INTERVIEW V

DATE: June 23, 1976

INTERVIEWEE: SAM HOUSTON JOHNSON

INTERVIEWER: Michael L. Gillette

PLACE: The Alamo Hotel, Austin, Texas

Tape 1 of 3

J: Well, I'll probably discuss Lyndon's boyhood, as I see him. You have to understand that he was born on the Ranch. My two sisters, Rebekah and Josefa, were born up at Stonewall. I was conceived on the Ranch and born January 31 right after we moved to Johnson City in November 1913. So I used to kid Lyndon all the time that more people came by to see my home than they did his.

G: Your birthplace was more visited?

J: A lot more, because his is out of the way, you know. Really and truly, I'm sure now that there's a lot of restrictions on there. In order to go see Lyndon's birthplace and the graveyard, you have to catch a bus, you see, go up to the state park. That's the only way you can get in there. But there at Johnson City, you drive up there, you can't find a parking place anywhere around there. My sister has a home there that she rents to the National Park Service. But whole blocks around there, people [are] coming in by the thousands in this bicentennial year.

And I like it up there. I think I've got the best home. You've seen it and the yard there and everything. You sit out and dictate

and bring back old memories. Somebody'd holler, "Sam, I want you to meet my mother. She's ninety-four and I'm seventy-two." I don't remember either one of them, because a lot of people I don't--I left here when I was just fourteen.

Of course, it's all I think in Mother's book [A Family Album]. You know as much about the way Mother described Lyndon as a little boy running away from home, going with his cousins to school, you see. So finally she just enrolled him in school.

G: Who were the boys that accompanied him on that [trip]? Were there three others?

J: You mean that--?

G: [The ones who] went to California.

J: Well, I was talking about when he first started in school.

G: Oh, I see.

J: You see, he had two cousins, Ava and Margaret Johnson. They were older than he was, and Uncle Tom [Johnson] lived way up on the ranch, you know, and they would come by where we lived, [where] Daddy lived and Mama. Then he would come with them to the Junction schoolhouse when he was just a little three-year-old kid, or four. So finally they just enrolled him in there.

Then they came to Johnson City and my first recollection--I put a lot of this in the book [My Brother Lyndon] and it can be denied or confirmed, it makes no difference to me, but it doesn't hurt Lyndon and it brings out more about him than anything else. See, Grandmother, my mother's mother--well, my mother was the oldest of the Baineses,

oldest child. She [was] the first of four children, you see, so Grandmother more or less helped raise us, helped bring us up when we were kids. So the impression I got when I was a kid [was] that Grandmama didn't like boys, because she said Lyndon wouldn't mind her. See, that's just all it was. She'd ask him to do something and he was gone, and that's just about his character, too, it fits in. I got the impression--when I was a youngster, I kind of knew who was boss whenever Grandma was in. Daddy was gone lots of times to the legislature and sold real estate and all. But just like I made a speech up there at Ozark College [College of the Ozarks] a few months ago in which I said I used to milk the cow, then I'd bring in so much, you know, and the next day I'd bring in a little bit more. But Grandmother said, "You must be starving the calves to death, you're bringing in more." And after I did that and killed about a couple of cows and so forth, I thought if we could feed them more they would give more milk and things like that. Then I stopped at the water hydrant and filled the rest of it full of water, you know, and things like that.

But Daddy picked me up one day when I was about three or four years old, whatever it was, and said, "What are you going to be when you grow up?" I said, "Grandmama's girl and a Baptist preacher." And Lyndon never let me forget that. Because he came and made the graduation exercise there the first year he was off to school and said, "Everybody should have an ambition. For instance, my brother's ambition was to be a girl and a Baptist preacher." In the campaigns he used that quite a bit.

Well, it worked for me, like I told them in school there, that at that young age the ingredients didn't make any difference to me, it was praise that I loved. But being in the milk business--take me at that time; I was eight or nine years old. Now, the only. . . .

G: You were talking about your grandmother.

J: Well, Grandmama gave Lyndon some chores to perform but he didn't do it. I mean, he was independent and that. Because I had to carry in the wood. I'd have done the same thing, if I had had a younger brother that was doing it, that he did. I milked the cows. But I got a great kick out of pleasing Grandmama and going to the Baptist church with her, you know.

G: Was she the one who was later paralyzed?

J: No, that was on the Johnson side.

G: I see. That was Sam Ealy's--

J: Senior's wife. Grandma Eliza Bunton.

G: Can you describe her?

J: I had no contact with her. Grandpa Johnson came down when I was a year old to see me. I had a picture made with him; I'm named after him, you see. Then he died of pneumonia later on. He died in I think it would be February 1914 or 1915. It would be 1915 because I was a year old. That picture was made with me, but my album was lost at LaGuardia. I kept all my important papers and things and carried that with me in a briefcase, but I lost my briefcase and all in 1968 at LaGuardia Airport. Someone stole it because it had "Sam Houston

Johnson, White House" on it. Someday it might come back, just like this watch I gave him came back.

G: Yes.

J: But Lyndon, he had the Redford boys. I don't know if you've met Dr. Emmette Redford or not. Then there was Cecil and Clarence Redford and they were his close friends, pretty close, but they were a--well, I never heard of any of them ever doing anything mischievous or wrong or anything, so that doesn't fit in with Lyndon's class. He fits in with the Criders. They were explorers; they went to California. They were Otto, Tom and Ben and all of that.

G: Well, who else--Otto Crider and Ben Crider went to California?

J: Otto, Guy Summy, maybe Tom. The Crider boys had been out there and saw the Golden West, one of them had, and they came back describing--

G: I see.

J: --about the Golden West, so these boys redid a car and worked on it, you know, and then--

G: Did you know they were going before they left?

J: Everybody in town did.

G: Really?

J: Those things you can't keep from anybody, including my father knew it. So I never heard anybody call Daddy [anything] but Mr. Sam, you know, even if they would be older. And Daddy, too late of course, knew it. They went and told my father about it. He said, "I know all about it." He was going to leave on Friday, and [Daddy said], "Let them go ahead. Then when they get ready to take off, I'm going to jerk him

off and put him right back to school." Then, as I recall, Daddy went to sell his real estate business, sell a ranch somewhere. Then Lyndon came by and grabbed his bag about four o'clock in the afternoon, before Daddy got back, and off he was gone. He went on a Wednesday instead of a Friday, you see. He just upped it a couple of days.

G: Did he talk with your mother before he went, do you know?

J: Well, of course, she knew his plans; she also knew what Daddy was going to do, you know. And everybody else in town knew it. When it got back to Lyndon, why, then he [left]. Everybody was in on everything. The only difference of it is instead of Lyndon being pulled out of the car on Friday, Daddy never caught him. He left on Wednesday. Then when he came in, Daddy called every sheriff in every county up till he got to El Paso. But they traveled by night and slept in the daytime until they got out of Texas. Then of course he ended up--started out picking peaches and working with the other boys, you know.

G: Well, he stayed a while at San Bernardino, didn't he?

J: I haven't checked it back there, but I do know that he later on moved in with his first cousin, Tom Martin, who was a big lawyer there. Tom was the oldest grandson of the Johnson grandpa, Sam, oldest one and he had served in the [legislature]. Daddy was elected to the legislature, but then Tom succeeded my father in the state legislature. In other words, Daddy got out to give Cousin Tom a little start, you know. Then World War I came on, he joined then and went over to France and was gassed in France. He came back and was

chief of police of San Antonio and then went off to California. He was kind of a--someone in the family says, "Tom Martin ruined Lyndon," or something, you know. But it may be that Tom Martin made Lyndon, because in this way he got some experience and then he learned Tom's bad habits and things not to do. He had to put him in the hospital. You know, they lived with him and had to put him in the hospital. But then when there came a big case where three Filipinos had murdered some people out there, Tom saw his chance. He was selected to defend them. Then he sent for his daddy to come out, who used to be a judge, you know. Uncle Clarence [Martin] defended Jim Ferguson during his impeachment. So he sent for him to come out and help him. So when they left, Aunt Frank and Uncle Clarence promised to bring him [Lyndon] back, so he came on back.

G: I guess he was willing to come by this time.

J: He'd had enough of it. He had made the ropes. Some say he never did anything but go out and visit Cousin Tom because he was pretty well-to-do, but I know different. He did work his way up from lower California picking peaches and things like that until he got to be an office boy for Cousin Tom and going with him to hear cases and things like that.

Then he came home. Now, the only dealing--I used to pick cotton and Lyndon would have to drive me to the cotton patch. I mean, Daddy would make him drive me to the cotton patch. Then you've read about the bicycle deal. It was funny. It was a second-hand bicycle. He said, "Let's go partners," and he got a bicycle a little bit too large

for me. But Daddy came home and saw it and he made Lyndon give me the money back and then Daddy bought me a new one, which worked out fine for me. I don't say that I anticipated that Daddy would or anything like that. I don't see how it taught Lyndon a lesson much, but Daddy thought it did. He made him give the money back, as far as that's concerned, whatever it was. But then he turned around and gave me a new one, and that spoiled me, too, you see.

G: Was your brother closer to your mother than he was to your father, do you know? I know you and your father were awfully close.

J: Well, I was close to them both, you see. Daddy had a pretty bad temper. Most of the Johnsons do have. The Buntons, you get that line of the Buntons; I think that's where we inherited that hot temper was on the Bunton side.

G: Why do you think that?

J: Well, because Grandpa Johnson was very mild and all, and the Buntons and the Deshas were pioneers, fought in the American Revolution. They were adventurous people. Of course, both of my grandfathers fought in the Civil War and that. Now, they take it that Lyndon said his great-grandfather was killed in the Alamo, you know, and then they found out [he wasn't]. I don't [think] Lyndon would be dumb enough to say that, but he might have been turned on and got to talking, you know, because everybody was killed in the Alamo. There wouldn't have been a Lyndon Johnson or a Sam Johnson or a Sam Houston Johnson if he had fought in the Alamo, because everybody was killed there. But what happened is on the Bunton side, why, he fought in the battle of San Jacinto and

was wounded. There's a picture of [John W.] Bunton next to General Sam Houston. So these writers get things, say that Lyndon said it was in the Alamo, "My great-grandfather fought in the Alamo." Well, the history of the Alamo, nobody got out but one woman, I think. But they ridiculed Lyndon on some of his historical background.

