

INTERVIEW II

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INTERVIEWEE: WALTER JENKINS
INTERVIEWER: JOE B. FRANTZ
PLACE: Mr. Jenkins' office, Austin, Texas

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F: Let's start today with a little talk about Johnson as a Senate majority leader operating to bring new senators into committee appointments, and also maybe to move senators already there to more choice assignments. He did, in a sense, sort of speed up a junior senator's ability to get on good committees, as I recall.

J: That is correct. I believe he probably was the first Senate majority leader in history to have a formal policy of trying to see that each new senator had at least one major committee assignment. He went out of his way where he could to give him an assignment of his choice. Perhaps that was not always possible because of the limitations of the places on the committees. But he asked each new senator to give him in writing his requests for committee assignments, his preferences in order, and then for at least one of the places he tried to make it possible for him to have either his first or, if not that, his second choice.

F: As a new senator came in, did he tend to invite him in and get acquainted with him, or did he just wait for time to have them brush up against each other?

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J: No. I think he invited them in and tried to get acquainted with them and close to them, although a great many of them he already knew from House service or having campaigned for them in their own states or in trying to assist them in other ways while they were candidates.

F: You get somebody like William Proxmire. As I recall, Johnson allotted some money into the Proxmire campaign originally, and then Proxmire sort of went against Johnson on quite a number of issues both in the Senate and later. Did Senator Johnson feel a need for a sort of voting loyalty, or if he helped you in a campaign did he expect you to go ahead and be an independent senator when you got in there?

J: I think he rather expected them to be independent senators wherever they had deep convictions or wherever the interests of their states were involved, although I think he probably expected and hoped for a sense of personal loyalty and friendship and team relationship.

F: Did he ever feel that any senator just downright played him false that you can recall?

J: Well, I don't know for certain that he did. I think there might have been at least some feeling on the part of some, if not on the part of Mr. Johnson personally, that Proxmire might have and perhaps Hartke from Indiana.

F: On a lone wolf senator like Paul Douglas, who from all I can gather from the sidelines was a man who pretty well kept to himself and never really belonged to the Senate as an organization, did Senator Johnson make any particular effort to get Douglas enlisted in the ranks, or did he pretty well let him go his own way?

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J: I think he always tried to be courteous to him and friendly with him and have some sort of working relationship with him, recognizing the fact that he was not constitutionally built to be a member of the so-called establishment of the Senate.

F: No senator was ever just sort of frozen out? No Democratic senator?

J: I know of none. Even Morse, who came into the Democratic Party, I believe, while Senator Johnson was majority leader, was invited in and every effort made to accommodate him. He was given the Foreign Relations Committee, which he wanted. I don't believe anybody was ever frozen out. Some may have gone out of their way to freeze themselves out.

F: In the early days of their association, did Ralph Yarborough and the senior senator tend to get along fairly well? You've got a natural maverick in Ralph.

J: I think they always got along together on the personal basis. Their personalities were such that they were never close or intimate, as far as I know. Their voting records were quite similar, particularly after Mr. Johnson became vice president and president. Yarborough's voting record was almost a hundred per cent with both the Kennedy and the Johnson Administration.

(Interruption)

F: To get back to committee appointments, did Johnson try to push some senators ahead of others? I have always wondered, for instance, on why he, I presume, urged the retirement of Theodore Francis Green and William Fulbright's ascension to the Foreign Relations Committee.

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- J: In the early days President Johnson and Senator Fulbright were very close, both in the Senate and on a social basis. They went out together a good deal. Their wives were particularly close friends. I think he felt that Senator Fulbright would make as constructive a member of the Foreign Relations Committee as there probably was in the Senate. I think he was at the time very pleased with having had a part in not only putting him on the Foreign Relations Committee, but helping him along in that field. Their differences came much later.
- F: This is looking ahead a bit, but did he sort of groom Mike Mansfield as a successor?
- J: Yes, I would say so.
- F: Did he ever comment to you on his estimate of Mansfield's performance as a majority leader once he got in the White House?
- J: Yes.
- F: Was he disappointed?
- J: Yes.
- F: Did he feel that Mansfield just wasn't the caliber he had expected, or that he had turned down another road?
- J: That's a rather difficult question. I think he felt that Mansfield, in a good many ways like Fulbright, is an introspective, sometimes perhaps impractical, theoretical fellow who may have been guided by the things the way he'd like to see them rather than things the way they are.
- F: Did Johnson follow, as far as you could tell--did he ever talk to you about this--a conscious policy of not taking stands on lots of crucial

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issues but working quietly behind the scenes to get something through or something smothered?

J: Repeat that. I'm not sure I understand you.

F: In an issue--it doesn't matter whether he's pro or con in this case--but instead of Johnson sticking his neck out and saying "I'm for this" and letting the nation know where he stood, just in a sense never declaring himself but just quietly killing off something or pushing something through, utilizing other people--did he tend in a sense to keep himself in the background on issues like that purposely?

J: Yes, I think it's possible that in his sort of overall planning if he reached a conclusion that something could be accomplished by indirect rather than direct methods, he didn't hesitate to use those methods if they reached the goals which he felt were for the good of the country.

F: Did he to a certain extent try to avoid publicity, allowing for the fact that as Senate majority leader he can't?

J: His relations with the press have always been one of his problems, as I'm sure he recognized better than anyone else. He went back and forth from being extremely friendly to them, perhaps too much so, and giving them everything they asked for and then some, [to] when he found someone had betrayed his trust or hadn't treated him fairly then swinging back the pendulum the other direction and ignoring them for a few months completely. Neither method was entirely satisfactory.

F: In these Senate days was there any indication to you that Bobby Baker was following a somewhat self-serving purpose? I'm not trying to fix guilt or non-guilt.

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J: Not really, although I did know, first, that he was studying law at night, and second, that after he got his law degree I either heard from him or from somewhere that he had opened a law office. I didn't realize the extent of his activities. I do remember one Saturday afternoon when we were working that Senator Johnson asked me to get him on the phone, and I told Senator Johnson that at his home they had told me that he could be reached at his law office. Senator Johnson said, "He'd better not be practicing law on my time," or some words to that effect. That may or may not have been the first time that Mr. Johnson realized he was--

F: I judge he was, though, tremendously effective as an operator around the Senate.

J: I think he was as effective as any man I've ever known.

F: But you were never in any position of having to protect him because nothing surfaced during that Senate period.

J: No. I think, as a matter of fact, until the roof sort of caved in Bobby was pretty well able to protect himself and never asked anybody to protect him.

F: During those latter days in the Senate, you've got a lot of jockeying for position as you come down toward 1960. I'd like to ask a little bit about the Majority Leader's relationships with some of the people. Did the fact that some of them were potential nominees on the Democratic ticket for the presidency make any difference in their relationships?

J: I never could see that it did because President Johnson never acknowledged, as far as I know, to anyone that he was a candidate himself.

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F: But he just continued to treat them as senators and senators only, in a sense?

