

INTERVIEW V

DATE: August 12, 1982
INTERVIEWEE: WALTER JENKINS
INTERVIEWER: MICHAEL L. GILLETTE
PLACE: Mr. Jenkins' office, Austin, Texas

Tape 1 of 1

G: I think we covered most of my questions there, but let me just ask you one or two others. First of all, I neglected to ask you who was running the campaign [in 1941] and to describe pretty much the campaign organization, if you would.

J: Well, nominally I guess Claude Wild was running the campaign. Am I getting 1941 mixed up?

G: No, I think you're right.

J: But actually John Connally was running the campaign; Claude Wild was more a figurehead. Charles Herring was at the campaign headquarters. Charles Herring was in charge of the helicopter operation, which was the biggest job of all.

G: But now that would have been 1948, wouldn't it?

J: Yes, okay.

G: What role would people like Everett Looney and Ed Clark play in 1941?

J: Well, Everett Looney actually took Mr. Johnson's place on the speaking. Again, am I getting mixed up about when he went to Mayo's?

G: That was 1948, yes.

J: 1948. He took Mr. Johnson's place on the stump in that campaign, but I think in 1941 it would have been more advisory.

G: And Senator Wirtz' role? What was that?

J: Sort of boss of it all.

G: Did he participate on a day-to-day basis?

J: Yes.

G: He did? Did he office at the headquarters?

J: No.

G: And Ed Clark?

J: I don't know that Ed Clark was active in 1941. Do you have some reason to believe he was?

G: No, I'm just--

J: I don't think he was. Looney was. I have some doubts that Ed Clark was.

G: Why was Wild the head of it?

J: Because he'd managed the 1937 campaign, and his name was identified as sort of the Johnson campaign manager. He was a respected citizen, not one who worked very hard but had a good name for it.

G: Do you think that the campaign organization, say, your district and county organizations were better in the second race than they were in the first, say, better in 1948 than they were in 1941?

J: Yes.

G: Really?

J: We had some time to sort of put them together. 1941, we didn't have much of a statewide organization. The situation was entirely different. You didn't have to get a majority in 1941. 1948, there was just one major candidate.

- G: Now, after the defeat, I know that before you left for the navy, there was the issue of the extension of the Selective Service Act.
- J: I didn't go to the navy, but that's all right.
- G: Sorry. And LBJ played a role in that. Can you recall the details of that close vote to extend the Selective Service Act?
- J: I can recall the details of the close vote, but not from his point of view. I can recall it primarily because I was on the Capitol police force, and we were trying to police the Capitol that night of that vote, and it was an impossible job for about sixty or seventy Capitol policemen and thousands and thousands of demonstrators. But I don't remember.
- G: This was the crowd that was going to go over the hill in October or were these people in favor of the extension?
- J: Oh, no. They'd come from all over. Special trains had come in early that morning from Detroit and Chicago and New York, and so on. They demonstrated on the Capitol steps. We were ordered to move them but they stood there chanting, "I shall not, I shall not be, I shall not be moved." And we couldn't move them. They wouldn't let us call on the Metropolitan Police, because we were supposed to have been responsible for the Capitol. But I remember very vividly the occasion and the one-vote margin, 203 to 202 as I remember. I remember that we were trying to disperse them, and a group of marines came back from somewhere partying, and they said, "What's the problem here?" They joined us, and that's what got them dispersed. They broke it up in a hurry.

G: Well, was LBJ important in securing that victory on the vote, do you know?

J: Not that I know of. He may have been, but again, as I told you, I was pretty far down the line.

G: You were drafted into the army.

J: Yes.

G: I'm sorry. I knew you received a commission in the navy or were offered one about the time you went into the army.

J: Yes.

G: Now, did you have any contact with Mr. Johnson during World War II, correspondence or anything of that nature?

J: Well, I had one [personal contact]. I had finished basic training and was stationed in Fort Francis Warren, Wyoming, when John Connally called out to the base one morning and said, "We're at the train station." Have I told you this story?

G: No.

