INTERVIEWEE: DANIEL K. INOUYE

INTERVIEWER: DOROTHY McSWEENY

May 2, 1969

M: This is the second session with Senator Inouye in his offices. Today is Friday, May 2, 1969. It's approximately 2:30 in the afternoon, and this is Dorothy Pierce McSweeny.

Senator, on our first tape, we discussed your initial meetings and contacts with Mr. Johnson and how this had come about. We also had gone into the statehood for Hawaii. I'd like to ask you if there is anything else you could contribute or elaborate on that subject as to the procedure as it came about in the Congres of the United States.

I: Not recalling fully what we discussed earlier, what I'm about to say may be repetitious but with that understanding, the drive for statehood covered approximately 25 years. A very serious attempt at statehood was made right after World War II, and that went on for nearly 13-14 years. We had, as far as we were concerned, demonstrated most ably to the nation our economic ability and independence, our political stability. But there were those who opposed Hawaii statehood, and strong opposition came from a rather insidious type of forces--insidious forces if I may use the word--because the arguments used were very seldom used publicly. The public opposition based upon, first, the argument of noncontiguity. They argued that Hawaii was separated from the nation by a vast ocean and therefore it should not be made part of the nation as a state. The other argument was its population. But they were rather weak arguments as far as we were concerned,

because when California was made a state it was not contiguous to the East. When other states such as Nevada, Montana, Wyoming became states, their population was much smaller than Hawaii's. But obviously, the opponents had other deeper reasons.

There was a time when a United States Senator in a discussion indicated to his colleagues, that if Hawaii became a state, something unusual may happen in the makeup of the Senate and he made this inquiry, "How would you feel sitting next to a Senator Yamamoto?" This was one of the reasons against statehood. It was felt that with Hawaiian statehood you would be including in the great halls of law makers men and women of ethnic backgrounds not generally considered as part of the main stream of the United States. Secondly, they feared it may add to the Senate and the House voices of irresponsible liberalism.

When World War II was concluded there was no way to challenge the loyalty of the people of Hawaii on the basis of proportion or per capita counting. Hawaii had suffered more casualties and deaths than any other state in the nation. Hawaii had purchased more war bonds per capita than any other state in the nation. Hawaiian people had given more blood per capita than any other state in the nation. So on all of these measuring sticks for loyalty and for patriotism, we generally came up on the top.

But then there was another argument used privately against the inclusion of Hawaii. It was generally felt that Hawaii would be Republican, and those who were in power, the democratic powers, were not too keen to invite two members of the opposition party into the Senate chamber and one into the House chamber. So therefore the attempt was made to tie Alaska and Hawaii together, because Alaska

was supposed to be Democratic and with Hawaii coming in it would neutralize the whole situation.

The way it turned out Hawaii was the predominantly Democratic one and Alaska is now here now there. When one considers this background in the quest for statehood, it becomes a bit more extraordinary that a man from the South, like Lyndon Johnson, came to the forefront to not only speak for Hawaiian statehood but to use every legislative technique at his command to bring this about. This is one of the big reasons why you will find many Hawaiians who to this day look upon Lyndon Johnson as a great liberal leader, not a great Southern leader.

I believe that I indicated in my first interview it would have been extremely easy for a man from New England or from the North to support Hawaiian statehood. It would have been in line with the advocacy of civil rights. But it would have been extremely difficult for a man from the South, looking at it practically from the standpoint of his constituency and considering the circumstances of events at that time in history, to support Hawaiian statehood. So it should not surprise people to find Hawaii looking favorably at the image of Lyndon B. Johnson.

M: Senator, were you aware any of the maneuvering, the politics that went on in the Senate and in the Congress that brought about the statehood?

I: Yes. The man who should take a lot of credit is now our governor. The attempt to tie Hawaii and Alaska together was an attempt by those who in many ways wanted to kill statehood for both. If you tied Alaska and Hawaii, the opponents of Hawaiian statehood would vote

against the bill; the opponents of Alaskan statehood would vote against the bill--thereby strengthening the opposition. You'd be combining double opposition.

So our governor, John A. Burns, discussed this matter with Speaker Rayburn and Lyndon Johnson and decided that a good thing would be to let the Alaskan bill go through without an amendment, without Hawaii being attached. This was a blow to some of the folks in Hawaii. They felt that Hawaii was much better qualified and prepared for statehood than Alaska. Statistically it is correct --economically, politically, otherwise. But we set aside pride and Alaska got in, and the next year Hawaii got in. You see, Alaska became a state in 1958; Hawaii became a state in 1959. We don't mind being junior to anyone as long as we're in the same game and in the same nation. We're very happy now.

M: Was this decision to separate them in part the workings of Speaker Rayburn and then Senator Lyndon Johnson?

I: Oh, yes. And at that time Speaker Rayburn, who was not too keen about Hawaiian statehood, at the urging of Lyndon Johnson, gave assurance that he would not put any roadblocks against Hawaiian statehood when it came up the following year.

So when Alaska became a state in 1958, one of the first orders of business was the consideration of Hawaiian statehood in March. March is pretty early in the legislative calendar. We are now in May and we haven't done too much. So the leadership, by that I mean Lyndon Johnson in the Senate and Speaker Rayburn in the House, kept their word as one would expect gentlemen to do.

M: Do you recall any other developments that showed the congressional

maneuvering or procedure that was used?

I: I wasn't privy to all the discussions going on behind closed doors, but there were those who opposed it, and they tried valiantly to see that the bills were defeated. But after awhile national polls were taken and showed that about 75 percent of the people of the United States favored statehood for Hawaii. You must take that into consideration also. You cannot forever fight the will of the people. I hope that people are not regretting now that we are a state.