J: That is correct. It was only a few days before the Democratic convention that he had a press conference and stated that he was a candidate. Up until that time I never heard him acknowledge that he was a candidate to anyone.

F: Did you have any opportunity to observe his relationship with Jack Kennedy as a senator?

J: Yes, some. Their relationship was good and very friendly. He had a very healthy respect for Jack Kennedy, and I think Kennedy did for him. I think Kennedy appreciated the fact that it was perhaps Mr. Johnson and Speaker Rayburn, more than anyone else, who made it possible for him to have the dramatic, close race for the vice presidency four years earlier when Rayburn and Johnson swung the southern and border delegations to Kennedy when most people thought they would go to Kefauver or somebody else.

F: Why do you think they went to Kennedy over Kefauver, since Kefauver was a Tennessean?

J: I think because Kefauver was not a person that was easily sold to people who are politically minded. Kefauver was, like you mentioned Douglas a moment ago, a maverick, and Kefauver, in my personal opinion, was greatly overrated as far as his ability was concerned.

F: Did Senator Johnson have any contact with old Joe Kennedy during that period that you know of? Were they fairly congenial?

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J: I think they were congenial, but I don't think they were ever extremely close, although I have heard that some time along in this period Joe Kennedy asked Johnson if he would take the presidency and with Jack as his running mate.

F: This is secondhand information though?

J: That is secondhand information, but reasonably good, I think, as far as the sources are concerned.

F: Who were Johnson's close friends in the Senate? Some of them are obvious.

J: Perhaps on a personal basis in the Senate days Smathers, Symington, Russell, Senator George--

F: Stennis.

J: Stennis, yes--Stennis not so much on a personal basis as a right-hand man, Armed Services Committee, and so on. My memory is not as agile as it should be.

F: Whose is! Did he and Gene McCarthy get along all right in these days?

J: Yes. They were extremely close. He liked McCarthy and was very friendly with him and thought he had great capacities, both as a senator and a speaker, although I think he perhaps felt that he didn't use them to their fullest capacity.

F: He and Humphrey, I presume, were in good relationship?

J: Yes, he and Senator Humphrey always had good relationships, although I would say probably not as close as some of the others I've mentioned.

F: Did Senator Johnson try to keep the Senate from breaking down into a kind of conservative-radical division? Did he try always to move both edges toward the center?

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J: Yes, and I think successfully.

F: Did this bring him criticism, particularly in the political realm, for maybe being too close to the Eisenhower line?

J: Yes, he received some criticism from the extremes on both sides, but it didn't come from responsible conservatives like, say, Senator Russell, or responsible liberals like, say, Senator Humphrey.

F: They understood what he was trying to do there.

J: And in a great many ways worked with him in an effort to accomplish it. Where there was some particular subject that they couldn't, he understood it, and so did they--that he didn't expect them to.

F: Was there anyone, as far as you know, in the Senate--another senator--to whom Johnson could not go personally and talk over a situation? Did he ever have to use someone as a bridge?

J: I don't think he ever had to. He did use Bobby Baker as a bridge a good many times because Bobby had developed quite a relationship with a number of senators, and he used other people, too.

F: When did you first suspect this commitment to civil rights?

J: I personally felt it from the first day I worked for him. Perhaps I shouldn't say the first day, but shortly after that.

F: In other words the emergence of Johnson as a champion of the black and the brown, particularly, is a consistent development rather than something "Johnny-come-lately"?

J: I feel so. Of course, he did not get out in front as a senator from a southern state, but he never joined the southern bloc as most of the senators did.

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- F: When they issued that Southern Manifesto, was he under pretty strong pressure to sign it?
- J: I'm sure he was.
- F: But he never talked with you about the problem that you recall.
- J: I don't recall. I've certainly heard him talk about it either to me or to others. I don't think he ever considered for a moment signing it. His positions that were taken in those days on poll tax and so on are not inconsistent with his later position in civil rights.
- F: When he put through that first civil rights bill in more than three-quarters of a century, what was it like around the office at that time? Because you were engaged in something that--I don't care which party you belonged to or which wing of which party, it still would have been a time to remember I think.
- J: It's a time to remember, but I don't remember it that distinctly above other things, because no matter what he was working on there was always something going on around the office that was a little exciting. I think he put every effort he had into it and was very happy over the accomplishment.
- F: You had, in a sense, about three offices to oversee in these days, didn't you?
- J: Yes. In the days when he was majority leader and chairman of the Space Committee and also chairman of the Preparedness Subcommittee I wouldn't say that I had direct authority over all of the operations, although he used me in connection with all of them. I did have direct

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authority over the senatorial office, and I guess along with Bobby over the majority leader's office, and to some degree over the other two offices.

F: What about the Senate Policy Committee?

J: The Policy Committee and the majority leader's office are practically the same thing. He operates out of the same office.

F: Did you do most of that by telephone, or did you have to move around on the Hill quite a bit physically?

J: I didn't move around too awful much--mostly on the telephone. Whatever part of it I had was usually carrying out instructions for him. I had very little to do with any basic decisions.

F: What was your mail like during this civil rights period?

J: It was more negative than affirmative, certainly from our home state.

F: I know you can't be precise on this because you didn't have time for it, but was his mail indicating that he was increasingly a national senator? I'm sure it was always heavily from Texas, because that's where people had their wants that he could satisfy, but did people write him from all over the nation on issues?

J: Yes. His mail became national in scope reasonably early. Long before he was majority leader we had begun, because of some of his activities in both the House and the Senate to--for instance, back in 1941 he was the chairman of the campaign committee for all Democratic House members. In that connection, he made a lot of contacts with political figures in all of the states. They liked him, and we carried on correspondence

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with people all over the nation well before he was even in the Senate, although it increasingly became national as time went on.

F: In these latter Senate majority leader days, how heavy was his mail when you've got something going? I presume it comes in rises and falls to some extent.

J: He sort of had a thing about the mail, and we conscientiously kept a mail count, which I'm sure is available to you if you want to consult it. But I think that in the days of the majority leadership it was running somewhere in the area of a thousand a day.

F: Who monitored it?

J: It was monitored in sort of a system whereby the opener of the mail sorted it according to subject matter, whether it was the Preparedness Subcommittee or space or so on. Then all of it on a particular subject went to the person more directly responsible for that subject. Anything that the mail openers felt he might have a personal interest in seeing at once came to me. I either saw that he did see it or made a decision that he did not need to.

F: In case of doubt, I presume you always sent it to him.

J: Yes. If I thought there was any question about his needing to know about it, I sent it to him. Although he knew pretty well about the rest of the mail because each day we gave him a report the next day on what mail had come in the preceding day, the general subject matter. If it was on issues, how many were for and how many were against and so on.

F: Was he kind of a widespread sampler of mail on issues like that? Would he come in and read two or three letters?