J: "The Congressman and I are at the train station. He has a layover here, and would like for you to come down and visit him." So I went up to the commanding officer, Major Carney, C-A-R-N-E-Y, who was just old army. I didn't even suppose he knew who I was, but I said, "My old employer is down at the train station. Can I be off for an hour or two?" And he said, "Oh, Lyndon Johnson's in town?" It just shocked me, because I didn't think he had any more idea who my former employer was. And he said, "I'll take you myself in my car." And I said, "Well, that won't be necessary. I have a car." I was one of

of the few privates in the army that had a car. And he said, "No, no, I'll take you. I'll take you. Run to the barracks and put on your class A uniform and I'll take you." So I couldn't get out of it. He took me down to the Cheyenne train station. He wanted to be selected for Command and General Staff school, and I understand later was, but I've regretted any part I might have had in contributing to his selection.

But Mr. Johnson said, "Well, we have to go to Denver and we don't leave Denver until midnight tonight," I believe it was. This was early in the morning. And he said, "If Walter could be off today, he could drive me to Denver, and we could visit a little bit." "Sure, no problem. Sure. Of course he can." And nobody had ever seen this guy have a nice kind word for anybody. He said, "You come out to the barracks and to this post and meet the commanding officer while Walter gets his pass," and so on. We went out there. I was one of the company clerks then, and had to walk down this long line of all the company clerks on each side, and he was just bowing and scraping to Mr. Johnson. They hadn't ever seen a demonstration like that. They were out there going [derogatory sound]. (Laughter) And they could hear him say, "Now you run over and get your uniform and get your pass. In the meantime I'll take care of things here."

So he took him in to Colonel Kroll [?] who was the regimental commander. I know this only from Mr. Johnson because I wasn't present, but Mr. Johnson told me that Colonel Kroll said, "I have on my desk the application of Private Jenkins for officer candidate school. Do

you have any recommendations to make?" Mr. Johnson said, "No, because Walter asked me not to ever mix in his military career if there is such a thing." Colonel Kroll said, "Yes, but as his former employer, I would like to know if you find his work satisfactory and so on. If so, I'd like for you to write a letter saying so." So I was over getting ready to take him to Denver. He dictated a letter in the Colonel's office about my work. And I was selected for officer candidate school the very next selection. I don't have any way, of course, of knowing whether I would have been or not, but when we drove to Denver, I never lived that down. I was glad to go ahead and leave for Virginia because I got an awful lot of slack about it from my fellow [clerks].

G: Well, what was he doing in the West during this period?

J: He was stationed in San Francisco, as I remember, and he and John had been ordered back to Washington or somewhere. The train was going to stop over in Cheyenne and then stop over in Denver. They weren't going to leave Denver until that night, so we had all day in Denver. It was very pleasant. We had lunch and went out to see Sam Houston and his wife and children who lived in Denver at the time.

G: Well, what was on his mind during this? Did he talk to you about his work on the West Coast?

J: Yes, but I don't recall exactly what he said, and I remember not understanding a lot of it, because a lot of it was conversation with John who was with us, who was working with him. I guess he had been assigned as his aide or something, I don't know what.

G: Was it primarily manpower that they were looking into?

J: Yes. That was involved. But I don't remember.

G: Did he seem restive to you and seem to have a desire to be occupied elsewhere than--?

J: No. As a matter of fact, he seemed not as restive as he was in Washington.

Then I wrote to him occasionally while I was overseas, but then I never saw him anymore until I was back in [the States] after I'd been overseas for over two years. I was stationed in a German prisoner of war camp in Richmond, Virginia. I was adjutant of the P.O.W. camp. I went up to Washington, because you know it isn't too far from Richmond, and visited a time or two with him.

One time he asked me to come up and spend Sunday with him out at the house, and I did. He had gotten very interested in this points system where people were supposed to get out when they got eighty-five points and a lot of them were writing in that they had their eighty-five points and weren't getting out. It was the same situation I was in. He asked me about it, and I said, "Well, I've got over a hundred points, but my commanding officer has classified me as necessary," which I wasn't at all. And he had a lot of examples of people that were classified as necessary. So in a speech that he made to the--and I don't remember whether it was the next day or a few days later, but it came out in the Richmond paper that he made a speech about some of the examples he'd run into. One he mentioned was a former member of his staff who was now pushing

paperwork in a prisoner of war camp in Richmond who had been classified as important to the war effort and wasn't being given an opportunity to get released as he is entitled to under the two and a half years overseas and so on. And I know also that I got released very quickly after that.

G: Oh, really?