G: Was your father also a heavy drinker?

J: Yes. Daddy--when you say also, Lyndon never was a heavy drinker, to my knowledge.

G: No, I mean also in addition to having a bad temper.

J: Well, Daddy was this: Uncle Clarence, Daddy's brother-in-law--he married Aunt Frank--was a heavy drinker, and Daddy would have to go get him out somewhere. Then Dayton Moses [?], the district attorney there, was another one, and Judge [W. C.] Linden was another one. That's the reason Mother didn't want him named Clarence, didn't want him named Dayton, didn't want him named after Judge Linden. They were all three judges and district attorneys, you know, and famous people, but they all drank.

G: I was wondering if perhaps there was an exaggeration in their drinking because perhaps your mother didn't drink at all and so she considered any drinking excessive. Plus the fact that out in, I guess, the German Hill Country areas everybody drank quite a bit.

J: I think [there is] a better way to put it. And I haven't noticed much change. When you're a member of the legislature here, you go down to the Driskill Hotel and they have parties all the time. That hasn't been changed any. Then my daddy was a bachelor, you see; he was about

thirty before he ever got married. All of these people would stop at his home, you know, to discuss politics and things like that. You wouldn't call Daddy a heavy drinker, but some might.

But the point of it is Daddy was raised in an entirely different family than Mother was. Mother's grandparents, when you go to getting through Mother's books and things up there, you'll find out that they founded the Baptist church throughout the South. I mean, Billy Graham asked me about it. They started out from North Carolina, you know, and trace it right on back, the Baineses and so forth. [They were] all church people, lawyers and politicians, too, on the Baines side. Now, the Bunton side, the Desha side, were all pretty religious people, but the Deshas, [one of them was a] governor of Kentucky. You could look on the family chart and see how we get involved with them. Then Governor Desha's daughter, Vivian, married Colonel Vanderbilt, you know, and he's down at the Derby. And then she went to New York, with the fight between the Vanderbilts and the Astors over who was going to take over society there, and she said, "I'm a Desha from Kentucky [inaudible]." She did, you see. I'm trying to say that's where you get on one side the adventure, pioneers and religion, too. Then my great-grandfather fought, on Mother's side and on Daddy's side, too, in the American Revolution. [That] can be chased--but no one ever has chased that down. Mama's got it right there in the book. And [there's] no president yet that has the heritage that Lyndon has, and the background. Lyndon never could decide whether he wanted to be born in Hyde Park or in that log cabin up there.

G: Did he exaggerate the--?

J: Yes, the answer is, he could. Go ahead. Did he exaggerate what?

G: The humbleness of his background, you know. Did he indicate that he was poorer than he really was and that his family had a harder time than they really did?

J: Well, of course--

G: I've understood that your mother felt that he tended to describe things as worse than they had been.

J: Well, he did. It varied as to who he was talking to. One minute he might be in the Battle of San Jacinto, a hero, or couldn't get food to eat on.

G: Well, how well off was the family?

J: Well, to start in, first you go back to the Johnson family. There you see the big pioneers in the trail drivers, the largest trail driver in five or six counties. Now, yesterday a Mr. [Konrad] Kelly was up here interviewing these two ladies, getting the historical background of the trail drivers. He had been over to San Antonio and got the history of them in connection with my grandfather and all that kind of stuff. So they were pretty well-to-do. One time they had a big drought and lost a lot of money, but you don't come from Buda, Texas and become the largest trail driver in those six or seven counties. That's in Mother's book but she's quoting it from another book [from] the Old Trail Drivers of Texas Museum.

So Grandpa Johnson started off, I would say, pretty well-to-do. So then Daddy, being the oldest boy, he got the best house. Grandpa

had about, I think there was four houses on it. One of them was Aunt Frank's; one of them was Uncle Tom's; up there where Liz Martin [lived], who died the other day, [is] three. But then Daddy got the one that Lyndon was born in and he batched himself. See, Daddy went to the legislature at a very young age and that's where he met Mama, then married her, and then three of us kids were born there. They had farmhands there. But now like this, the fellow that mowed my lawn up there, takes care of my house in Johnson City, his mother used to do all the washing and ironing for my mama. I never saw Mama do any washing nor ironing in my life that I know of. Now, Grandmother made the kids [clothes], sewed and that, but Mother had an extremely wonderful education, you see. There are very few people that could write like Mother.

G: She was editor of a paper there in Johnson City, wasn't she?

J: Well, yes, but the point of it is she wrote for several papers. She wrote for the Dallas News, San Antonio Express, Austin American, before she met Daddy.

G: Is that right?

J: Then Daddy married her shortly after her father died. Daddy was in the legislature and Mother came down to interview him as to what his plans were, and he said, "I'll give you an interview, [but] I want to interview you," and then they were married, you see. Well, the only place Daddy's home was was up there at that ranch where Lyndon was born. But then that was only after--well, let's see, I'd say after six years on there.

G: Was it a difficult transition for her, do you think, moving from--?

J: Yes, it was.

G: Did she ever talk to you about it?

J: No. You see, there was a lot of jealousy in the family. Now, no reflection, but Aunt Frank went to college. All of them had some college education. And Aunt Ava finished college and taught. But Mother, her father practiced law under Governor [James] Throckmorton. He owned a newspaper at McKinney, Texas, became campaign manager for Governor [John] Ireland, secretary of state under Governor Ireland. Mother went to Baylor-Belton [Mary Hardin-Baylor College?], Baylor College, Texas University, you see. And [when she] moved up there, she was out of her class. So Daddy's sisters kind of were jealous of her because if anything went on in Johnson City in the way of plays or greeting people, why, it was Daddy and Mother, you see.

And Mother felt a little bit--she thought that he devoted too much time to Uncle Clarence. He would always do what Uncle Clarence did. Well, Uncle Clarence was a judge, but then he'd have to go get Uncle Clarence and get on a big toot, you know. So Mother always blamed them, Aunt Frank and them. Now, as far as Daddy's brother, Tom Johnson, Mother got along fine, but not with his wife. Mother had quite a few difficulties.

G: What [were they]?

J: Well, you see, there was a family of Chapmans there. All right. Uncle Tom married Kittie Chapman. Daddy at the time was going with Mabel Chapman. You see, two boys going with two sisters.

G: Two brothers going with two sisters.

J: Yes. Then Daddy just up out of a clear blue sky married Mother. Then, boy, Aunt Kittie was knifing Mama every chance she got. And Mabel Chapman married a Ross [?] there, [who] owned the hardware store. So that was the conflict. They could get a story out about my daddy drinking, why. . . . As you'll notice, you see two front gates going in the house.

G: Yes.

J: One for Daddy and one for Grandmama and the girls, you see. In other words, if you'd come in Daddy's entrance, you could go in there and talk politics and drink and you wouldn't be bothered about your language. But if you crossed over that line, not like the David Crockett line at the Alamo but it was damn near as bad, go over in the other part, why, there was no drinking in the other part and no cussing, because Grandmama was a big Baptist, you know.

G: Well, which side did your brother go in on?

J: Oh, well, hell, he went on Daddy's side, and I just played every side I could. I played everybody and everything I could.

But to the extent of all that, Daddy was the boss of the town, of course, and he had enemies there in the town, because Daddy took a firm stand on the Ku Klux Klan issue, you see. And then he took firm stands on these preachers that come up there. Daddy called it playing hypocrisy on a lot of them, you know. And that went on. But we owned the opera house there and the paper there and had the best home there. And he was a rancher, a real estate man, a member of the legislature

whenever he wanted it for all those counties. And if you go back--I'm the only one that had that picture; it was in my scrapbook--Daddy bought Mother a Hudson car, which is the same as a Cadillac now. Daddy couldn't drive it, Mama couldn't, but they had to have a boy to drive it. His name is Guy Ames [?]. He drove Mama. In other words, you can call it a chauffeur if you want to. Also ran the press at the newspaper, you see. And you can go back--a good student of history can do it now--you could enter in Johnson City, if you talked to Mrs. Scofield [?] or some of them, [they'd say], Sam Johnson, oh, he drank and he raised hell. Because Daddy did cuss them out plenty of times when he felt like it, called them a bunch of damn Ku Kluxers. Anyhow, but Daddy never lost an election, you see. So--

G: So really there were good times. Were there also bad times, say, years when the crops were bad, where farm prices were bad, where it was--?

J: There have been good and bad times in every family, you see. Now, Daddy traded and bought cotton. Well, then when they had the San Francisco earthquake they called in all the money, you know. Then we had to sell our home up there and move back to Johnson City. Daddy owned the ranch; Lyndon was born, Rebekah was born, Josefa was born. Then he bought [the house in Johnson City]. Mama got out of that territory. He got her the best home in Johnson City; he had an architect to rebuild it. He bought her a newspaper and a victrola. If you had a victrola in those days you were--there weren't but three

bathtubs in Johnson City at the time; I think the Fawcetts and the Barnwells and my daddy [had them].

But you can hear it from any side you want to on it. Now, they'll polish it up--like when Lyndon became president, the people up there didn't know how he wanted it told. Some would say one thing and then some the other, you know. Like when Lyndon owned the home, well, he put an old corral fence around the home in Johnson City. Oh, it made our family, sisters, mad about it, but now it's being restored to what it was when Daddy moved back to Johnson City and where he died in.

