INTERVIEW I

DATE: August 6, 1969

INTERVIEWEES: GOVERNOR AND MRS. RICHARD HUGHES (Betty Hughes)

INTERVIEWER: JOE B. FRANTZ

PLACE: The Hughes' home in Princeton, New Jersey

Tape 1 of 2

F: First of all, Governor Hughes, tell us briefly where you came from, how you gradually moved up the ladder, and how you came to be governor.

RH: I have always been a New Jersey resident. I was born in Florence in Burlington County, New Jersey. I am a lawyer. I used to be an assistant United States attorney.

F: When was this?

RH: In 1939. I lived in Trenton, New Jersey. I was married to the late Miriam McGrory Hughes, who died in 1950. We had four children. The youngest was the young lady you met just a minute ago; she was twenty years old yesterday. When her mother died, she was a year-and-a-half old. I was a judge at the time my first wife died.

After three or four years had gone by, I had the good fortune to meet a tall, articulate, witty, good-looking brunette with three little boys. She was a widow of air force Captain William Murphy, and she was well-traveled and knew a lot about the world and the country. I found her quite fascinating, and shortly after that we were married.

BH: Why don't you tell the truth, that I was also fat and poor?

RH: Well, not fat, but maybe poor. But it was a very fortunate coincidence for me, this chance meeting. We combined this family of seven children, and since then we have had three children, the youngest of whom is seven years old. Now that makes a total of ten.

F: It keeps you from retiring early, anyhow, doesn't it?

RH: Betty says that my retirement can occur when I am seventy-eight. That will be the time when, hopefully, our youngest boy, Thomas, will be getting out of graduate school, or getting out of college. After that, she said I can do as I please about working.

We've been governor for--

BH: You have been governor.

RH: I have been governor since 1962. I met President Johnson when he was the majority leader in the Senate, I think in 1959.

F: How did this come about?

RH: I was at a fund raising dinner in Washington, and I was introduced to the President by a mutual friend, Congressman Frank Thompson, our congressman from the Fourth District here in New Jersey. He was an admirer of President Johnson's skill as a legislative leader. I remember LBJ very vividly that night. He paid no attention to me, of course. He was polite; he was tall, I remarked about his tallness; he was well turned out, well-dressed. He looked tired and busy, as though he had had a good, hard day's work. I believe that he was a speaker that night, [but] I am not sure about that.

BH: Yes, Rich, there were eight presidential hopefuls, of whom John F. Kennedy was one. There were so many that they were shuffling them around. They had two ballrooms, and four would come in, of whom our Governor Meyner was one, and Soapy Williams, and Presidents Johnson and Kennedy. Isn't it strange to think that they are both gone? That was less than a decade ago. And I guess Stuart Symington, maybe Hubert Humphrey--was he in it, too?

RH: Hubert Humphrey, yes.

BH: I remember that I was very impressed with Lady Bird. Naturally, she didn't have the youth of young Jacqueline Kennedy, but much more charm and self-possession. I was impressed, like Dick, with the size of President Johnson. But I didn't like his suit. He had a gray dinner jacket, gray dinner clothes--

F: I remember that one.

BH: --and I felt that men who were seriously thinking about being president should wear black. (Laughter)

F: New Jersey hadn't committed at that time?

RH: No. That was in 1959, and there was a great pull for Kennedy here through Ambassador Joseph Kennedy, who was very friendly with Mayor John V. Kenny. There was a sentimental attachment to John F. Kennedy, which was not shared--

F: Kenny was mayor of which town?

RH: He used to be mayor of Jersey City; everybody still calls him Mayor. He is the political leader of the county, a very strong man,

good friend of mine. He had become somewhat estranged from the then-Governor Robert B. Meyner, who was my predecessor. Robert Meyner was standing in the wings as a possible candidate in case it would be a deadlock among the leading candidates, and for that reason he wished to hold the New Jersey delegation together and uncommitted. He refused to give way to the increasing pressure for a Kennedy endorsement. So that on the first ballot in Los Angeles at that convention--which I didn't attend, I was not in politics nor even fairly interested in politics at that time. I was practicing law, having retired a few years before from the New Jersey Superior Court bench where I had been for ten years.

F: Do you know Bill Brennan incidentally?

RH: Bill Brennan? Very well.

F: He is a good friend of mine.

RH: I was on the bench with Bill Brennan, and we sat together in Hudson County, as I recall. He was on our superior court, then on our supreme court, and then he went by appointment of President Eisenhower to the United States Supreme Court.

So that at Los Angeles Meyner declined to give way on Kennedy, and the Jersey delegation voted for Meyner as a favorite son on the first ballot. President Johnson obviously was quite grateful for that, and therefore has always been very high on Governor Meyner and has so expressed himself to me several times.

By coincidence, Governor Meyner's the Democratic candidate for governor this year. I have served two terms. This is the final year

of my second term, and our constitution prevents me from being a candidate again, which is just as well, that would be my preference anyhow. Meyner, who served two terms between 1954 and 1962, is running again. His opponent is Congressman William Cahill of the First District of New Jersey.

F: Yes.

RH: Anyhow, this left a pretty close tie between President Johnson and Bob Meyner. President Johnson remarked on it only three or four weeks ago, how much he admired and wanted to send his regards to Bob Meyner.

F: How did you happen to come back into politics?

RH: The Democrats in 1961 were confronted with the end of a two-term governor. Customarily in this state, which is a swing, independent state, people don't confide in one party or the other for too long periods of time, so the general thought that it was time for a change and that we would have a Republican governor. At that time, Senator Clifford Case was projecting a man named James Mitchell, who is since deceased. He was Labor Secretary in the Eisenhower cabinet, and by coincidence a native of New Jersey, although he hadn't resided here, of course, during the time he was in the cabinet. But he was one of the candidates. There were two other local candidates, and there was a very spirited Republican primary which, to the amazement of everybody, was won by Mitchell.

Now the Democrats at the same time were looking around at about twenty or twenty-five possible candidates. One was too short, or one

was too tall, one lived in the wrong part of the state, one was too young, and they finally got around to me, I suppose on the basis that I was a former judge and a former Democratic organization chairman and so forth and so on. They asked me to run in what we all thought would be a rather hopeless battle. But I campaigned; I got Betty's permission to run. She said, she has a favorite phrase, "Where you go, I go, amigo," and so she gave me carte blanche about running. With some misgivings I decided to run, and then, having become a candidate, I got pretty interested in campaigning. As I went around the state I absorbed quite a bit of concern for the highways and the institutions and the many other things that needed to be done. I worked pretty hard and was elected just by a very close vote, maybe one-half of a per cent of the vote.

F: That was the time of close elections.

RH: Yes, it was. That night I received a call from President Kennedy about quarter of twelve in the evening. He wasn't sure from his returns whether I would make it, and I estimated that we had the vote counted down pretty closely and I would probably win by 25,000 votes. He congratulated me, and we had a nice chat. It turned out that I had won by 34,000. But that was a close election. Then in 1965 when I ran for re-election, it was not that close. I won that time by some 360,000 votes.

F: Who was your opponent in 1965?

RH: In 1965, Senator Wayne Dumont, who had been a candidate in the

Republican primary in 1961, and a defeated candidate and a very prominent, hard-working and very knowledgeable man, well-known through the state. The campaign turned on a rather unforeseen issue involving a speech of sympathy to the Viet Cong made by a college professor named Genovese, who was a history professor in Rutgers. I didn't know this man, and there wasn't much commotion about the speech for a while until some publicity representatives sold Dumont on the idea that he could make a pretty big issue out of this, a la the old Joe McCarthy era, which would have worked fifteen years before.

But I felt that this being America, and having the guarantees of free speech, that this rather silly statement by the professor, you could disagree with it but that didn't mean that he should be fired or imprisoned or punished in any way. So I insisted that the board of governors of the state university had jurisdiction and I wouldn't interfere with it. They did nothing about it, and the issue, therefore, went to the people as to whether I was soft on communism, et cetera, et cetera. The people apparently solved this pretty affirmatively. Strangely enough, none of our experts could forecast this. I didn't know, on that day of election I had no idea whether I was going to win or lose. Right, Betty?

F: The polls didn't indicate?

RH: The polls indicated everything except this underlying issue, and this was talked about in every barber shop and tea room in New Jersey. It was a constant thing.

BH: No one knew whether the people really saw a specter of reds at Rutgers, which is our state university, or whether they were thinking things through and deciding, "Now, I am an American. If I am entitled to free speech, this boob is also entitled." We were just astounded, and of course gratified when Dick won. He told you the figures--360[000], did you say? But it was the highest majority that any governor of this state has ever had. I guess double what anybody had ever had.

F: This is getting ahead of the story, but were you in contact with the President during this campaign?

RH: During the 1965 campaign? Yes, I saw him. I had close contacts with President Johnson after the tragedy in Dallas. Before that time I had seen him quite much. I had done some business with him, political, governmental business. He would come up here for dinners. I met him in Miami, I think in 1962, probably, and we had a very cordial meeting.

I noticed one thing about him, that his attitude toward President Kennedy was absolutely unexceptionable. Now many people have said there were not warm personal relations between them, but I have never seen in public life the deference and the courtesy [shown]. For instance, I would ask Vice President Johnson if he would come to New Jersey for a speech, and he would say he would like to, but of course this depended on whether President Kennedy wished him to do it at a particular time and so forth. So he was just, I think, the

perfect vice president, carrying his share of great responsibility and yet leaving the limelight to the President and not trying to encroach on it. I admired him very much initially for that, because I don't think it was in character. I think he had been such a leader in the Senate that it wasn't in character for him to be second man.

F: He really had to put a halter on there.

RH: That's right. But he just did it beautifully, and I think he did it as he did most of the other things that he did and didn't do, because he loved this country. He was doing it for the country.

F: I suppose where you really got close to him was when you started talking about the Atlantic City convention.

RH: That's right. I remember a very funny incident about that. We had fought hard in 196--let's see, that decision was made before President Kennedy was assassinated.

F: Which was November, 1963.

RH: November, 1963, and the final decision was made by President Kennedy. We were competing with Chicago and we were competing with Miami, both of which I think had pledged as much money as we had, but it was felt that the Eastern Seaboard would be a good location. It was a great thing for us in New Jersey. We had never had a national convention of any kind here, and we were quite excited about it.

Then, let's see, after the assassination and the following spring, in May, 1964, it so happened we had a big dinner for the

Party, three thousand or more people in the convention hall, thinking that would be a nice sentimental forecast or prelude to the nomination. President Johnson was there. I sat next to President Johnson. I remember John Bailey leaning over President Johnson, and President Johnson said, "Who picked Atlantic City for the convention?" Bailey said, "President Kennedy did, Mr. President," and he said, "Oh." I don't know whether he would have made the same choice or not.

F: That closed that conversation, didn't it?

BH: Dick, in retrospect, thinking about that convention, you know we had gotten very bad press. There are simply not the facilities, unfortunately, in Atlantic City that would be in either Chicago or Miami.

F: Well, the press is a little spoiled, too.

BH: We were pleased. It was a monumental job which Lady Bird Johnson and her staff shared; you know, the behind the scenes thing, not the political thing. As soon as it was apparent that he was president and it would be Atlantic City and there was no question about it, she called me and said, "What can I do to help?" I said, "You know, I am becoming a little bit frightened because of Atlantic City."

F: About when was this?

BH: This would be the summer, maybe May, and it's going to be in August.

F: Summer--late spring.

BH: I said, "Lady Bird, let me level with you, I am getting scared. I think the fact that this is on a beach, and it is a resort place

rather than a big city, indicates to me that people who would not normally bring wives, children, teenagers, grandchildren, will bring them. Furthermore, [there's] the proximity to the New York World's Fair. A lot of people are planning to come to Atlantic City--I have been meeting them all over the country--and then go on to the Fair in New York. We are going to have thousands of kids, and I fear teen-ago problems and teenage drunks on the Boardwalk and people needing babysitters. I think it is a bigger job than any of us anticipated, and we must get to work." She had Liz Carpenter here, I guess, on the next plane, and we went all over Atlantic City. We had fun, and I was disappointed that the press was so bad. Now, after Chicago, it is beginning to look better all of the time.

F: Atlantic City looks like the last of the happy conventions. How did you handle that problem of transportation into Atlantic City, since there is not a major port?

RH: We worked out an airline situation of some additional stops, and there was a great deal of travel by private plane--

BH: And charter.

RH: --and charter planes that came in. We have got an airport down there about twenty miles from Atlantic City called the National Air Facilities Experimental Center, NAFEC, at Pomona, which has probably as long runways as there are in the world, I think twelve thousand foot runways, so that it is a great landing place. That was one means. Then of course our Garden State Parkway comes down near there. So it wasn't that bad, although that was the final

knot that we had to untie before we got the convention, the transportation problem. We had a terrible time with hotel rooms, and so forth.

F: I wanted to ask you about that because this is the height of your tourist season; it's not like holding it in the winter there.

RH; Well, the hotels cooperated splendidly, and the President sent Marvin Watson up here with a very nice fellow from East Texas named Blake Gillen. And Blake Gillen and Marvin and I had a lot of fun. We worked with some Republicans and some chamber of commerce people there.

F: You must have decided about then that you weren't governor of a state, but a convention manager.

RH: That's right.

BH: How about a man named Burney, I remember--

RH: Cecil Burney was up.

F: From Corpus Christi.

RH: Woody Woodward--there were a lot of Texans.

Betty and I used to wake up in the morning. . .Betty got the idea of having a buffet party every night, beginning at midnight, on a big terrace outside of our hotel suite. That party generally wound up about three o'clock, and then at seven in the morning we were up and at it again. So it was a very tiring week. Betty would say, "How"--she will imitate a Texas accent.

BH: How'r you. Ahm fine. How'r you. I'd say, "Let's talk Texas, Daddy."

F: How far in advance of the convention did you move down to Atlantic City?

BH: I think about three weeks. We had a teenage committee taken over by a young Republican attorney in Atlantic City at our request, and he did a very good job. I guess I have had so many teenagers in my time that I was worried more about them than anything. They had the Y, and a couple of schools had rock'n'roll bands for them. They had tents pitched on the sand. Every delegate when he arrived, if we knew in advance that he would have a young person with him, had a box of saltwater taffy in his room and an invitation--you know, "There is a free ride for teenagers, and deep sea fishing." They really had a great time. Then we had babysitter committees and so on.

F: Did you get your anticipated crush of youngsters?

BH: Yes, indeed.

F: They came to Atlantic City.

BH: Yes, they did, and as I say, for those reasons. I think the combination of the beach and the amusements, all that sort of thing, plus its proximity to the World's Fair, meant that we got a lot of traffic that we had not counted on.

RH: Betty decided on one of, I think, the most remarkable ways of entertaining. We had the big people in the Democratic Party at these parties in our suite; had several bars, and it was very well done from the logistics standpoint.

But it was remarkable to me to see a man like our friend

Governor John Connally and Nellie Connally, or Adlai Stevenson or some other great figure in history standing and seriously talking to a little committeewoman from the third ward in Hoboken or Paterson, New Jersey, about the future of the Democratic Party. I thought it was just a wonderful thing. We had a great mix of the humble people, the grassroots of the party, and the big people.