J: Yes. (Laughter)

G: Did he have any impact on the whole system, do you think?

J: Yes, I think he did. I think he did. He made a very fine speech about it. The army eased up. These old army people who were going to stay in and had been in it before the war and so on just hated to see their empires crumble. They were classifying everybody as important to the war effort, although the war was over.

G: Let me ask you what you did after you were released from the service.

J: Well, I got married immediately. I think I was released on the first of October and got married on the fourth of October, still in uniform, in a military chapel. And went on my honeymoon in New Orleans, where I got a long distance call saying, "Please come back at once."

I might go back a little. I was going through release procedure with thousands of other people. I didn't know anybody had any idea where I was. They paged me. It scared me to death. It was Mr. Johnson calling from Washington and saying--and this was the first time that I knew I was going back, because I had not planned to, although there was a provision of law that you could require your former bosses to take you back if you'd been drafted away from ..

your job. But I didn't want to force myself on anybody, or anything.
I was just planning to go home and find a job.

G: Were you planning to come back to Texas?

J: Yes. But he called me at the debarcation--that's not the word, whatever the word is [for a] release center--in Richmond and said he wanted me to come back and I said I would. He said, "Come back right away." And I said, "Well, I'm getting married next week." He said, "Well, as soon as your wedding's over, come back." I said, "We'd planned a little honeymoon trip, a week or ten days." "Well, as soon as your trip's over, come back." So I said all right. We hadn't been in New Orleans three days when we got a call saying, "It's important you come back at once." So we cut our honeymoon short and got in the car and left for Washington.

G: What was important?

J: Nothing.

(Laughter)

Mack DeGuerin wanted to go back to his law practice and they didn't have anybody to take his place.

G: Was there a real shortage of good House staff at this time, generally?

J: Yes, I guess so. People, so many young men had been in military service maybe had not gotten out yet, but I don't remember. There was Mack DeGuerin and Dorothy Plyler. That may have been just about it.

G: Now, when you returned in late 1945 and early 1946, there were all sorts of rumors about Mr. Johnson running for governor. There is an indication that he at least weighed that possibility.

J: Well, of course I heard the rumors, read about them. There were some that got in the press. But I never thought that he seriously weighed it. I may be wrong, but I never saw any indication that he really wanted to go into state politics.

G: Did you ever hear him express that notion?

J: No, but I never heard him express the opposite notion either, and I never got the impression that he was seriously interested in running for governor. On the other hand, when Morris Sheppard died and--well, we're going back to 1941 now. I'll go back to 1941 for a minute because I think it has bearing on it. When Morris Sheppard died--

(Interruption)

--[I happened] to be the first one to hear it, because I was on duty as a policeman at the front door of the Senate Office Building when the word came in that Morris Sheppard had died. It was only about seven o'clock in the morning, and I called Mr. Johnson at home to tell him, and he was immediately interested in that, I mean immediately. I don't know whether he necessarily made a decision to run, but--

G: How could you tell? I mean, how was this manifest?

J: Wanting to know all the details, and immediately saying he wanted to get down to the office and start making some calls, which he did. He came right down and started calling Senator Wirtz and other people and talking to them. You asked about whether I thought he was seriously interested for governor. I never saw any indication like

that that he was, but he was interested in the Senate the first minute he heard there was a vacancy.

G: There were also rumors that John Connally was thinking about running for Congress. Of course, that would--

J: From where?

G: Yes, that would assume that there would be a vacancy in the Austin district. You can't really have one without the other, I suppose.

J: I don't know. John might have been considering running from Floresville. I don't know that.

G: Now, during that period, Mr. Johnson helped Donald Cook get a position as Tom Clark's assistant in the Justice Department. Do you know why he wanted Don Cook to be there in the Justice Department?

J: No, other than he had a great admiration for Don Cook, his ability. I don't know for sure where he met Don Cook; I met Don Cook in 1945 when I came back from military service. So somewhere in that interim while I was gone [they met].

(Interruption)

G: Another measure that I want to ask you about is the surplus property provision that would allow veterans to have a priority on purchasing surplus property that government agencies didn't want. Do you recall LBJ's effort here to get--?

J: I recall it, but I do not recall details. I recall it as a matter in which he was interested and worked on and I think maybe introduced something, I'm not sure.

