job, because all the kudos went to Shriver and all we did was churn out hundreds of thousands of kids and we spent our money well and we had very few scandals. We had to get our reward in heaven or from an occasional congressional committee on testimony, but I never got any encouragement from Bureau of the Budget.

G: On the Hill, were you ever able to get more money from the Congress for Neighborhood Youth Corps than the OEO wanted?

H: Yes, summer. We were always able to get more for summer. We always got more for summer because the program worked.

G: These cost comparisons between the Job Corps and the Neighborhood Youth Corps evidently were really a problem for OEO when the program would come up for appropriations.

H: We helped make sure it remained a problem.

(Laughter)

G: Did Wirtz play a role in this as well? Did he go up to the Hill and present the comparisons?

H: No, I did that. I'm just trying to think. I think the first time, I think the very first money bill, they had the cabinet officers. But from that point on I went up. He really delegated the whole program. I went up with Shriver. Shriver would give the overall pitch and then each of us would handle it. So I handled both the authorization and the appropriation measure in Congress.

G: Did OEO exert any oversight at all? You mentioned Bill Haddad's efforts. Was there any effective oversight as far as you're concerned?

H: On operations?

G: Yes.

H: No.

G: Later on they recommended I suppose that the program and Job Corps be done by. . . .

H: Yes, that was under Nixon I guess. That was much after I had gone. I left Washington when Nixon came in. They looked at our tapes. We

gave them full reports on our operations. Now and then they'd get a complaint through press or through a member of Congress or through the inspector general or something. After Haddad had gone, we'd worked that out, investigated, found out what it was. No, we were really fairly autonomous. Looking back on it I am amazed really at, first of all, the authority that Wirtz gave me, and secondly, that maybe because of that we were a very tight-swinging operation that they really couldn't control.

I recall we had a problem with Fogarty in his home town. The Mayor was putting people on the Neighborhood Youth Corps that didn't belong there. Well, we went in and closed down nine projects, seized the bank accounts. All I did was call Fogarty and tell him, say, "We've got to do this, John." He said, "Yes, you're right." I didn't ask the Secretary, I didn't ask Shriver, didn't ask anybody. We ran the program. And we dealt with the press, we dealt with Congress. We had to.

G: Did you participate in OEO staff meetings? How did you communicate with OEO? Did you deal in particular with one staff member?

H: Oh, Lord, I used to deal with Lisle Carter. He was doing legislative work I think. We'd talk with Lisle now and then. I'd deal with the budget guy, I saw his name here. I haven't thought of him for a long time. Well, Joe Kershaw, of course, who was the policy [guy]. Joe was the first policy guy and I worked with him. I'm just trying [to think]. There was a budget guy that I can't [recall].

G: [Robert A.] Levine?

H: Yes, yes. Levine, Levine. Yes. I'd deal with him fighting over the--I'd deal with him kind of functionally. I dealt with Dick Boone a lot when he was in Community Action--I'm trying to recall, boy, you know, it was a few years ago--mainly I think on where we wanted to go or who was going to be a sponsor. Of course, Dick was always pushing Community Action. Dealt with a guy I'd known, Don Baker, who was general counsel. He was counsel on the committee and then came in as general counsel. I had known him before; we were neighbors of his and very good friends. He would try to push me on the program, on the design of the program and so on. Frankly, much as I liked him, I just in my mind said he's a lawyer, and lawyers don't tell me how to run a program. I would listen to [Joseph T.] English and I would listen to Kershaw, because they were the program policy planners and so on.

I would deal with Jack now and then, Jack Conway, mainly on fairly high level decisions, one of which I'll never forget. I got badly screwed by it. Sarge was out of the country or something, and Jack had called and said--it was June, toward the end of June, and that was the fiscal year then. We had allocated, we had spent every penny of our summer program, because the summer program was very popular, we never had enough money. We had a very sophisticated computer system, so actually on June 3, we'd sit down with our computer runs and our central auditor for the department, and we would overspend a percentage very carefully designed, because we

didn't have any money to waste. We had projects stacked up that we couldn't fund. So we tried to make every nickel count.

Jack asked me to get together with him to talk about enhancing the summer program. He said, "Look, Jack, on July 1 you've got a lot more money for summer." I said, "That's for summer of next year." He said, "Well, what about advancing fifteen or twenty million?" I said, "Well, I can do it for the program, but that means that's going to cut us down next year and we have to be ready for that political heat." He said, "Well, we really need the money this year." So on July 1 I cranked up fifteen, twenty million, you know, put out telexes right away around the country and picked the key areas and said go for an amendment. So we spent another fifteen or twenty million within a week or two.

I'll be goddamned, Shriver came back, and, oh Lord, six or eight months later when we were going in the budget cycle he started chewing me out for that. He said, "You compromised your next summer's program by doing this." I don't recall whether I told him that I made the deal with Jack, or whether I just said, screw him, I don't care. But that really burned me because it meant that one hand wasn't talking to the other. And it's the only time that I ever had any problem with OEO in that sense, of doing something like that, and it's probably about the last time I did it, too. From that point on I ran my own program. I was dealing with them all mostly, not often with Shriver, but certainly with all the various departments.

G: There have been a lot of criticisms of OEO administratively, but apparently with this one exception, you didn't have the same experience?

H: Well, they didn't administer us. I thought it was a shambles, yes. I thought it was a shambles. I mean, the community action thing was a shambles, and a lot of the things out there were. But see, we escaped that. We escaped that because we had our own particular structure. I mean, I had tremendous support from the Labor Department in anything I needed and wanted, like budget support and legislative support. So that luckily I wasn't dependent on OEO.

G: OEO would argue that the Employment Service did a miserable job of recruiting for Job Corps. Is this the case?