So during the Depression, Daddy worked as superintendent. Mrs. [Miriam] Ferguson got in as governor, well, then the highway department--Daddy was superintendent of the highways up there in 1924, 1925. Then he was named inspector for the Railroad Commission. And I don't think when you've got five kids all graduating from college during the Depression that you're in a hell of a bad shape, you see. But here's the thing about that. Daddy moved from Johnson City in 1929. He was traveling without wanting to move the family down. So we had five kids in college at one time. Lyndon was a senior, Rebekah next, Josefa next, and my little baby sister was in what you'd call sub-college, proving her credits her senior year. So we didn't have what you'd call a [hard life]. I'd say we lived as well or better than anybody else in Johnson City. But how poor we were or how devastating those days were never came in, they were never talked about until it became useful politically, you see. And I confirmed a lot of things

Lyndon said, knowing it was a damn lie, as long as it was all right. "Sam Houston, you remember?" "Oh, yes, hell, yes." I confirmed most of it until I decided I got tired of it. That's the reason I wrote my book, to kind of make a few corrections on the thing.

G: Another thing that you told me about earlier was the violin lessons, you know--

J: That's the biggest damn lie in the world. No one ever heard of it. I don't know of any Johnson that could be--not Uncle George, not Uncle Tom, Mother never could carry a tune. No one in the Johnson family, including me or my sisters or my brother, could ever carry a tune at all. Now, on my daddy's side, his sisters could play the piano and Daddy loved to sing.

G: But the point of it is your mother never would have objected if your brother hadn't taken violin lessons. This is something Doris Kearns says in her book [Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream].

J: The violin lessons is not an education, it's an art, you see. Mother's primary purpose, along with Daddy, was to see that all of us, all five kids, got college degrees, which we did. As far as violin lessons, I can't see how anyone could ever draw that--I can't see how Lyndon could even pretend that now. I'm not saying he didn't say it, but I haven't read that woman's book at all. I just read [inaudible] of it. But, really, a person before he comments on it ought to really read it and then make--

G: I've read it and I'm going to be asking you some questions.

J: All right. Now, ask me questions about it. The violin lessons never occurred, never happened, period. And Mother didn't want him to, because it never occurred to her for him to ever play the violin. That answers that one positively. And there's not anybody else can back that up that Mother wanted him to, because she didn't care about music herself.

G: Well, she [Kearns] describes the competition between your father and your brother.

J: Well, in other words what she is trying to do, I imagine, and it's partly true in that I think I'd put it in a better way. Daddy was a hundred per cent for Lyndon in every way he went, always was, and he wore out several clippings about Lyndon and the Little Congress and things, he wore them out in his billfold showing them to everybody, you know.

G: Is that right?

J: Oh, yes, and that. But how did he get elected to Congress? Let's go into that now. 1937. All right. Lyndon said Uncle George got him into it one time. Well, it wasn't that, it was Daddy. Now, Mrs. Buchanan, Congressman [James] Buchanan represented the Tenth Congressional District of which Blanco County was a member--I mean was not a member of that, that was a member of Kleberg's district. But in 1934 it became a member of the Tenth District, Austin district. Well, Lyndon hadn't lived in Austin but two years, three, you see. So then he wanted to go to Congress actually from Dick Kleberg's district. That's where his power stood, as secretary to Dick Kleberg. Anybody

that was secretary to Dick Kleberg was also a congressman, more or less, you see. But then when they put [in] Blanco County, which is the smallest county of the ten counties in this district, well, then Mr. [C. N.] Avery here, a good friend of Daddy's, a former member of the city council, and [who] had known Daddy for years, he was campaign manager for Buchanan, so his idea was to let Mrs. Buchanan serve the unexpired term like they do so many times, you know, until he could get organized better to take over. Well, Lyndon goes up and talks to Daddy. He said, "Lyndon, you'd better announce now before she gets in, because if she thinks she's going to have a hard campaign, she won't get in it." So you read the headlines in the Austin paper, "Lyndon Johnson Announces, Mrs. Buchanan Undecided." So then she decided not to run in the field of nine.

Now, who preceded Buchanan? Albert Sidney Burleson, Lockhart. He knew my father from way back. He was postmaster general under Woodrow Wilson. So Daddy goes and gets Burleson to endorse Lyndon: "Always send a young man to Congress so he can grow and grow and grow." Lyndon never heard of Burleson before. I mean, he had heard of him, but Daddy had to go all the way over there to Lockhart and get him to make the announcement. And the papers, that part about Burleson endorsing my brother, it's a matter of record. I'm not making it up.

So Lyndon's fault--in other words, he did so many brilliant, wonderful things on his own. Nobody could have passed Medicare, nobody could have passed the civil rights bill, when Daddy was dead, and no one could have done that. Kennedy couldn't do it. Truman

couldn't do it. And Eisenhower didn't know what he was doing. So that's not competitive with Daddy, because Daddy's dead, deader than hell in 1937 when all this other came out. So Lyndon had plenty of brains on that. And it wasn't competitiveness with Daddy to get that done, but on the other hand, a boy doesn't grow up to be president, congressman, unless he has a good, sound foundation in politics, and some in what is right and what's wrong, and something that the people--P-E-E-P-L-E is the way Daddy used to spell it--if you're for the people.

Now, Daddy's being a populist and a liberal, he did more in even the state legislature in his own way than Lyndon did, if you read that book there by the college, you know, that [they] put out there [Lyndon Baines Johnson: the Formative Years]. Drought-stricken people, the tick bill, the saving of the Alamo and all that kind of stuff. Well, here is what I want to try to make clear. Daddy, when he made his speech taking up for the Americans of German extraction, [that] killed him politically, but it actually made him. In the long run that's how we got in with the Klebergs, and how Lyndon did. That speech was very famous, although he couldn't get elected governor on that kind of thing during wartime. So there's enough credit to go all the way around.

G: But both your father and your brother were strong-minded men who I suppose were ambitious and aggressive. And I know in your book you describe an instance where each one wanted you to sleep with them.

J: Yes, that's true.

G: Sort of a competition here. Did this sort of thing happen very often?

J: There was jealousy over me all the time. Daddy thought he was sending me to law school and Lyndon thought he was, and I let them both think they were and I lived in a dormitory, had me an apartment and a golf caddy and everything.

(Laughter)

Like this, well, when I got off the plane--the plane crashed at Nashville on my way up from Houston. I was working in the bank. All right. Most of them are killed or injured besides me. Lyndon meets me at the airport. What was his welcome? "Oh, Daddy would have killed me if anything had happened to you."

G: Really?

J: Yes, that's exactly what he [said], "Daddy never would have gotten over it if anything had happened to you."

G: Really? What year was that?

J: 1935. Now, here's something funny--not funny, but it just--in 1948, well, of course, you know we won by 87 votes. I think I've told you about how I got Joe Steed to be the man sitting over in the corner. Like, for instance, you were against me. You were against Lyndon Johnson. You're on the [State Democratic] Executive Committee. You're from Cameron, Texas. You've had your name up there. I was walking around in the lobby; nearly everybody knew who I was. Nobody knew what was going to happen, because legally we had certified copies of the vote. That's legally. All right, you're confused. You're for Coke [Stevenson], there's been no question about it, but you don't

want to go down with him. You want to see whether or not you can kind of get in on maybe both sides, you see. "Mr. Johnson, what do you think about this?" "Hard fight. Don't know. Yes, it's going to be hard, it's going to be tough, but it depends upon one man, Joe Steed. If I can get him for Lyndon, it's all over with." Joe Steed had been for Coke, you see; he hadn't been a strong Johnson supporter. I think he said he voted for [George] Peddy, but he was against us, you know, but I had convinced him. You go over there, "Hey, Joe, how are you going to vote?" "Well, you know I don't give a goddamn for Lyndon Johnson particularly, but he's got the votes legally, certified copies of them, and I'm going to jump on the bandwagon when it's time to get on there, and now's the time to get on. That's just plain, common, ordinary political sense, because Lyndon Johnson can win it in the court battle." So he came back, "I got Joe for you." I thanked him very much. And then I'd get another one that got Joe for him, you know, for Lyndon. And it ended up 29 to 28. And when Lyndon became president, I located Joe Steed up there and I go, I said, "Well, you put him there with that 29-28 vote."

But anyhow at that convention, when Lyndon was speaking on the radio accepting the nomination of his party, I went to the telephone to call Mama to see if she was listening. In a few minutes here come Lyndon through; he'd accepted, you know. He had a bunch of these hangers-on [with] him, crowding him. Hell, I don't know, they were for him maybe, but they damn sure were for him then after he got the nomination. Lyndon stopped at the telephone, "Come on, Sam Houston,

we're going to have a party." And I wasn't even drinking during any of those days. Whenever he had something to do, I didn't drink, whenever I had something to do. What the hell did I care about--the fight was over with--going around and listening to all this bragging about--[it was] nonsense to me, the fight was over. I went to my sister's. I'd been up, I'd been tired, I'd been working. My sister lived in Fort Worth and I got a cab and went out there and had coffee. About that time the phone rang and it was Mother and [she] said, "Well, Sam Houston, I just wanted to tell you Lyndon just called me." Here is what Lyndon told her, "Wouldn't Daddy have been proud of Sam Houston, because I couldn't have made it without him." Was he proud of it? No, but Daddy would have been proud of it, you see what I mean? Couldn't get him around to admit it, but Daddy would have been [proud].

Oh, but the questions of Lyndon, there was a slight competitiveness between us.

G: Sure, you described that in the last [interview]. It sounded like your father tended to side more with you.

J: He did. Mama did, too.

G: Really?

J: Oh, I was named after Daddy, you know. He told my sister, "If anything happens to me, don't let Lyndon ever get hold of that watch," and all that. Oh, yes.

G: You know, this Doris Kearns in her book said that your mother was the single most important influence on Lyndon Johnson.

J: Well, of course I was my mother's favorite, too. I was executor of her will, too, and handled it. You know, you have to stop and think. You asked me one day who was Lyndon's closest friend. I told you I just couldn't tell you, I just didn't know. Now, as far as Mother being the single most important influence, I wouldn't say that at all. That man in his early formative years, when he was nine or eight or ten, he decided himself--he had the heritage back of him, my Grandpa [Joseph] Baines, you know; he had the ingredients. But when Daddy wasn't around and [was] dead and Mama was around, the decisions that led--let me show you one example now. You haven't gone into his war record, or at least you don't know it, I know you don't, because it hasn't been told except what you read.

G: His war record?

J: Yes. The truth about it hasn't been told.