M: Senator, we had also discussed other subjects. We had brought it through Kennedy's assassination and also discussed Mr. Johnson's withdrawing from reelection this past year, 1968. I wanted to hit some other high points and sort of backtrack to some of the legislation that you worked on. But first I would like to ask you about the 1968 Democratic National Convention at which you were the keynote speaker. I think it's going to go down in history as a rather unusual convention. I would like to have you tell a little bit about your activities and how you were selected and how preparations you had to make, what information you had--

I: We did not discuss this?

M: No, we had gotten right up to this point?

I: I did not participate in the determination of Chicago as the convention site, but it was rather obvious that it was selected because this was Mayor Daley's power base. And Chicago has always been a good Democratic city, always coming through with good Democratic votes. This was one way to show our appreciation to Mayor Daley. Secondly it was central as far as the nation was concerned--a midpoint.

But I had nothing to do with setting up the organization or the

place or time. However, I don't recall the exact date, but I think it was somewhere in February or so in 1968, I received a rather strange telephone call from John Bailey. I used to call him quite often for other matters, but this time he called me. As John Bailey is a rather blunt person, he said, "Dan, would you, if requested, would you accept the job as temporary chairman of the National Convention and present the keynote address?"

It sounded just ridiculous to me. So my response was, "And so what's new?"

He said, "No, I'm serious about this. There are about a dozen of you being considered and just want to know at this point whether you'd be interested."

So I said, "Why, certainly, it's a great honor."

Then I forgot all about it. I didn't take him seriously, really I did not. Then I received a call in the latter part of May, I would say, and this time he said, "It's down to three." I didn't quite gather what he meant by that, "It was down to three." So I said, "What do you mean by this, 'down to three'?"

He said, "Well, we have gone through the process and it's now down to three men. You are one of the three for the keynote address." Wow! Then I realized he was serious.

Up until then I had not discussed this matter with my wife, nor my friends, because I didn't think it was big enough to be discussed with them. I just shrugged it off. Then it became a rather serious matter, but I didn't do anything about it. I didn't feel that this was a position that one sought. This was a position where the party came and said "We want you. We need you."

Then in June I received a call. I remember this because this was two days before the assassination of Robert Kennedy. I was in Hawaii then, and a call came through from John Bailey and he said, "Tomorrow I'm presenting your name to the Arrangements Committee," or something like that, or the National Committee, "to have you serve as temporary chairman and keynoter. In other words, you're it. The press release will be made in Washington."

"Fine." So the press release was made and the following day everything collasped.

I didn't do anything about the speech until about the first week in July. It was right after the 4th of July. I got a bit restless by then. I assumed, like many people did, that one of these fine days a messenger from the White House, or the National Committee would drop by, and say, "We have a little draft here. Would you like to look it over?" A few suggestions. Here is a memo on a speech. This shows how much I was involved in this process. But then nothing like that was forthcoming, so I called up John Bailey and I said, "Are your people sending up a draft?"

He said, "No. If you want some help we can arrange to get some writers to help you, but it's for you to write, to prepare."

I said, "You want me to prepare anything?"

"Anything you want to say," he said "I'm certain you're not going to do anything to embarrass us." His words were a bit more choice than that, but he meant that. Then he said, "Well, I have a few suggestions. I don't know how you feel about it, but I think it would help if you made it brief."

I said, "Don't worry. The speech that I would like to make would

be about 20 minutes long" and that was it.

Then I sat down and began gathering my thoughts and I decided on certain guideposts. One, it would be a very short speech. It turned out to be about 23-24 minutes. So it is the shortest of all the keynote speeches in the history of either party. Secondly, I decided, and this was an important decision for me, I decided to address myself not to the convention but to those people outside the convention, so I decided that the speech would not be a partisan one. In fact I never mentioned the word "Republican" once or the "the opposition". I used the word "Democratic" once. I tried to point out some of the problems we had. Thirdly I felt the tone of the speech should be a somber, serious one, because then and now are not times for frivolity, and so I stayed away from the type of keynote addresses that one may be tempted to give, the cheer-leading type; rah, rah; and "we have done everything, the other side hasn't done a thing," because I didn't think we had the luxury of resorting to this type of demagoguery. I prepared the speech, I sent a copy of the speech two days before its delivery to the President. Prior to that we never discussed this matter. Even after receiving this he did not call me until right after I gave the speech in Chicago. We had several occasions where he could have very easily and privately made suggestions. There was a time when I was with the President for nearly an hour crossing the Pacific on a plane, just the two of us. We covered everything but the speech. I was just waiting for the President to say, "I hope you'll cover this in your speech," or "I hope you'll emphasize this point," or "it'll be a good thing to say that or say this." Never once did the President mention the speech. In fact it was as

though he were going out of his way to make certain that whatever I said would be my own thoughts.

I did however show this text to the Vice President, Mr. Humphrey, because I felt that he was going to be the nominee. He was pleased with it. He didn't make any changes at all. In fact the copy that I sent to the President was not the final one because there were two changes, not major ones, that were made prior to the delivery. So the copy that he received, a mimeographed copy, was not the final one. Because I felt after having this experience, he would feel rather bad if I had gone up and say "Is this the way you want it, boss?"