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J: Yes, he had a way of coming in on Saturdays or Sundays and going around to everybody's desk and thumbing through what they were working on, both to see, I think, what was in the mail and also to see whether we were caught up or not.

F: What did you do with the obscene or hate stuff?

J: We didn't answer anything like that, but we didn't get too much of it until he was vice president. After that, it went directly to the Secret Service.

F: Tell me a little bit about his getting involved in space, and your getting involved in space, because this is one of his breakthroughs.

J: He'd been interested in the field but not a direct activity in connection with it any more than a good many others. At the time that Sputnik I went up, we were down here in Texas. The Congress was not in session. I don't remember the date, but it must have been in the fall. He was much impressed by that having happened. He immediately started calling and writing recommendations as to what we should do about it. He flew back to Washington to, first, get fully acquainted with what our situation was in the field of space, which wasn't much as I remember at the time, and had a request and proposal ready when Congress convened, I suppose, which was the following January, unless there was a special session. I don't remember, but my feeling is that this happened in late fall and that early January he had made up his mind that somebody had to wake the country up in this field and start an all-out effort. He asked for authority for a special committee of the Senate as soon as the Congress reconvened and was given that authority and was made

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good deal of the credit for such accomplishments as the administration had were due to the cooperation of Johnson and Rayburn, who carried the Eisenhower program in the Congress, much of the time with the opposition of a good many of the senators of Eisenhower's party.

F: Did you ever have any opportunity to observe his relationship with Nixon?

J: Yes.

F: How did they seem to get on?

J: I always thought they were rather friendly. When Nixon was vice president and Johnson was majority leader, Nixon used to come in and visit in the office quite often. If I'm not mistaken, he didn't have much of an office in the Capitol. Later that situation was corrected. But the vice presidential office in the Capitol in those days was a ceremonial office, used largely for picture taking and so on. I remember one morning his coming in and sitting around for quite some time and telling us about his visit to Russia.

F: The famous kitchen incident?

J: The kitchen incident. Their relations were friendly.

F: Going back to 1956 a moment, Johnson was an extremely dark horse at the convention that year, and, of course, Eisenhower was going to be nominated again. Did the staff ever feel that there was much likelihood of Johnson going on the ticket in 1956?

J: No, sir. I don't think that anybody felt that there was.

F: Nobody really worked toward it?

J: No, sir.

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chairman of that committee and held--I'll take it back, it was not the Space Committee first.

He already had a subcommittee which could be used in that field, and he convened the Preparedness Subcommittee of the Armed Services Committee which he felt had some jurisdiction in the field, particularly any military aspects of space, and convened a series of hearings that went on for some weeks. He asked Ed Weisl, a prominent lawyer from New York City, and Donald Cook to assist him. They brought in all of the people who knew the most about the subject, Dr. Teller and others. The hearings were, I think, probably the groundwork for the nation's space effort, because when they got through they made a number of recommendations, most of which have now been followed and accomplished.

F: Did they get, as far as you could tell, full cooperation from the White House on this, or was this done kind of outside the White House purview?

J: I don't remember. I guess it was done outside, but I don't remember that any roadblocks were thrown in the way by the White House. In fact, I think the White House was also beginning to wake up to the need to move forward faster.

F: Could he pretty well get access to President Eisenhower any time he felt he needed it?

J: Yes. I don't think he ever had any difficulty.

F: And in those days I presume that he and the President got along quite well.

J: Yes, I think they got along well. I think they always had a healthy respect for each other. I think President Eisenhower realized that a

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F: In the intervening years between 1956 and 1960, did you get the feeling that you had a potential presidential candidate on your hands and that you ought to be looking beyond your duties of serving the senator to the possible pushing of a man into--

J: I felt that we had a possible presidential candidate very early. I did not know whether it was possible for a man from this part of the country to actually ever become president.

F: Did Johnson feel that that really was a barrier?

J: Yes, I think he did. I don't think he ever felt that he would be president. I've heard him comment on the fact that no southerner had since the Civil War, other than Wilson, who wasn't really from the South. He had been born in the South, but--

F: Did Mr. Sam somewhat buttress that opinion?

J: Yes, I think so.

F: So that you were just geographically blocked.

J: I think that he felt that, yes.

F: Okay, now then, as you come down toward 1960 there is at least a little boomlet for Johnson, but you don't have an announced candidate. What do you do in a case like that? Do you act like there is no boomlet and just keep on with your job?

J: I was in a little anomalous position. I was in the office of a man who said he wasn't a candidate, and yet I was very close to John Connally who was running a nationwide campaign. I was very much in sympathy with what John was doing, and whenever I finished my work at the Capitol I'd go down to the campaign office on K Street and work down there, too.

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So I was working for a candidate who said he wasn't a candidate, as were many others.

F: Was this kind of like the cliché that you never talk to a pitcher who's pitching a no-hit game about how well he's doing? In this instance, was this an unmentionable subject around the senator?

J: No, not really. He knew, of course, what was going on and could have [stopped it].

F: You didn't have to be subversive about it.

J: No, not at all. He knew what was going on and was getting reports of what was happening and had some interest in it. But if he ever was serious about it, he never said so.

F: He never expressed whether he considered himself too long a shot or anything like that? He, in a sense, just didn't allow himself to be made a candidate.

J: I don't think he felt that he could be successful in obtaining the nomination.

F: Just before the convention when he finally did make himself available, what do you think triggered the change?

J: I think the thing that triggered the change was the end of the congressional session. He was trying very much to get a program through the Congress. I think that he felt that as a presidential candidate, or a candidate for the nomination, his motives would be suspect, and that it would be difficult for him to accomplish the things he was trying to accomplish. When the session ended, even though I don't think he felt

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that he would win the nomination, I think there was no longer that bar to his being a public candidate.

F: Did you get involved at all in the seeking of delegates?

J: Yes.

F: What did you do? Telephone?

J: Yes, telephone, and once he announced we had already prepared, and as a matter of fact the office downtown had sent, letters to all the delegates with information about him. I went with John Connally and others to meet with the various delegates.

F: What kind of reception did you get? I'm sure it was mixed, but I mean in general.

J: I don't think we ever got an unfriendly reception from anybody. I think everyone had a healthy respect for Mr. Johnson. There were a good many of them who said they would like to support him, but they were already committed. The Kennedy organization had done, I think, probably the finest political job in the history of the country in lining things up. They had put all their eggs on the first ballot. There were many, many people who told us, "Mr. Johnson is our preference, but we've committed on first ballot only. You let us carry out our commitment on the first ballot, and we'll be for him on the second one." I rather think that if Kennedy had not made it on the first ballot, that he never would have made it at all. It might not have been Johnson.

F: You had a feeling then that if he could get past that first ballot that you had a ball game.

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J: That's right. It might have been Symington, for instance. But the Kennedy organization had done whatever they felt was necessary to tie people up for the first ballot.

F: Was there ever any meeting of the other-than-Kennedy candidates to talk about how to head off the so-called Kennedy steamroller?