G: Good. Maybe you can talk about that.

J: Now, I know that from firsthand. All right. Went to Washington, he got on the Naval Affairs Committee. He gave Roosevelt credit for putting him on there, helping him on--Roosevelt didn't have a damn thing to do with it. It was a vacancy and due to [his being] a Texan, he got it.

G: It was who?

J: It was a vacancy on that committee and W. D. McFarlane, a former congressman, had been defeated, so it was supposed to go to a Texan. And then Rayburn and them, they got it, you see. But Lyndon put it in that Roosevelt wanted him on the Naval Affairs Committee because he

was so interested in the navy. That's all crap, C-R-A-P, on that. Why would Roosevelt, being president, want Lyndon Johnson as junior on the Naval Affairs Committee, period? That's not it. But, Carl Vinson, the chairman of it, from Georgia, he--Lyndon was on it and then Lyndon formed a little subcommittee where he could act on his own, [an] investigating [subcommittee], just like the old Truman Committee like he had over in the Senate, you know.

Well, [when] Lyndon campaigned in 1941 he said, "If I vote to send your boy to war, I'll be the first to go myself." Congressmen are not eligible, you see; you can't draft a congressman or a member of the state legislature. So you have to volunteer. Lyndon was one who volunteered, but he didn't resign his office; he kept that. Lady Bird ran that, and Mary Rather. All right. Now, Jim Forrestal was under secretary of the navy and [Frank] Knox was secretary of the navy. You know, he was a Republican from Chicago. And Roosevelt had made [Henry] Stimson, a Republican, secretary of the army [war], and Knox was a Republican and secretary of the navy. Well, they used Lyndon out in California, in Hollywood, meeting the movie stars to get them all lined up for [bond campaigns, to] buy bonds and all that.

I was then acting director for twelve states, in Denver, of the National Youth Administration. Well, he called up there to me and told me to go see a doctor and see if I couldn't gain some weight, that he had a job for me. I went and saw a doctor. I was taking vitamin shots; I ate those damn old yeast tablets. And then I had oatmeal and eggs and, hell, I couldn't gain five pounds. So when he

came through Denver on his way to Washington, he stopped there and came out and had dinner with me and my wife and daughter at the time. So Lyndon said, "Sam Houston, what I'm doing is just down your alley. You would love this. This is it. I can get you a commission as lieutenant commander, same as I am." I had the education and experience. "But, goddamn, I can't get him to [gain] fifty pounds; I can twenty-five, but I can't get him to [gain] fifty." And that was that.

But then he told me right now, "I'm going to have breakfast with Roosevelt tomorrow, and Justice Bill Douglas is the one that arranges it." So he told me and so it happened. When he went in to see Roosevelt, he said, "I want combat service. I want to go where I can do some good. Just running up and down Hollywood"--now I'm not stretching the facts for my brother either; I'm telling it like I see it and like I hear it. He said, "Or I can go back into Congress and start in with the Naval [Affairs] investigating [sub]committee and help you more in Congress than I can out there making some speeches." Roosevelt said, "You really want to go?" I don't know whether Lyndon was bluffing or not, but I don't think he was, because he told me he was going to tell him. Roosevelt gave him a letter to General [Douglas] MacArthur, one to Stalin, one to Churchill, appointing Lyndon Johnson "as my special assistant who speaks for me." He armed himself with those letters. You ought to have them up at the [LBJ] Library. I imagine you do.

G: They have them at the Roosevelt Library, too, copies.

J: Now, he gets over. They send him an Englishman, Lyndon's counterpart, to go over to Australia, you know. Well, his plane takes off the next morning. Lyndon's parachute didn't fit him and so the plane went out xero hour, every thirty seconds, you know, and by the time they brought Lyndon a parachute, the plane that went out got shot down. Lyndon's was crippled, and it landed somewhere in Australia, the Outback. Just like you'd read the paper back in that time, saying there he was in Australia right on a farm there. He said, "Hell, this reminds me of Johnson City, Texas."

Then he came in. General MacArthur had two chairs there--had three but two empties. He said, "You see, I begged you not to go, but you threw the letter at me. Those two people there didn't come back." And MacArthur can get pretty dramatic. I guess you heard the "old soldiers never die, they fade away" [speech]. Lyndon saw that he faded away, all right, but I'll get to that later. So he just made one of those gutty speeches, then offered Lyndon--"but you get the Silver Star." Lyndon didn't accept it at that time; he just walked out, just like that.

Then after that he was more or less--when you are representing Roosevelt, you work under the supreme commander if you want to; if you don't, you work under the commander in chief. Well, Lyndon kind of had it any way he wanted it, just like I had it in psychological warfare. I had civilian when I wanted to be, and it could be a brigadier general if I wanted to go up to the front and fight.

G: One of the stories I've heard concerning that trip to Australia was that the real reason that President Roosevelt wanted him to go was to feel out MacArthur's presidential intentions. Did he--?

J: Oh, hell, yes, of course, of course. He didn't trust MacArthur.

G: Well, can you elaborate on this, what he was supposed to find out in this regard and what he did conclude when he reported back?

J: Well, I can't elaborate on it, except I can quote from Time magazine on it and so forth. Anybody that intimately knew or served under MacArthur knew he was egotistical as hell, and he was the youngest superintendent of West Point and a hero in the Rainbow Division in World War I. Then he was out at the Philippines. He was a man that thought he knew more than anybody in Washington. Well, Roosevelt's chief of staff, General [George] Marshall, as well as President Truman's, they're the ones that ran it, but MacArthur wanted to do it his way. If you go back to Time magazine [of] that period, you'll see a picture over to the left, on the front page--not on the cover but I mean on the front page--a picture of Lyndon in his uniform. It said, "He came back." Picture of MacArthur over here with no tie on, didn't show him wading in the Potomac, but it showed him--"He stayed." Now, this is how it reads: "Roosevelt called his true and tried and trusted friend Lyndon Johnson to report to him on conditions in Southeast Asia. They had breakfast over scrambled eggs and bacon in the morning, and Lyndon Johnson gave him a report." That's practically verbatim what was in the Time magazine on it.

So I think it's logical for a reasonable man to assume that by giving him letters to Stalin, to Churchill, that he put him in there to check as to see what MacArthur was doing and report back to him on how the war was going. Now, I'll say that not because [of] Lyndon Johnson being my brother, but I've seen--I know Roosevelt, too. I was up there. I saw him sworn in. And Lyndon had been loyal, not 90 but 100 per cent. And I don't know of a man that--he couldn't tell you how to fire a .22, but he could tell you how to get the man that was firing the .22. You see what I mean? Like in Booth Mooney's book [LBJ: An Irreverent Chronicle], they ought to read and re-read things. Booth said now in Roosevelt's second term, 1941--well, his second term started in 1937, of course; Booth's just off four years on that, but that could be done. Then is when he sent Lyndon--Booth just had it all wrong, but what he had heard, he had heard me talk and he copied my damn book there--that's what he told me he did, more or less--and elaborated on it. Okay.

But the fact of it is that Roosevelt, I dare say there was no member of Congress that Roosevelt trusted more than Lyndon Johnson. You say, "Well, why? How did that come about?" Because when Lyndon ran for Congress--you remember when Roosevelt carried everything but Maine and Vermont, it naturally would give him or anyone else a little confidence in himself to where he'd figure that he could tell Congress what to do, particularly when the Supreme Court, a bunch of old bastards up there, said the NRA was unconstitutional and the AAA was unconsitutional, trying to tear down Roosevelt's program. Then you

get a young man, twenty-eight years old, running for Congress who says, "I'm not 90 but I'm 100 per cent [loyal]." So you can see the loyalty there. Then you can see the loyalty when [John Nance] Garner wanted to run with Jim Farley on the ticket in 1940 that Lyndon wouldn't sign that petition, like I told you. And you see Jesse Jones and Sam Rayburn going down to Roosevelt and saying, "[Are you sure] Lyndon Johnson isn't doing you more harm than good?" And Roosevelt said, "He's my friend. I don't think he's going to--" So you can draw a conclusion on that.

Tape 2 of 3

G: You were talking about compromising.

J: Yes. Going back to that, because compromise is supposed to be one of Lyndon's greatest assets that led him on to become president. We'll start out, what was there to compromise? Well, [when he was in the Senate] he had an investigating committee investigating a Republican president, bear in mind, [a Republican] administration. Now, I'm going to make a comparison and I don't give a damn who hears it; I'm just going to compare Lyndon Johnson to Harry Truman, in this way. Harry Truman was a young senator--I don't know how young he was, but he was a freshman when he got there--picked by [Tom] Pendergast. He was a county judge. What's a county judge? He presides over the county commissioners, and he built a big courthouse. That's his experience. His father or grandfathers, any of them, had [they] any knowledge or background in politics or anything? Not to my knowledge. Now, he comes to Washington because Pendergast picked him. That was

known. How did Lyndon Johnson come? By buying a ticket down here in Austin, a weekly pass on the streetcars, when they were running. [He would] shake hands with everybody in that car and then reach out and get another car and do it. That's funny but he did it. He used that streetcar pass to shake hands on a streetcar, and then [he'd] wait for another one going the other way and [keep on] doing that. That's the difference in the compromise deal; that's the difference in the two men.

Now, Truman came to Washington as senator. Everybody up there gave him one term because Pendergast got caught and sent to the penitentiary. But he won the second election for a second term. He formed the Truman Committee. He named the committee after himself, even though he didn't want to, but it was forced on him. See, I don't fall for that crap. Be honest. If you don't want a committee named after you, don't let it be named. Just say, "Hell, no, I don't." If you don't want to be drafted, say you don't and won't be under any circumstances; don't sit around. Does that make it clear? If there's anything I hate it's hypocrisy, and you have it in Washington more, and it's getting worse every damn day. I said the next book I was going to write was on hypocrisy in Washington, and Helen Thomas asked me, "When will it be out?" I said, "I don't know. I can't find who in the hell to dedicate it to." So I don't know. But anyhow, that's it.