- G: Do you remember his efforts in behalf of getting the magnesium plant for the University of Texas at Austin?
- J: I sure do, because that's something I worked on, too.
- G: Can you elaborate on it? Can you tell me about that?
- J: Well, what was the name of the man that became sort of head honcho of the Southwest Conference?
- G: Oh, Neils Thompson.
- J: Neils Thompson came to Washington and saw Mr. Johnson about an effort to get the magnesium plant because it was closed down with surplus, but they didn't have the kind of priority apparently they needed in order to exercise a top priority. We met with him several times and Mr. Johnson did a time or two, and we set up meetings with the General Services [Administration]--no, whoever it was; I guess it was General Services. At first they were very discouraging that a plant of that size and expense and so on could just be handed over to a state institution, but Mr. Johnson was persuasive, and they decided to do it. I think it was probably a good investment on the government's part, because of all the things that have come out of the magnesium plant later.
- G: What do you think it would have become if the University hadn't gotten it? Was there at the time, at least in terms of the government's view, a more logical use for it?
- J: As far as I know, there wasn't anybody else trying to get it. But they still did not think the University of Texas really needed it

and would put it to full advantage and so on. I don't remember that there was any effort on anybody else's part besides the University.

G: Did he use any of his contacts in the government to push that through?

J: I'm sure he did. I can't tell you who or how, but I'm sure he did.

G: Okay. Now, I have a note that in early 1946 he was hospitalized again with pneumonia and everybody in his family was sick evidently. He was here in Austin. Do you recall that?

J: Well, it's difficult to place that particular occasion because with all of his vitality and energy and so on, Mr. Johnson had a tendency to be sick occasionally. I'm not sure that I recall that particular one, although there are a number of times. Anyhow, if I'm not mistaken he had pneumonia two or three times.

G: This was one, I think.

Then this spring you also had a strike at KTBC. I wanted to ask you to recount that, the IBEW strike at the station.

J: Well, I don't know that I can do that very well. I remember it very well. I know that it had both Mr. and Mrs. Johnson concerned.

G: Did he see this as a political issue? I mean, did he think of it as being politically motivated rather than--?

J: I think he felt like it was. Not entirely, I guess.

G: Did you have any good evidence that it was?

J: I don't know.

G: Since we're getting to the 1946 campaign and one of the issues--

J: Taft-Hartley.

G: Taft-Hartley, but one of the issues that Hardy Hollers brought up was the organization of KVET, and so let me ask you--

J: I can tell you all about that. Now we're getting onto some ground I know something about.

G: Okay. Let me ask you to recount as much as you know about how KVET was formed.

J: Well, very few people actually believe what the truth was, because they couldn't believe that somebody would be out inviting competition for themselves. But Mr. Johnson had a real desire to do something for eight or ten of us who had worked hard and gone to military service and were coming out and still didn't have anything to speak of. At that time there were only two radio stations in Austin, KNOW and KTBC, and I think he foresaw that Austin would be a town with not two but fifteen or twenty one of these days. That if it wasn't us, it'd be somebody else. The first suggestion was from him to John that they put together a few of us like Bill Deason and Jesse Kellam and me and John and the others who John felt had gone out of the way to be helpful to him, and put in an application. I don't know who first thought of the name KVET, I just don't remember.

But he had no more control over it or desire to have any control over it. Of course, here in Austin everybody said, "Well, he just wants to have both stations, more than one." Because they couldn't believe that all these people that were closely aligned to him would be going into competition with him without him being behind it and involved financially and so on, which I assure you

he absolutely was not. Nine of us put in twenty-five hundred dollars apiece, and John Connally put in, oh, I guess John had 50 per cent, whatever that was, I don't remember.

G: To your knowledge, none of that money was from LBJ? The Connally money?

J: I'm certain it wasn't.

G: You don't think he may have loaned him some of the money?

J: I don't think he loaned him some, because I was keeping his books. If he did, it was done surreptitiously, and I don't believe it was.

G: Were there any other applications before the FCC at the time?

J: No, but they started coming in pretty rapidly thereafter.

G: Did he have any role in the elimination of any of these other applications?

J: I don't think so. I don't think he needed to. I think the idea of a station owned by eleven veterans just out of the service appealed to the FCC. Gosh, it was a

G: Well, let me ask you. Were there ever any occasions when there was genuine competition between these two stations that caused problems for either you all or for him?