J: I'm sure there were some. I wasn't privy to them except one or two after we got to Los Angeles.

F: What was the general tone? Was it sort of a quiet desperation?

J: I don't know that everyone felt that the ball game was over until the ballot was taken. I think that most of the candidates, besides Kennedy, who made contact with the delegates, if they couldn't get them for themselves tried to channel them to someone else other than Kennedy in the hopes that that would bring about a second ballot.

F: Did Senator Johnson ever talk to you prior to Los Angeles about the possibility of being the number two man?

J: No, sir. Well, let me correct that. I had heard him say on a number of occasions that he had no interest in being number two man.

F: Did you go to Los Angeles?

J: Yes, I was there.

F: Did you begin to suspect, once the first presidential ballot was over, that possibly you might have a vice presidential nominee on your hands?

J: No, sir. I did not think that he would be asked, and if he were asked I did not think he would accept.

F: How did you find out about it?

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J: I was there when Kennedy came to see him the following morning after the nomination.

F: Did the two talk privately?

J: Yes, they talked privately. I believe John Connally was in on part of one of the conversations. I'm not certain about that. Mrs. Johnson was in on part of it.

F: How do you think she stood?

J: I think she was probably opposed to his doing it.

F: Why? I mean you're guessing on somebody else, but what's an intelligent guess?

J: I think maybe she felt that he had probably a more important job already than the vice presidency would offer to him. I'm not certain about this. This is instinct, and partially based on just general background, but that's my feeling, that she would have opposed it.

F: Did he ever call the staff together and explain to them, or announce to them, what he was going to do?

J: No, not really, because the staff, a good many of them, had left Los Angeles. After the ballot that night we thought our party was over. A good many of them took off back for their homes and other places, didn't see that there was much point in even remaining. There was certainly no opportunity for a staff meeting. I think that most of the people that were present there right on the same floor as President Johnson--Mr. Rayburn and John Connally and I and perhaps Bobby Baker and two or three others were there, and were in and out--participated in some of the general conversations. I understand that President

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Johnson discouraged him in the first meeting rather substantially and told him that he thought that it would be a problem for him on the floor, getting the nomination through, and advised that probably he ought to go to Symington or Jackson or somebody who would not be a problem for him. Kennedy, I understand, indicated he had already talked to a good many people, and that Johnson was the one he wanted. I think Johnson asked if he had talked with people like Walter Reuther and George Meany and Soapy Williams and so on. Kennedy indicated he hadn't, I believe. Johnson advised him to go talk to some of them before he made up his mind.

After President Kennedy left, and we didn't hear any more from him for some hours, I think we reached the conclusion that that probably was the end of it.

F: Was Johnson sort of openly weighing yes or no during this period?

J: I think he must have been. I don't see how he could have helped it.

F: But he didn't talk to you about it?

J: No.

F: What were your feelings on the subject?

J: I thought he should do it.

F: Why?

J: Because while it's correct that the majority leader is probably a more important and more responsible position than the vice president, I felt there was a possibility anyway that if he were asked to do something by the standard bearer of his party and declined to do it there'd be some doubt in my mind whether he could continue to be majority leader,

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or if he did, whether he'd be able to command the influence that he had. I don't see that he had any choice, really, once he was asked.

F: Let's go back a moment, and this I think bears on that. Johnson, of course, worked like a dog, and he worked everybody around him the same way, including senators, who are pretty high-powered people. How did he get them to run those long sessions where it was obvious that many of them wanted to go home for the evening, they wanted to go home for the weekend, they wanted to do something other than be there where the work was going on? Yet he was the most successful majority leader we've ever had at keeping people's noses to the grindstone until they reached a point that he thought was sufficient.

J: I think he was able to fire up enough of them with his own enthusiasm and desire to accomplish certain things that he had enough votes that nobody could make a motion for adjournment and have it carry if he was opposed to it. Now I'm sure there were others, particularly some of the Republicans and maybe some of the Democrats, too, who didn't particularly appreciate how hard they were working, but somehow there was a surprisingly small amount of grumbling. He was able to carry them along with him, perhaps by the force of his own personality.

F: What was your reaction immediately after you learned now that he is going to be the vice presidential candidate? What did you think that meant for you?

J: It meant an awful lot of work, I knew that. I didn't know that it meant anything very different from what I had been doing.

F: How did it change your activities? Or did it change them?

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J: Yes, it changed my activities because during the campaign period I was detached from the office as far as handling the mail and routine office matters.

F: Did you tend to stay based in Washington, or did you move about with him?

J: I stayed based in Washington almost entirely and worked on his speaking schedule in seeing that he wasn't in the same part of the country that Kennedy was, coordinating it with the Kennedy organization.

F: Who was your principal contact in the Kennedy organization?

J: I guess Ken O'Donnell more than anyone else.

F: Did the Johnson staff and the Kennedy staff work pretty well together as co-campaigners?

J: There were only two or three of us who sort of coordinated between the two and I don't think, outside of that, perhaps some of the advance men were switched back and forth from one to the other. There was never any difficulty, but we were in one location and they were in another. Outside of just telephone coordination to be sure that we weren't encroaching on what they were planning and so on, there wasn't any requirement for real close contact on the part of at least a lot of people.

F: You're working with Kenny O'Donnell. Did he, to a certain extent, want to utilize Johnson to shore up areas of weakness for Kennedy?

J: Yes, I think so.

F: I mean, was that the main purpose?

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J: I don't know that that was the main purpose, because they used him in places that you'd have thought Kennedy would have been strong. They put him in the New York Citys and the Chicagos and so on. Although, yes, they also wanted him in the Oklahomas and the Texases and the Arizonas and the South.

F: Did you get the feeling that they thought he was an effective asset for the ticket?

J: Yes. I feel sure Kenny O'Donnell felt so, and I'm sure President Kennedy felt so. I don't know whether everyone in the Kennedy organization did or not.

F: Okay, you get him elected. Were you down here at the Driskill the night of the elections?

J: No, sir, I was in Washington.

F: So you sat it out up there.

J: Yes, sir.

F: What was it like around there? Where did you watch the returns?

J: I guess in our office. Yes, that's right, in the office in Washington where a good many people were coming in. We were on the phone almost constantly.

F: As you know, it didn't get settled that night. At what point did you decide to secure?

J: I believe I was there all night, if I'm not mistaken, and into part of the next day. I may have lay down on the couch and slept.

F: Were you in any sort of telephone contact with the candidate down here in Austin?

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J: If not with him directly with people who were with him, and perhaps with him directly. I don't remember.

F: Was there much concern that the ticket wasn't going to make it?

J: Yes, I think there was great concern as to what might happen in Illinois, for instance, where it was very close, and California where it was very close.

F: Okay, you do have now a vice president-elect on your hands. What do you do after that? Because you're obviously going to have some change in your life.

J: We began to try to determine what his responsibilities were going to be as vice president.

F: Did you consciously wind down your Senate activities, or did you maintain a level?