No president likes a man--I would assume so, maybe not--that will investigate his cabinet officers, like Truman did with [the

Departments of] Navy and War and others, without first coming to the president or to them and telling them and giving them a chance to correct it. My brother, who investigated it, first, he wouldn't let the committee be named for him even if it were suggested, which I'm not sure that it was ever suggested, but it was known as the successor [to the Truman Committee]. So he had it [named] Preparedness [Investigating] Subcommittee of the Armed Services Committee. You got it so entangled, subcommittee of the Armed Services Committee. Why did he do that? Not to make the others jealous or mad, just do it. Then what work you do, it will show for itself.

Now, every one of the hundred-odd reports [of the subcommittee] were always unanimous. Why? Because naturally you'd think that the Republican members, [like] Styles Bridges--I forget who all some of the others [were]--but Lyndon would let them know what he was doing and let the secretary of the army and others know what he was doing, and [he'd] give them a chance to cooperate and do it. In other words, he didn't use that committee to undercut Eisenhower or the secretary of war or the secretary of defense. Do you follow me? So when you play square, which my brother did, there's no wheeling and dealing, it's just plain goddamned honesty and good in politics to do it. Was there ever a televised hearing on the Preparedness Subcommittee? The answer to that is no.

Did I ever tell you the first time I thought Lyndon was capable of being president? If not, I'll tell you now, for the record. We had the Atlas Construction Company, the largest in the world. They

built airfields in Africa, and the damn things, the hot sun melted that asphalt before they could get it done. Then he started to investigating the Atlas Construction Company, the largest in the world.

They came to Washington in full force, and the papers were playing it up. This was 1952. I decided that [I would go to the hearings] since the Armed Services Committee was just not very far from my office. But it didn't make any difference, if it had been downtown I'd have gone anyhow. So let's don't say that I just conveniently dropped in. Hell, I didn't; I wanted to hear it. Anyhow, then one of Lyndon's counsels of the committee began to badger the president of the company, you know, by asking questions, this and that. Lyndon just took that away from him; he decided to do his own. He didn't shout; he didn't show anger or anything. He wanted to know what was wrong, what went wrong. Now see, I can say these things because Lyndon's dead; I'm not making a hero out of him. He's not here to stop me either, so what I say is what Sam Houston saw and watched. And I'm not running for any office and never have and never would and never will. I never could get elected is the only reason, I guess. [I] didn't go for it, not even in Johnson City. But anyhow, the point is I saw that Lyndon began to cut his counsel off and then ask what was wrong. He was talking and questioning the president of the corporation, mild-mannered; [he] treated him like he wasn't a scalawag, but a big man, but what is wrong with your organization that caused it?

They adjourned for lunch. I went across to the Carroll Arms, had lunch with a girlfriend and came back, and the headline in the paper

was "President of Atlas Construction Company Strikes Back at Lyndon Johnson." In other words, the statement was prepared by the PR man of Atlas before hearing anything. There wasn't any striking back, because Lyndon was treating [him] too nice. And I handed him that paper before the hearing [resumed]. He looked at it and laughed. [He] came on back, laid it on the table like this, said, "Here's the headline that Kozak [?]"--or whatever his name was--accused Lyndon of wanting the Democratic nomination for president, running for president at the expense of Atlas Construction Company is the way the article ran. Lyndon said, "The only thing, if you had had a PR man to do some of your work rather than the bunch of engineers you had, you'd have had a better deal. You wouldn't be here right now." So much for that. He turned it off, just laughed.

So then he went on, and finally Lyndon had an engineer that he thought wasn't telling them the truth, so he turned to Governor McNutt [?], who was the counsel for this Atlas Construction Company: "Governor, make him answer that question. I want him to answer it." I've even forgotten the question. Then he put the president on. "Those airfields that you built over there had faulty engineering on them, and some of your men here have lied to this committee, but that'll be turned over to the Department of Justice." It never was turned over, but Lyndon went through the formality. I used to go back to George Reedy, and I'd say, "George, did you turn that over to the Department of Justice yet?" "No."

Here's Lyndon. He said, "Now the main thing I want is to get them put in shape. Will you correct the mistake that you have done, then report back to me in six months what effort you have done to make amends for the shoddy work that was done before?" "Yes, sir, Senator." Lyndon said, "I see no reason in holding any more hearings on this, so the committee will stand adjourned. Mr. President, we'll wait until you come and report back to me." I'm sitting there and I was amazed, I was, at my brother not jumping and grabbing the ball and running with it. He had it, you see, he had it. The man had shot back about Lyndon running for president. Instead of doing that, he did like this: "I'll give you six months to do it." Didn't send anybody to the penitentiary, wasn't any need to. They got the airfields rebuilt like they wanted to, no publicity for Lyndon Johnson. I walked out of that room, I told my friend, "Lyndon Johnson, in my opinion now, is capable of being president. I didn't think so before." That one hearing that he did, where he could forgive and get the job done, rather than to explore. And that makes me so damn mad on this wheeler-dealer stuff. What came out in Lyndon Johnson was something that he inherited, or [was] brought up, a way of doing it.

Now, in compromising, if you want to raise hell in a committee, you can do it, but if you work and reason, "Come and let us reason together," Isaiah--who thought that one up, I don't know, because Lyndon didn't think it up himself, I'm sure [?]. He never read Isaiah. But George Reedy sold him on it--somebody, I don't know--"Come let us reason together." That's the history of all of his

committee reports. If there's something in there that Senator Styles Bridges or some Republican thought he was going too far, [he'd say], "Maybe I am. But let's keep an eye on it. I won't put that in there now, but I'm going to keep an eye on it, see if it"--give them another chance, you see. Things like that.

Now, do you know that Eisenhower got more cooperation out of Lyndon Johnson than he did out of his own Republican Party, or do you? Well, I'm speaking for you--he did.

G: Let me ask you about two things that you've mentioned that are not directly related to this, but while we're thinking of them. One, on the Naval Affairs Committee. I understand that he went to the rescue of Walter Winchell when Winchell got in trouble with some of the senators like Burton Wheeler. Do you know about that? Do you recall that?

J: No, I. . .

G: When Winchell was a lieutenant commander in the navy, and from his position on the Naval Affairs Committee he helped out.

J: I'd say that he'd have gone to bat for zip, on the elevator there, when Burt Wheeler ever said anything. Wheeler had never been right on a thing yet. He was on the Foreign Relations Committee that refused to go along. The Wheelers, the [Gerald] Nyes, the [Charles] Lindberghs were what caused World War II, so if he went to bat for Walter Winchell--I'm sure he did.

G: I was just wondering if you recalled anything--

J: No, I don't recall it, but I'll say this, that I wouldn't be a damn

bit surprised if he didn't go as far as the law would allow, or even beyond what it allowed. I'll go that strong.

G: Another thing you mentioned was his subsequent relationship with General MacArthur, presumably during the Truman-MacArthur controversy, and the hearings that he held when MacArthur came back and testified before the committee. Can you elaborate on his role in--?

J: I've already told you.

G: Well, you summarized it, but you didn't go into how he did what he did.

J: Well, have you ever seen General MacArthur in a civilian suit, without his built-up platform shoes? Comes to about right here on me. I saw him when he walked into the committee room. And he was very nice to Lyndon, and he went over how they met first in Australia, complimented him, you know. Lyndon came back to the office, says, "I guess he's got a file on everybody in that committee. But old soldiers never die, they fade away." Well, if you'll recall, that committee was a joint committee of Foreign Relations and Armed Services. You get it all in one and then I'll kill it all at one time. He took over that, because of his investigating committee. So it being in executive session, the only thing that was released was what he wanted released. The other senators went along with it; no one there was bucking Lyndon on it, to my knowledge. Of course, I wasn't in there, but I know George Reedy would take the transcript and run back to the office, pencil it, and then release it to the press. So that's that.

G: His mail ran pretty much pro-MacArthur, didn't it, at the time?

J: I would say that [it was] a hundred to one easily. If you got a telegram supporting President Truman on that, you were just shocked. No, it was tremendously for that. MacArthur thought he would use that to run for president, of course. He stuck his neck out, wanting to be fired, and he particularly asked to be fired, if you know psychological warfare, which I do. He asked to be fired by a fellow like Truman, who was unpopular that last few years, you know, a very unpopular president, because of the Alger Hiss case and [Dean] Acheson. So he asked for it. MacArthur knew the rules, that he was a general, and he knew who was commander in chief. Why did he violate those rules, "Let the President come to me"? Because he wanted to be fired and to run for president. And he started out in Wisconsin. But that man, with the Foreign Relations Committee and the Armed Services [combined], he didn't have a leg to stand on. That oratory didn't appear in the Senate Armed Services and Foreign Relations Committees; it was just is this right or [is] that right? And that was one of the things that Truman, outside of saying he was going to kick that fellow that wrote that bad report on his daughter's singing, and firing MacArthur, [those] were two of the greatest things that Truman did.

G: Also, during the Senate years when you were up there, there were several legislative things. The Albert Beeson nomination, do you remember that, which he led the opposition on? This was during the Eisenhower [Administration]. I think it was 1955.

J: Hell, I never heard of him.

G: He got the Democrats to vote unanimously against that nomination, I think.

J: What was it for?

G: I believe it was for a subcabinet post. There was the [Lewis] Strauss nomination, too, I think to the Atomic Energy Comission.

J: I wasn't in on it.

G: How about the Bricker Amendment? Do you remember the fight over the Bricker Amendment?

J: What was the amendment?

G: The Bricker Amendment had to do with limiting presidential prerogative on foreign policy, getting congressional approval of executive agreements and things like that.

J: I didn't follow that, can't help you.

G: You've described his work in committees very well. Do you recall his work on any particular bills that was really outstanding, where he managed to get something passed. Do you have any particular recollections of--?

J: Oh, I don't have any particular recollections of any particular bill. I'll just say he was in complete charge of the government. And I say government in this way: when he got to be majority leader, or even before then, there were forty-seven Democrats, forty-eight Republicans, and one Independent, Wayne Morse. Then Wayne got elected on the Democratic [ticket]. But Nixon could have broken the tie, you see, 48 and 48. So he didn't make any concessions, although he said

he'd let [Robert] Taft have it, but with Nixon there as vice president he wasn't being too goddamned generous.