Then he sent me a telegram that night saying how pleased he was and then the next morning he called me. There were two people on the line, he and Mrs. Johnson, and they were extremely generous with their words. Then he said something which just floored me. Frankly, I was in bed at that time because we finished about 3:00 in the morning and I had to stick around to see that loose ends were tied before I left the convention hall. When I left it was pretty dark there, because I knew I was taking over the following day. So one could not expect me to be up at 6:00 after going to bed at 4:00.

So I got a call about 9:30 or 10:00 o'clock in the morning, I think it was, Chicago time. I was up actually, but in bed. I was on the phone talking to my assistant. Suddenly something which very seldom happens, happened. An operator cut right in, "This is the White House operator, is Senator Inouye on the line?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Could you, if you will, end your conversation at this point.

The President would like to speak with you, Senator." It was about a minute later, the President came on the phone with Lady Bird. Then he said this astonishing thing, he said, "I'm going to talk to Hubert and I'm going to strongly recommend that you be his choice for the Vice Presidency." Now what can I say? I'm not seeking this job. I can't tell a man that I love and admire, and especially if he's the President of the United States, "now cut that B.S. out," or something like that. By the tone of his voice, why should he be kidding me that early in the morning. I gathered he was very serious because after that convention he repeated that to me on several occasions, once at a dinner party at the White House. He said, "You know, I was hoping that you would have been the one." It was in the presence of other people, too. I told the President I was deeply honored and exceedingly flattered by his last statement and although I said--and I didn't say this in humility or anything--I felt there were many others, many, many others. And he said, "No, no, no, you'd make a good one." And that was it. But then he must have done something because the announcement for the vice presidential choice was supposed to have been made at 10:00 in the morning in Chicago; it was held up until 4:00 in the afternoon, and the people in Hawaii got all excited when inquiries were being made about me. I suppose they wanted to see if I had skeletons in the closet. They were checking on my health. My governor got all excited. "I just got inquiries made by a few people who want to know about you." So for a brief moment I hit the front pages in Hawaii.

All this time my wife--you see, we had this little boy--he had just made four at that time--and I didn't want them to be in Chicago

knowing what may happen. So she came over just for that evening, to hear the speech, and she left the following morning on the first flight out. So she was at home all the time and watching me presiding after that. And a couple of the neighborhood ladies came charging in all excited and said, "Did you hear it on the radio? You husband is being considered--" So she called me up in Chicago and said, "I hope you're not serious!" I said, "No, no."

M: Did you have any conversations with Mr. Humphrey about this? Did he talk tc you directly?

I: No, no.

M: Senator, there was much talk and rumor about Mr. Johnson controlling or running the convention from Washington. Could you contribute on that?

I: If he did, I didn't get the message, because the past several minutes I've been trying to tell you how meticulously he kept his fingers away. He did have people who were close to him in the organization. I see nothing wrong with that. After all he is the President and the head of the party, and he should have people who were friendly to him there. I don't think in any way he was manipulating and pulling strings from Texas or from Washington. On the other hand I'm certain he must have called some people to express to them some of his thoughts on the platform, and I'm certain he must have had some say in the selection of committee chairmen. I cannot see an active President like Lyndon Johnson just sitting back and dipping his toes in the river. He'd be doing something about it. I would expect that of him. But I think he did not overplay his hand. I don't think he went out of bounds, shall I say. In fact, one got the impression that he was

almost washing his hands of the convention.

And it must have been a blow to him--and I was in with a group of people who felt that every effort and attempt should be made to bring the President in. It was his birthday. He had already indicated he was not going to run again. Now he should have been given--we should have extended to him the honor of capping his career with some joy and happiness. Then they were afraid if he came it may spark a riot or something like that. Well, I said, "So what. We could provide the security. The least we can do is to have the President come in, give him the opportunity to say whatever he wants, and to give him the praise that I think he deserves."

M: Was there any movement underfoot to draft Mr. Johnson?

I: No serious movement--not that I saw. You had people talking about it but what little I know of Lyndon Johnson convinced me that after he gave that March 31st speech he had crossed the river and he burned the bridges.

M: Were you much forewarned about the turbulence, the demonstrations--to expect that level of demonstrations?

I: We expected demonstrations and little clashes, but not to the extent that we experienced in Chicago. Well, with all the publicity going on--every paper had something about the large numbers moving into Chicago. Before the convention started they showed film clips of young men and young ladies practicing karate and jiujitsu and how to protect themselves from tear gas. They were having military-like maneuvers. So it would have been a big, but a very pleasant surprise if nothing had happened. All of us expected something to happen, but not to that level.

A lot of things that happened were completely unnecessary and unprovoked as far as I was concerned. For example, I saw no rhyme or reason for them to throw into our dining room a stink bomb. What did they hope to achieve by that? No one could use the restaurant after that. In that sense, it was a horrible experience, but I didn't see too much of it. I was in the convention hall at the time.

M: That first night at the convention at which you were presiding, ended rather abruptly, and I think earlier than some people had anticipated. Could you tell me a little bit how that happened?

I: I had already intended to end it. It appeared abrupt because of the way I did it I suppose. We had already discussed that we would take up the other business the following day. But then there was a demonstration going on which was totally unnecessary--and it was not because of whatever actions I had participated in. You can ask any delegation chief to find out whether I was fair or unfair with them. No one can say I was unfair. I recognized every person who sought recognition. In fact, I discussed this matter with several of them before assuming the chair to assure them that they would be heard. So, if you recall, something happened when I relinquished the chair; they all stood up, those who were dissidents especially stood up and gave me a standing ovation for about two and half or three minutes, which is a long time. It got embarrassing after awhile.