J: I don't remember, other than jokingly he would--well, you know he always read the KTBC business reports every week, the calls they made. Occasionally there'd be one [where they] called on so and so, and they went to KVET. And he'd jokingly say, "Well, I see you beat us out on such and such an account." But as far as any serious problem, I never saw any.

G: How about competition for personnel? Was that ever a [problem]?

J: Well, I don't think so. As a matter of fact, I guess some of our ownership was working for KTBC. Mr. Kellam and Bill Deason both were working for KTBC and were both part owners of KVET.

We used to, John and I and two or three of the others, Merrill [Connally], would go down there on Saturday night. We had an all-request program on Saturday night and we'd answer the phones and put down these requests and get them all lined up and we'd play them in order and the ones that got the most requests, you know, play them. We'd work every Saturday night. You'd work your butt off, because we had a real big listening audience. It was the first station that's ever been on in Austin that sort of catered to the black audience, and they were calling in by the thousands wanting Sister Loretta Thorpe [?] and I've forgotten who all else.

G: What sort of relationship did he have with KNOW?

J: I don't think he had any relationship with KNOW per se. He had a friendship with Louis Cook, who owned KNOW. They were friends.

G: But would you describe that as also a friendly competition?

J: I don't think they ever discussed radio business. They were friends and as far as I know, Louie Cook was a supporter. In fact, I'm sure he was. But Austin was burgeoning right after the war and there was plenty of business for everybody. I don't think there was any problem.

G: You know, LBJ's critics have always been astounded at the profit that KTBC made. Let me just ask you, did that seem extraordinary to you by comparison with KVET, or was KVET also lucrative?

J: KVET was lucrative, too, but not to the degree KTBC was. I really think it was because Mr. Kellam was an operator who never believed in spending a dollar until you took in three. I've heard him say a thousand times, "If you take in three, then you can spend one." That was the code he lived by. He was a great manager.

G: Now, let me ask you about the 1946 campaign. Hardy Hollers, the opponent. Did you and Mr. Johnson feel that Dan Moody was actually behind this?

J: Yes. Mr. Johnson did. I didn't know enough about it to know one way or another, but I know that--

G: Was there any effort, do you think, on behalf of LBJ's opponents like Dan Moody to get a stronger candidate in the race?

J: I'm confident there was, but I don't think it was a stronger candidate that was willing to make the effort. Of course, we spent our time in the 1946 campaign answering quote, "lies," unquote. I spent my time just preparing all those files. We took the charges one by one and I went back in the records and looked them all up, prepared replies. I remember that first speech down at the--well, just a few blocks from here.

G: Wooldridge Park?

J: Woodlridge Park. And he dealt with them all in one fell swoop. He said, "I'm not going to try answering one by one all the things that have been said, but I've got it all here in the record. Walter has it and it's available to any one of you. He'll be at the desk here if you want to look at any. Pick out what you want to see and

he'll show it to you." So I stood there at the desk waiting for people to come and nobody came.

G: Really?

J: Yes.

G: Whose idea was it for him to just open his records like this?

J: I guess it was his, as far as I know. It might have been Senator Wirtz. I don't know. But it was very effective.

G: Well, let's go over some of the charges. One of them is somewhat unique, I guess. Hardy Hollers accused him of--well, indicted essentially his views on atomic weapons and placing them under international control with the UN working out some sort of system. Can you give me the background of that position and elaborate on the issue here? Of course, this is LBJ's version of what he endorsed, Hardy Hollers was much more extreme. "Turning nuclear weapons over to the Russians," I think it was.

J: I remember it, but that was not the type of thing I worked on. I don't know.

G: Anything on his views about atomic weapons in this period, in 1946?

J: Well, I think he had thoughtfully and seriously reached the conclusion that there had to be international control over the use of atomic weapons, and early. It was a controversial matter. Maybe his views were interpreted as saying, "The United States is going to give away its secrets," and so on. If they were secrets then, they weren't very long, and wouldn't have been.

G: You've already discussed the ownership of KVET and the control of it. Is there anything else vis a vis KVET in the campaign that you recall?

J: I don't remember that. It seems to me like Hollers or somebody, I'm not sure, tried to charge that Mr. Johnson was trying to control all the radio in Austin. I guess that's one of the things we had in that pile of things was evidence that he had no ownership of KVET.