BH: I began to realize that food mattered. I had never been to a national convention, and to start out being hostess, that kind of starting at the top I could do without. However, we started getting all these cocktail parties, like the Texas delegation, the Minnesota delegation, this one and that one invites you. It seemed that the cocktail parties started about four o'clock in the afternoon, and you were always invited to three or four of them. Then you went from there to the convention hall, and that would go on till eleven or twelve o'clock, and everybody was really very hungry. There wasn't any time in there to sit down and order a dinner. I said, "Father, I know it will be expensive, but let us go heavy on food. Instead of these little, tiny olives wrapped in bacon, let's have great, big, serious roasts of beef and hot rolls and Lobster Newburg, and real, true food, and big urns of coffee." Of course, there would be a bar. But it went very light on the drinking and heavy on the eating. They would see that big roast of beef and run over and [get some].

F: Go to Hughes' place to eat.

RH: We had pretty good contact with the President during that interval, too.

Just to go back a minute, the first official meeting I had with President Johnson after the tragedy in Dallas was at a time when the governors were down in Miami at our mid-winter meeting. It was decided that we would call him to announce our support. So I guess a dozen of us, including Republicans like Governor Jim Rhodes of Ohio, half Republicans, half Democrats, flew up to Washington in a plane furnished by Governor Frank Clement of Tennessee.

We saw the President then, and, as somebody had said at the meeting, he was still quite shook up about this terrible thing and the enormity of the responsibility that had fallen on him. I think it did him good [to see us]. He got then the bipartisan pledge of loyalty from all the governors that held up, I guess, on through 1966, right through the Vietnam enlargement of troops.

F: A pretty long run.

RH: It was just excellent. For instance, at a governors conference, I think in 1965, we passed a resolution to endorse his sending of one hundred and sixty-thousand more troops to Vietnam. I think there was only one abstention, and that was Governor Mark Hatfield, who was very much opposed to the war. But that was a really united front.

BH: Richard, I think that you are forgetting that you saw President Johnson, as I recall, the day of President Kennedy's funeral.

RH: Yes, that's right.

BH: You were in such shock then, and so were we all, that you have blanked out on it.

F: You went down for the funeral?

RH: Yes, we did.

BH: I remember sitting in a hotel room and you coming in and saying, "Oh, that poor fellow." Apparently he had them all lined up, the foreign dignitaries who were there and the congressional leaders. He only gave a brief time, so you told me, to the governors, but he wanted to give him that courtesy.

RH: He had a great--

F: Where did you see him, over at the White House?

RH: I think at the White House; I've forgotten that.

BH: That was when everybody was trying to tell him he should move into the White House.

RH: Oh, that's right.

BH: He was declining. I wasn't there, but it must have been the old office they had.

RH: No, I think it was maybe in the State Department. But it just demonstrated his great sensitivity. You couldn't find a more courteous man. I imagine, although I have never actually experienced this except maybe once or twice, that President Johnson can be pretty tough when he wants you to do something or gets mad at you. But his native courtesy and kindness is I think exceptional, and that was an example of it.

During the 1964 campaign he was up here the very day, the morning of the day that the terrible story came out about Walter

Jenkins. And that poor man, President Johnson, I don't know whether he knew anything about it then or not, but he was just back from a western swing. His hands were bandaged. We had him in Bergen County, and we had a crowd of thirty, thirty-five thousand people. It was a great crowd, hurriedly arranged because it was a last minute stop. He was speechless; he couldn't speak. Even in the car he would scribble notes. Jack Valenti was in the car with us and the President.

F: Was he hoarse?

RH: He was hoarse. He had absolutely lost his voice on the six day trip out west because the people had mauled him. I remember very definitely both of his hands were bandaged--not fully covered, but where people had scratched him. (Interruption)

F: At this juncture, Governor Hughes was called to Trenton, and so for the next period we will talk with Mrs. Hughes, solely.

Mrs. Hughes, let's move ahead. You were very intimately involved in the arrangements for the Hollybush meeting, or the Glassboro meeting when Mr. Kosygin of Russia came over and brought his daughter.

BH: Right.

F: Would you like to tell us how that got underway?

BH: Yes. It was really fascinating. We were down at the beach house with a flock of children; of course, that is sort of the story of my life.

F: The beach house is at Island Beach?

BH: Island Beach State Park, oh, possibly fifteen minutes as the crow flies north of Atlantic City. You would place it from there. There is a state house there provided for the governor as kind of a retreat. We never, ever, ever entertain there, because this house is so lovely and it is fitted out with all the appropriate silver and china and crystal chandeliers and all the rest of it, and that place, Island Beach, is very heavy on paper placemats and stainless steel cutlery and barefoot children. It just is not the sort of place, I guess the only house guest we have ever had would have been sixteen and younger, the children and their friends.

F: Let me interrupt one moment out of personal curiosity, what is the Governor's home doing in Princeton instead of Trenton?

BH: Because this house happens to be ninety years older than the White House. It was built in 1701 by the grandfather of the Richard Stockton who was the third signer of the Declaration of Independence. It stayed in the Stockton family for two hundred years and was then acquired by Governor [Walter] Edge as a personal residence, who in turn left it to the state. So the quality of the history and the fact that it is an easy commute, twelve or thirteen miles, to Trenton makes it acceptable. I kind of like it. He doesn't bring people home for lunch like he might if he lived right across from the State House.

So I am trying to place this Island Beach house. I think the flavor of the entire thing was that this visit was terribly informal, and I planned it that way. I had been reading all week long

accounts of Premier Kosygin and his daughter being in this country. I had read that she had been to Radio City Music Hall, and they had been to Niagara Falls, and of course they had been to the Russian Embassy. She had gone shopping at Macy's, but was so harassed by the press of the world that she ran away from Macy's and went back to the Embassy. I kept thinking, "Darn, I know there is one thing that girl probably hasn't done and that's to be literally inside an American home." I thought, "Don't you wish that the ins and outs of protocol would make it possible for me to telephone her and say, "Come see my house [and] see how America really lives?" I thought this is a vain dream, if I called up I would never get through that radar screen that those Russians have around them.

F: Had Glassboro been determined on at this time?

BH: No. I had no idea.

F: Up to this stage he was at the United Nations, and there is just a speculation of whether he will even see President Johnson.

BH: Then at the same time that I am worrying about the Russian girl and she can't see an American house, apparently my husband, he confided in me later, was worrying on a higher level. He was thinking, "Isn't this awful, these two great world leaders and they are both somehow being pigheaded and Kosygin won't come to Washington and Johnson won't come to New York. Isn't this awful, that just the tension of the arrangements will make a meeting, a summit, impossible."

So he decided that he would call, which he had done and had not

told me, I guess to Marvin Watson. Then Marvin called him back, and finally it was agreed that if the Russians would come--Dick suggested Glassboro State College because, truly, of its simplicity. He felt that there wouldn't be time, and it was such a crash thing. One day the world heard about it, and the next day they were there. There was no time to organize hecklers and things like that. It was a simple community. I said, "Well, why not our house in Princeton?" Dick said, "That's kind of almost too elegant." He had a feeling, almost like I did, that these are both simple men, both men of the land, and that they shouldn't be intimidated. This little farm house or the president's house down at Glassboro is really quite simple and Victorian. So he extended the invitation, it was accepted, and he will tell you all the ramifications of that.

I went down to Glassboro the first day just because I wished to be there. Also, I write a column, and I thought maybe I would get a good column out of this. I had to. We were stunned when President Johnson and Premier Kosygin came out and, through an interpreter, said to us they were very hopeful about the talks they had that day, and would we mind if they came back Sunday, which I guess was maybe one day or two days hence.

F: Now you went down there--

BH: --on Friday.

F: The day before they came, the same day?

BH: Same day. In fact, the world heard about it, I think, seven or eight o'clock of a Thursday night, and Friday morning everybody was there.

F: How much notice did you have? The same amount? A little more?

BH: Yes, you see I had no role in it the first day. I just went as the Governor's wife and a reporter. When they emerged from Hollybush, that house, and said that they were very, very hopeful and they would like to meet again on Sunday, well, I just cried. I was so thrilled that we had had a part in anything that great.

So we went back to the beach, and then, about seven o'clock on Saturday evening--I still had not heard whether Lady Bird was coming--I got a call. We had about seven teenagers, and as you know with teenagers of your own, seven o'clock on Saturday night is the zero hour. That's when they are making all the deals, who's got the car and got a blind date, this and that, and I don't even answer the phone because it is never for me. There is only one phone line coming into that beach house. So our Timmy answered, and he said, "The White House?" We had a few friends around in slacks and shorts, all with a martini, and everybody put down their glass real quietly and Dick started across the floor. Timmy said, "I am sorry, Pop, it's for Mom." Father was rather deflated, and I went over. It was Marvin Watson telling me that Lady Bird was in Texas at the Ranch and was very anxious to come the next day, and that they were exploring the possibility of inviting Premier Kosygin's daughter. These negotiations were still going

on, or I guess pending. But what she was worried about--naturally, we would not be welcome at the conference table, and there was just no room, the press of the world was all around on the lawn--could I think of anything to do with this girl to show her something and still not interfere with the conference, but show her a good time.

I didn't hesitate one minute. I said, "You bet I can. I think we have to get a big helicopter. It will have to be yours because New Jersey is a poor state, we only have those little tiny ones." But I said, "We will take Lady Bird," and I was then talking to Marvin, "You tell her that I will take her and her daughter Lynda, who was coming, and of course anybody else she wants and the Russian girl and me, and we will get a helicopter and fly as low and as slow as we can. We will show her our superhighways, which will be crowded on Sunday from the air. Then we will show her the convention hall and that beautiful stretch of coastline. Then we will land, and she will come to our beach house. We will have lunch, and we will walk the beach. She will just see how America really lives. So I said, "You tell Lady Bird to call me." He said, "Lady Bird can't get through to you. Your phone has been busy all the time." I said, "Okay, Marvin, I'll put the kids off the phone."

F: That's how Marvin got in on it instead of Liz or Mrs. Johnson directly.

BH: Right. He said Lady Bird had been calling me for over an hour

from Texas, and Lady Bird just couldn't get through.

F: When you had originally contacted them about the possibility of the girl coming down, had they shown any interest?

BH: Oh, yes, yes. Then I guess I talked to Lady Bird two or three times that evening with real world-shattering things like, "What are you going to wear?"

F: You got the kids off the phone, then?

BH: Yes. We talked back and forth, I guess, three times before midnight. I never saw such action. Then Marvin finally called me.

F: What did you decide to wear?

BH: Oh, a cotton dress. I didn't think much about it. I was worried about the luncheon, because we had no fine things in that house. I did send up here, I think, for my sterling silver, but I used the same simple china and tumblers and everything that we always use. My friends had to cook the dinner, because I was going up to Glassboro to meet the Russians. So all the people who had been there for cocktails the night before, I gave them all assignments. I said, "We'll find out if this is going to come through. You be back here by midnight. You will do the chicken. You'll get the strawberries. And, oh, vodka, vodka, Russians are always big on vodka. You bring vodka. You get ice. And get some of the horses to put down at the foot of the road, at the foot of the house, so if we don't want spectators we won't have spectators."

By that time the state police and the Secret Service were

arriving, and the telephone company was putting in hot-lines. It was really all quite exciting. So I got up and went to six o'clock church the next day, and came home and had breakfast with the children. I phoned my mother, who was up the beach maybe twenty miles, and said, "Mom, would you like to come for lunch?" Mother said, "At the beach house?" I said, "Yes, a few friends are coming." She said, "Well, who is coming?" I said, "Never mind, say yes or no." She said, "All right, if you want me to come, I'll go. Who is coming?" I said, "I can't tell you now, but you will probably hear it on the radio." She then turned on her TV, and in an hour or so the plans were announced.

Right before I left for Glassboro by helicopter I typed her a note. Now my mother is the lace-curtain Irish type. She comes from an era where children on vacation went to hotel dining rooms with organdy dresses and white silk socks, and I knew she was going to come to that house and change all my arrangements. So I typed her a little note. I said, "Mother, please, I want the children clean and respectable, but in their beach clothes. Do not try to get them ready for a junior prom. This once I ask your cooperation. Fondly, Betty." It killed her, but she did as I said. When we got there they were all around in blue jeans and sweat shirts and bathing trunks and so on, and that Russian girl was just captivated by our kitchen.

F: Did she have a female companion, or did she come alone?

BH: No, I was astounded that the Russians would permit her. I don't

think we would have done that.

F: How did you get her down there?

BH: By helicopter.

F: From where?

BH: From Glassboro.

F: She had gone to Glassboro?

BH: Yes. She came down the superhighway with her father from New York to Glassboro.

F: Must have been quite a convoy bringing them down?

BH: Oh, yes. Then we met her, and the men went about their business. We came out to the presidential chopper, Liz Carpenter and Lady Bird and Lynda and me, and of course the Russian guest, and a doctor and maybe two Secret Service men. It wasn't crowded. It wasn't a big, big chopper.

F: The Russians didn't move in with their own Secret Service team to protect her? I mean, they left the arrangements up to the [Americans].

BH: No. I was astounded because they had no one. She was absolutely, well, cold turkey I guess you would call it. I thought to myself, "I am sure that if Lynda or Luci would be in Moscow our government wouldn't turn her loose without anyone." She had no female companion, no guard, no gun, no nothing, and she really did very well for herself. She was excellent in English, both articulate and good enough even to be witty. She had visited London one time, but this was her first visit to the States.

F: What age?

BH: Oh, maybe thirty-two, thirty-four. She had teenage children, and not a beautiful girl, very plain, but warm. She was an excellent emissary for the Soviet Union. She said to us that, "Always [I] have wished to see an American home." She said, "Then this is not possible. Then last night my Embassy say that Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Hughes have made this possible. It gives me joy." I said, "What did you do when you heard you were coming here?" "I get my hair curlers."

F: She probably wondered what she was going to wear.

BH: Right. Isn't that funny? But she wanted to see the kitchen, and the kitchen there is rather new. It maybe has been redone five years ago. There is a yellow refrigerator and yellow formica cabinet tops and birch wood, that sort of thing, a yellow washer and dryer. She was quite astounded, and she tried to tell us, not nastily or harshly, that she understood that naturally a governor could have this, but not everyone could have such things.

"Oh," I said, "yes, they can. A man who drives a milk wagon or who is a postman, if he is willing to pay possibly ten dollars extra, can have these colored appliances. This kitchen is not at all unusual. In fact, in a nation where we have no servants, they are fast disappearing, and the lady of the house spends a lot of time in the kitchen, almost the first thing you would have, certainly ahead of a fur coat or a Cadillac car, would be a good working kitchen." I said, "Now, we have a son who is thirty. He has such

a kitchen." I said, "Do you understand the word mortgage?" We explained that to her, and I said, "He has a mortgage, and a big one, and he has to work very hard. He cuts his own grass and his wife sews and cooks, but he has such a kitchen and he is not a rich man." She couldn't just get over the idea that these things were available to anyone.

F: Did you get the feeling that she knew her way around the kitchen?

BH: Yes, I guess so. That's a very astute question; I hadn't thought of that. But certainly you wouldn't be so interested in kitchens if you hadn't spent much time in them, right?

F: Right.

BH: If they were the place where the help carried the food out to you, what would you care how they looked.

F: Yes. "Something goes on back there."

BH: Lady Bird was just in rare form that day. She was just happy. You could see her glow. She was thrilled to be part of all this.

F: She must have been up most of the night just to get there.

BH: Well, no, she had left I think at six or seven o'clock in the morning from Texas, but you know in this day of jets. Their plane, Air Force One, would be comfortable; it wouldn't be like being in an economy seat of a cross-country plane. She looked lovely and so did Lynda, much better than I looked or the Russian girl, really. She was just glowing. I think she was really delighted, thinking that her husband, her Lyndon, and her president, was really making his big score. Of course, it turned out not to be. It wasn't his

fault, or Dick Hughes' fault, or any of ours. But I think I had that feeling, although she did not say so, that she was elated that this man she loved had brought the world together.