But that demonstration came along--I had already asked the Governor of Connecticut, if I recall, Mr. Dempsey, to be ready to make a motion to adjourn. We don't do these things haphazardly. I have certain people I ask to do certain things. So when I gavelled for

order and the order didn't come, I thought, "well, obviously I don't want to be standing here for half an hour waiting for order, and I don't want to send the police down there to stop this ruckus". It was on Julian Bond, if I recall-- "Julian Bond, Julian Bond." It was a fine rythmic chant there. And I didn't mind them going through the chant but not to deny us all the sleep. It had nothing to do with parliamentary procedure. It was some decision made by a state delegation, I think it was. So I looked down and I saw the Governor, and I said, "The chair recognizes the Governor of Connecticut,"

He stood up and said, "Mr. Chairman, I move we adjourn until tomorrow,"

"So ordered," bang.

M: Were you in any consternation about perhaps a united effort to rush the platform, take over the microphone.

I: No, never once.

M: Had you heard much or were you aware--

I: Incidentally, if you followed the proceedings you will notice that we even set aside the rules in order to be extremely fair. In fact, we were told that this was the one order that we got from Texas, to be as fair as we can. The rules of the party, adopted by the prior convention and also reaffirmed by the then-sitting convention, stated in clear, precise English language that the presiding officer would recognize the chairman of the committee for a period of 30 minutes. And the chairman of that committee will then in turn, if he so wished, delegate time. In other words, the whole Credentials Committee report debate would take 30 minutes, Platform 30 minutes, Rules 30 minutes. Now it can't happen, it cannot, it's just ridiculous.

What I always did, I would talk to those who were opposed and submitting the minority report--"how many minutes do we need for this section" --"15"--then I'd go to the chairman and say, "They want 15, how much do you want"--"5"--"fine". They got their full time. No one was cut off. But we didn't use this 30 minute rule. Then you would have had a riot. Can you imagine discussing the platform in 30 minutes--10 for you and 20 for me, see--and Viet Nam in between. That was the finest public debate on any issue in the history of our country, four and a half hours of high level debating on the question of Viet Nam. It was done in broad daylight, Class A time on television for the world to see, and the high point in the Democratic Convention was that debate. We did not hide. We let the world see a democratic process in action.

The Republican convention in Miami was a well greased affair. No one fussed. They came up with beautiful language on how patriotic they were and that was it. On the other hand we fought it out. No one can argue that they didn't have their time necessary to debate, because we inquired "how much time do you need?" In fact, those who were opposed to the Administration's activities in Viet Nam were given more time than those who supported it.

When you look at the convention details of this sort, I can't see how those who are now criticizing called this just everything under the sun which is black and bad. It wasn't that black and bad. It was an unusual convention. Yes, we had unusual security, security that I never experienced in any other conventions. In the past conventions they had security. You had to show identification to get in. Now this time you had certain security levels. In my case

I had four passes to get up to where I was, but after awhile they knew and recognized me, so they just waved me on.

But I can't forget the last day in Chicago when just before I left I sat down with the Mayor and had a chat with him. I got to know him rather well. Here was a man who was pictured by the press and television as a hardened political hack, one of these tough machine bosses--and maybe that's the facade he wants. But when I saw him he was tearful and he said, "I know what the people are saying about me." "But" he said, "you know very well, you saw some of these intelligence reports, what would the people say, or what would the press say if because of lax security some gentle looking young lady walked into the convention hall with her bag filled with plastic explosives and killed a few of our leaders. What would they say about Dick Daley then!".

So I said, "Well, I hope when the dust settles they'll realize that there's no question there was brutality on the part of the police but there was provocation, and there was brutality by the other side too." But, then, there wasn't a single shot fired. In Miami there were a lot of shots fired and in Miami people were killed. In Chicago no one died. But these things seem to be forgotten. Now they're having these soul-searching committee meetings where they want to cleanse the Democratic Party. I only hope they don't destroy it. That's all.

M: Senator, were you aware of any draft Kennedy movements activities?

I: Oh yes, it was a rather serious one. I would suppose that if Senator Kennedy had said "I'm interested" it would have been a very interesting convention. It was interesting enough, but I think events ever since

then indicate that there was great pressure. Every half an hour you would hear a new rumor, "Sargent Shriver's in town, I think the word is here now," and "I think Mayor Daley's going to come out that way, this and that"--but it didn't happen.

M: I have heard many stories and events that have come out of the convention and I also heard one, I think, a very ironic one. After the first night of the convention, it was that of a very dissident person rushing up to you and accusing you of being biased against minorities groups.

I: No that never happened.

M: I don't know if you could substantiate that or not.

I: I don't recall anyone coming up to me and accusing me of bias. No, I'm sorry to disappoint you. It would sound rather dramatic, wouldn't it.

M: Do you recall any other sort of highlights in your mind of that convention as you look back on it now?

I: Some of the highlights are not highlights actually. Some of the things you'd like to forget. That's the first convention I have attended since 1952--no, since 1948--where we had such turmoil and such disagreeable things happening. It's a convention one cannot easily forget. Another sad highlight was the fact that we denied the President of the United States his rightful place of honor in the convention. This cannot be undone; it's too late really. It must have hurt him because he had looked forward to this, his birthday; he was then approaching the close, the end of his administration.

M: How long did you sort of hold out hope that he'd be able to attend?

I: Until the very end. I was hoping he would come. But it appears--I

don't know what his views were because we never heard whether he wanted or not but the security people were almost to the last person adamant about this--"no, he should not come, he should not come."

But then if that's the attitude to take, my God, you can coerce the President of the United States into attending or not attending, a place where he has every right to be. Then I think we're in sad shape!