J: We maintained all of our activities until the end of the session, although we realized at once that we were going to have to make a substantial adjustment in our staff. Because going from a senatorial office, which is an allocation rather large, and three committee offices, all of which had an appropriation for staff, we were going to a staff which was relatively small.

F: Did you try to relocate all those people, or did people come after them because they were experienced?

J: I called all of the people in to a meeting in which I told them that I did not know who all we were going to be able to keep because we were going to have a very small allowance, comparatively at least, and that I hoped that all of them who could would find other places; that those

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who did not have another place in mind that was satisfactory to them, that they would come and talk to me so we would try to place them in some place where they would not lose their seniority or their retirement system and so on. If I'm not mistaken, by January 20 we were able to place everybody somewhere. Some with the committee--well, people stayed with the new chairmen--we took a number of people, and some of them went to other senatorial offices. I don't remember where everybody went.

F: Was a former Johnson employee looked upon as a kind of a premium?

J: Yes, I think people were sort of happy to get them in view of the fact that he was going to be vice president, for one reason, and second, because I think that people always felt he had one of the best staffs on Capitol Hill.

F: You'd agree with this?

J: Leaving out myself, yes, I would agree with that.

F: I won't ask you to get that personal. Where did you set up then? Did you move over to the EOB?

J: Yes. As a matter of fact, I had a desk in both places, but I spent most of my time at the Executive Office Building.

F: Were you, under the circumstances, reasonably well satisfied with your physical arrangements?

J: Yes. We had a reasonably nice office on the second floor of the EOB. President Johnson had a nice office there and also still maintained a nice one at the Capitol. He was able to keep his majority leader's office, and it became the vice presidential office. They provided other space for the new majority leader.

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F: Did he have much of a problem becoming a non-senator?

J: No, I don't think he did. He has always surprised me by his ability to adjust to new situations. He went from having his finger in nearly every pie in Washington to only having it in those pies which President Kennedy asked him to participate in. He was very conscientious about doing anything that President Kennedy asked him to do, and doing it to the best of his ability.

F: Was he to a certain extent, for a man of his extreme energy, under-used? Was he restive?

J: Yes, I think he was under-used, and I think he was a little restive and perhaps a little frustrated. Although I think President Kennedy went out of his way to use him just about as much, if not more, than any vice president I can remember, in connection with the National Space Council, which he was made chairman of, and the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity, which he was made chairman of.

F: In both of those, did he have pretty much of a green light?

J: Yes, I think he was given--I wouldn't want to say carte blanche because I guess that wouldn't be accurate, but I think that whatever he went to the President with after activities of those, as far as I know, he had full cooperation.

F: He was the chairman?

J: I think he was, yes.

F: Did they use up a good bit of his energy?

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J: Yes, both did. Finding himself with perhaps more time on his hands than he had had in the past, and he's not a man to enjoy time on his hands, he was very active in both fields.

F: Did you get much contact yourself with the Kennedy staff?

J: Quite a little with all of them, although more with O'Donnell than anybody else. There was a staff meeting at the White House every Tuesday afternoon.

F: Did that include the Vice President's staff or just you?

J: I believe just me from the Vice President's staff.

F: Who ran those Tuesday meetings?

J: O'Donnell ran them, in which they discussed the things that they were trying to accomplish in the various departments and asked those of us who felt we could contribute anything to certain efforts to please do so. Particularly, a good deal of the conversation was in connection with the legislative program--who might be able to talk to certain congressmen, certain senators. I was given the responsibility of the Texas delegation for the Kennedy Administration, which is not the easiest one in Washington. But we did, in a good many cases, better than we expected to do.

F: Did the Vice President kind of await with some impatience your return from some of those meetings to find out what had happened, or did he show any interest in it?

J: He showed interest in it. I wouldn't want to say that he was impatient, sitting waiting for my return. That wouldn't be in his nature to do that. But I kept him informed, and of course he already knew because

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President Kennedy had him over there all the time. Any meeting of great significance he would call him over. I don't know whether he felt like he was doing it to keep him happy or whether he felt like President Johnson was making a major contribution to the efforts. But in any event he was in on a great many things that were not just space and equal employment.

F: Was he utilized for legislative contacts, to do any liaison work, or does the White House, by its nature, stay clear of that?

J: The White House doesn't stay clear of it. The White House had a legislative staff. It at that time was headed by O'Brien. Yes, on occasion they called on him in specific situations--although he was not used broadly--saying, "Go talk to everybody that you can," or anything like that.

F: As far as your original constituency of the state of Texas was concerned, did they surrender him as a senior senator, or did they continue to come to him for the things you use a senator for?

J: We continued to get the same sort of mail, particularly from the ones who had been writing us for twenty-five years. I don't think they'd decided to write to Tower or Yarborough. Maybe they wrote to them, too, I don't know.

F: Did you try to handle their requests where you could?

J: Yes, we continued to. Now when he became president, we more or less--

F: Shoveled it on out.

J: Yes, because it probably would have been questionable, if not improper, to treat correspondence from one area differently from that from another.

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F: Did you ever get any feeling that he might be going to be dropped as 1964 came down?

J: I never thought he was going to be. I know that there was speculation in the newspapers, there was a good deal of talk about different ones, that this one and that one were promoting and so on and so forth, but I never had the feeling that there was a doubt as to whether he would be asked to continue.

F: You don't think really he had any doubts?

J: I don't know about that.

F: On the foreign trips, did Johnson welcome them as far as you could tell?

J: At first I did not think he did. But after he had made one or two and had done rather successfully in his speeches and appearances, I think he began to relish them. I think he perhaps was a little nervous about them earlier because he had not done too much in that field.

F: Did you go along on any?

J: I went on the trip around the world.

F: Tell me about that from start to finish. Let's just do a kind of a narrative.

J: I thought he handled it extremely successfully.

F: How long was it in preparation?

J: It was not in preparation too awfully long, I would say four or five weeks, is my memory. He had certain missions to perform in nearly every country we went to, some of them, I think, not vital, but certain

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requests that the President had asked him to perform. I assume the most important was in Vietnam.

F: Before he saw a head of state was he more than usually nervous or restless? In other words, did he show an obvious concern for how the meeting might go, or did he pretty well take them like meeting another constituent?

J: I don't think it was anything new to him to meet heads of state. It would have been something new to him to appear before vast crowds of people in foreign countries. I didn't notice any nervousness about appearing with heads of state. I think he hit off very well with the ones that I had any contact with in the Philippines and in Formosa and in Vietnam.

F: Pakistan.

J: Pakistan, India, Thailand.

F: Were there any of these foreign leaders that he actually became friends with? I realize they were short visits, but with some people you are--

J: He was quite friendly with--Formosa.

F: Chiang Kai-shek.