F: It was almost the beginning of the big thaw.

BH: Oh, yes. It was less than twenty-four hours later that we realized that Kosygin was talking nice but he wasn't following through. But she was a happy lady that day. It is so funny now when I think of Lynda. When the Russian girl was asking her about her boyfriends or her sister being married, you know Luci by that time was married, Lynda sat there in that helicopter and said that her plans were to be an old maid aunt. Now Lynda has her husband and her baby, so those kinds of plans seldom work out.

The one word the Russian girl did not understand was incognito. I said, "Have you done everything you wished to do in this country?" She said, "No, I like to go to an automobile cinema." We had to figure that one out. It turns out to be a drive-in movie. She had heard about them, but they don't have them in her country. She wanted to do that very badly and she wanted to go to a supermarket, and this also she had not done. So I said to her, "The next time you come, you must come incognito." She said, "What is incognito?" We explained to her that she would wear dark glasses and a kerchief on her head and some other name, and then she could kind of look around as she pleased.

F: How do you pronounce that, Gvishiana?

BH: Gvishiana.

F: Gvishiana. Did she visit with your teenagers?

BH: Yes, she did. Oh, I was just heartbroken. When I woke up Sunday morning--we have a boys dormitory. Our teenage boys are sort of like nature abhorring a vacuum, if there is an empty bed they get a body to fill it. Michael had two friends, Tippytoes and somebody else, there for the surfing. I woke them up and I said, "Now listen, boys, you have got to get out of here. We are having very, very important guests. I can't tell you who, but you'll hear on the radio in a couple of hours. Clean up this room. I want it looking like Better Homes and Gardens. Then Dorothy is going to fix you some bacon and eggs, and take your surfboards and get lost. A flock of teenagers I don't need today." So I really chased them, and they went. Then when Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Gvishiana arrived there were a couple of surfboards propped next to our garage, and then both said that they would love to see surfing. They had seen it in the films, but they had never seen a live surfer. Of course, I had chased my personnel. I could have had quite a show. Yes, she saw the teenagers.

Then [to] my little Tommy, who was then possibly four or five, I said, "Say goodbye to the lady." I thought, "Well, Tommy will surely shake hands, and maybe with any luck he will give her a kiss." He looked her dead in the eye and said, "Go away, goodbye, and never come back." I said, "Oh, brother." I was mortified. I could feel my blood turning to ice water, and I knew that her English was good enough that I could not hope that she hadn't understood. I explained

to her that his big things usually were playing records and swimming, and I wouldn't let him go in the surf that day. I figured I had enough to do without watching him. Furthermore, he had to turn off his record player because the Secret Service were using the playroom as a command post or something. It had ruined Tommy's day.

F: A little difficult to explain that to a four-year-old.

BH: Yes, but apparently she was enough of a mother to be amused. When I heard her start to laugh I thought, "Oh, thank God."

F: You didn't create your own international incident then? Did you talk such homey things as child upbringing and teenage problems? Did you get any feeling for that?

BH: Yes, she talked about her two teenagers and what they were studying and what she had studied. I thought, and I told her this, "You are much further ahead than we are. For instance your English and your children's English is infinitely better than our Russian, which does not exist. You make me feel rather ashamed." She conceded that point, and she said she had that same feeling about our highways and automobiles, that they had just got to the point after World War II that they are now very, very proud of their rail system and their railway terminus or depots, or whatever you call them. But she realized that they had a long way to go technically when she saw our superhighways and began to realize [the truth of] what she had always heard, that any American not only can have a car but does. She said those superhighways had convinced her that that was all true.

F: Pretty astute for that Sunday traffic. Did your kids come to lunch?

BH: No. We were five at lunch: Lady Bird and her daughter, my mother and myself, and Mrs. Gvishiana. I put Lady Bird at the head of the table after a quick consultation. I think Liz called Bess and said, "When everybody ranks everybody and you haven't got a round table, what do you do?" She said, well, Mrs. Johnson, even though it was my house, would sit at the end of the table, and then I think I sat next to the Russian lady and my mother next to Lynda.

F: With you as foreman, what did you have for lunch? What kind of lunch was it?

BH: We had chicken that my friend Emmy Acuff did, a kind of a chicken casserole because we weren't sure of the time and it had to be something that could keep low in the kitchen, and Jersey strawberries. Everybody who came in the place that morning had brought vodka. Everybody thinks Russians-vodka. We had tons of vodka, and all she wanted was orange juice.

F: I see.

BH: There was vodka all over the kitchen, because we wanted to do right by the United States of America.

F: I trust you had orange juice.

BH: We had orange juice. The children had a cook-out, because this luncheon didn't take place until maybe two or two-thirty. They had had hot dogs out on the beach at noon.

Then one of my friends from the cocktail party the night before

ordered hoagies and coke in cans at some delicatessen up the beach, those great big long [sandwiches]. It's like a whole loaf of bread, and you can make it into seven sandwiches; they slice it down, that sort of thing. He brought them to the press, and you have never seen anybody so delighted. The press, oh, they were just herded. I felt so sorry for them.

F: They were just placed out there without any--

BH: Oh, in the heat.

F: You didn't have time for any sodas.

BH: No, they were down at the end of the driveway, and they were just standing there in the driveway, which was just awful. I finally said to Liz, "Let's ask Lady Bird if we can't let them come up and take their pictures. Then if they want to go home, they can. We'll make it very apparent." But with the press Liz is the boss, and I had to ask her. She asked Lady Bird and Lady Bird asked Mrs. Gvishiana, and we all agreed that they looked very hot and sticky and miserable. We also pointed out that they might be trying to make a deadline and to get back to Glassboro to hear about the big news, so we did invite them.

F: About how many press people did you have?

BH: An astonishing number. Well over one hundred I think, many of them women. But it was so recently announced.

F: They didn't have much notice either, did they?

BH: Right. Physically it was difficult for them, but somehow they made it. You know those Washington press girls can seem to do anything.

F: Yes. Did your state police hold them off at a distance, have to keep them from just taking over?

BH: Yes, at the end of the driveway, and barricades, and it just looked awful. Somehow you wouldn't mind it when you looked out and saw men, but this was very heavy on lady press.

We finally agreed that we would let them come up and walk on the beach, not come in the house but question us and follow us while we walked down to the ocean and so on, then my friend Dick Switlick went out and came passing out hoagies and cokes because there were no facilities for them to eat. They were really mighty grateful. I think the hoagies made them go away happy.

F: Now, when you walked on the beach, did you walk in your bare feet?

BH: Yes, we all took off our shoes.

F: She did, too?

BH: Yes.

F: Did she seem to enjoy that?

BH: Yes, she did. That was some day.

F: What did you have, a good day?

BH: Beautiful, beautiful day.

F: Not too hot?

BH: No. It was good that she came at all. But, seriously, if she had been able to come incognito, it would have been delightful. I liked her very much, and I know that Lady Bird had the same feeling, and Lynda.

F: It was a shame you had to put a kind of an official cast on this,

just from the fact of the press. Well now, then you helicoptered her back to Glassboro?

BH: To Glassboro, and the men were still meeting.

F: Did you have any timetable you were trying to keep within, or did you just kind of do it when the afternoon came to [an end]?

BH: No, I think that Secret Service men and Liz were sort of in touch with their counterparts in Glassboro. They were still meeting, and no one would dare to go in and ask either the President of the United States or Premier Kosygin, "Do you want the girls back?" So they finally said, "Well, you better get back." We did, and the men were still meeting. Then we met my husband, who had not come with us. He stayed in case there would be any emergencies that he could help with, although naturally he was not at the meeting. When we returned to Glassboro the President and Mrs. Robinson, that would be the president of Glassboro College, were invited into their own home--and Dick and I and Lady Bird and Lynda and Mrs. Gvishiana. We sat and chatted for about an hour, but I could feel that by this time that tension was beginning to mount. Both Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Gvishiana were wondering what was going on behind those closed doors. You can just put out so much chit-chat, and then when you think that history is ten feet away everybody was getting a little jumpy. Someone brought us iced tea.

F: How did your mother react to all of this?

BH: She thought I was just crazy, the idea that I brought them there to the beach when I could have brought them to the official governor's

residence. She thinks, still, that it was the greatest mistake of my life.

F: I see.

BH: Yes. She would have liked to have black tie and finger bowls with rose petals in them and all the rest of it. She felt that when you do things, you do them right. But my hunch was that that was right, and I think so still.

F: Have you heard from Mrs. Gvishiana since?

BH: She sent me presents through the Russian Embassy and I wrote her a thank you note, and that was the end of it.

F: What did she send you?

BH: She sent me a Russian, well, I guess like a tea or a mocha set heavily embellished in gold, and she sent Russian chocolates for the children. I guess that's it.

F: The four-year-old probably forgave her when the chocolate came.

BH: That day we exchanged presents there. Mrs. Johnson and Lynda had a book of color photographs of the White House, and then I think a small [one of] those kind of clocks that have tuning forks. I forget, Acutron, is that it? One of those, a little small bedside clock. And I had a Lenox China bowl--Lenox China, plug, plug, you know it is made here in New Jersey. We have designed such a bowl that has the state seal in gold and our names as you turn it over. I don't think she had any presents for us; well, she wouldn't because she didn't know she was coming.

F: Right. Then what happened, as far as you women were concerned, when

they were meeting is in town, out from town?

BH: On the edge of the town is the campus.

F: Is there open space around there?

BH: A lawn. I chatted while we were waiting with the President's pilot. I am not sure if it was that Godfrey, the same one who President Kennedy had had. I was kind of in shock, and I was trying to think what to do. But we went over on the back screened porch, where it was kind of out of the sun. I had been an air force wife in my first marriage, and of course later an air force widow. So we had a little chat about whether you were likely to make colonel faster if you were flying a president. I told him I hoped so, and he said it was just the most glorious thing that had ever happened to him to have this job. But it was very difficult for his family because you are on just one minute's notice, and nothing, a wedding anniversary or a birthday, nothing could come ahead of where the President wished to go. This was great by him and his wife was quite patient, but he was realizing it was difficult on her.

F: This may have been James Cross at this time.

BH: Gee, I wish I could remember.

F: It doesn't matter.

BH: He'd make a great interview for you, I think.

F: Yes. I am trying to set the scene here. When the men came out, I presume you all stood up and sort of greeted all around. Did they say anything at all about what they had been talking about? Did

President Johnson have anything to say?

BH: No, they didn't say, and we didn't ask. We all thought it was too momentous.

F: There was no informal kind of chitchat there about, "Well, we have been talking, and we have had a good day," or something like that?

BH: No. The President, you know how he has kind of a booming voice sometimes, [said] "There you are, girls, how is everything. Did you have a nice time?"

F: He was asking about you then, instead? He was asking about the women's party.

BH: Yes, if we had a nice day and so on. Then there seemed to be people herding us around. I don't know, it wasn't Liz Carpenter. I am not aware of who it was, but it seemed that someone told us to go out front. The press was just ready to die. They had been out there for seven hours, and the ones with those big, heavy cameras were suffering. [We were told] that we should go out. Then they organized us: first the President and the Premier, and then with the ladies, and then with President and Mrs. Tom Robinson from Glassboro, and they took a lot of pictures.

Then you could hear the voice of the crowd, "We want LBJ" or "Come this way, come this way." I had to think you know, we had heard that chant, which I thought was the cruelest thing of his administration, that awful "Hey, hey, LBJ, how many kids did you kill today?" I was so happy when I heard this, "We want LBJ," "Come this way, come this way."

He was happy. So he came over and kind of just ushered the Premier right with him, and they looked like two happy men. [There were] all kinds of cheers, and people were throwing flowers.

F: Kosygin got in with the spirit of the occasion and was not dour or grim?

BH: Yes. Everyone cheered, and then the President raised the Premier's hand and indicated to the people, "Now give one for my boyfriend," and they did. I always remember that other Russian, Lady Nikita Krushchev, who had given that gesture to Jacqueline Kennedy. Don't you remember, they were on some balcony on that famous French trip?

F: Yes.

BH: Oh, I just went away from that place so happy. Then Dick and I went over. We saw the President off--first the Premier left.

F: He left by car?

BH: By car. No, he changed his mind, he went by helicopter. He wouldn't come down by helicopter, and he had indicated to the Americans that he hated those things. He just wouldn't get on one.

F: This was a U.S. helicopter that took him back?

BH: So, somehow he had changed his mind. Maybe he was very tired, or maybe he trusted us more, who knows?

F: Maybe he didn't like the five o'clock traffic.

BH: But they all climbed on the helicopter, and President and Mrs. Johnson were there to see them off. They had told me that I couldn't say "God bless you," and I forgot. He shook my two

hands, that kind of a gesture, and said--

F: To him or her?

BH: I said it to him. He shook my two hands with his two hands and said something in Russian, and the interpreter said, "He says thank you for being so nice to his daughter." He could say "thank you" in English, and he said to me, "Thank you, thank you." I said, "God bless you," and I thought "Uh-oh, have I stepped in it again today?" But the translater translated it, and he did not find that offensive at all; he kind of hugged me again. So we saw them off in their helicopter. Then President and Mrs. Johnson got in theirs, and they were going to Philadelphia, I guess, to board their big plane.

F: They didn't stand around for any postmortems with your husband.

BH: No. No, they did not. Let's see, he spoke to the press then for about five minutes, and I had an idea that he was hopeful but hedging. It was such a delicate thing that he wanted to clear it before he started telling The New York Times. So then Dick and I went over [to] our press. I say it is "ours" because it's here in New Jersey. A lot of the world press was there. They were all over in the gymnasium where [there were] big TV cameras, and they had sent messages begging us to come over and give them our viewpoint. They had to have something, particularly the feature writers wanted something about the ladies' day.

F: Again with this lack of time, what had you done towards setting up

any kind of facilities in the gym? Did the school manage that, did you manage that, or did it just get managed on its own?

BH: I did not. I don't know who did it, but that place had bleachers, typewriters, all those heavy tables, a whole bank, say, a couple of trailers with telephones in them, mobile telephone units.

F: So that could have gotten the word out if there'd been any?

BH: And generators, everything. Oh, yes. And food, oh, those people in Glassboro were sending sandwiches for the press. They'd have to give it to someone at the gate because there were security men all over the place. But a man would come in with a whole bunch of sandwiches, and then I guess there were coke machines that had been brought in, that sort of thing. It was amazing. They redecorated that house in one night. Did you know about that?

F: No.

BH: Dick said to me--you'll have to get him to tell you his version--he had talked to Marvin Watson. They had been back and forth all day long, and Marvin finally said, "The President accepts; however, Governor, you can understand that this is such a big thing that we do not wish you to release it. When you get up to this level, the President has to make this announcement, which he will be doing in a couple of hours. Now, you say that this college is out of session and you say that the president has a house. You do not remember if it is air-conditioned. Don't worry about--"

F: Was it?

BH: No. But it got air-conditioned overnight.

F: The Robinsons, at times, must have wondered what hit them.

BH: He said, "Within an hour we will be working out details. In the meantime, you cannot tell anybody." So Dick decided he had better get down to Glassboro, because it looked ninety-nine per cent sure.

F: How far is Glassboro from here?