But there were different things that came up every day: the Bricker Amendment, the Jenner Amendment, or something like that.

G: Do you remember the Southern Manifesto at all, after the Brown [v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas] decision?

J: Yes.

G: When all of the other southern senators signed--

J: And he refused to sign it. Yes.

G: Do you recall his reasoning on this or what he--?

J: Well, what's the obvious?

G: Well, one thing, he was the majority leader, he was the leader of the party, and perhaps felt a compulsion to side with the national party rather than the southern senators.

J: In other words, he was a--I've used that a lot of times. But the fact of it is, he just didn't agree with them. Oh, I've used that, he had to be a--oh, goddamn, I called up at--you know, Lyndon was running for re-election in 1968. It was funny. Here come his valet down to my room and says, "The President says for you to get ready to go to Texas." I said, "Well, goddamn, pack my bags." Lyndon was over at the State Department, and then he called back and said, "No, Sam Houston's not going. Come and meet me at the South Portico." Bobby Kennedy had announced that day, you see. All right. I meet him out there, and the helicopter was ready to start after he got through talking to me. So he did this: "I want you to call every chairman

that you can and see how they stand on Bobby Kennedy's announcement, how that's going to affect [the campaign], all that you can do. I've told Jim Rowe, I've done this and that." I went in and talked to Jim Rowe and Johnny Criswell. They were going back in the old days of Roosevelt, didn't have their mind on what Lyndon wanted to do at all. I wasn't even earning my room and board.

I walked out and I said, "Well, I think I'll take Louisiana." So I told the secretary to get Mr. Watson [?], who was the Democratic chairman from Louisiana, some small town. "Watson, this is Sam Houston Johnson. I'm President Johnson's brother." "Hell, I didn't know he had a brother." "Well, he has one. I want to find out how you stand on my brother. What do you think about him?" "Not worth a goddamn." "All right, Mr. Chairman, what do you figure is wrong?" "If it had been old Harry Truman in there, he'd have gotten that Pueblo back in thirty minutes from those North Koreans." I said, "Yes, it would have been. Harry Truman could have threatened them with the atomic bomb and gotten it back, because the Russians didn't have it at that time and no one else had it but us. But now Russia has it and it could be a third world war all over again. So you've got to play it--I thought the same damn thing. I told my brother, 'Goddamn, get that thing back here within twenty-four hours or, by God, we're going. . . .'" I said I said that to Lyndon; I didn't, but it made it good. [I told him that] I said, "Lyndon, you've got to get that son of a bitch back in twenty-four hours." And [I told him] that he said, "Sam Houston, you must realize that that could be a plot for

a third world war and get us in it. I've got to think that the atomic bomb now, one of them is twenty-five times more powerful than what it was in Truman's day."

[I said that] I used that argument to Lyndon--although I hadn't even mentioned it--to this fellow, and he said, "Well, all right, I'll go with him. But listen, I contributed to your brother's campaign in 1948." I said, "Well, I sure appreciated it, because we needed it in 1948 more than we ever needed it before, so I assume it had to do with my brother's voting record on oil and other things that you liked." "Yes, sure did." I said, "Well now, what do you think about [J. William] Fulbright?" "That son of a bitch! I have on my desk about twenty letters that I'm mailing to my friends in Arkansas against that son of a bitch." "What about Wayne Morse? He's fighting my brother." "Don't mention that bastard's name." I said, "Well, Bobby Kennedy?" "Oh, that bastard!" I said, "Well, you know he announced today." "Well, he'd better never enter the state of Louisiana." I said, "Well, then, you don't like my brother. Why?" "Well, when he became leader of the Senate, he brought all those goddamn niggers to Washington." Then I used that same thing: "Well, when he was just representing Texas, he represented Texas. But when he got to be majority leader, he had to represent the whole country. You wouldn't want a man from the North just representing the North in there, would you?" "No." "Why would you think that a man from the South should just represent Louisiana and Texas and Mississippi? I'd like for you to think it over, because I don't think that [George] Wallace has got

a chance. I know who you're for, how Louisiana stands; it's for Wallace. But you're the chairman of the Democratic Party in Louisiana, and you're going to have to vote in the Democratic committee for him." He said, "I don't run it. Call the Governor." Whatever his name was, McField or whatever [John McKeithen]. I said, "You think I'm a fool? Goddamn, you just cussed my ass out. If you think I'm going to call up there and get cussed out again, you're crazy as hell. I'm not about to get cussed out twice." He said, "If I have something that comes up there, how do I get in touch with you, just call the White House and ask for Mr. Johnson?" "Goddamn, don't do that! You're liable to get the wrong one. Ask for Sam Houston." We got to laughing. He said, "Well, I'll talk it over with the Governor, and we'll work it out." But that was kind of a test run on how we stood in Louisiana at that time.

G: Did you call other states, too?

J: Yes, I called other states, used the same approach. Most of the state chairmen were behind Lyndon. Of course, Massachussetts, I've told you about talking to Lester Hyman in a friendly way, that I could understand that he wouldn't have been the state chairman if it hadn't have been for Teddy Kennedy, because the other senator was a Republican, [Edward] Brooke, and the governor [John Volpe] was a Republican, you see. So I could understand Teddy Kennedy's stand, and how Teddy Kennedy had respect for Hyman. I did the same thing to Burns [?], because we had [Jacob] Javits, a Republican senator, and we had

[Nelson] Rockefeller [as] governor, so it left the patronage all up to Bobby Kennedy, and I could understand that feeling of loyalty to them.

G: One of the things that we talked about before, and you mentioned this when you said, "You might get the wrong Johnson if you call," many people have told me that you could sound just like your brother.

J: Yes.

G: That every now and then they would get an order from someone that they thought was the President to bring in this file or that file, and it turned out to be you. Do you recall any examples of your using your ability to sound just like him as a practical joke or something?

J: Oh, hell yes. But I never used it in an official way. I never did that. I did it in a prankster way. I'd pick up the phone and call Mama. "Mama, where in the hell is Sam Houston?" She'd start making excuses for me. Then I never will forget when Lyndon was first elected to Congress. Sherman Birdwell was his secretary. And they came up there--it was a special election, you know, behind Roosevelt--hell, they were the cockiest bitches you ever saw. Hell, they were. Goddamn, they thought, by God, that Lyndon Johnson was already president, but he was the most freshman of the freshmen. But his staff wasn't. So I called up Sherman. I said, "Sherman, bring me this LCRA file right away." He hauled the goddamn LCRA file over there. Lyndon said, "What in the hell are you calling for?" So Gene Latimer, I talked to him. I sent that little bastard--he got cocky. He worked for us once, [for Richard] Kleberg, I mean. And I told him, "Gene, I'm getting ready to make a speech on the farm bill, and I want a

farmer's bulletin, the latest farmer's bulletin, four hundred and thirty-five of them, so I can put them on each congressman's desk when I get up to make the speech. Go get them." And he had to take a pack on his goddamn back to get them [?]. (Laughter) Hell, yes, I did. But it backfired, too.

G: When did it backfire?

J: Well, Lyndon called down one morning: "Hello, honey, how are you? This is Sam Houston. He won't be in for a couple of hours." I've heard him; he called before, "He's not coming in for a couple of hours. The Senator won't be in for a couple of hours," and there it was, Lyndon. He was always mimicking.

G: He was a great mimic, too, I understand.

J: Oh, yes. Only thing it was is when you live with a man all your life and you know how he talks, expresses himself, and then at the same time, you've seen two brothers that talked a lot alike, and things like that. But I couldn't in an ordinary conversation fool you, but I could if I talked like I am now, you see. That's the only way. To talk like I'm mad, well, by God, that--

G: You raise your voice instinctively.

J: I raised it, and "Damn it, I want to know where he is." I've called up Lady Bird, just casually, you know, called her up about something. [She'd say] "Dear, when are you coming home?" I said, "Lady Bird, this is Sam Houston." Like that. She got the wrong dear.

But, oh, I've pulled other pranks. There was nothing wrong with them. Oh, I scared the hell out of Congressman Nat Patton. This is

good. He's from up at Crockett, Texas. His office was directly across from mine. He was always coming over asking my advice on something. He struggled right across with me. He had a letter--see, his district had been redistricted back in 1934, I think, so the postmaster job came up for reappointment, and her husband was a doctor and he had written Congressman Patton about his reappointing his wife. So Nat had a three-page letter--Cousin Nat. He called everybody cousin; Queen Elizabeth [was] cousin, everything. He said, "Don't you know that I know that you voted against me? I ain't saying I am going to appoint her, and I'm not saying I'm not." Three pages of bull and that's plenty. "I have to have the cooperation particularly of those whom I name as postmaster. Up to now, she hasn't indicated any loyalty yet to me. Now I repeat again, I'm not saying yes, I'm not saying no, but I'm open-minded about it."

I advanced that telegram. I got the--my memory of the man's name, Dr. So-and-so--I got the date of the letter. So [Nat said to me], "What do you think about that letter, Cousin?" [I said], "I think it's pretty good. How long has it been waiting?" "Oh, I've had it here for about ten days." I said, "That's bad." I was already thinking what I was going to do, you know. I said, "God, you made a mistake. You should have answered that right then." "Well, I wanted to ponder over it. Let them worry about it." Okay, he left the office. I called Joe Corona, head of Western Union. "Joe, I want you to take this telegram. I want you to put it on from Palestine, Texas. Here's what you do: 'You failed reply my letter. Will have an oppo-

nent against you before sundown.' Sign this fellow's name to it. Deliver that in twenty-five minutes." "Sam, I can get sent to the penitentiary for that." "Oh, no you won't."