J: Chiant Kai-shek, although he had met him before, and particularly Madame Chiang Kai-shek he had met before. I felt like he hit it off pretty well with Diem. They seemed to have a good deal in common, and they were friendly. He, I think, was quite impressed with Diem. He made a public speech in which he compared him with George Washington which we got a little razzing about, but it sat well with the people who listened to it.

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F: Did he and his staff pretty well hammer out his own scripts, or did the White House dictate some of the content where he had to make public appearances?

J: No. He and his own staff hammered out the context of the exact speech within the framework of the briefing books which had been furnished on each country before we ever left, and which he was pretty assiduous about studying and familiarizing himself with and knowing all about by the time we arrived in that country.

F: When did he study?

J: On the plane between flights, primarily. Then he'd get George Reedy or Bill Moyers--we had three or four people with us who helped paraphrase and phrase some of his public statements.

F: Is he that rapid a reader, or does he have the facility for just skipping from key word to key word in paragraphs?

J: I don't know. But he certainly has the facility of looking at something very briefly and--

F: I've been impressed how he can get the guts out of something.

J: I have, many times. I've had the occasion where I've spent hours getting up something for him which he had asked for, and then being quite disappointed when I'd hand it to him and he'd give it what seemed to me a cursory glance and lay it aside. I thought, "Well, that's time wasted." Then when it came time for him to make a statement on that subject I'd find that he referred to practically everything that was in the original memorandum. I always wondered how he could have absorbed it with what appeared to be such little effort.

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F: That retentive power also is not just immediate. It lasts, doesn't it? In other words, if he read it now, five years from now he probably could come back at you with it if you wandered afield.

J: On a good many things he can. I don't know whether he would everything, but he has a phenomenal memory, much better than mine, and has corrected me on a good many occasions when I felt sure I was right about something. Then after he insisted I wasn't, after I'd go back and look it up, I'd find that he was right and that I was not.

F: On these trips did someone brief him pretty well as to the kind of person he was meeting? Did he have some size of their character before he met them?

J: The State Department had with us experts on nearly every country that we were going to visit. Not only did he have the briefings on the substantive material, but he would have a briefing from somebody who had either been ambassador or been on the staff in that country on the personalities involved.

F: You go bearing gifts. Who selects the gifts?

J: The gifts were done largely, I believe, by the protocol office at the State Department on that trip. I think later Mrs. Johnson and some of our own people felt that maybe there ought to be something besides Steuben glass.

F: But the first time out of the chute you kind of lean on them?

J: That's right. We didn't have anything to do with the selection of the gifts on that particular trip. Although usually, in addition to whatever the State Department prepared, he had some very nice framed pictures

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that he would exchange that wasn't a part of the State Department's program. But I believe later Mrs. Johnson got into that field pretty strongly and got things that she thought would have some personal interest to the people concerned.

F: Did he have more than a perfunctory relationship with Harold Holt?

J: I believe he did.

F: That's later.

J: I think it's later.

F: What about Ludwig Erhard?

J: Yes, he did with Erhard, too, although perhaps it wasn't as close as it had been with Erhard's predecessor.

F: Adenauer.

J: Yes, he was very close to Adenauer.

F: Adenauer actually goes back to the Senate days, doesn't he?

J: Yes.

F: Did you come down for the Adenauer visit?

J: Yes, I was here at the Ranch for that.

F: Was that as congenial a visit as it looked like from the public print?

J: Yes, extremely congenial.

F: Was it set up to be congenial, or did it just work out that way?

J: I think both. I don't think he ever set up one not to be congenial.

F: Right.

J: But that one turned out to be particularly congenial. I think they'd had enough of a relationship before for the groundwork for a very friendly, warm visit.

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F: What about the camel driver? Did you witness that?

J: Yes.

F: Was that a situation that kind of outgrew itself, or what happened?

J: Yes. One thing that Mr. Johnson did that perhaps other visitors had not done in these countries was to get out and mix with them. He did it to the consternation of the Secret Service and would more or less throw himself into these crowds of people and let them touch him and see him and talk to him and so on. The Secret Service, I think, felt he was taking unnecessary chances. He never felt so.

F: Did you get the feeling they were looking at him as an oddity from another country, or as a great man, or as a representative of a leadership that they liked, or what? I mean, what drew the crowds?

J: I think it was a combination of all of them. I think Kennedy had caught on with most of the people of the world--his speech at the inauguration, his attractiveness, his youth, his intelligence and so on--so the administration was popular to begin with.

F: Were you present at the time of that Baker-Adolphus Hotel incident?

J: No, sir, I was in Washington.

F: Did you get any immediate reaction from that from him or from Mrs. Johnson, or had there been enough time elapsed before you saw him?

J: As I remember, he didn't come back for a few days. By that time we had gotten a nationwide reaction in the mail and the calls and so on. I don't believe that he could have hired anything that helped the ticket in our part of the country more than that did. I'm not implying that he did hire it, you understand.

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F: I was going to say, is he the type person--I'm sure that was painful and probably to Mrs. Johnson just downright scary and the sort of thing you don't like to remember, but would he realize the plus possibilities of something like this?

J: I'm sure as painful as it was that he realized them immediately, because whatever else he may be, he has got the best political instincts that I ever saw. I didn't finish something a minute ago. May I go back?

F: Yes.

J: You asked me about the camel, and I didn't mean to be gotten off of that. I was saying about how he went into the crowds. We came to one particular intersection, and the crowd was not quite as big as it had been at some of them. He saw this fellow standing over across the ditch--it was kind of a muddy ditch--with his camel. I don't know what impelled him to step across this muddy ditch, getting his feet and shoes muddy, to shake hands with one fellow who was sort of staying away from the group that had come up, but something did. He did go over there and shook hands with him, and they talked a moment or two through an interpreter. I couldn't hear the conversation, but I could see it. I understand he said, "You must come see me some time in the United States," one of those rather indefinite invitations which he thought little more about until a day or so later--I guess we had left Pakistan even by the time when there was quite an article in the Karachi newspaper saying that he had invited this fellow to come and see him in the United States, and that he was planning to come.

F: What was Johnson's reaction to this?

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J: He was a little surprised.

F: Was he annoyed?

J: I wouldn't say annoyed because I think perhaps, again, he hadn't planned it that way, but I think he saw that it had implications. Of course, I think some people laughed at him about it and made fun of it, but the total thing of the camel [driver] was very favorable. The man was quite an impressive fellow although he was from, I guess, the lowest strata of society over there.

F: In the public press he had a simple eloquence, didn't he?

J: He did have.

F: They didn't put words in his mouth?

J: No, they did not. He did have, and he had a good deal of dignity about him. He was a little fellow that what he said almost sounded like poetry.

F: Straight out of the Rubaiyat.

J: That's right. He had done some reading in his time. Like a few other things, it was the intellectual establishment that made a lot of fun of it, but I believe that it was appealing to not only a good many people in this country but certainly to a good many ones in other countries around the world.

F: As far as you could tell, did Johnson like him?