H: It's quite possible, quite possible, yes.

G: Again, would this go back to the point that you made earlier about the Employment Service being state-influenced?

H: Well, that's a big piece of it. You have to look at the history. The Employment Service was set up to appeal to employers and to place persons who needed work. Obviously they liked the best possible candidates for the jobs. They liked to tell employers they've got great people for them and so forth and so on. Suddenly we're going to make them a social agency. To me it's akin to deciding that suddenly the school system is going to be our mechanism for integrating the neighborhoods of the United States of America, after a couple of hundred years of discrimination. Schools can't hack it. The Employment Service couldn't hack it. The Employment

Service didn't want to hack it. And part of that is history and part of that is the state structure. They're fat, dumb and happy out in the states and they see a federal program dumped on them and they don't want it. They just didn't want it. Who would care about it? Who cares about picking up twenty kids out of this town and moving them out to Oregon for a Job Corps camp? They could care less. They just didn't care. So you had some dedicated counselors and you had some dedicated people. But that combination put the Job Corps recruiting very low on the Employment Service list. For one thing, they had to recruit for Neighborhood Youth Corps, they had to do some things with manpower training. All these new programs were coming down and we were dealing with folks that probably hadn't had an original idea in twenty years. That's what happened. Sure, I sympathize with them, with the Job Corps on that. So they turned to private recruiting, or agency recruiting, things of that sort.

G: Do you think the Job Corps was oversold, that there was too much publicity, too overpromising?

H: Sure. Yes, I do. Everything, yes. Yes, I do. I had a free moment early on in the days and I was rummaging through a Salvation Army bookstore and I found an early report on the NYA, which I have treasured ever since, because it explained how they cranked up the NYA and got going. It really made me feel pretty bad, because voom, they just went like that, and hundreds and hundreds of thousands of kids, and it's not directly on Youth Corps, but it goes to it.

NYA in a sense was a bit like the old CCC in that they had people in there from a lot of different eligibilities. There was some kind of mixture, although they did try to get welfare kids. But they did have others, too. The CCC, of course, went across lines. It was not limited to poverty, they had quite a mix. So that the Job Corps had some heavy duty problems coming into existence with a certain bag of predetermined philosophy with respect to movement, a certain difficulty with respect to not having real jobs there. They had many internal problems dealing with two different agencies and running the camps. With all, they promised a lot. They promised it was going to be the crown jewel, it was going to be their big operational program, and maybe they felt they had to do it because Neighborhood Youth Corps went to Labor. At any rate, they promised too much. It was a difficult program to begin with. It was not susceptible of starting big, it was a slow start-up program, and yet they pushed and pushed and pushed. All those things I think made it a disaster.

G: If you had been able to use hindsight in planning the program, would you have made it more of an in-city program, rather than one located in camps, rural settings?

H: Well, definitely, I mean, that's what they did later on. After they started that they started going to in-town Job Corps centers, which had problems, but which I think had far less problems. The answer to that is yes, yes I would have. In fact, I think that was the focus of probably some of the Labor Department's objections early on. The feeling was that the camp setting really wasn't job related

in many cases. I mean, I'm not sure that there was a great crying need for bulldozer operators and construction workers and so forth. That wasn't where the jobs were. And the unions weren't too happy about that either. I mean, the jobs were in service jobs; we're a service economy. The jobs were probably in [cities]. If these were city kids, they're probably going to go back to the cities, and it seemed to us that the training they were going to be given should much more relate to the reality of where they're going to be. We understood they had classrooms and stuff like that, but still we felt the job aspect of it ought to be paramount. So, yes, there are a lot of hindsights available to all of us. But we just didn't think much of the Job Corps program.

G: I gather there was a preoccupation with quantity rather than quality of the program, the number of youths. They were constantly faced with the statistical imperatives, the number of youths they could get enrolled rather than the [quality of the programs].

H: In all programs, I won't say just Job Corps, but all of us. All of us were, we were. It was a budget crunch, a bang for the buck. We've got so much money and how many numbers can we get for it. We tried follow-up. We tried to say these kids stayed in school, and these kids went on to jobs and stuff, but because we didn't expect much from our program, we didn't expect our program to end up in job training. So we had rather slippery measures and about the only firm measure we had were numbers, that we were helping this number of kids and 85 per cent of the money is going into family incomes.

We'd do dramatic things like tracking the checks that were cashed one week, and we showed they were cashed at the grocery stores and clothing stores and for bills. So that was our focus.

G: Everett Dirksen saw this War on Poverty and particularly the job programs as being a political tool of the Democrats. Someone pointed out that these youth were too young to vote. Dirksen's response was: "Yes, but they can be missionaries." Was it a useful political tool for the Democrats?

H: Oh, sure, of course it was. Sure. We were doing something about it, we, Democrats. The government was trying to do something in a human sense, a human way. Sure it was useful. Social programs are useful, it seems to me, because they indicate the services that a government is providing. We didn't use it overtly Democratically, but we sure as hell let it know that this came out of the administration and the Congress. I find nothing wrong with that, that's the facts of life. I must say that we were pushed in those days to have a new program a minute. Every year we had to have a new LBJ kind of program. But that didn't give me any trouble.

G: Well, I certainly do thank you. I know you have to [stop here].

H: Yes.

[End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview 1]

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(2) The tape recording shall be available to those researchers who have access to the transcript.

(3) I hereby assign to the United States Government all copyright I may have in the interview transcript and tape.

(4) Copies of the transcript and the tape recording may be provided by the Library to researchers upon request.

(5) Copies of the transcript and tape recording may be deposited in or loaned to institutions other than the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

Jack Howard
Donor

July 7, 1982
Date

Robert M. Warner
Archivist of the United States

July 27, 1982
Date