BH: Oh, maybe an hour, an hour and fifteen minutes. It was a rainy night. So he called President Robinson down at Glassboro and said, "Tom, remember I talked to you about having some out-of-state congressmen have a little meeting down at your place tomorrow?" Tom said, "Yes, Governor, fine. I told you we were willing to cooperate."

F: Did he know what this was?

BH: No, no idea.

F: No?

BH: He couldn't. So Dick said, "Well--"

F: I thought maybe your husband was talking that way to keep any operator from listening.

BH: Oh, no. Dick said to him, "Tom, I think I'd better take a little run down there and go over the arrangements with you." Dr. Robinson said he was stunned that the Governor wouldn't think that he could handle fifteen people without driving all the way down in the rain to make arrangements.

Then on the way to Glassboro my husband got a call over his car telephone saying, top urgent, he should call the White House

right now. He was afraid to talk on the mobile phone because all the ham people can listen to it. So he stopped at a pay station on the turnpike and called the White House, and they said, "The President is going to announce it in the next ten minutes." Dick said, "I am on my way there now." "Well, we'll be in touch, the telephone people are on their way." Dr. Robinson, I guess, heard it over the radio. By that time a professor [had] called him up and said, "Dr. Robinson, what about the President and Premier Kosygin coming to your house tomorrow?" Dr. and Mrs. Robinson both figured it had to be a joke. Then they thought, "No, the Governor is on his way down. Oh, Lordy."

F: "Get out quick!"

BH: The next phone call was The London Times calling Mrs. Robinson, and they began to realize it was real.

Marvin came in that night, and he looked things over and said, "It has to be comfortable." They got TV people and utility people out of bed and they set up a big generator in the backyard, and this air-conditioning was instantly done. Then it became apparent that one of the rooms where the aides were to meet didn't have any door on it, it was an archway. So a carpenter was hauled out in the middle of the night to make an instant door. Then furniture began arriving. Now where they ever got the furniture, I don't know, but they had to have so many rooms for the aides, and furniture trucks were arriving at midnight. They did use White

House chefs, and an extra stove was brought in.

Oddly enough, the Robinsons had to leave. They went up to the third floor, which she said had not been occupied in years, and they found some beds up there and they slept there. But the next morning they told them, nicely, the place had to be absolutely completely secured, and they might be more comfortable if they went and stayed with a friend. So they did that. Oh, it was some exciting day.

F: They must have wondered all day what was going on over at their house.

BH: Yes. Just imagine being told that the next day you are going to be entertaining the two great world leaders and the world press. There was so much attention on the President and the Premier that the fact that the Robinsons were kind of sweet-faced, maybe sixtyish people--Mrs. Robinson looks and is mild-mannered, charming, and sort of a grandmother type, a lady who is growing old gracefully and does not mind, but certainly not a high-tension person. I just tried to think if that had been me what I would have done. I guess I would have run for my vacuum sweeper.

F: Yes, I think so, start putting things up in the closet. How long before you settled back down?

BH: After that?

F: Did you come on home that evening?

BH: We went over and talked to the press at the gym because they were

so hungry for feature news. Really, I talked more than Dick because he had not been party to the negotiations and even if he had been it would not have been his role.

F: He had just been waiting around?

BH: Yes. That role belonged to the President and the Premier. But I could freely tell about walking on the beach and what we had for lunch; you know how hungry they are for copy. So then we got in our chopper and flew home. Then when I got home my newspaper--I write for four newspapers here, a weekly column.

F: What are they?

BH: The Jersey Journal in Jersey City and The Herald News in Passaic, New Jersey, up on the New York border, and The Dover Advance, and The Trentonian. I could write for more, and I am always glad to do it. Once you write it, what do you care who reads it. Furthermore, every other paper that I have, I get a heavier paycheck. But I began to realize when I took on the last paper that I can handle the column, but I can't handle the mail.

F: Yes.

BH: So I had to limit it to four. But they were on my back. I said, "Oh, I am so tired. I was up all night, and I have been three days running back and forth to Glassboro." They said, "Look, you have to file tonight." I said, "The nearest Western Union place is twenty miles up the beach." "Then we'll send someone. Somehow you have to get that on the wire." I was dripping with perspiration and totally exhausted, but they pay me when I write drivel about a

rainy weekend and I figured I couldn't let them down. So I got my column and got one of my teenage boys to run it up to Asbury Park to try and make a midnight deadline. Then I started putting vodka in closets--it was still all over the place--thinking that I would return it to its donors, and talked to the children and just settled down.

F: Let's switch ahead. You were down at the White House during the [Women] Doers' luncheon at which Eartha Kitt made her little pitch for notoriety?

BH: Yes.

F: Tell me a little bit about that.

BH: That was a strange day. I had been invited often to the White House when they have the governors to dinner. Also we live close, and if they are looking for somebody to fill out a crowd we are kind of available, more than, say, the governor of Oklahoma, if they needed somebody at the last minute.

I had been invited to several of these Women Doers' luncheons. I think the first one that Lady Bird had shortly after the assassination, the first time she did this, I was there. I had been often. But at the time of Atlantic City Liz Carpenter and Bess Abell, who we all know as press and social secretaries to Lady Bird, had said to my mother, who was with us in Atlantic City and kind of acting as an auxiliary hostess--if I was out getting a hair comb-out or would go to a fashion show Mother presided in the suite and entertained people, called for ice, that sort of thing--"Oh, Mrs. Sullivan, you have been so gracious, is there anything

at all we can do for you?" She said, "You bet you can. I want to go to the White House some time. I don't care if it is a tea for two thousand, but to get an invitation and go to the White House of the United States is a thrilling thing. Please try to arrange it."

Well, this particular day was the day designated. Oh, and my mother was so funny. She had new clothes; she had, I suppose like everybody would do, her hair done special, and she has this mink coat but she wouldn't wear it down. She had it in the car with her. I said, "Mom, no one will see it. You check your coat downstairs." "Well, I just think if you have got one, you should wear it." We stopped at some gas station outside of Washington, and Mother I guess at that time was seventy, and she put this blue eye shadow on. She was really going all the way.

So we got there and we met all the other ladies, and the topic was what women could do about crime in the streets. We knew we couldn't revolutionize the world, but Lady Bird's theme was, "It's better to light a candle than to curse the darkness." One lady from Indianapolis was there telling what the women had done just by better street lighting and setting up these homework centers where children in the ghetto area could come and get parents' help. There would be pencils and pencil sharpeners, the simple facilities that would not be available possibly in their own homes. I was seated next to one of the Washington press girls, I believe Isabelle Shelton, and my mother was across the room at

another table. I am thinking that possibly there were forty people, maybe five tables with eight women at each of them, but I may be wrong.

F: You had place cards?

BH: We had place cards.

F: Where was this?

BH: It was downstairs, not the big dining room.

F: The one that is just off it?

BH: That one just off it, with the muraled wallpaper.

F: That will take forty or fifty people quite comfortably.

BH: Yes. I would say five or six tables, with eight ladies at a table. The President came in right after lunch and said, "Girls, have a nice time. Good luck to you in your negotiations. I have other business. I just wanted to say hello."

This girl jumped to her feet then: "Mr. President--" and she was giving him quite a harangue. He, like husbands everywhere, even presidents, kind of brushed her off on Lady Bird: "Well, now, you ladies just talk, I have got to meet somebody," and he took off. Then the speeches and the question-and-answer session began. This girl, to my best recollection, jumped to her feet, and she started haranguing and saying that her people were rioting in the streets and smoking pot, and they not only should do that but they must do that because they were involved in a war they didn't believe in. They were paying their taxes, and high taxes, to support this war, and what were we all going to do. This was the only way they could

get ahead, and she sympathized with them. She was getting closer and closer to Lady Bird until, finally, I am guessing that her finger, which was a nagging finger under Lady Bird's nose, wouldn't have been ten inches away. Well, the whole room was just appalled. We were stunned. Nobody said anything. I whispered to the reporter girl next to me, "Who is that?" It was a very tiny woman, and then someone said, "Eartha Kitt." I was mixed up. I was thinking of Lena Horne, whom I have always admired.

F: She does look like that.

BH: A beautiful woman, and quite a talented person. I guess because they are both young Negro singers was why I thought, "My Lord, she has changed." Because I always thought she was a pretty woman. Then I could see that Lady Bird was flushed, and her face was just getting redder right up to her hairline.

F: All the other ladies were just kind of sitting there in a state of silent shock.

BH: Slack-jawed. There was a Secret Service man in that room, and he was stunned. You know, nobody believed it was happening.

Finally I jumped to my feet, and I said, "Is this a monologue, or can anyone talk? Now," I said, "I have got something to tell you. I don't know how many sons you have and how many of them are in Vietnam--" I learned later she had one four-year-old daughter-- "but I have eight. Three of them are the sons of my first husband who was killed serving this country, as my father did and

as my brothers did. My oldest son has finished his service to the country in the air force. Now," I said, "I'll be very frank with you, I hope that my sons will not have to go to this jungle. I and they are not at all enthused. I am hoping with everything I have in me that they'll finish their education and this nasty business in Asia will be over. But if the time comes and they must go, I would be heartbroken to think that they were rioting in the streets or smoking pot rather than support their country." I said, "You are some kind of a kook. You have to be when you make that kind of an allegation." I said, "These people who are talking about taxes, if they are the same people I am thinking of, are eating more taxes than they are paying." I don't know, I just went on and on and on.

F: Did you get any kind of a crowd reaction out of that?

BH: Yes, they applauded.

F: They applauded. Well, now what did Miss Kitt do? Did she look at you?

BH: She glared, yes, a really fiery look. I think there were two reasons: one, that I thought none of us should be bullied in that fashion; two, it was feeling sympathetic to Lady Bird, because you could see the beginning of tears welling. I thought no one should be harangued that way in her own home. An argument, yes, but this sort of vituperation, no.

F: It's an impossible position to be put in, too, where you are the

hostess.

BH: Lady Bird by this time had regained her composure, and she really emerged as much more of a lady than either Eartha Kitt or Betty Hughes. Because she said, "I cannot imagine, Miss Kitt, I cannot speak as eloquently and as well as you can, nor do I totally understand the life you have lived because I have not lived that kind of life. But I feel we all must agree that even though the problem is difficult, it is not insoluble," or some such thing. Then she sat down.

Then Mrs. Washington, her name is Bernetta [Bennetta], am I right? The wife of the mayor of Washington, D.C., stood up, and I always gave her such credit. She was embarrassed.

F: She is an imposing woman, too.

BH: A handsome woman, total composure.

F: You know when she speaks.

BH: Oh, yes. She stood up and said, "May I apologize?" She said, "I do not apologize for Miss Kitt, that is not my place,"--or, I don't know if she called her by name or "the other panelist." She said, "I wish you all who have been kind enough to come here to know that all of us are honored to be in this house, and that the other speaker's opinions are not mine and are not shared totally by her people." This must have been difficult for her. In effect, she was apologizing for another member of her own race. And then we left.

F: Miss Kitt hushed?

BH: Yes.

F: She didn't try to go on with it?

BH: No, she left hurriedly, and of course mad. I was scared. I thought, "Oh, Lordy, what have I done?"

F: Do you know whether she went through the amenities of saying goodbye to Mrs. Johnson?

BH: I don't know. I was so frightened. I looked at my mother, and I could see her ready to kill me. You know, the big day that she finally gets to the White House, and then her daughter gets involved in a donnybrook. She was mortified.

F: What a day to bring her to the White House! On the other hand, she was in on an historic incident. It wasn't just another day at the White House.

BH: It was not personal at all. I have never met Miss Kitt before or since, and would have nothing against her. I am not familiar with her work. I am familiar with Lena Horne's work, but I don't think I have ever heard her sing. But I know she's a big name in show business. I had nothing against her at all, but I just felt that I had to say it. If it would be political suicide for Dick Hughes--I didn't think that far. I just could feel the adrenalin pumping through my veins, and I jumped.

F: You reacted.

BH: I began having some second thoughts, I thought, "Oh, wait until Dick Hughes hears about this."

F: "I'm in on a national incident."

BH: "He has always been the friend of the Negroes and the minority groups here in New Jersey. He has appointed a Negro cabinet officer and Negro judges and has enjoyed such a good rapport with these people, and to think that I could have ruined it. Why didn't I shut up? There were thirty-eight other women, and they didn't feel called upon [to speak]. Oh, what have I done? What have I done?" I really felt bad. I was scared to come home.

F: You had some press there like Isabelle Shelton. Did they try to get hold of you immediately, or did things just disperse?

BH: I said, "Girls, I think I have said enough. I am going to get my mother and take off." I was really frightened to come home. I felt that Dick would be furious at me. It is just such an unlady-like thing to do, to get involved in a hen fight, sort of. I said to Mother, "Let's go over and see Brother." I have a brother, eighteen months my junior, who is an attorney in Washington and Alexandria, and a builder. He builds these housing developments and things. I said, "Let's go on over and stay there, I'm scared to go home, and wait till we see what happens about all of this." So we were there, and Dick found me somehow. He said, "Well, I hear you had a nice afternoon." "Oh," I said, "Richard, I am sorry, I really didn't mean--" I said, "Furthermore, who told you?" He said, "Time, Life, Newsweek." I said, "Are you mad?" He said, "I haven't heard the full story yet, but I trust you. You probably did what--but," he said, "tell me, what did you do?"

A little while later the President called, and my nieces were so impressed. They lived in a large ranch-style home in suburban Washington, and the President just never calls that house. [My] brother has never been politically active; I am not even sure which party he is, because he does a lot of selling of this real estate to senior officers at the Pentagon. He'll build a house and then he'll sell it, and that man gets transferred and he sells it again. He has got a nice little business. So when one of his teenage daughters answered and they said, "Aunt Betty, it is the President and he wants to talk to you," I came to the phone. He thanked me. He said it was an unfortunate incident, but he wanted--

F: You probably went to the phone with a little concern yourself, didn't you?

BH: --to thank me for helping Lady Bird out of a very sticky situation. I said, "Really, Mr. President, it had to be premeditated, because remember, she tried to jump on you and you took off. She was just gunning for action." I said, "It couldn't be the liquor, with all respects to your luncheons." You know, you possibly get one drink, and it is a daiquiri, or one of those ladylike tutti-frutti drinks, I call it. He said, "Betty, I wouldn't be surprised if she had a little bit of that pot before she came." I heard later--I do not know this to be true--that she had engaged a Carey limousine prior to attending the White House luncheon to drive her around to the radio stations. Now, maybe this is gossip, I never knew whether it was

true. Then I was asked to be on a television show to discuss it, and I said no.

I got absolute tons and tons and tons of mail. I didn't think of separating it into good letters and bad letters until Liz called me and asked if I was getting mail. I said, "Yes." She said, "Could you roughly say how much pro and how much con?" I think it was two-thirds my favor, and the other one-third, oh, they were frightening. Letters saying, "I hope you and every one of your damn sons comes home from Vietnam in a box," and, oh, bad. Sometimes even the ones that said they approved of what we had done, I didn't like those either. Because they said, Good for you, Mrs. Hughes, it's high time that somebody put those uppity niggers in their place." Well, I didn't do it for that. I would have done it, any color or any profession, if somebody was that insulting. But even those letters that said, "They are coming too far too fast" and "Thank God women like you see it all our way," they were kind of like John Birchey.

F: They were thanking you for the wrong reasons.

BH: I have never met Miss Kitt since, and if I do I will speak to her, even though I doubt that she would answer. I felt happy about the Glassboro thing, my small part in that, and I have not really been--when I think about it, I quickly try and think of something else. I just smart with embarrassment every time I [think about it].