J: Yes, I think he did. I had been afraid that he would come and he would greet him and shove him off to somebody else. Instead of that, he made some trips with him, as you remember, and stayed with him, saw to it that the thing was well-handled.

F: He was satisfied with the outcome of it then?

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- J: He was satisfied with the outcome of it. We had a little problem or two later because with all the national publicity the fellow got, the truck he got which he couldn't drive and so on, he changed his way of living when he got back and I understand later sold his goods and had some problems.
- F: But he has got a memory.
- J: That's right, he certainly has, that not many people in his country have.
- F: Was the situation between Connally and Yarborough of sufficient worry to Johnson that, in a sense, he did promote this trip, or was there just a general feeling on Kennedy's part that the Democratic situation needed some shoring up?
- J: The trip was primarily promoted by Kennedy and his people.
- F: It wasn't Johnson's desire just to get him down here to patch up a quarrel?
- J: No, sir, not at all. As a matter of fact, if I'm not mistaken and I'm reasonably sure I'm right about this, this had already been discussed a time or two between Kennedy and Connally before Mr. Johnson was even brought into it.
- F: I haven't gotten that far with John, who is really the detail person on that.
- J: I think you can confirm that.
- F: Did you come down?
- J: No, sir. I helped plan the trip along with O'Donnell.

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- F: What was behind your planning? Were you trying to hit just the metropolitan areas? Was there any design in the order you took?
- J: Not as far as I know, other than the convenience of the travel rather than hopping back and forth.
- F: Was the Washington end of the operation involved at all in that evidently unseemly exchange between Yarborough and Connally on who rode where and who got invited to what and so on?
- J: No. I think that all came up on the spur of the moment at the various places.
- F: It was strictly a local development?
- J: Yes. Again, this is hearsay because I was not there, but I understand that Yarborough raised the questions and Mr. Johnson tried to handle them on a nice basis. Then I understood that Kennedy told Yarborough, "You'll either ride this way, or you won't ride," or words to that effect.
- F: Where were you at the time of the assassination?
- J: I was having lunch at the Congressional Hotel.
- F: How did you hear about it?
- J: They had a television on in the room where I was having lunch. It came on, and I saw that it had happened. I had a very sick feeling at the pit of my stomach. At that time I didn't know what had happened, but I immediately got up and got in my car and drove back down to the Executive Office Building. I'm trying to remember which one of the Kennedy staff was calling me. I don't remember, but asking that I come

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over immediately. They had called George Reedy also. The two of us went over and were with them all afternoon.

F: What were you doing, just watching TV and waiting for reports?

J: And getting the information they were getting on the phone. Then I talked to President Johnson two or three times.

F: Along what lines?

J: He called me once to get the wording of the oath. He called me once to ask me whether I had any feeling as to whether he should be immediately sworn in or not.

F: What did you say?

J: I said I thought he ought to be. He asked me to get hold of Bob Kennedy for him, which I did, and they talked. I believe Bob Kennedy told him the same thing. There were about three conversations from the plane while it was sitting there.

F: Once the plane took off was he in contact with the White House until he got there?

J: Yes.

F: So that you could kind of, in a sense, plot his course?

J: Yes. We arranged, of course, for all the helicopters.

F: Was there much apprehension that there might be some Air Force One sabotage or anything like that?

J: I didn't feel any there. I think he probably felt for a period that he didn't know whether this was some national plot to get a lot of people or whether it was just to get Kennedy or what. I felt very--I guess everybody in the country did--sick that afternoon because I didn't really

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know what had happened. I was afraid. Of course, I was terribly sorry it had happened, but beyond the fact that it had happened, I was afraid it was our kind of nut element in Dallas, right wing groups that we have that had spit on Mrs. Johnson and had attacked Stevenson. I thought, "Oh gosh, what's that going to do to Texas?" I was relieved to find out that it was not that element.

F: The Kennedy staff that was there in the West Wing, did they kind of turn anti-Johnson or anti-Texas on this under the passion of the moment?

J: They didn't that afternoon. I didn't feel it. As a matter of fact, two or three times, and this was very hard for me, they turned to me and said, "Now what do we do about this, you're making the decisions about these things now." Which I didn't want nor--

F: It was kind of sudden.

J: That's right. But they were sitting there, and they knew I was in contact with Mr. Johnson.

F: What kind of decisions?

J: About who would go out to meet them, what they'd drive in, whether to use helicopters--you know, just routine decisions, just the planning and so on, but things that they had been used to doing. I was ill-prepared to do it because I didn't know anything about how you accomplished those things.

F: You didn't know whom to call, did you?

J: But I did go out on the helicopter and rode back with him.

F: Tell me about the landing, the meeting.

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J: I, of course, don't know what went on on the plane other than what I've heard.

F: I mean from the time they hove into sight.

J: But there was quite a large crowd out there.

F: Was Andrews open? Could I have gone out as a civilian to see the President come in, or did it have pretty tight security as far as you know?

J: I don't know the answer to that question. There were an awful lot of people there. If there was tight security they made a lot of exceptions because there were I wouldn't say thousands, but hundreds of people. Perhaps there were people on the base, and perhaps there were people from the cabinet, all of whom were there. All the diplomatic corps was there. They were asked to come.

F: Who called them?

J: I don't know.

F: You didn't give that order.

J: I didn't give that order. Maybe they just came.

F: Chief of Protocol?

J: Probably someone at the State Department did that. But I did ask that the cabinet members be notified to be there.

F: Who sent out the message turning Rusk and the others around?

J: I don't know that. I would imagine probably someone at the State Department, too, although I'm not certain. I believe this was done before they knew for sure whether Kennedy was going to live or die.

J: Okay, the plane lands. Did you ever eat that day?

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J: I did that part of my lunch until I got the word. I'm sure I didn't that night. Mr. Johnson waited until they had taken the body off and put it in the ambulance or hearse, whatever it was, and until they had actually left. Then he came down and went down the line shaking hands with the dignitaries that were there and went over to the microphone, made a very short statement, and went and got on the helicopter with about five or six of us.

F: What was the ride back like?

J: Very quiet.

F: Of course, a helicopter is not a place to talk.

J: No, although you can in those helicopters. But I think he was trying to sort of organize his thoughts, because immediately when he got to the White House he began--although I'm sure he didn't find this easy to do--doing some things.

F: Did you go straight on over to EOB, or did you go to the West Wing, or where?

J: We went right through the West Wing. We landed, of course, the only place you can land, on the helicopter pad there, walked right through the West Wing without stopping, went across to the EOB. He called a cabinet meeting for that night. He called for a meeting of the National Security Council, I guess, for the next morning and began talking to various people who he thought could tell him things he ought to do. We had very little help, if any, from the Kennedy people outside of Pierre Salinger. For several days Pierre Salinger, I will say, was a great strength right at that time.

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F: Just the old pro.

J: He stayed right on.

F: Were the others too stunned, or were they too resentful?