M: Senator, of course Mr. Humphrey didn't win the election. To what do you most attribute this defeat and, also could Mr. Johnson have helped him more, or could he have hurt him more because of his support and association?

I: Considering the time and the circumstances, I think President Johnson did just about everything he could or should have done. It was a sad moment in his life. People are now saying "My God, he wasn't that bad." That's a little too late to be talking like that, but it happens like that in history.

I think that there were too many Democrats who had convinced themselves that we could not win. I don't know where they reached that conclusion, maybe it was that riot that made them decide that the world was against us. So you found a rather strange thing happening where all of a sudden Senators and Representatives who were seeking reelection, were doing everything possible to meticulously divorce themselves from the national ticket. There were people who were saying, "Well, it's up to you who you vote for the presidency." To me this is political heresay. This is a matter of record, there are not too many Senators who went out of their home states to campaign for the national ticket. I felt rather lonesome. I was running for

reelection myself. I wasn't worried about reelection. I knew I was going to get in. Everything pointed toward that. But even if it weren't that way, I would have campaigned just the same.

I left Hawaii at the prime time of my campaign, the latter part of October, and I spent nine days--14, 15, 16 hours a day--campaigning, all the way from the east to the west coast for the national ticket. Much of the expense was borne by myself, because I kind of sensed that we could win. There were people that just wanted to get some message, you know. I had to go into areas where our people were not campaigning. I would be insulted if someone had to come to Hawaii to campaign for the national ticket. Because I would think that we can do it ourselves. In fact, when I saw the Vice President before Chicago, I said "I should be telling you; please come to Hawaii to campaign. I'm telling you now, don't worry about Hawaii; we'll carry it for you. Stay elsewhere where it's more important." Why should he spend 24 hours of precious time flying in and out of Hawaii, getting himself all exhausted. I said "We can get the votes; don't you worry." We came through with the largest majority in the nation, about 70 percent. At least we did our part.

I suppose there are some who are feeling bad about it when they look at the results and say "My God, if there was just that little push." Well, they could have made that little push. It wasn't forthcoming because they thought that maybe the right thing to do was either ignore or attack the administration. Many times when you attacked the Administration you were attacking yourself. Don't get the idea that I have been a Johnson right-or-wrong type of person. No, I have opposed the President on occasion. I've not gone a long with the

Administration on everything.

M: What are some occasions of these Senator, where you have been in opposition.

I: The first thing that happened was the first vote as a Senator. The Administration's position was to amend Rule 22, which is the filibuster rule. I've always maintained that it's not that bad, that we have to assure that the voice of the minority is given every effort to be heard even if that voice is unfriendly or unproductive and who am I to suggest that the majority is always right. The founding fathers had good sense. They knew that the majority could be tracherous and therefore the Bill of Rights is always something against the majority--to hold the majority's power back a little. They very wisely decided that the majority rule should not prevail in jury trials--and if you want speedy trials, why not make it majority rule--if the majority rule is that precious and so sacred. I oppose that and I will continue to. So many times Senators use it and it frustrates me--to be sitting there knowing that a measure that I want is maybe being whittled down because of this long overdrawn debate. Yet on the other hand history shows that liberals have used the filibuster weapon more often than conservatives. When they use it, it is for a just cause! When the Southerners use it, that's bad! [said in irony]

I have opposed the Administration on specific items, on defense for example. The last two votes on the AntiBalistic Missile, which was getting to become rather controversial under the Johnson Administration, I voted against the Administration. The first time I voted with them because it was indicated that the Administration

wanted the ABM vote as a trump card when they played this great poker of life with the Russians. Then I was convinced that this would be a dangerous way to play cards, so I've been opposed to it all along.

M: Senator, on these occasions of opposition, or even when you weren't, have you had many calls from the White House, either Mr. Johnson or his staff--

I: To change my mind?

M: To persuade you one way or the other?

I: I, in a way, was very fortunate. I was able to see the President, at least I made a point to see him. I was convinced that if you wanted to see the President, all you had to do was call up. Some of these people said "Gee, I can't see the President." All they've got to do is pick up the telephone. And the President would call up and say "drop around once in awhile." My former press secretary used to get quite frustrated--"Why can't we tell the press you had dinner with the President, you and your wife, and Mrs. Johnson and the President on the yacht. It's a big thing in Hawaii."

I said, "No, it's a private affair." Or have dinner at home in sport shirts. I think I had dinner aboard the yacht more often than I had it in the State Room. I would discuss with him, I would say "Mr. President, I can't go along with you on this one," and he would discuss his side and try to convince me. But he never put the muscle on me, or squeezed or twisted--never! He tried to convince me otherwise but on a level that pleased me.

M: The last time, as I was closing up and this wasn't on tape, you mentioned a couple of different occasions where you were with the

President, which you said you wanted to tell me about. One of them was an occasion where you were sitting with Mr. Johnson down in his office, I think, and you thought it was just going to be a short visit and it extended into quite a long one. Would you tell me a little bit about that occasion and what was discussed?

I: I used to go into see the President about once a month. I suppose there are many others who did that, too, just to sit down. Obviously, the President missed the Legislative Branch and as President he could not very well walk into the Senate whenever he wanted to. There were certain things that inhibited that. But he wanted to know what was going on, and who was doing what, and what was going on in the cloak room and all these little things that he as leader would be interested in--leader, legislative that is. He was keenly interested in what sort of strategy was involved in maneuvering that measure through. So I used to see him about once a month to discuss these matters. It wasn't a report to him in a sense, but he just wanted to feel that he's still there.