G: Was there also an effort on behalf of the stations and the news programs to be neutral in campaigns or at least to give equal time to each side?

J: Well, KTBC did. In fact, they went out of their way to [do that]. I guess that's involved with the FCC and so on. I don't remember about KVET or KNOW. I just don't remember. But I do remember that he was always telling them at KTBC to never let it indicate that they were showing any favoritism one way or another.

G: Well, perhaps on occasion he even seemed to feel that he wasn't getting enough good [publicity].

J: That's correct. I remember that a little, too. He felt like the other side, that their sensational charges and so on got more play than he did.

G: Let me ask you about the Taylor Construction Company, another issue that Hardy Hollers raised, and the construction of REA lines. Do you recall what the facts were on this?

J: The best I can remember, and I'm reasonably sure I'm right, Mrs. Johnson's father was a very strong-minded person who was a sort of

a plunger where he saw somebody that came along and had an idea he thought would make money. Somebody came along and suggested he go into this field and Mr. Johnson knew nothing about it. He found out about the Taylor Construction Company after it was already a going concern in business and operating. It was a sort of political embarrassment to him in a way, but I don't think he ever felt there was much he could do about it. It was Mr. Taylor's money and Mr. Taylor's company. He had no connections with it whatever in any way, shape, form or fashion. They were, I assume, bidding on the jobs they got.

G: How about the Longhorn Ordnance Plant?

J: Texarkana?

G: I think it was near Karnack. This was, I think, another one of Mr. Taylor's operations or something. He perhaps sold them the land.

J: Yes. I do remember about it, but Mr. Taylor had an awful lot of land, and it was something they were looking for. Again, it was something Mr. Johnson had nothing to do with, knowledge of, or connection with at all.

G: The Dillman Street house remained a point of controversy.

J: I used to live in it.

G: That's right. You lived on one side.

J: I lived in the middle.

G: Oh, I see.

J: John was on this side, Mr. Johnson on this side, and we had a little apartment in the middle.

G: It was actually a triplex, is that right?

J: Yes. I later moved into the side that John lived in.

G: Someone had indicated that the fact that one of those apartments had had a high pressure shower and LBJ first became acquainted with that there at Dillman Street and that led to his enthusiasm for them in later houses. Do you have any recollection of that?

J: No. That is beyond me.

G: That's a little obscure.

Let me ask you about the purchase of the house. I realize that you were away when they actually bought it, but since this was an issue in 1946, let me ask you to recount what you know about it.

J: I don't know anything about it other than as far as the records were, that it was for sale and they bought it. I don't know who owned it before, and I don't think that it was anybody he knew or had any connection with.

G: Do you think that some of the controversy may have been the fact that Tom Miller was also interested in buying it about the time LBJ was?

J: I didn't remember that.

G: And that Miller may have--

J: Stepped aside.

G: Well, not so much that, but when he didn't get it, he may have criticized LBJ's having bought it.

J: I don't think so. I think it may be more likely that he stepped aside.

- G: Another accusation was that LBJ really owned other pieces of property around town. I think the Travis Apartments.
- J: Owned everything in town, according to Hollers.
- G: Do you have any knowledge of any of these other--?
- J: No. All he ever owned that I know of was the Dillman Street house and the nineteen acres, and I guess the nineteen acres came later, didn't it? No, they didn't.
- G: No, he had them then.
- J: He had them then.
- G: He was not, to your knowledge, a silent partner in any--
- J: Never was. Never. But anything that anybody that he was associated with owned, somehow they'd say he owned it. If Eddie Joseph owned something, Mr. Johnson owned it. If Everett Looney owned something, Mr. Johnson owned it.
- G: In reading over his speeches from this campaign, he really seems to attack Dan Moody as being behind Hardy Hollers, particularly at that Wooldridge Park rally that you spoke of. Do you know the source of the enmity between Johnson and Dan Moody?
- J: No, but they certainly were never friendly, and I don't know what it goes back to. I've gotten very friendly with Dan, Jr. I see him all the time now. He's a nice young man. He's not so young anymore. He's a bridge player.
- G: Gene Autry came and campaigned in that 1946 race. Do you recall the details of that?