I went down to Congressman Morgan Sanders' office. I said, "Well, let's see. We've got just about ten minutes now until that Western Union is going to deliver a telegram, so let's go on up to Nat Patton's office." Went in there and we sat down on the divan. Mrs. Patton was sitting over there with a little bonnet on, you know, she didn't have much sense--oh, well, a good country girl, you know, with some other woman with her. [Patton said], "Hey, Morg, I want to read this to you," this letter. So he got to "don't you know that I know--" and about that time that telegram arrived. He said, "Oh, shit!" You could have heard him down a block. He read it: "I'll have an opponent against you by sundown." You see, the filing date was not over yet. I got to laughing so damn much I rolled off on the floor. He said, "Tell me, tell me. Did you do that to me? Did you?" I said, "Yes, by God, I did." That was a funny one.

But I told you about sending that other boy to the White House, Bob Poage's secretary, didn't I?

G: No.

J: Well, [in] 1936, Bob Poage was elected congressman. So he had a secretary called Clarence C. Elwell [?]. He graduated from school with Bob Poage. He called his congressman Bob--Bob this, Bob that--and he made the circuit telling us secretaries what all he was doing. "I'm mailing out so many farm bulletins. I'm doing this and that."

Well, hell, I'd been up there a couple of years, I felt like I was senior. And some of the other secretaries, you know, got tired of this fellow just bragging about what all he was doing. They said, "Sam, how long are you going to let that go on?" I said, "Not very much more."

It was the start of the year. So I picked a time when I knew Bob Poage was out of town, gone back home. Then I had my secretary to say that Mr. Steve Early of the White House was calling for the Congressman. iJust a minute. I'll tell you what, Mr. Early, Bob's not here. He's down in Texas. Anything I can do to help you? I'll be glad to do it." "Well, I wanted to know, I have it here"--see, Steve Early was press secretary but he kind of also handled political things. "I have it here, [a] rundown, that your congressman supported the President pretty strongly on his farm program." "Yes, he did. He sure did." "Are you familiar with that?" "Yes, I'm very familiar with it. You know, Bob and I went to school together." "Oh, you did?" "In his campaign, now, he took one end of the district and I took the other end of the district." And that man, he convinced me that he was goddamned important. I said, "Well, since you're being so close to the Congressman, went to school with him, learned with him, went through the campaign, I wonder if you'd mind coming down to dinner tonight, because the President is having just a few of the new members that went all-out for him." "Do you mean that?" I said, "Yes. Of course, it'll be a white tie affair. Southwest entrance." And it said in the paper that I had a photographer there taking pictures of

him trying to get in the gate, but I didn't do that. That was the funniest thing. He never spoke to me again.

G: That's funny.

J: Now, what other questions have you got? I want to get back to Kearns, now.

G: I guess we had better get back to the youth and Doris Kearns. Another point that she makes, that your brother told her, was that when he would do something to displease your mother, that she would give him the silent treatment, that she would sort of ignore him for a day or two. Was this a form of discipline in the family?

J: First thing, it didn't happen. That's more of Lyndon's own way of doing things. That was the way he operated. That's perfectly Lyndon.

G: Where do you think he got that from?

H: He made that one up, just wanting to--

G: No, I mean, where did he get this technique of giving people the silent treatment?

J: Oh, I don't know. He [used it] only [on] those he was extremely close to. Because if you did something wrong, if you weren't real, real close to him, you didn't get it. He'd cuss you out. But if you were real close to him, he'd just say, "All right. Okay," and then that would hurt you more than bawling you out. That's where he got it. So then he imagined; he passed that on as Mother giving him the silent treatment.

G: But you don't recall your mother doing this to him?

J: No. Mama. . . .

G: Who was the disciplinarian in the family? Was it your mother or your father, or both of them?

J: I guess it was more Mama than Daddy. Lyndon, he had to have the--see, there were five kids, five children. He would get mad at four, but he had to have one that would take up for him. You can ask Mother's maid, who's still living. [She] says every time Lyndon would call up, Mother would start shaking, because she was afraid if he'd come out he'd find something wrong that she'd done, or something like that, was trembling.

G: Was this when she was older?

J: Yes. This was when he was in Congress. He wanted to have a hundred per cent loyalty from Mama and--not loyalty, but he wanted to be the only child, instead of one of five. He wanted more attention. The other four weren't considered.

G: Did he get more than the others?

J: Quite the contrary. Mama really wasn't--you run down--Mother would be somewhat like Daddy. She stuck up for the one that was being attacked, particularly if it was wrong.

G: Can you give me an example here?

J: Well, he might complain about one of my sisters spending too much money, or not doing this or not doing that. It was mostly me, of course. Regardless of what I'd done, it wasn't right, even if that wasn't true, you know. [He'd] needle Mama about it and needle Daddy about me. So instead of it turning them on me, it turned them more toward me than Lyndon, because they could see what he was doing. If

they'd been dumbbells like you have around the Library, or around some of these other places, cussing Sam Houston out, why they'd take him pretty serious, but they expected it from [Lyndon], that he's just running me down, because I was Daddy's favorite, you see, as well as my mother's. And that's admitted by the other members of the family. And I guess Lyndon made me that way.

But then, turn around, like Booth Mooney says, I was there all the time when he needed me. Like I told you before, I can't remember ever really asking him for something that he didn't do, when you got down to it, personally or for a friend. He might needle hell out of me, and he might say, "No, it can't be done. I won't do it, and you shouldn't have asked me to." But after he got through exploding and saying fifty reasons why he couldn't do it, [like] Lady Bird wouldn't let him--that was always a good one. "Lady Bird won't let me." Hell, I swear I heard that one, "but maybe I can talk her into it," and this and that.

G: Wasn't he really the boss in his own family?

J: Oh, hell, yes. That don't mean [in] his home [?], he was really 99 per cent--no, I won't say that. The thing of it is, Lyndon--as Mother says in her book about me, I was extremely sensitive and all. Well, when he was bawling me out about something, unjustifiably, and I thought it was unjustifiable, he wouldn't see me, because I wasn't around. I'd take off and go to Mexico. So he had learned it would take him a long time to treat me with kind of kid gloves. Now, if he didn't need me, or something, it would be different.

But I remember when I moved in the White House to live in 1967 that he wanted me up there to be in his campaign. I'd broken a leg over at Baltimore; a car ran into a girlfriend and me in a car and I was in the hospital. And I was invited to Lynda Bird's wedding. At Luci's wedding I was invited; I came up all the way from Mexico to attend it. But I was in the hospital at the time [of Lynda's wedding], army hospital, too, because it was the nearest one.

So I called up--well, first thing, Dr. [Bill] Voss at the White House, he was there in thirty minutes after I had the wreck, and it was a merchant marine [who] ran a stop sign and ran right into her car and knocked me underneath the dashboard. They had to saw the front seat out in order to get me out. But anyhow--and it was this bad leg--we got an invitation to come there, and Dr. Voss, who was there--he was what you'd call kind of a go-between. I mean, Lyndon used him because he was a psychiatrist, and he was pretty good at figuring things out and advising and everything.

So Dr. Voss came over to see me and said, "Did you get the invitation to Lynda Bird's wedding?" I said, "Yes." "Do you think you're going?" I said, "No, I don't think I can make it." "Well, why?" I said, "Well, I don't know why Lyndon invites my ex-wife to come at the same time as me there. I went to Luci's and there was Mary [Fish Haselton] that came all the way from by-God Paris to be at that. I ran into her when Secret Service told me she wasn't there. That's one of the reasons. The second reason, I don't know about my leg." Well, time passed.

Then I called in Colonel Scoles [?]. See, I was in an army hospital, Colonel Scoles was the head of the hospital. I said, "Colonel, I want to ask you something. How long can I stay here?" "[As] long as you want to." I said, "Well, say the President wants me to come, and you say I'm unable to come, and he finds out I am. You know what could happen to you, don't you?" "No, I figured that. You can still stay here as long as you want to, because I'm going to retire next month, anyhow." (Laughter) Shit. Boy, boy, boy, was I pleased. He left. I scratched a letter to Lady Bird that said I remember Lynda Bird, and I used to change her diapers, and how sorry I was that I would be unable to attend and, oh, I really just poured it on. But that I [had] talked it over with Colonel Scoles, and so forth, and I just couldn't make it.

Well, the mail leaves there at Kimbrough Hospital about one o'clock, if you want to get it that day. I couldn't find an orderly to take it down; that's when I got out of bed myself and I went to the clerk--the first time I'd walked with crutches--and I went down there and put that in the goddamned box. And I came back so relieved that I didn't have to go.

Then the next day was Sunday, and I went through the papers. One thing that I knew that Lyndon checked was those that were--that's one thing about [Lyndon]; that's a minor detail, you might think, but to him it isn't--those that were coming and those that can't come. Well, it had [that] Mrs. Robb's sister couldn't come because of a broken hip, or a broken foot or something, had been invited but couldn't

come. My name wasn't mentioned as even being invited and couldn't come on account of a leg. Liz Carpenter just didn't put it in yet. I said, "Colonel, I know when Lyndon reads that he's not going to take it. He's going to get mad as hell. The fact is they listed the others couldn't come on account of a leg and they didn't even list me as being invited. Something's going to happen." Sure enough, that Sunday night, about nine-thirty or ten, Lady Bird called and said she was talking to Lyndon, and they'd talked to Dr. Voss and could see no reason why I couldn't come on to the wedding. I could get the same therapy there at the White House that I could get there. It wasn't a question of "are you coming?" It's "what day are you coming?" She was getting married on Saturday, so I took a Wednesday. And that's all there was to it and I was there.

Then of course, the President of Australia, after the wedding was over with and all, he went out and he got [killed]. A shark killed him, President Hume [Harold Holt] or whatever his name is.

Oh, the first thing I did when I moved in the White House, I thought I'd test to see--

(Interruption)

G: Let me ask you another thing about your youth. I have a quotation from your mother as saying that your father was too strict with Lyndon and too easy on Sam Houston. Have you ever heard that quote before?

J: You have a quote on that?

G: Yes. I believe it came out of the book that was done at San Marcos,

the [William] Pool, [Emmie] Craddock, [David Conrad] book [Lyndon Baines Johnson: The Formative Years].