This was one of those meetings--I just happened to be by--and usually it would take about half an hour. I was scheduled to go into see him at 11:00. But there was one thing about the White House there, if you're suppose to go in at 11:00, you didn't go in at 11:00 unfortunately; you have to wait a little while. But I was accustomed to that. So I got in about 11:30, I think it was, and I thought about half an hour and then I'll be going on my merry way again. Well, we talked and talked and talked and I finally looked at the clock and I said, "My God, Mr.President, it's three o'clock." There was an Ambassador, Mr. Goldberg, and a few others who were

still waiting out in the Fish Room, and I didn't know if they were still sitting there.

We did not discuss anything really fully earth-shaking. He was interested to receive my assessment as to what people were saying about him. He never did ask me who said what and why. So my conversation would be "Well, there's an eastern senator who has said such and such," and whether he guessed it or not--he didn't care as to who specifically. I suppose he didn't want to know. He was reaching a stage where you could sense thathe was rather sad. He must have somehow felt that his closing days would not be too happy ones.

M: Was this after March 31?

I: No, it was before.

M: Did you talk about the possibility of not standing for reelection?

I: He said that to several people, not directly, as that, but, "You know, I've been thinking about maybe not running again." None of us would take him seriously, and would say, "Aw, come on." But the Lyndon Johnson--I'm not a psychiatrist or psychologist--but the Lyndon Johnson I have known personally was an extremely proud man.

All of us are proud people, those who seek publice office. Otherwise you can't seek public office. Those of us who run for these positions have extra large egos. We're all prima donnas. To have one deny this would be an out and out lie. We're all prima donnas in here. We all try to look humble. Some are more successful in protraying this facade of humility. But all of us have these big strong egos and I suppose as the job gets a little higher the ego gets a little bigger. So I would think the President of the United States

should have an ego that's a bit larger than that of a senator. I'm not suggesting that we're insincere. I'm just suggesting that we have a drive in us, for example, that would say,"Gee, I hope when history's written they will have at least a footnote on me."--something that money doesn't buy. Lyndon Johnson is a proud man and he's always looked upon other presidents as his mentors on this. It wasn't too difficult to figure out that he wanted to go down in history not as a good president but as a great president. He was driving himself to that. And here was a man who wanted adulation, and he used to thrive on that.

M: Can you give an example of how you felt he was driving himself in his presidency?

I: Oh, the number of hours he would spend, for example--well, you take the tons of legislative bills that he sent from the White House. Take the present administration now, we're half way through the year, we're waiting for the State of the Union message. I don't know if he's ever going to give it to us. We'd like to know what the state is. It was only recently that the Budget came in.

M: Senator, you also mentioned three different telephone calls. I didn't note down what specific ones they were. Does that come to mind?

I: Must be talking about the calls in Chicago.

M: Okay, and you've covered that. Senator, in 1965 you were a member of the five-man Senate group that went on a world tour for Mr. Johnson. It was led by Senator Mansfield included yourself and Senator Aiken and Muskie--

I: And Caleb Boggs of Delaware.

M: How did this happen to come about and how were you selected to be one of the members?

I: I believe this was initiated by Senator Mansfield. He must have discussed this matter with the President and the President must have approved it. I don't know who initiated this. I would gather that Mr. Mansfield took the first step and discussed this with the President, and the President gave him a letter requesting that he take this trip. As a result of the presidential request, certain things happened. We used his plane and because of this status we conferred not with second level or third level, but with the top level. The discussions were with people like Kosygin, instead of the third echelon. It was with all of the chiefs of state, all the highest ranking who happen to be in residence at that time.

M: Were you carrying any message for Mr. Johnson?

I: No, no message. We were, however, going around to receive the views of these people--their private views if they did want to share with us--on our involvement in Viet Nam and other areas. This aspect was not in our report.

M: This was a relatively unannounced trip prior to your practically taking off--

I: We tried our best not to get publicity. It was not a junket, believe me. It was all work. It was 30 days--if you can imagine for 30 days going--you have to be on your toes and the tension would be in itself frightening. Paris; Moscow; Warsaw; Budapest; Riyadh, Saudia Arabia; Yemen; Aden; Colombo; Ceylon; Rangoon; Vientiane; Luang Prabang; Saigon; Bangkok; Manila; Hong Kong; Tokyo--that's a lot of work.

Maybe I missed a few in there--Phnom Penh; Cambodia. The Cambodian chief of state, Prince Sihanouk wanted to see us, also. It was rather unusual because we had no relations with that country. We still don't. We were also the first to go into Yemen. They were having a civil war and this was as a matter of interest, we didn't go there to ask them their views on our involvement in Viet Nam. It depended upon the country, the major countries in which we discussed Viet Nam were Poland, Soviet Union, France, the Southeast Asian countries.

M: This raised a little furor at home, particularly with the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee who felt he had been uninformed, I believe. How had this come about that he was not involved in this trip as Chairman for the Foreign Affairs Committee?

I: As I said, the Majority Leader made a request--of course, I'm certain Mr. Fulbright could have done the same if he wanted to. Now as far as my participation, Mr. Mansfield simply said "You go along." I was very pleased and very happy, although I had to leave my son who was just a year and a half.

M: Senator, can you kind of condense the group findings at this point in 1965? Did this have a bearing on our increased commitment in Viet Nam?