F: I don't think you should. Has your mother recovered from what must have been a traumatic experience?

BH: Oh, yes.

F: Now can look back on it with pleasure.

Let's talk very briefly about one other thing. You have got a journalistic background, good news sense, and so on. Mrs. Johnson, it seems to me, broke some ground in press relations. Eleanor Roosevelt really did it, making the White House first lady something more than the wife of the president. But Mrs. Johnson was the first really to have a press secretary and, in a sense, to go out and consciously make her own news and have her own sort of claque--claque is not a good word, not a precise word, but her own group of press followers who were assigned to cover her all the time. (Interruption).

BH: You were asking about Mrs. Johnson and her press relations.

F: Yes.

BH: May I go on record as saying that I have always liked the President, and I respect him. I think that the two finest things that he ever did were to say "yes" to Jack Kennedy, which could not have been easy. He had been an opponent, and he was a take-charge, run-this-thing-myself type.

F: In a sense, the vice presidency was a step down.

BH: To submerge his personality and have to be docile to a man that many years younger could not have been easy. I think that was the finest thing he did for us.

Then I think the next finest thing was March 31, that famous night that he said, "I will not accept the nomination." That had to hurt.

I truly think that he figured this would take him out of politics, and he would rather have that war over than be president of the United States. That, again, was a tough decision, and even though it didn't work out, the war did not get over, I think we owe him a lot for thinking of us first.

F: I think it cleared the air considerably, though.

BH: But, as I say, I always liked him. But I have really loved Lady Bird. She has all the warmth and all the charm, and the press people, who are not to be fooled, those press girls loved her, too. She led them a merry chase down the Snake River on those rafts and all that stuff. They weren't always too big about that.

F: I made a couple of those trips; a couple of them were fairly rugged.

BH: But those girls loved her. I really feel that Betty Beale and Isabelle and the rest of them felt that they lost a friend. I wondered always how she did it. She had those teenagers, and they're not easy. Luci was falling in love with this one and that one, and then she went through the George Hamilton business and then one young marine who Lynda used to go with--he's a stockbroker now, I forgot his name, but I liked him. And all the while she was doing this and keeping her diary.

She gives--how shall I say it? I don't mean to sound risque when I say she gives a lot of personal physical attention to the President. She waits on him. If he wants his tomato sauce a certain way, I am convinced that she will go into the kitchen and cook it. She adjusts her life to his. I remember one time her saying to

me, "Oh, he makes me so mad." I said, "Who?" She said, "Lyndon." He wanted to go out to Texas for the weekend, and she had embarked on some kind of dental program which required that every other day you are supposed to be there. I said, "What are you going to do?" She said, "Well, I have to do what he wants." You know, as if there would never be any question about it. If that's what he wanted to do, well, the dentist and everyone else would have to go hang.

I think she has got a great sense of history and was really dedicated to this beautification business that so many people thought was just an attention-getting device. I really think she believes this. She is a lovable, lovable woman. Again, it must have been hard for her to follow Jacqueline Kennedy, who was everybody's fairy princess, and, you know, the days of Camelot.

F: We all had a love affair with her.

BH: Yes, and the prettiest woman I guess, of course none of us ever really saw Marie Antoinette, in the world in public life, prettier certainly than Princess [Queen] Elizabeth, and more of a Jet Set and more of a young woman for her [Lady Bird] to come [after]. It would have been hard enough to follow Mrs. Kennedy, but to have to follow her after the assassination, when you figure, "Well, the people didn't really pick me. They picked her and they loved her, and now they must put up with me." [It] must have been the most trying time of Lady Bird Johnson's life. I think she did a smashing job of it.

F: Did you go on that 1964 Dixie stop of hers?

BH: Oh, no. I begged to be let go. I really wanted to, because I think that this whistle-stop touring will soon be extinct; the airplanes are going to take it all away. I really begged them. I said, "I will empty the ashtrays, any little job you have for me." Liz said to me, "Betty, we just can't." They had so many southern governors and congressional wives that were hopping on and off, and I guess maybe they just didn't need a Yankee.

F: Train's kind of crowded. Did you go to Chicago to the convention?

BH: Oh, yes. Yes, indeed.

F: What was your impression of that madhouse--you had been through one down at Atlantic City--besides the fact that you thought yours was superior.

BH: As I said earlier, at the time I really felt embarrassed about Atlantic City. As you know, we were in the height of our season, and there aren't as many suites. It is more of a family place, and there were simply not enough deluxe accommodations to go around. We got a very bad press. That hurt me for my state and for my husband. But in retrospect, Atlantic City is beginning to look like paradise. But we went to Chicago. We were at the Palmer House and a bit removed from the Chicago Hilton and the noise. I have always felt very, very sorry for Mayor Daley. Now I've tried hard to figure it out, and I figure now this man is a big frog in small puddle. He never wanted to be president or vice president or any of that stuff. He wanted to be--

F: He wanted to run Chicago.

BH: --the mayor of Chicago and run it like a Swiss watch. And, you know, he had. Chicago friends of ours say that they truly love him. Now, certainly no one on purpose would discredit his own home place when it is his place and he's the boss of it. I feel, and this is only Betty Hughes' conjecture, that Mayor Daley was absolutely determined that there wouldn't be another Dallas or another Los Angeles. (Tape ends abruptly).

Tape 2 of 2

F: This is tape number two with Governor and Mrs. Hughes. We were talking about the convention in Chicago in 1968. Go ahead, Mrs. Hughes.

BH: I feel that Mayor Daley tried hard. Obviously, he tried too hard. He was determined that there would be no assassinations, and he had that place really very tight. I agree that the first night we went out to--what do they call it, not convention hall--the stadium or whatever is the name of it, when I saw this barbed wire, I was shocked. It looked so much like our impressions of Nazi Germany that it frightened me, and then I thought, "Well, possibly this is better than for one of these people to lose their lives, or possibly many." I talked to a policeman. We had a couple of state troopers, I guess, with us. We had flown out, and [they] brought the car out. We thought there would be a shortage of transportation and so on. [They] made it in one day out on the turnpike and [were] around with my

husband in plainclothes. The idea was that there had to be two troopers, because one was supposed to go into [the] convention hall with Dick, and the other one would have to do the physical parking and minding the car and so on. So we did have two.

I talked to one of them who I know and trust. He is thirty-four years old, and he has been in police work since he was maybe twenty. I like him. I asked him one time, "Now, you tell me--" People won't talk to Dick and they won't talk to me, but I know this boy's temperament. He is the type who would hang around and talk to the cop on the beat and the fellow selling newspapers and the man vending hot dogs. He kind of keeps his ear to the ground. I said, "Tell me what you think, as a policeman." He said that he felt very sympathetic for Mayor Daley, that the Mayor had made up his mind that there would be no assassination. He said, "When you come right down to it, he succeeded." There were eight people killed in Miami, I believe, and no one was killed in Chicago. He said he felt, however, that he would have been better off to have fewer police and more knowledgable. He said a young rookie tends to panic. He said this is why the generals are older than the privates, by and large, and this is why you send a higher ranking officer, a little more seasoned. He said he had so much police, and many of them seemed to him to be very young and new.

F: Sort of last minute recruits.

BH: Yes. I don't know if he said this with any authority, but I trust him. He does keep his ear to the ground. Then, our sons Pat and

Tim were with us. We had a suite atop the Palmer House, and every night I would say to one of our older sons, "How about going to check the boys?" I was worried.

F: The boys were what age?

BH: Sixteen and seventeen. They are the type who like to mix it up, and I didn't want them turning up with a bloody head.

F: If there is a crowd there, they want to go over and see what it is all about.

BH: Bobby, who is thirty-two and married and has a wife and three children, and his wife were with us, but not their children. Then our older son, Dick, lives in Chicago, and he was in and out of the suite with his wife. I would say to one of the big boys, "Go check Pat and Tim and make sure that they're in." They would go check their room, which was right down the hall from our suite, and they would come back and report, "Yes, they are there. Everything is fine." And I'd quit worrying. I learned much later that Pat and Tim were out every night. Knowing that they were going to be checked, they would happily say good night to their older brother, wait an hour, and then sneak downstairs and go to those parks.

F: As soon as the check was over.

BH: Timmy would tell me things that these young people would tell him. I would say, "How would they talk to you?" He said he got a shorthand pad and said he was a reporter, and anybody who was a reporter they would talk to any time. I asked our boys, and they

contend that not all the children, but the ones that they met out in the park at night were hoping for trouble. You know, a night that there wasn't any trouble was an unhappy night for them. I think it lost the election for Vice President Humphrey.

F: I do, too.

BH: I really do.

F: He had to come back. He had to start so far behind the starting line I think.

F: (Interruption) Governor Hughes, when we quit a while ago we were talking about 1964, and we had left the President, with you, quite hoarse. Let's talk a little bit about that year of 1964. What kind of delegation did you take to Atlantic City. Was it committed to President Johnson?

RH: Yes. We never had any doubt about President Johnson. It was a unanimous delegation, very high on him. I, myself, have always been very strongly dedicated to President Johnson; however, I do admit that I was worried very much about Senator Goldwater's strength. I thought I felt a backlash coming in this country. I remember being down to the White House with Mrs. Hughes on August 22; the convention began on August 24, and the Democratic governors and their wives were invited to a luncheon at the White House on the Saturday before the convention opened. The President had a little receiving line, only on the way out. I had previously expressed my worries about Goldwater to him, and I remember him saying, "Are you still afraid of that man Goldwater?" I said, "I sure am, Mr. President,

and I hope you will campaign very hard." He said, "I shall, and I think we will beat him." So he was confident, supremely confident.

I had been in touch with him several times by phone. I next heard from him, I think, on the Wednesday when he was to be nominated that night. Pat Brown and several other people, governors, were to make nominating speeches. We were expecting Mrs. Johnson and her two daughters, and we had assembled a great crowd out in a big, wide area in front of the Claridge Hotel, which was our headquarters. I would assume there were 3,500 or 4,000 people in this crowd. Suddenly it began to rain. As Mrs. Johnson and her daughters were en route from the Pomona airport that I mentioned, in a helicopter, it began to rain and we saw this crowd diminish, much to my horror. However, about, I suppose, 1,500 or 1,800 people stayed there. They were covered with ponchos and blankets.

I began to leave the hotel room to go out front to greet Mrs. Johnson and her daughters. As I did, I was halfway out along the grounds, an aide said, "The President wants you on the phone right away, and it's important." So now I had to choose between receiving Mrs. Johnson and answering the President's call. I decided in her favor. I said, "I will have to call the President back," and then I went on out. Just at the moment that her helicopter set down, you can believe it or not, the sun came out. It stopped raining, and I made a little speech introducing her. I said, "The sun shines on Lady Bird Johnson. This is a good luck symbol." Then we introduced the girls and so forth.

When that was all finished, and Mrs. Johnson and the girls departed for their next stop, or where they were going to stay overnight in Atlantic City, I went back to the hotel and called the President back. He said, "I have just been watching you on the Television. Being a father yourself, you'll know how much I appreciate the nice way that you received Mrs. Johnson and my girls." I guess he just said "my girls." I said, "Well, Mr. President, I am sorry I wasn't able to take your call, but I couldn't have received them if I had. " He said, "That's all right, forget about that." He said, "I kind of think on this vice president business that we'd better get a man from the Middle West." Of course that meant Humphrey to me, and I said, "I'm delighted, Mr. President." I had been actually, I think, the first Democratic governor to ask for the nomination of Humphrey as vice president, so I was delighted. Then he said fine, he was going to call up some other people and so forth.

Then I got word from our state police that the President had made a sudden decision to come to Atlantic City. He wasn't due to come to Atlantic City until Thursday night, which was his birthday and the day on which he would give his acceptance speech. But he decided to come up anyhow. We were in what they call the summer White House, which was the Pageant Motel. We called in a couple of hundred state policeman. We had a deuce of a time getting ready for him, but he came in. He had made an announcement, apparently, in Washington that he was going to ask the convention to nominate

Senator Humphrey as the vice president candidate. So I then took him into the Pageant. We struggled through the crowd, it was a great mob scene, and he had with him Senator Thomas Dodd and Mr. Humphrey. So Humphrey went off to shave and to get his acceptance speech ready.

The President asked Senator Tom Dodd and myself to sit with him in the hotel room. Here we sat in a small hotel room with the Secret Service man, [Rufus] Youngblood, standing by the bathroom door as a sort of a guard. He was a fine man, very expressionless, this Youngblood. The President took off his shoes and relaxed for a couple of hours to listen to the nominating speeches. We had three television sets there, and strangely enough, all of the television people were keeping their eyes on a couple of hundred minority group people who were out on the Boardwalk in some kind of a demonstration. It was an orderly demonstration, a little jumping up and down, but perfectly under control. I am pretty sure the President was quite unhappy, because he wanted to listen to the speeches. So finally one of the stations got back to the speeches, and thus we stayed for I guess an hour and a half.

Then we escorted him over to make an appearance at the convention hall. Now about this time I was beginning to get ill. I went through the next day, which was a big day in which the President gave his acceptance speech. We had prepared a great birthday party for him involving all kinds of nationality groups and labor groups

and so forth and about $17,000 worth of fireworks, which is about an hour and a half show. I stood there with him watching the show from the balcony of the convention hall, which was out over the ocean, the surf. He enjoyed it very much. We didn't watch for the whole fireworks. Then he had to go to a couple of receptions, one for Vice President Humphrey and one for, I think, all the congressmen. He invited me to go with him.

By this time it was twelve-thirty in the morning, and I was beginning to feel very ill. I learned later, the next day, that I had contracted a disease called salmonella poisoning, which is from bad food or bad milk or something of that kind. I was ill. I was in the hospital, actually, for about ten days after I returned from Atlantic City.

F: You suffered from your own party.

RH: I did, and I told the President, "Mr. President, I hate to turn down an invitation." He pressed me very hard to go to these receptions with him. I said, "Mr. president, they don't make them as tough up here as they do in Texas. I don't feel well. My head is spinning, I'm sick." "Well," he said, "you go on home and I'll see you for breakfast in the morning." At breakfast in the morning I couldn't even get out of bed. I had a doctor, and I was very sick.

Then we went through the campaign together. I thought it was a great campaign. He won in New Jersey by a plurality of about 900,000, which was remarkable. It even exceeded the greatest plurality Eisenhower ever had in this state.

F: Where did you fear your backlash, in the more rural areas, or up in the Jersey City-Newark complex?

RH: I was afraid it was going to be throughout the whole country, I really did, because Goldwater obviously was appealing to prejudice against the minorities. Maybe he didn't mean to do it, I don't know. But certainly there was a great target, I think, against President Johnson on the ground of his forthright, honest dedication to things like the war against poverty and civil rights law and so forth. I was afraid he was going to suffer from it. Now as it turned out, however, there was a great flocking-in to his support of Republicans and independents alike. In New Jersey I, myself, addressed many Republican meetings in the most conservative type towns which went for President Johnson. They were definitely afraid of Goldwater and his potential for escalation of the war and so forth.

F: What was your campaign tactic in this, just to more or less lay the Johnson record on the line?

RH: I did. I put the Johnson record on the line. I spoke of President Kennedy. I spoke of how loyal a vice president President Johnson had been, how dedicated he was to his country, and how unsure we Americans would be if we elected a Republican with no specific plan except to talk tough about extremism and nuclear defoliation and things of that nature. So that's how the country decided, and we were very delighted.

Then we went to the parade, and the inauguration day was great.