- J: Well, I recall the details of his coming and I do not know exactly where Mr. Johnson knew Gene Autry, but they were friends well before that. It must have been while I was gone or something. But he came and he made not only a singing appearance but sort of a speaking appearance.
- G: Yes. During this campaign, you also had the governor's race between [Beauford] Jester and Homer Rainey. Did this at all affect your race?
- J: We tried to keep it from it, but it was a bitter, mean campaign.
- G: Did Mr. Johnson in his own mind seem to lean one way or the other in that race?
- J: I would guess he leaned toward Rainey. He and Rainey were friends and worked together on things for the University, and he and Jester had never been close. But he took no part in it.
- G: Did people try to get him to come out for Rainey and support Rainey?
- J: I don't know. I don't remember. I would bet my bottom dollar he voted for Rainey. I know I did.
- G: Let's see, I had one item that I. . . . [Shows article] Do you recall that?
- J: No, it looks like something Will Rogers would have done, because he was quite an operator.
- G: It really describes a different style of campaigning than you have today with the electronic media. This is dealing with four large picnics in Austin with watermelons. Was this typical of the campaigning in this election?

- J: Yes. I'd forgotten this, but it's sort of coming back now. It was all organized by [Will Rogers]. I guess they grew the water-melons out in Bastrop County, and Will Rogers put it together. I don't recall it. "Neighborhood parties," they didn't spell their words right in their ad.
- G: Now, of course LBJ won with no trouble.
- J: A very big margin.
- G: Large margin. I think it was forty-two thousand, almost forty-three thousand to--
- J: Seventeen [thousand] or something.
- G: Seventeen, seven. And then, of course, he went back to Washington and I guess with the reorganization plan of combining the Naval Affairs and the Military Affairs Committee that that created a situation where a number of others would outrank him on the committee. Do you recall that?
- J: Yes, I recall it. But he still wanted to go on the Armed Services Committee.
- G: Is that right? Did he ever attempt to gain a seat on the Rules Committee at this point?
- J: Not that I know of. He had attempted to get a seat on the Appropriations Committee, as you well know, and Albert Thomas beat him out. He wanted to be [on it]. He felt like to be on the Appropriations Committee, you controlled everything. He tried very hard to get on the Appropriations Committee.
- G: Thomas had a little seniority over him, I guess, didn't he?

J: Yes. In those days seniority meant everything. I don't think it does anymore. Even some of Mr. Johnson's best friends, closest associates, voted for Thomas.

G: Do you think it was strictly seniority?

J: Yes. I think they felt like when the day came when they wanted something, they wanted their seniority to count, too. They didn't want that rule to be broken.

G: Now the tidelands issue is just beginning to surface. Do you recall his role in that this early at this point, in late 1946, early 1947?

J: I don't recall that he took an active role early in tidelands. I remember he took the traditional Texas position and worked hard for it, but I don't think he was a leader early. I may be wrong.

G: Well, I think that covers 1946.

[End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview V]

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON LIBRARY

Legal Agreement Pertaining to the Oral History Interviews of

WALTER JENKINS

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 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.

This assignment is subject to the following terms and conditions:

- (1) The transcripts shall be available for use by researchers as soon as they have been deposited in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.
- (2) The tape recordings may be made available to those researchers who have access to the transcripts.
- (3) I hereby assign to the United States Government all copyright I may have in the interview transcripts and tapes.
- (4) Copies of the transcripts and the tape recordings may be provided by the Library to researchers upon request.
- (5) Copies of the transcripts and tape recordings may be deposited in or loaned to institutions other than the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

Beth Jenkins Bromberg
Donor

Date

9/4/07

Ann Sawicki
Assistant Archivist for Presidential Libraries

Date

10-30-2007

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON LIBRARY

Legal Agreement Pertaining to the Oral History Interviews of Walter Jenkins

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.

This assignment is subject to the following terms and conditions:

(1) The transcripts shall be available for use by researchers as soon as they have been deposited in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

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

(3) During my lifetime, I retain all copyright in the material given to the United States by the terms of this instrument. Thereafter, the copyright in the transcripts and the tape recordings shall pass to the United States Government. During my lifetime, researchers may publish brief "fair use" quotations of the transcripts and tape recordings without my express consent in each case.

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

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

Donor

Beth Jenkins

Date

2-5-87

Archivist of the United States

Frank B. Bunker

Date

2-19-87