I: Our committee report was in a way a warning that we may find ourselves getting involved to an untenable extent, that it was becoming an open-ended type of commitment. And it turned out to be correct because the build-up really began right after we left there. We did

not recommend a build-up. You see, our report was not one making recommendations. It was just a report of our findings. We felt if we were seeking a military victory, it would be an involvement of huge numbers and high casualties. In our way we were trying to suggest that what to seek was not a military victory but another type of victory, which we are now seeking. We are not seeking a military victory.

M: When do you think that Mr. Johnson became of this opinion that a military victory would be impossible to have?

I: I would say in the latter part of maybe '67 and obviously, all of '68 up until March 31st. He was always talking about negotiations very seriously. And he decided to make that decision at that point so that negotiations could begin.

M: What did you feel personally about the effect of the bombing of North Viet Nam? What was your opinion of it?

I: Originally?

M: Yes.

I: I think I was like most Senators here. There were very few voices raised against it. You see this is the thing that's so tragic. We had the Tonkin Gulf Resolution. It was passed almost unanimously. Great speeches were made by Senators who later on became disillusioned and disappointed. The SEATO treaty was passed in '54 by a vote of 82 to 1, although I doubt if any of them expected this treaty to result in this type of commitment. It was suggested that this may involve us in something big, and no one complained. There were those making great speeches about Viet Nam, but when the chips were down

to vote for funds, there were not too many who voted against defense funds, which were being spent directly in Viet Nam.

Now if you want to effectively cut off Viet Nam, you could just say "None of this is going to be spent in Viet Nam" and the war would have to end tomorrow. No one did that. So what is the President to think?

Unfortunately--so I'm giving a speechone of these days--I've just prepared the draft--on the military industrial complex and I'm suggesting that I don't think that's where the problem is. The problem is at a much much higher level, the decisions which are made before you come down to the military--industrial complex, foreign commitments for one thing. And I'm suggesting that the Secretary of State submit to the Congress an annual posture paper as the Defense Secretary does. "What is the status of our commitment? How far are we willing to go in the defense of Thailand or Turkey or France?" The treaty would say "we will come to the aid---what do you mean by that?"

M: Do you think we could have stopped the bombing of North Viet Nam sooner?

I: Oh there's no question, if you wanted to stop it--you could start it or stop it.

M: And I would say and not harm our commitment there or to have speeded up negotiations?

I: It's not an easy black and white situation. There are too many grey areas. I notice now a retired Admiral is coming out and saying that we could have won the war in Viet Nam. I think it is nonsense personally. He doesn't take into consideration the possible consequences. They're not just possible, I think they're real consequences of what would happen if we had intensified the bombing

of the North. We may be involved in something bigger now.

M: Senator, they are referring to the Viet Nam war as Lyndon Johnson's tragedy. Do you think this is going to be a significant factor in how he is judged by history?

I: It's too early now for historians to write about this. I think it may take a little while longer. It may be his tragedy in the sense that as a result of this he had to bring his career to an abrupt halt. It may be a tragedy in a sense that the advice he had received was not the best. It may be a tragedy in a sense he had not put around himself men who would disagree with him. There were too many people who just agreed with him. But it's easy to talk about these things after it's happened. It's not fair to him.

Now the question is, what would have happened if in 1965 instead of responding, we had said, "Well, I don't think the people of the United States would want this. Sorry, we made a promise but we're reneging." and walked out of it. I wonder what would have happened? This is all guessing. What would have happened to Thailand, because it would be ridiculous to say that we're not going to fight in Viet Nam but we're going to fight next door. So if you move out of Viet Nam abruptly, unilaterally, now or before--if you did that I think it would be an indication to those people there that we don't have the stomach to carry on an activity of this sort. So it would be wide open.

Then you may ridicule the domino theory but the facts indicate that if given a chance the insurgents and the Viet Cong in Thailand would like to take over, the ones in Cambodia would like to take over, the ones in Laos would like to take over. You're not guessing. They're

there right now. And well if you don't resolve this and indicate to them that when we make a committment we live up to it, we may find ourselves involved in a bigger one later on. I don't know how history is going to rate this.

M: Senator, as a member of the Armed Services Committee, was there a similar lineup or split, perhaps I should say, between hawks and doves?

I: I hate categorizing people but if you had to, I'd say that the hawks far outnumbered the doves--by hawks, those who generally supported or went along with our involvement in Viet Nam. But, you see, people have changed when they sensed the political winds.

M: Apparently it didn't erupt into quite as public a schism as in the Foreign Affairs Committee. Was there general acceptance on to try to keep this within the committee?

I: I don't know.

M: How did you find the briefings at the White House that you attended on Viet Nam?

I: It was personally very helpful. It was an opportunity which was not effectively, adequately utilized. By that I mean the meetings were with a small group of people--relatively small, maybe 25 at each meeting--and you had the top level policy people with their chief assistants, like the Secretary of State, Defense, the Budget Director, the President himself, the Vice President. You were not messing around with the fifth echelon but with the top ones. They gave a presentation, and no matter how objective you may want to be, the presentation would be partial to the Administration's position. You expect that of people presenting a case. You're not going out of your way and say

"We're doing everything wrong." But what I'm trying to say is the opportunity was there to question them.

I have been to meetings where some of the loudest voices against our involvement were there in that room but through out the evening would just sit and not say a word! I'm not going to mention names, but I used to go up to some of these Senators and say "Why don't you ask the President? Now is the time!"

This is one thing that the President told me a couple of times. He said, "I don't mind people criticizing me to my face. I don't mind people suggesting things to me, but" he said, "it gets a little tiresome receiving the criticism and receiving their suggestions on the wire services."

M: Senator, since 1964 and 1965 were noted for their congressional activity, to what do you attribute this passage of the flood of legislation and also what pieces did you actively work on?