I remember the President and Vice President Humphrey standing in the stands and giving me a big hand as the New Jersey car went by, and Betty and I waved. Then at a reception in some big place, I guess in the Wardman Park or the Sheraton Park Hotel, we have a picture that we cherish. The President was going around to visit all the state delegations, including Republican as well as Democratic governors, and he came to my box and he grabbed my wife and gave her a very resounding kiss. It was a very nice reunion.

F: Let's move ahead. You were thoroughly wrapped up in this Glassboro conference. Let's talk about that, how it all began. I rather gather to a certain extent you initiated the action here, that you had an impasse between two world leaders separated by two hundred and fifty miles, and you couldn't close the gap.

H: I do think I initiated it. It was just by a coincidental chance. We were down at the Jersey coast at our summer home, and I was being driven up to the State House, on a Wednesday morning I believe. I was reading in the New York Times that Kosygin was in New York, had declined to go to Washington to see President Johnson and intended to depart by the airline for Moscow on Thursday night at six o'clock. I then sat back and started to think about this and how tragic it was, especially in view of the nuclear bombs that are abroad in the world, how tragic it was that these two great leaders couldn't come together.

So when I got into the office I tried to reach my friend, Marvin Watson. He was busy; he was with the President, and I then

asked to talk to Dr. Walter Rostow. I told him that I thought it would be a most unhappy occurrence if the President and Chairman Kosygin were not to meet since they were so near each other, and it might well prevent a third world war or at least provide a platform for people to try to talk about preventing a third world war. He agreed. He said, "I don't think there is much to it, but I will put it in the pipeline and we will see." I really never expected to hear about it again. However, I began to get calls from Marvin Watson and from Rostow and there was great interest, still a feeling that it would not come off, and apparently people were talking to the Russians. We had one very funny conversation. Meanwhile, I had discussed with Marvin Watson, and I am not sure whether I had discussed with the President directly, but we were on the phone a couple of times anyhow about the suitability of a place for this meeting.

F: You hadn't really at the outset suggested New Jersey as a kind of neutral site, you just wanted to get something going?

RH: I wanted them to meet. I suggested first that they could meet here at my house, where we are sitting now. Now this property is five acres big and it looks pretty big to me, but when you think of television trucks and so forth it wouldn't be big enough. I think I was talking to Marvin Watson at that time, so then I suggested Princeton University. No, that wouldn't do. Then I suggested Rutgers University. No, that wouldn't do. Then I suggested, well, how about the estate of Mr. Greenfield, the

millionaire from Philadelphia. He is a big Democrat. I don't know whether he had died at that time or not. But his widow--

F: I don't know Mr. Greenfield.

RH: I forget the name, William K. Greenfield, I think. Then I suggested Charlie Engelhard's home. Now Charlie Engelhard is a great millionaire friend of the President, he has a magnificent estate up here in North Jersey. We discussed ups and downs on this.

I finally said, "Well, look how about a little state college that we have down here at Glassboro, New Jersey?" So we got to talking about that, and I got my vital statistics on it. First I found out whether it was available. I called Dr. Thomas Robinson, the president of the college, and I naturally had to fool him a little. I said, "Tom, I have got to meet ten or twelve important congressmen from Pennsylvania on a very important, quiet matter. We will have to land some helicopters. It has to be not too far from the Philadelphia International Airport"--and it turns out that it's fourteen minutes from that. I said, "Is your campus available?" He said, "Yes, we have had our commencement, and our summer school hasn't opened yet. It would be available this weekend. We have fifty Upward Bound trainees here or some teachers, but not many."

F: Why did you pick Glassboro instead of some place like Rider College, which is equivalent in status?

RH: Well, I perceived--

F: It was an inspired choice, I was just wondering how it happened to happen.

RH: It was one of a number of places. I thought that it was about midway from New York to Washington, and therefore no one's sensibilities would be offended. I also wanted to get a place of some humility, and it turned out that was correct. Chairman Kosygin told the President that he was just delighted at the choice of this place, that is, after he had seen it he said that the only place he might have preferred would have been a farm. But this was such a beautiful, rustic atmosphere. It was a real typical American small town.

Then I had a conversation, while the President was in his bedroom, with Marvin Watson and all the experts that were up there. They were looking over road maps of New Jersey trying to find where in the dickens Glassboro was. I explained to them where it was. Then they told me to hold still now, they were talking and this might come off.

F: There still had been no contact with the Russians?

RH: Oh, yes, they had been talking indirectly with the Russians. I had kind of an instinct then. I felt that if they were bothering the President during his nap, and he himself was interested, it kind of made me think it was going to work. So I decided to start for Glassboro. It was raining, and I left in my limousine. I left a man in my office with strict orders to watch out for a call back from the White House. Well, I was gone maybe three quarters of an hour, I was halfway to Glassboro and my car radio--

F: Where did you go, down the turnpike?

RH: Down the turnpike. I left my state police radio on--I have a telephone also in the car, but on the radio I was told by my office that I should call the President personally, and I should call him not on the car radio, for security reasons. So I stopped at a little gas station, went into a phone booth and called the President. He spoke to me personally.

F: The service station man didn't know what was taking place. (Laughter)

RH: No. He said, "Listen, we are going to do this." He said, "I would like for you to get down there. You talk to Dr. Robinson. Now you go down there and you tell him the truth, what this is all about, and we'll be there and we'll make the announcement." So I got in my car. "Yes, sir, Mr. President, I will do that. I will be back to you." I got in my car, and three minutes after I got in my car they were making the announcement at the White House, which I could hear on my car radio.

F: You hadn't talked to Robinson yet?

RH: Yes,I had talked to Robinson, but in this disguised, ambiguous form. Rather than call him I figured I would use the time by going to him. When I got to poor Dr. Robinson's home, which was the old mansion they call Hollybush, he and his wife were utterly confused. There were fifty reporters on the porch already. They, I guess, had flown in, a lot of them from Philadelphia. He was getting calls from the London Daily Mail and the Tokyo Express and Newsweek magazine, the Los Angeles Times. Then I came clean with him and told

him what it was all about, and Dr. Robinson, who is a fine, gentle man, never questioned or objected. He couldn't have been better. I know the President emerged with a great affection for him.

So then I had to leave to keep an appointment nearby in Glassboro, at a Democratic club. Unfortunately the mayor of Glassboro had died that very morning. He was a good old Democratic friend of mine named Joseph Bowe.

F: What a piece of timing.

RH: Yes. I arranged for his wife and his children to--this dinner had been in his honor, as a matter of fact, so it was very sentimental. Then I announced that there would be this summit conference in Glassboro, and people thought I was kidding. They were completely, totally mystified that this would happen. I then returned to Robinson's house about nine-thirty or ten, and by that time the Secret Service and the White House technicians and the cooks and everybody were moving in and transforming the whole Hollybush mansion. They installed something like thirteen air conditioners overnight, and the phone companies were coming in and Western Union.

F: Were they using local tradesmen to help them?

RH: The phone company came down, and there was a great patriotic response from the local tradesmen. All the appliance stores in the area of fifty miles were opened, and people came from their homes and opened their shops and all.

F: They worked right through the night?

RH: Yes, everybody worked through the night, and by the next morning

everything was fine.

F: Did you have any doubt that you would get arrangements prepared in time?

RH: No, there was a man named [Sherwin] Markman who came up from the White House, and he was excellent. I forget his first hame, but he is a delightful man, very efficient. He took charge, and I stayed with him until one or two o'clock. Then I went up to spend the night at the Cherry Hill Inn up in Camden, and for the first time I telephoned Mrs. Hughes. Now she had been hearing all of this on the radio, so she arranged to come down in the morning.

In the morning I had a cup of coffee with Jimmy Breslin, who told me that somebody tried to charge him fifty dollars for a room in some old home or something. He had some funny stories about it. Then we want down, and by this time the whole national press and international press was pretty well represented. The state police of New Jersey acted beautifully under the direction of Attorney General Arthur Sills and Colonel David Kelly. They impressed the President again, as they had in 1964, that this was one of the best police forces, if not the best in the United States, the state police of New Jersey.

F: Now, your press facilities for something like this have to be enormous, and you don't have any sort of natural outlets in Glassboro. So did you feel the responsibility for this, or did the press look after itself? How did you handle this?

RH: No, the technical part of it was done by cooperation of about all of the important people that we had in New Jersey. For instance, Bell Telephone Company just did a miraculous job. I don't know how many hundred telephones they installed overnight. There was need for additional electrical circuits and all kinds of things of that nature. The gymnasium was taken over by the press. Western Union came in. This whole miracle of preparation was pretty well finalized by the time of the meeting, which was, I think, at eleven or twelve o'clock of the morning of Friday.

F: Who pays for something like this?

RH: The state of New Jersey defrayed a lot of the expense, and I think we got some money from, oh, I am not sure, the Office of Emergency Planning or something. I guess this cost the state maybe sixty or eighty thousand dollars; there was no problem about it.

F: The state of New Jersey also got international advertising.

RH: It certainly did. The President arrived first; of course, that would be the important thing. Then we waited around. He was very cordial. We waited around for the Russians to come. They were coming down on the New Jersey Turnpike so the Chairman would have a chance to see some things. The Ambassador was there. I forget the name of some of them. Our Ambassador Llewellyn Thompson, wasn't it, Betty?

BH: Yes.

RH: And Gromyko, they were all there.

BH: Dobrynin.

RH: And Dobrynin, yes, and Rusk and McNamara, the full top level were

there. Betty and I didn't participate in the discussion of the high level people, but we stood by and saw the preparations and the greetings. It was quite thrilling to see Kosygin go over at one stage and greet this crowd of a couple of thousand people from a little hill, a little terrace. There was a very warm relationship. He spoke in Russian; his remarks were translated by an excellent translator, Victor somebody that they had. He said a very significant thing. He said that we shouldn't be fighting and everyone should cooperate and bring us to peace in the world because there are so many beautiful and wonderful things to be done. It ran in my mind that he was thinking about curing cancer and alleviating hunger and things of that nature. So then the conference proceeded.

It was just as hot as could be. Did you stay around that day, Betty? I think you did. The first day of the conference, Friday?

F: Was any attempt made to get Glassboro people out, or to keep them away from the site?

RH: No, none whatsoever.

F: Did you just let them do whatever they wanted to?

RH: We looked after security.

BH: The roads to the campus had New Jersey State Police, and you had to have a press card or something or other to get in. But around Hollybush that is a public street at the end of the lawn, and they were just packed there, and apparently very close. Would you say forty feet, Daddy?

RH: Oh, yes, no more than forty feet.

F: In a sense you had a parade route by the mere fact that they were coming in cars.

RH: Right.

F: This was known and I suppose blocked off for other traffic by the time they got there.

RH: Yes. There were flags out; there was a very patriotic response. There was one fellow there who had a Russian flag and an American flag together in the front of his house. The crowd's response was very warm, because I think immediately people seized on hope that this was going to be a break in Vietnam or in world tensions.

F: You had good reason to be proud of your state.

RH: We certainly did, and the response. We had a couple of signs "Communist go home" and so forth but nothing of any significance, a few kids. But we had it very well and amply covered, because that would have been a terrible place for any accidents to happen.

BH: I told Dr. Frantz [about something] that I found, as a housewife, particularly touching. So often you hear about profiteering, you know, when folks are hungry they sell ten-cent sandwiches for a dollar. I heard later there was a little bit of that in rooms that the press would rent, but--

RH: We heard of many instances, as Betty was just saying, where people having diners and all practically gave their food away to help feed the people and hand out sandwiches for them to take and so forth. I think there was a nice balance as between those who might have been

a little acquisitive and those who were so enthused that the President and the Russian Premier had chosen Glassboro for this summit conference, which is unprecedented in New Jersey history. They were so proud of their town that they wanted to contribute a little bit.

So the conference went well. It was terribly hot, and then we were all flabbergasted by the announcement by the President that he and Chairman Kosygin intended to meet again on Sunday.

F: What did you do, stand by mainly to troubleshoot?

RH: Oh, yes. You don't leave the President when he is in your home state under any circumstances. Then we sort of took a day off Saturday, thinking there would be nothing further for us until the resumption of the summit conference on Sunday. We were just sitting around, as I guess my wife has told you, relaxing with some friends, cocktails before dinner at our summer house, and phone calls began to come in from the [LBJ] Ranch. It then turned out that the Russians had agreed that Mrs. Gvishiana, the Premier's daughter, would come over on Sunday, and that meant that the ladies would provide some kind of entertainment for her. They first talked about driving around and showing her some of the great farms in South Jersey. Then it was decided, my wife projected the idea, that she probably would want to see a typical American home. It so happened that Mrs. Gvishiana loved that idea, and they had an excellent time on the beach while the thing was going over.

F: Sounds as if they had a really relaxed day.

RH: Yes, they did. Then they returned, and when they returned to Glassboro in the helicopter the President and the Chairman were still at it. So we had to sit around.

F: Now this second day, did you have anything particularly that you had to do other than just be there?

RH: No.

F: All your preparations already had been taken care of by the first meeting.

RH: Except for the continuing supervision of the state police through the Attorney General. Our Attorney General, who is a very fine man, was down there that day with his little daughter and his wife, and they met the President. The President expressed his thanks for the excellent police work that had been done on that occasion and on his previous visits to New Jersey during the 1964 campaign.

After that Glassboro conference was over, successfully I thought--though I do recall the President told me on his way back to the Ranch that night that Chairman Kosygin was quite insistent that we leave Vietnam, lock, stock, and barrel. The President was equally insistent that unless there were some other arrangements that would safeguard Southeast Asia that we couldn't leave.

F: He told you this between the time that he told Premier Kosygin good-bye and the time that he told you good-bye to go home?

RH: That's right. The President was as usual his courteous, deferential self. He said good-bye to the Premier and all the dignitaries, and it was only then that he thought about taking himself back on, I think, to the Ranch.

F: One small note I think may be worthy of something: the Robinsons had been dispossessed, of course, by this high level conference.

RH: Yes.

F: Were they called back in before the meeting broke up to meet the Premier?

RH: Oh, yes.

F: To see their house guests?

RH: Yes. Both before and after, as I recall, Dr. Robinson and his wife and some of their married children. I can't remember just now who they were, but the amenities were observed there and the profuse thanks of the government of the United States were given to President Robinson and his wife.

I am pretty sure that President Johnson saw this as the beginning of a colloquy that would serve the interest and the safety and the peace of the world for many years to come in the future.

F: One other small social note: were the Robinsons given any mementos, gifts or anything by either the Russian or the United States government?

RH: Yes, the Russians gave something. Now I can't remember just what they were. They are shown in an excellent book--I will get a copy of it

for you--by a history professor in Glassboro. [He] has just written a book called, I think, Summit at Hollybush. He has a very good, factual account of this you may be interested in reading. I will get a copy of that book for you.

F: Good. You've seen both heads of state off, what happens to you then?

RH: Then I returned to the shore. Not long after that, I can't recall the exact dates, we had a very new tragic occurrence in New Jersey, which got world attention, and that is the terrible riots that we had in Newark, in Plainfield. I was here in Morven [New Jersey] [the executive mansion] the night of that. We had been watching the Newark situation for a couple of days, and I had been in touch with our Attorney General and some police authorities during the evening. I went to bed about midnight, leaving word that if anything happened to call me. I did get an almost hysterical call from the mayor of Newark about 2:20 a.m. He told me that his city was burning down and we would have to have state police and National Guard assistance to quell this riot. Under New Jersey law that assistance can only be invoked on the order of the governor, and he in turn can only be activated by a decision of the local authority. That is to prevent any interference with local administration.