J: I don't know. I think there was a combination of both. Ken O'Donnell didn't show up for several days. Finally, several days later, Mr. Johnson asked me to tell him he wanted him to come to work. We needed him. He had already told them all on the plane, the ones that were on the plane, that he needed them worse than anybody else could possibly need them and wanted them all to stay.

So I called Kenny, and he came down to see me. He was bleary-eyed and unshaven and looked like he was getting over a drunk. He told me he did not know whether he could work for Mr. Johnson or not, that he was weighing it in his conscience. I believe that was on a Thursday. Then he said, "If I can, I'll be here Monday morning. I'll be ready to work, and I'll do everything I can. If I find I can't, I'll tell you so and know you'll understand." I appreciated his position. I thought it was a forthright one and an honest one. He showed up Monday morning and went to work, shaven and ready to go, and did, I think, a good job.

F: How did you operate with a staff that didn't know its way around? I mean, you're not complete innocents, but at the same time you haven't been right at the dead center.

J: We had some problems. We had a good deal of help after a few days [from] all of them. But we had a good deal of help from some of them early, particularly Salinger, and just sort of struggled along as best we could.

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F: Were you ever designated to head the staff, or did you just keep working and just automatically slid into it?

J: No one was ever designated to head the staff. I think probably if you had asked anybody who was head of the staff--if you had asked President Johnson, he probably would have said Ken O'Donnell. That's what he should have said. He kept on; he had been head of the staff. But I think if you had asked Ken O'Donnell who was head of the staff, he would have said me, because he and I worked together very well. But he, I think, realized that Mr. Johnson was in contact with me a good deal more than he was with him.

F: Did you stay in EOB during this period until Mr. Johnson moved over, or did you move on over into the West Wing?

J: We did not move anyone to the West Wing until we all moved.

F: Didn't that lead to certain inconveniences?

J: It didn't last very long. I guess there were some inconveniences, but I think he felt that he did not want to move in as long as Mrs. Kennedy was there and so on.

F: Did you see her at all, or Bobby?

J: I saw Bobby at the cabinet meeting. No, I don't guess I saw her except when she got off the plane at a distance.

F: But you didn't have any contact with her?

J: No.

F: Did the Johnsons feel that she took an unusually long time to move out?

J: I don't think so. I think they felt that considering what she had been through that she was very good. She wrote that night I believe,

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if not that night the next day, one of the sweetest letters I ever saw--I don't know whether it has been made available to the public or not--to him about how much she appreciated everything he had done for them and so on, a rather emotional letter.

F: I would think in a case like that that there would be a tendency for activity in one way to come to a dead halt.

J: He saw to it that it didn't. I think maybe some felt that he moved in a little too fast. But I think that he felt that there was a possibility of sort of a crisis of confidence in the country and the world and that somebody needed to take up the reins in a hurry. Maybe some of them might have felt that there should have been a long period of mourning with little activity and so on. He did not.

F: What did you do about mourning? I don't recall. Wore armbands?

J: No. I never saw anything of that kind, even on the part of the Kennedy staff.

F: When did you get to bed that first night, or did you?

J: Yes. We stayed at the EOB until somewhere around--I'm guessing now--two o'clock in the morning, went out to President Johnson's house, The Elms, and stayed around there a little while. I would say it was three.

F: What did you do out at The Elms for that hour or so?

J: I think he just talked and thought about the things he should do and needed to do.

F: Now you've been to The Elms many times before. I presume that you felt a consciousness that the situation had changed.

J: Yes, I certainly felt that the situation had changed.

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F: How had it changed that is noticeable?

J: In superficial ways I think that even people like John Connally or me, people who had been with him a long time and had a fairly close relationship with him, immediately felt a little bit of restraint, that he was now the president of the United States.

F: You never were going to call him by his first name for a while.

J: I never did anyway. Neither did John, for that matter. But I never did call him Mr. President either. Most of us who had been with him a long time had always called him Mr. Johnson, even in the days that he was senator. I continued to call him Mr. Johnson and still do.

F: Did workmen come immediately to install the extra lines and lights and all of that?

J: Yes.

F: I mean, were they working on it that night, or did they wait until the next morning?

J: I don't remember that they were there that night, but they were in the next day.

F: I presume the Secret Service was already out there in number.

J: Yes, they were there in number and were with him all the time. Of course, they had been with him as vice president but not in the same number.

F: In that case, incidentally, did you change the Secret Service men who were with you, or did you just augment the old group? Did you get a bunch of new faces, in other words?

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- J: He more or less augmented the old group, although I don't know that he personally had anything to do with that. That was under Mr. Rowley, who was head of the Secret Service. The president is accorded a good deal more protection than the vice president is. I wouldn't want to say that he didn't form sort of some few favorites, like Rufus Youngblood, who he may have asked be made head of his detail, or something of the kind.
- F: I was going to ask, does the President over a period of time get to feeling a little close to some of these people? I'd think he would if they practically [live with him].
- J: Yes, he did. I think any president would because they're with them so much of the time.
- F: They see more of them than they do their own family.
- J: It's almost human nature to develop favorites, ones you particularly like.
- F: Are they pretty stern, as they're pictured, in doing their duty regardless of the President's wishes? In other words, if a president tells them to get lost, they'll stand up to him and say, "No, Mr. President, my place is with you."
- J: I never saw that come up. I assume they would because they know their constitutional duty. But as far as at least Mr. Johnson was concerned, I don't believe he ever told them to get lost. He may have gotten irritated with them sometimes when they impeded what he wanted to do and might, as he did with nearly everyone else, fuss at them a bit, but I think he realized the legal responsibilities they had. I don't remember any real problems with them.

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F: Okay. Let's hold it there.

[End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview II]

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In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 21 of Title 44, United States Code, and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth, I, Beth Jenkins of Austin, Texas, Executrix of the Estate of Walter Jenkins, do hereby give, donate and convey to the United States of America all my rights, title and interest in the tape recordings and transcripts of the personal interviews conducted on August 14, 1970, August 24, 1971, September 23, 1976, May 13, August 12 and September 16, 1982, January 18, July 22, September 22 and October 6, 1983 and on April 18, April 25, July 12, July 19 and August 30, 1984 in Austin, Texas, and prepared for deposit in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

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Beth Jenkins

Date

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Archivist of the United States

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In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 21 of Title 44, United States Code, and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth, I, Beth Jenkins, of ^{DALE} ~~Austin~~, Texas, Executrix of the Estate of Walter Jenkins, do hereby give, donate and convey to the United States of America all my rights, title, and interest in the tape recordings and transcripts of the personal interviews conducted with my father, Walter Jenkins, on August 14, 1970, August 24, 1971, September 23, 1976, May 13, August 12 and September 16, 1982, January 18, July 22, September 22 and October 6, 1983, and on April 18, April 25, July 12, July 19, and August 30, 1984, in Austin, Texas, and prepared for deposit in the Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library.

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Beth Jenkins Bromberg
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Date

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Assistant Archivist for Presidential Libraries

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