I: We have several factors involved. The time was opportune for it. This type of laws would not have passed 30 years ago. The time had come for it. There was a man in the White House who understood that the time had come for it and who understood the legislative road that these bills would have to travel. He also understood the political thinking of individual politicians and I think he took advantage of this. Secondly there was at that time a feel of some remorse, some sympathy over the assassination, and I think the President wisely understood this also.

And this is a thing--you must take advantage of the circumstances, if it's going to be helpful. He wasn't doing this to connive, it was in the best interest of the nation and he did it.

Were you aware of any direction from the White House to get passage of some of these?

I: Oh, they were there all the time--counting heads and calls were being made by the President. It was a busy and happy time. I remember sitting in the Majority Leader's room and checking off names and "Can you talk to this Senator?" "I'll try." "Okay."

Return fifteen minutes later and "We got them."

M: What were some of the tactics that were coming from the White House to get some passage--the procedure and the strategy?

I: I think it was all above-board. If you try to have me tell you that the White House used tactics like "if you don't vote for this, you're not going to get that post office," I never heard of that happening. But it was a tactic of constant reminder, I would say. "Come on, how about it?" They were sending down experts. Now if I was not quite certain about a certain bill and they found out that I wasn't quite certain about a bill, you can be assured that the next day I would have a whole bevy of them to explain the bill to me.

M: Senator--

I: Lyndon Johnson likes to win--not by one vote.

M: Senator, you've been in the Senate for a period of the Administration that has had a great deal of activity and lesser activity. Do you think that over the period of the power and the prestige of Congress has declined?

I: I don't think so. That's what some people are trying to suggest, but the Constitution is still the same. Nothing has changed there. We still have the power to veto, the power to authorize and appropriate. There's no question that the influence exercised by Lyndon Johnson was

at times overpowering, because he was a strong president. He did not leave it up to his subordinates to do his work. He was a very strong one, and he was a strong advocate of his views. But it doesn't mean that Congress has been weakened by that. To the contrary, if the Congress had weakened, he'd still be President today. The facts of life indicate otherwise.

M: Mr. Johnson did come from a great mandate in 1964 to pretty widespread unpopularity by 1968. To what would you attribute this and do you think this is part of what they call the "loss of his consensus."

I: No. You can give many reasons, but I would say the important factor was communications, TV for one thing. For the first time in the history of mankind we were able to see TV in living color, war in living color, see American young men dying. They showed pictures of a man wounded and gurgling, and finally pass away--and this is in your living room. So the mothers are watching this and a son had just been drafted, and the casualty reports coming out every day. And you hear about 60 billion dollars, 70 billion dollars, appropriations for the Defense Department. And you would have Gold Star mothers sprouting up in every community. Then the young people for good and obvious reasons didn't want to get drafted, and it began to boil.

The Viet Nam war that was fought in '66 and '67 and '68 was still the same war that was fought in '61, '62, '63. The only difference in '61 to '65, you didn't have the casualty rates, and it wasn't considered important enough--so TV crews didn't go out there. Television showed in living color in every living room. That's going to

excite people. To show a front page picture of the Saigon Chief of Police firing a gun on a Viet Cong's head, Americans get sick of that.

Our national economy was at the highest level in our history. We had poverty, yes, but in general, the level of living was high. Education was at the highest level. More young people going to colleges and universities than ever before--but this war.

M: Senator, I know we're taking a little of your time--

I: Yes, someone's waiting out there.

M: May I ask you just one more question if you can comment even briefly on it. We did have some questions on--problems on our stockpile come up and, of course, it's related to your committee and subcommittee that you are on. I'm thinking particularly of the aluminum crisis in 1965. Can you tell me the contacts you had with the White House on that?

I: None whatsoever. I was on the Armed Services Committee. It was brought up in the Committee, and that's the only contact I had. I did not receive any message or direction from the White House as to what we should do. Maybe the chairman did. You should ask Stuart Symington on this, because he was subcommittee chairman on stockpiling.

M: Senator, just to conclude, how do you think history will rate Lyndon Johnson?

I: I'm not a prophet. I'm not in business to predict things but I think history will be kind to him--although you'll have volume after volume of books entitled The Tragedy of Lyndon Johnson, The Bad Years of Lyndon Johnson. But you can't very well close your eyes. Great steps that were taken, steps that one may say "well, they're easy to take today"--today, but not in his time, on civil rights, concern

for the impoverished, even on the war. You don't know what's going to happen with the Chinese or the Vietnamese.

On the war--well, let's put it this way, when Mr. Macmillan, Prime Minister of England, returned from Munich after his meeting with the Chancellor of Germany. He came home. He was extremely pleased. He was almost cheerful. A new day had begun. We shall have peace in this world, and the historians of that day who were writing the chronicle, at that time, at that moment, praised him as a bearer of glad tidings, as a man of peace, a great leader. My God, it didn't take too many months later they were all doing everything to tear him apart. His name has become synonymous with certain things in history. Do you want another Munich?

So I don't know what history will say. When I'm talking about history, I'm talking about history as written, say, a hundred years from now, when the historian who would have had no personal contact and who was not involved in the emotions of demonstrations, or emotions you would find especially in the intellectual segment of our community. Knowledgeable historians are all emotionally involved today. They are not neutrals.

M: Senator, I have no further questions, we've covered a great many topics. If there is anything else you would like to add or comment on that we haven't talked about, or add to anything we have?

I: No, but I look forward to seeing the President once again. I haven't seen him for quite sometime.

M: Thank you very much.

I: Thank you.

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