F: To keep your lines of authority straight.

RH: Right. So I got to our Attorney General, I activated the state police, and then I talked to the chief of defense, General Cantwell,

my chief of staff. He was at an army base along the coast, and he flew up and he activated the National Guard. Then I got dressed and the trooper drove me to Newark, and I was there for about three or four days.

F: Now in a major city like Newark, Jersey City, you no longer have such a thing as a local riot, if it has any proportion at all, because these are matters of national concern. Did the President advise with you on this? Did you keep him informed?

RH: Yes, I did. I was in touch with the President. The President had always been most attentive. For instance, the summer before that we had a riot in Jersey City. There were some personal injuries, bus drivers were being dragged out of their buses and beaten, and the President called me. I was sitting right where we are now, right in this backyard, and one of the kids came out and said, "The President is on the phone and wants you." I didn't believe it for a minute, and I got in and he said, "I have been hearing about this Jersey City business. Is there anything we can do? Do you need the army, or can we help? I want you to know we are at the other end." I said, "No, Mr. President, the mayor of that town, with whom I talked three times today, wishes not to have any soldiers in the town. He's upset about the possibility of major problems, and he has got it under control." And so he did. Mayor Whelan did a fine job then. But on this I was in touch with many people. Ramsey Clark was particularly helpful during the night. One of the nights of the riot up there we had gotten to the point where decent Negroes were

starving in their apartments.

F: Afraid to get out.

RH: They were afraid to come out. They don't have food for more than a day ahead. I met with some Negro leaders of the community, and I talked to Reverend Martin Luther King by telephone one of those nights.

F: Was he in Newark?

RH: No, he was in the South, and we had a very nice conversation. He asked me if I wanted him to fly up, if he could be of help. I thought myself that if we called him in and Wilkins and the rest of them that it would only--as a matter of fact, the leaders told me that there was only one Negro that could help and that was Cassius Clay, or some sports figure that the young people might listen to. But I decided we better handle it ourselves. Governor [Claude R.] Kirk from Florida offered to send in his Tampa police force, but we rejected this outside help. The town was alive with rumors. There was a rumor that Stokely Carmichael was en route with six cars full of dynamite. We knew that was wrong because we had a state police observer in plainclothes watching him as he had departed several hours before for England from Kennedy Airport. So that these rumors, you see, keep on. Then there would be white people coming into Newark armed with guns and they were going out to stop the Negroes. I applied a curfew. We closed every tavern, prevented the sale of liquor, which--

BH: Tell him about how you couldn't get a drink.

RH: --got me in trouble. Because about the second night there, after

living on hot dogs for a couple of days, I got hungry and had a few hours off and wanted to go out for dinner. I had to drive about forty miles to get some dinner.

But it was quite an experience. We lost twenty-six lives. (Interruption) I was going to say most of these were innocent lives, people that were no way implicated in rioting but were accidental victims. We pulled out the National Guard on a Sunday; during Sunday night before the dawn on Monday, we felt justified in pulling out the National Guard.

F: Your whole idea, in a sense, was to play it down and keep it from getting into a larger affair by forming more troops and calling in the federal government.

RH: Oh, yes, we had to contain it. We sealed off, I suppose, maybe one-sixth of the town and applied a curfew and a very rigid one. I guess there were more than a thousand arrests. There were temporary detention places. I visited all the judges. I am not sure what day I did that, but I went downtown, I think on a Friday, to see the judges who had jurisdiction.

F: You saw them singly, or did you call them together?

RH: I saw them all together, and I told them what the situation was, for the safety of the courts and the operation of the courts. I said that I hoped that no one would get hysterical, but at the same time there would be priority given to prompt disposition and the visitation of justice and punishment for any crimes committed, with due recognition of people's constitutional rights. But I didn't want

these cases to lag and people to think that they could loot or bomb or burn or hurt people without pretty prompt justice.

F: Do you get much flak from this sort of procedure?

RH: No, I think not. No, I came out of this Newark thing, I think, with general approval. I had a great mass of correspondence from all over the country. Some little criticism, but mostly I would say that 98 per cent of it was highly favorable. It had attracted nationwide attention, the same as the Detroit riot did.

F: But there never was any real threat of federal intervention in this?

RH: No. I had indicated to the federal government, I forget whether I talked to the President directly, that we would not need or request federal troops.

F: That meant mainly that you worked with Ramsey Clark?

RH: I did work with Ramsey Clark through the night. He was helpful in getting these stores opened. He intervened with the presidents of several large food chains, and they sent word to their local managers to open these stores on a Sunday. You see, everybody was locked up and afraid. Then we got some food trucks in, we brought some supplies in. The state spent a little money getting milk and stuff like that in. We got four or five hundred Negro community leaders out on the streets with special arm bands.

F: Acting as more or less delivery boys?

RH: No, it was to reassure, to go from door to door and ask people to cool down and things would be straightened out, and so forth.

Then the third important thing that summer that happened to me was just when the Newark riot was over--and a terrible one that we had in Plainfield in which a white policeman was stomped to death, that was pretty bad also--toward the end of the summer, I was sitting around at the beach house one Saturday morning and the President telephoned and said, "You know there is an election out there in Vietnam on September 3, and I think we better take a pretty good look at it. I would like you to think about going out there." Then he asked me to help him to get in touch with the chairman of the National Governors' Conference, who was Governor William Guy, I guess from North Dakota.

F: Yes.

RH: Yes, North Dakota.

F: Is he a Republican?

RH: No, he is a Democrat.

F: He is a Democrat.

RH: Bill Guy's a good old Democrat. He's an old timer. So Guy went out, and then the President said he was going to invite some other people. I immediately said I would be delighted to go. Then my wife started criticizing me a little bit. Having gotten through the riots, she was an Air Force widow and she said she didn't like that, being a widow with three kids, let alone being a widow with ten kids. I did

go on that trip, and when we got back we reported to the President.

F: How long were you there?

RH: We were there about seven days.

F: What did you do?

RH: We went out to different parts of the country. We stayed near Tokyo at a new jet base, I forget the name of it, one of our American bases. I shared a guest house with Henry Cabot Lodge. That was a very interesting trip out there, and then I stayed at Westmoreland's compound with Senator George Murphy, the man from California. We would go out to different parts of the [country]. I didn't get down to the Delta, but I was out at Bien Hoa. I was at Phan Thiet, which is a fishing village, and on the election day I was up in the capitol city in Hue, which is about five hundred miles north of Saigon.

F: Did you have a feeling that there was a reasonably open election?

RH: I did. I reported that it was. I had quite a few disputes with the press. I found a lot of the press, even the American press, were really going out of their way to vilify the United States and the United States' position. I was quite unhappy about this, and I tangled with some reporters out there. One of them said to me, I think a fellow from one of the big papers, "How do you expect to learn anything about Vietnam in a week?" I said, "Maybe I can't, but at the same time maybe I won't be as prejudiced as people that are out here for a long time, maybe some of them for too long." He said,

"These people are no good. They are dishonest. They are fakers." I said, "Why do you say that?" He said, "Well, one of them stole my wrist watch." "And," he said, "look at the prices they charge in the hotel." That's how superficial that man's opinion was about these [people]. I think these South Vietnamese people were wonderful. Now Lodge had cautioned us that they were so courteous and polite that we had to take some of their statements with a grain of salt. But I found them [to be nice], especially the kids. I saw an awful lot of kids in different parts of the country, and I was very fond of them.

I did think it was an open and a fair election. I was in Hue and they voted I think 84 per cent of the vote, and I didn't see a single soldier pushing anybody into the polling place. People were lined up clamoring to get in to vote. The voting was very cumbersome, the style of balloting and so forth, no electric machines or anything like that.

F: Like Texas?

Rh: Yes. I saw nobody pushing anybody.

F: Did you report as a group to the President when you returned, or did you report singly?

RH: Yes, we did. Well, there may have been single reports, but we met him. On the way back there had to be the rest stop. On the way to Vietnam there always has to be a rest stop unless you change crews, so on the way back we stopped at Guam, I believe, for an hour. We then stopped at Honolulu and stayed overnight. That was to

enable a departure in the afternoon to arrive at Andrews Air Force Base in Washington about--we got in there about seven-thirty in the morning. We went to a motel and washed up a little bit and saw the President at a little after nine.

We reported to him jointly. I had reported informally to him out there through the press. One of the reporters said, "The government must be dominating this election. They have sent soldiers to some province." I said, "Well, there hasn't been a gubernatorial election in New Jersey that I can remember in fifty years when there hasn't been a demand for state troopers to go to such and such county to protect the vote." I said, "That doesn't mean anything. I just wish we had as enthusiastic elections in our state as they have had here." I got a message through Ellsworth Bunker, the ambassador, that the President had seen that comment and he appreciated it. So when we returned we reported to the President individually, well, in a group, but everybody had their little say. It was quite an experience. I will never forget it.

F: Did the President just go more or less around the room asking each one of you what you [thought]?

RH: In a sense. He was seated. I was at his right and, I forget, somebody on his left, but he would call on different ones. One would want to say something, another man would want to say something.

Whitney Young, for instance, was on the trip, and he got off one of the best wisecracks I ever heard on the way out to Saigon. When we landed at the Saigon airport it was raining a little bit,

and immediately three jeeps with soldiers and machine guns came up around the plane. It was Air Force One, I guess, the plane, or Air Force Two, and he looked out at these guns and said, "Well, I have seen enough. It's a fair election. Let's go home."

F: Was the group divided among itself? Did you get into any really spirited discussions while you were there?

RH: On the way out there I would say out of this group of twenty or twenty-two there might be six or seven who were definitely and unalterably opposed to the war. All of us were of one mind coming back: that we belonged there, that it was a fair election, that we hoped to get out of the war sometime, but that as far as the election went, it was a fair one.

F: You thought the war kind of had an evangelical effect on the dissenters?

RH: I think so. I'll tell you, I learned something out there that I didn't learn from the press, even the American press. There was great disharmony among the press there, cleavage, strife between the press out there. The so-called liberal press, like the New York Times, was highly critical of American armed forces and statistics and everything else, and some of the papers were, you might say, hawks on the thing. I came back feeling that [we belonged there]. From talking maybe to a hundred or a hundred fifty servicemen and gathering up what opinions I could, and seeing people that I knew in New Jersey, like one man who is a

relative or a brother of a New Jersey state trooper that I know, I believed these people, and they all said we belonged there.

F: You weren't shepherded, in a sense, censored by the military or by the diplomatic establishment on whom you could see?

RH: No, none whatever. We were given, I thought, the greatest opportunity. We were set loose. We were guarded, of course, their security was good.

F: Right, that is different.

RH: But, no, we were invited to talk to everybody we wanted. I must have talked to eight or ten election boards. One of the chairmen of one of the election boards was a former Viet Cong member. He came in under the open-arms policy and surrendered, and he got to be trustworthy and they had him in charge of one of the election boards. But there was an apparently deliberate wish to falsify a lot of these things by the press. There was a reporter from Stockholm, or one or the countries over there I guess, the socialist press. He pretended to misunderstand one of the Vietnamese election board members who wanted to say that there were some parts of this particular province that were so dangerous that you could only get in there with a helicopter. He pretended that he had said that the government candidates were being carried in for campaign purposes by American army helicopters, which was a complete distortion. I called him on it, and it was straightened out. The man said, "Yes,

that is what I did mean. It is just so war torn that you can't get in." He was quite upset because I caught him fabricating that lie. I thought it was a highly fair election.

It was so discouraging. I got back to New Jersey on a Tuesday, I think, the day of our primary election. We voted about 18 per cent of the registered vote. Out there where they sometimes got killed for voting they voted 80 per cent.

F: Did it make much of a problem for you to support the President's position generally on Vietnam?

RH: None whatever. I have always supported him. I supported him when a lot of the other governors were critical of him after the 1966 elections. I thought it was most unjust for them to jump on the President, who had only done the things that he had promised to do, and on the platforms that they had been elected on. I thought [it unjust], therefore, when he got the natural retaliation that you get from people when you have reforms and you go too fast. There is always a little reaction, and that reaction came against the party.

F: Did the President name you to the Kerner Commission?

RH: Yes, he appointed me, not on the formal Kerner Commission, but he appointed me as chairman of a subcommittee of the Kerner Commission. I guess you would say it was on the Kerner Commission. It was to examine the availability of insurance in riot or ghetto areas, inner-city areas.

F: What did you do along this line?

RH: The vice chairman was Bill Scranton, the then-governor of Pennsylvania, a very fine man. We had an excellent committee, a small one. We put our brains to it and we had a lot of hearings, and we decided to recommend an insurance pool.

F: Where did you hold your hearings?

RH: In Washington. We sent staff people out through the country, and we had an excellent staff man named Stanford Ross, one of the most brilliant young men that I have run into in this business.

F: On something like this, where do you get your personnel? Is somebody named as executive director?

RH: Yes, you draw them. Stanford Ross was later connected with the White House as a special assistant. He got a good staff together.

We worked out this pool legislation, which was finally put through by Congress, and I think it makes insurance available. It is some layer of protection. For instance, New Jersey: after the insurance companies' first layer of obligation, then New Jersey would have to, at the maximum, assuming that we had a total riot disaster in this state, pay four and one-half million dollars in a given year. Then after that you go into a top layer from the government corporation.

F: Did the President give the commission any specific charge other than to just find out what it could?

RH: No, nothing that specific. I think he gave a general charge to the Kerner Commission to explore into the causes in the hope that this

business would never happen again.

F: But you just went investigating?

RH: We had to devise some kind of a plan to make up for the constriction of the insurance market. For instance, the re-insurance market coming from Lloyds in London and other places--they are spread pretty thin. They have had a lot of disasters. There is a hurricane here and a terrible disaster there, and so that insurance was getting pretty scarce on that high level. We had to give some government support to it.

F: Let's talk a little bit about 1968. Where did New Jersey seem to stand prior to March 31, 1968, when President Johnson announced he wasn't going to run again? What had you decided, you and your delegation, regarding the 1968 convention?

RH: We had decided as a delegation to stay uncommitted. I, myself, as leader of the delegation, had great loyalty to President Johnson, and I would have sustained that. But he never interfered with us one way or another about what we should do about the nomination. I felt that he would have been more sympathetic to Vice President Humphrey although we never discussed that. My effort was to keep us with an open mind because the world was moving so fast that who could tell early in the game, before the primaries.

In New Jersey we have a preferential primary which is not binding on the delegates, and Bobby Kennedy decided not to run in that primary, depending on the old loyalties that had been with his brother in 1960 and so forth and so on. We received frequent

visitations from people representing Bobby Kennedy, and we called it pretty square. We had meetings and we invited representatives of the three major candidates, McCarthy, Bobby Kennedy and Humphrey, to come there and to address us, and we were still uncommitted when the President withdrew, after he withdrew, and the night Bobby Kennedy was killed, which was June 4, I think.

F: Yes. Do you think if the President had offered himself you would have pulled the delegation into the Johnson camp?

RH: Oh, yes. We would have won going away for the President. We did lose nineteen of our eighty delegates. We had spirited primaries all over, and in places where the Democratic Party organization is weak, such as in a very prosperous rural section, we got beat. The McCarthy people beat the Humphrey pledged candidates. So we went out to Chicago with eighty delegates--eighty-two delegates, there were two sort of ex officio delegates, the National Committee members--of whom nineteen had run pledged to McCarthy and one of them was a defector from our group. He was a sort of an opportunist senator.

F: Having an uncommitted delegation, did you mean that they were totally uncommitted? Were you a favorite son?

RH: Yes, I was a favorite son. My name is on the ballot as a favorite son. They were committed to me.

F: As far as you know, did President Johnson ever indicate where he stood to anyone on the nomination for president?

RH: Not to my knowledge.

F: What about vice president?

RH: He didn't to me. Vice president, no. No, he didn't.

F: Did he ever talk to you about the vice presidency?

RH: No, he did not. Various people had talked to me. Both the Kennedy and the Humphrey groups had talked about the vice presidency, but I had always argued, and truthfully, that I was not interested. It shouldn't bother our fundamental decision one way or another what would happen to me. I literally didn't feel like being a candidate, even if it had been offered to me, if I could have gotten it, because I think a candidate for vice president, who is essentially the same as being elected President in these tragic times, ought to know something about the world, and I didn't.

F: Did you get the feeling from your association with Vice President Humphrey that President Johnson had him under any particular restraints?

RH: I don't know that you could originate the idea of restraints to the President.

F: The mere fact that he was president could put some restraints on you, I'll agree with that.

RH: He was loyal to the President. I think that is one of the reasons he reserved his disagreement about the conduct of the war until his Salt Lake City speech. But there was a lot of--not defection of the President. For instance, I think that I was completely loyal to President Johnson, always would have been, but even I wrote him a

letter long before he decided to get out asking him to stop the bombing in North Vietnam. I wrote a two page letter to him, as I recall, suggesting that we were being falsely portrayed in the world as the war-makers when we were really helping to be peacemakers, and that the only way to dramatize this was to publicize it. We could publicize it by a dramatic halt in the bombing and by a tripling of the bombing in South Vietnam, if necessary, to stop the infiltration routes, and sending Rusk and McNamara to sit at Geneva until some Russian showed up. Then the whole world would know who were the peacemakers.

Well, I never expected to get an answer from that. I imagine it was one of many that he got, but he took the trouble a week later to telephone me. He talked to me ten or twelve minutes on the phone and told me that his military commanders had convinced him that if he suspended bombing staging areas of North Vietnamese forces and supplies in North Vietnam that he would, in effect, be killing thousands of American men. He said, "I am not going to do that. I don't care anything about an election or about a convention or anything, the only thing I care about is the United States of America and American lives."

I had a very significant talk with President Johnson the day after the elections in 1967, when I lost a pretty big election here in Jersey. I wasn't running, but we lost the whole legislature. From a two to one Democratic legislature in both houses it became a three to one Republican legislature. It was retaliation for a lot

of reform legislation that we had put through, gun control laws and different unpopular things, but I think right things. I happened to be in Washington the following day, which was November 8, 1967, working on this Kerner Commission subcommittee I told you about, and the President asked me to come by and see him. I think King Hussein had just gone out the other door and left a cigarette burning, and I asked the President if he would mind if I smoked, and he, of course, didn't.

I told him about the election, we got a pretty bad punishment. "Well," he said, "that happens sometimes when you do things that you know are right." He said, "I don't know what I am going to do next year, but whatever I do, I am going to consider it sort of in this order: first of all, the interests of the United States of America; and second, I am concerned a little about my place in history as a president; and thirdly, the interests of the Democratic Party." And I have always thought that that was the right, real Johnson way of sorting this out in his mind. But I guess I was as surprised as anybody in the country when he made his speech on March 31.

F: Were you listening?

RH: I was. I had stopped to see Attorney General Sills at his home. About five minutes after the speech started I got a call from Marvin Watson to the effect that at the end of the speech the President was going to announce he would not be a candidate.

F: Oh, why do you think that he called you?

RH: I imagine that he maybe called several leaders in the country he was particularly close to so that he would give us that [courtesy]; there again that Johnson courtesy comes out.

F: Also protection when the press started in on you, too, so you'd know what they were talking about.

RH: Yes, that is right. But it was an efficient and a thoughtful way to handle it, I thought. When I talked to him in 1967 he said, "Before I make up my mind, I will be talking to fellows like you," and he mentioned a few other names like Buford Ellington, his great friend from Tennessee. But he said, "That's how I am going to figure it out. I don't know what I am going to do yet." I sent a wire to him that night, I forget now what it said. But it said I was disappointed but I commended him for his courage, what he was doing for the country, and that he reminded me of Washington's voice at Valley Forge and other patriots who always put the country ahead of themselves. I saved a copy of it. I guess I have a copy of it some place. But I think he could have been elected.

F: Well, I will agree with you there.

RH: His obvious purpose was thinking that Hanoi hated him worse than they hated any [American], that he was the American Imperialist LBJ, and if he got LBJ out of the way that there would be a coming together and peace would occur. Now it hasn't occurred, but you can't fault a man like that for [trying]. That's what you call the supreme sacrifice, because I think President Johnson enjoyed power and

was sensitive to responsibility. Betty and I spent an evening [at the White House] one time three or four days after the Pueblo seizure. We had been invited to dinner, and Mrs. Johnson had called Betty and asked her if we would do them the favor of staying overnight. It was a great thrill for us.

BH: When she said would we prefer the Lincoln Room or the Queen's Room or which room, I said good and right well, we would sleep on the carpet in the East Room, we would be so thrilled.

F: But you didn't sleep on the carpet?

BH: No. We didn't. She gave us both rooms, as a matter of fact.

RH: It was a wonderful visit, and we sat up with the President. Saying good-bye to his guests, he said, "Why don't you go on upstairs and have a drink. I will join you later." Then she came up first, and he came, and when he came we did sit around and had a nightcap. He called the situation room, I guess, in the Pentagon or wherever it is, a couple of times during that conversation about that Pueblo thing. His best information was that ship was sixteen miles out at least, and that the communists were lying about where they seized it. But he was drawn and worried that night. I don't think he had been asleep for a couple of days. He didn't look it.

BH: He looked very tired. He looked an awful lot better two weeks ago out at the Ranch.

RH: Oh, he looked great at the Ranch. I just was amazed. We've got a picture of him with that brown or tan playsuit that he wears around.

BH: Now, do you think he is getting heavier? I was too polite to ask. It seemed to me that he had put on a bit of a pot, and then I thought, "No, he has got on khaki pants and a loose sport shirt and that's always less flattering than an excellently tailored business suit."

RH: He is whiter than he was. The grey hair is now becoming white, but he is tan and he just looks great.

F: There was some criticism of him, certainly in the press, that he let the Democratic grassroots organization go downhill. Did you observe this, with John Bailey and so on?

RH: I think so. I think he did let the national committee dwindle some, and I have always accounted for it in my own mind with his preoccupation with his job. In other words, he was thinking about Uncle Sam and how to get out of this Vietnam thing.

BH: But Rich, if you let the Democratic State Committee or the Republican National Committee, either one, go downhill then you might not have a job.

RH: That's right. That's true. I think if he had his time over he probably would have paid more attention to the party organization, which I think is now at a very low situation. I think it will come back some time, but it is going to take some doing.

F: Did you ever talk with John Bailey about this?

RH: No, I didn't. John Bailey customarily was loyal to the President. He had never once implied by so much as a wink of the eye any

dissatisfaction with the obviously minor role that he played. The way that I figured [it] out in my own mind was that Johnson was a very strong president, too strong to be calling up the Democratic National Committee every five minutes to see who should be appointed postmaster in some town. He had some very deft assistants. I think Marvin Watson is one of the most outstanding men I ever met in my life, wonderful man, and golly, to see that man work. I would just like to have him on my side if I had a big, responsible job.

F: Did you have pretty easy access to the White House during the Johnson period if you needed it?

RH: Yes. I would call Marvin, and we didn't have too much trouble. You have got to take your time on appointments and so forth and so on, but I could get to talk to the President, which I did once or twice--oh, more than that I guess, a few times. The President was very humble, too. He'd pick up the phone if he had something on his mind and would call you up. He has called me up once in a while to complain about something.

BH: Richard, did you find yourself, as the LBJ years went by, being more defensive about him socially?

RH: Oh, yes. I was called to a Republican meeting in Summit, New Jersey, during the 1964 campaign, some lawyer up there whose forefathers and he had been Republicans since McKinley days, I guess. He had about two hundred neighbors in there, well-to-do Republicans, and they said, "Now, Mr. Governor, we asked you to come here. We don't care much for this Goldwater. We want to know from you whether

President Lyndon Johnson is a wheeler-dealer, is he honest, and so forth?" I said, "Why do you ask such a question?" They said, "Well, what about this Bobby Baker? What about this? What about that?" I said, "Well, do you remember President Eisenhower and nylon coats?" or whatever--

F: Sherman Adams.

RH: Sherman Adams. I said, "You can't judge your man by occurrences like that." I said, "I think President Johnson is a great American. I think he is a balanced man. There is no more skillful man. He has got thirty-two years of very good leadership experience, and you couldn't call a man to the presidency better prepared to be president than Lyndon Johnson."

BH: That was 1964. No, I am talking about the years that the President's popularity was ebbing as the war was escalating. I am talking about friends of ours here in New Jersey of both parties who helped on the Democratic convention because it was a good [thing], you know, with a kind of chamber of commerce type attitude.

F: If you're a New Jersey booster, you're just going to get behind it.

BH: They worked very hard and socially worked for the President and were pleased to get thank-you notes from him, and somehow, four years later they didn't even wish to hear his name.

F: Yes.

RH: But it was the war, Betty.

BH: I think as the war escalated his popularity was going in reverse proportion, and he had to be a scapegoat. You can't get mad at

all of Asia. Somebody had to be the sacrifical lamb, and he was.

RH: Yes, the war tore the President down, but I still think he would have won against Nixon.

F: I think.

RH: In November, he sure would.

F: Did you have any problems as far as the federal-state relationships were concerned, any tendency on his part to override state sovereignty?

RH: None whatever. No, as a matter of fact I think that the relationship between the states and the federal bureaucracy was greatly enhanced by him. He had the governors in. He must have had us in six or seven times during a three-year period, which is unprecedented. No other president has ever done that. He would have Rusk there; he would have McNamara there; he would have every expert; he would have big maps; he would take part himself; he would jump up and down; and he wanted to come absolutely clean, to use the slang phrase, with the governors. I have seen Governor [Raymond] Shafer, the Republican from Pennsylvania, Governor [James Allen] Rhodes from Ohio get up and lead the endorsement of the President's policies. Of course, as it got nearer 1968 then that fell off.

F: They would retreat a little to party positions.

RH: Yes.

F: You and Mrs. Hughes went to the White House on a number of social occasions. Allowing for the fact that no White House visit is

routine, did anything out of the ordinary happen, any particular memories of those occasions?

RH: I wasn't present at the time, but my wife has one very vivid memory about a young lady named Eartha Kitt.

F: Yes, we went over that while you were gone.

RH: Did you talk about that? But I can't recall anything except a pleasant occasion. I remarked how kind and thoughtful the President was. He would stand in one of the rooms and have the governor and his wife come by and shake hands, have a picture taken--I have got several of them floating around here--which is a little thing to him but a very precious, big thing to a visitor. I thought his speeches were graceful, not too labored, not too long. He was a good table companion. I sat one time down there at dinner with him, I forget who all the other guests were, one of them was this wonderful lady from Maine, Margaret Chase Smith, and that man was just as funny. He told that night about a time when he and Billy Graham, he said during the 1964 campaign--or did you tell Dr. Frantz about this?

BH: No, I didn't. It is a great story. He may have it though.

RH: He told this at the dinner table, that during the 1964 campaign there was one weekend when Mrs. Johnson and the girls were both out campaigning, and he was all by himself in the White House. So he said he called up Bill Graham, his friend, to come up and see him and spend overnight. He said they sat up half of the night bragging, as he calls it, on each other. He said, "I was bragging

on Reverend Graham. I told him he was the greatest religious leader in the world. And he was bragging on me. He told me that I was the greatest political leader in the world." He said, "We had a nice evening and sat up, and he got up in the morning, had breakfast, and off he went."

He said not long after that there was a piece in the paper about Billy Graham's daughter being out with a date, and they stopped at a Goldwater campaign meeting. Oh, no, the first occasion was that Luci was converted to be a Catholic, and Billy Graham called him up and said, "Well, Mr. President, I guess I am not the greatest religious leader in the world after all." He kidded him about it. So soon after that the President noticed in the paper that the young Graham girl had gone to a Goldwater meeting with her date. He called Graham up, and he had a hard time catching him, Graham avoided him a couple of the calls, and he said, "Well, I guess I am not the greatest political leader in the world either, I see your daughter is going to support Goldwater." The way he told that story was much better than I just told it. He had his accent.

One time we had an interesting thing with him, Betty, remember. We were down for something, and Marvin Watson took us out to dinner at the Jockey Club. I noticed that Marvin was kind of pushing the dinner a little bit. Little Governor Bob Docking from Kansas--is he from Kansas?

F: Yes.

RH: He was with us, and Buford Ellington and a couple of other governors, I forget who they were.

BH: And two of our children.

RH: And two of our kids, yes. Marvin invited me out for dinner, and I said, "Look, I have a couple of my kids, one boy is from Georgetown and another girl from across the river at Marymount College. We better not bother." He said, "Bring those children along. I want to see them." So I noticed that Marvin was kind of pushing the dinner a little bit, you know, nobody wanted dessert and hurry up with the coffee and all.

BH: He said that, "No, we don't want any dessert. We will have coffee at our house. No, forget it, forget it, forget it." I said, "What do you mean? I want dessert."

RH: So off we went to his house, and he said, "We are going to have some visitors." So we were there about fifteen minutes and up comes the President and Tom Johnson, isn't it, his brother?

BH: Sam.

F: Sam Houston.

RH: Sam Houston, and Mrs. Johnson and the Secret Service and all. My kids were downstairs in one of the playrooms, and they literally wouldn't believe it. I said, "Come on up, you kids, you've got to see the President." Oh, I will tell you another man that was there, Governor [Roger D.] Branigin from Indiana. We sat around, like every party, the women went over here and the men went over

there, and the President and Branigin and Buford Ellington passed around these jokes, old farmer jokes and Tennessee jokes and Texas jokes. I tell you it was unforgettable. I wish I had it on a tape. Every time Branigin would come up, Branigin was a great humorist, Ellington knows some stories, too, and the President topped them all. He was great. Then we got to arguing, discussing serious stuff about the war and so on, but he was relaxed. That was a nice meeting, wasn't it?

BH: I forgot to tell you this. That was in early March, right?

RH: I don't know.

BH: It was right before I went down to the clinic in North Carolina.

RH: Yes.

BH: I went there on March 9. Lady Bird has told me since, she said, "Now how about that daughter of yours we met that night? She was overweight, and you were telling me that you hoped she would go to the clinic in North Carolina. How did she ever do?" I said, "Well, she is still heavy, but she is losing some." And she said, "You know, that night we all were together and you were telling me that you were definitely going to lose eighty pounds and you did." She said, "Of course, that night we knew."

F: Already?

BH: Or apparently were exploring and thinking that the President wouldn't run again. It was just almost a question of when to announce this. So that would indicate to me that if we could

find out what date we were in Washington, then you would know how long he and she knew.

RH: I am sure I've read some place that he planned to announce it in his state of the union message in January and somebody talked him out of it.

F: Yes, he was going to do it at that time and then decided it wasn't a good idea.

BH: Were you startled?

F: Yes.

RH: I was, too. I wouldn't believe it. I could hardly believe it.

[End of Tape 2 of 2 and Interview I]

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