J: Well, it's the goddamned truth, but I mean, I didn't think Mama would put it in writing. Now, it's this. Let me tell you my relationship with my daddy, and then Lyndon's relationship with him, and then you draw your own conclusions. [When] I was a kid, I liked to do chores around to please my grandmother, like milking the cows and then watering the milk, and things like that, and bringing in the wood. Now, like I'd be sleeping in the bed with Lyndon, and Mama's in with the girls, Daddy'd holler for me to come in and get in to keep him warm. Well, I'd just stay there freezing, afraid to move, you know, to wake Daddy up. And I'd [also] go get the morning mail and bring it back to the house. Lyndon wasn't around Daddy like I was. I drove Daddy when he was [on] trips and things, and I had the advantage. He would go into William Jennings Bryan's days, and then tell me all of his experiences while he was a representative. Well, I got the advantage of Daddy's knowledge, and ate it up, as well as Mother's knowledge, and ate it up. Whereas Lyndon was not made that way, to sit down and listen to Daddy. He'd listen, but then he's gone.

G: And yet he pursued his father's profession--politics.

J: Yes.

G: Why--?

J: Well, and Mother's profession, too; Mother's father was in politics, too. He got it on both sides. And so did I. But I had too much sense to run, because I knew I couldn't get elected. It's a hell of a

lot better to be behind the machine. I'll tell you something. People have often wondered--everybody knew that I was as close to Lyndon, like Holmes Alexander, closer than hands and feet on things. Now, if you get so important, or if you feel you're too damned important in Lyndon Johnson's office, what are you doing? You're putting yourself up there to be shot at. The newspapers are going to hit you and tear you down, if they're against Lyndon. But if you're back there doing your work and never saying a thing about yourself, going ahead and just talking to them, and things like that, and getting along with them, don't try to say, "My brother did this and that," or "I did this and that," and keep unimportant, then they are not going to shoot at you. They feel sorry for you. You see what I mean?

Now here's a prime example of that. Mother had it in her letters and things a picture with me and Daddy, "Daddy and his favorite," you know, in the scrapbook. Well, when Daddy traveled [as] motor bus inspector, he'd ride the buses and leave the car in charge of me, because Lyndon was teaching school in Houston. Now, my sister Rebekah would have to ask for the car, it didn't make any difference, one week or two weeks in advance. But that didn't bother me at all, because when I got ready to go out the back door, I'd just let the car slide down the road to start and I was gone. She'd report me to Daddy: "Sam Houston's taken the car, and you know, Daddy, you promised me." He'd say, "Wait till that young man gets back." No way.

But every morning at five o'clock, I was up eating breakfast with Daddy. Regardless of what time I came in, I woke up at five o'clock,

and I did this morning, at four-thirty, too. I do it every morning. I was up and dressed and down eating breakfast. Daddy and I might be talking about something. One time Rebekah--the first thing, Rebekah never did get up to complain, but one time she did. "Now, Daddy, you tell Sam Houston what you told me last night you were going to do." Daddy said, "Sam Houston, if you ever do that again, you'll never get it." Rebekah went on back to bed, and Daddy and I went on about the conversation, what we were talking about. So I was spoiled about that, as far as that was concerned.

Now, being too hard on Lyndon--read that over again.

G: Your mother was quoted as saying that your father was too strict with Lyndon and too easy with Sam Houston.

J: Well, Lyndon wasn't around to be strict with, that answers that part. He was easy on me.

G: Was he around your mother more than your father?

J: No.

G: I know she helped him with his course work and elocution classes.

J: Well, [she] did [with] everybody else. Well, so was Mother, [she was] just as easy on me as Daddy was. And so was Lyndon, when you get down to it, and so was Rebekah and Josefa and Lucia. So they all [were]. In other words--and so was Dick Kleberg. That's the reason I turned out to be such a son of a bitch as I am; if they'd have been harder on me, I would have been better. I'd have been president instead of sitting up here at the Alamo Hotel.

But no, the quotation from Mother, even if she felt it, she'd never give it out. That's number one. Now, that might come from something I might have written.

G: I think it did. It quotes you as saying that she said that.

J: Now, that's something that sounds just about [like] one of my deals.

G: Let me ask you an isolated case here. Do you remember Ox Higgins? I believe it's Higgins, a baseball player down there.

J: What did he do besides play baseball?

G: Well, he evidently had a role in one of your brother's early campaigns. I'll find the reference to that exactly but--

J: Oscar Higgins?

G: I guess that's it, yes. Ox Higgins.

J: I'll bet you don't find it. Now, if he did--you mean while we were in school or something?

G: I believe it was a little later. But [he was] a fellow from Johnson City whose brother was a manager of, I think, the Boston Red Sox baseball team. But I'll look that up.

J: All right. Okay.

G: I have another note here to the effect that you would make periodic trips to San Marcos when your brother was in school there.

J: That's something I'd like to bring up there. The relationship between my brother and I was very close, and the relationship between me and my father was very close. Now Lyndon would come home from San Marcos. Then he'd take me down there when he was going to summer school to stay with him. When he taught school in the summertime at Houston, he

took me to live with him in Houston to go to junior college. That kind of relationship. It wasn't to look after me; I had a daddy to look after me, as far as that's concerned. But we'd sit around most of the time and joke, and I don't want to say this in a braggadocious way, but if he would pull something that he thought was out of the ordinary, he wanted me to see him pull it, to get that he was the big brother.

And I worshipped him. I did. I could walk on the Senate gallery, the family gallery, and if he'd spot me up there, he would start an argument with somebody just for the purpose of doing it, and look up there all the time. Yes, he did that. Like this time right after he'd let that president of that company go, you know. He looked everywhere for me to come and go with him. When he'd pull something out of the ordinary, he did. And that's the reason if I'd see Lyndon winding up on something there that I knew that he knew that I knew wasn't a hundred per cent, I always walked out and gave him free rein. Because I never tried to--in other words, he wanted to, I don't say impress me, but impress everybody, but mostly it was me on some accomplishment that he made.

Just like he called me down at Myrtle Beach, inviting me to come to the [1964 Democratic National Convention]. I was in the hospital. [He asked me] to go to Atlantic City. All right. "Who do you think I should have as vice president?" He didn't know I was in the hospital with pneumonia, because [to] the operator [he] just said, "Get Sam Houston." He asked me to go, and I told him I couldn't make it,

[that] I was sitting out in the sunshine and all that crap, you know, on the beach. But then the purpose of it is, he said, "Who do you think I should have as vice president?" "Well," I said, "Dick Russell." He'd have been the last man I'd have wanted, you see, so I said it. "Sam Houston, God Almighty, lose all the North?" You know, like that. "You've been away from here, you don't know what's going on." Then that's when I popped off. I said, "Well, [John] Pastore would be a good man." "Oh, hell, three little delegates, Sam Houston?" That was all he said.

Then I got down to what I wanted to find out. "I hope to hell it isn't Hubert Humphrey." "What have you got against him?" "Lyndon, I've known him ever since he's been in the Senate. He fought you on civil rights, he did on this and that, and he tried to be a majority leader and this and that." "But I made a Christian out of that man." "But he talks too much." "Muriel has promised to cut that out." I found out from him who he was going to nominate and I called a friend of mine in an insurance company and bet five hundred dollars it'd be Hubert Humphrey two days before it happened.

My writer, who was going through my dictation, he wrote it up [that Lyndon said], "That little dago from that dinky little state?" And I didn't read my manuscript before it [inaudible]. It made me as mad as it did Lyndon, on a lot of things that went in there, because it was a damn lie, and goddamn, I've apologized enough for that, I'm going to quit, because some people, television people, call me, "What did you and your brother fall out about? About the book?" I say,

"Well, one thing I know he didn't like"--"Mr. Johnson, you're on the air now." "All right. One thing he didn't like was what was said about Senator Pastore, and that was put in by my editor, and it was not true. But it sounded a lot like Lyndon, and when my brother denied ever having said it, why, then the press just took my word instead of his, and Pastore took mine instead of Lyndon's, and that brought a break. That's the one thing I know. There are several things in there that I won't say that he was happy about, over happy, but it was a pretty straight-talking book, and I gave him credit and praised him throughout that book."

G: Another thing that Doris Kearns mentions in regard to the early years was his grandmother's paralysis, and as he told Kearns later, he had a fear of being paralyzed, and he didn't like to visit his grandmother because of her [being] paralyzed and being confined there to this one room.

J: Boy, boy, boy, how he thought that one up, I don't know. And how she sucked it in! Of course, it was Grandma Johnson. She died in 1917; he wasn't ten years old. I don't think he knew her. Of course, I couldn't say. Let's see, I think she died in 1917; Lyndon was born in 1908, I believe it is, so he was nine years old. I never heard him mention Grandma Johnson in my life.

G: Did you ever hear him express a fear of becoming paralyzed, or of losing the use of his limbs?

J: You know, that's pitiful. He must have been a pretty sick man when that woman was around. You see, I never saw him [then]. He must have

been pretty sick. I never heard him mention Grandma Johnson in my life.

Now later on I was told that he was always fearful of a heart attack because every male member of the Johnsons died before he was sixty, you know, had an early ending. Well, Daddy died when he was sixty but it was a different kind of a heart attack than Lyndon had had. It was a long, drawn-out diseased heart. It could have been diagnosed--you see, that was 1937--as cancer or something else. Now, Uncle George died of a blood clot in his leg. At that time they didn't have a cure for it, you see. Uncle Tom, I guess he was seventy, I won't be sure, though. But Grandpa Johnson died of pneumonia. Grandpa Baines died of hepatitis and he never took a drink in his life. Goddamn, I'm sixty-two; I've lived longer--oh, hell, I'd have sold out, "Give me fifty years. If I reach fifty, by God, I'll be happy." I'm the only damned one that don't have an ulcer in the family. Hell, I've got two sisters living, both of them have ulcers. Rebekah's had more operations, and Lucia has, too, arthritis. Frankly, I'm the healthiest goddamned one, and healthier than Lyndon was. I'd known it a lot of years, because, see. . . .

Let's consider the President in this light. And I have no other reason than to consider it in the light. Now, I might be the only one that does, but I do think I'm more qualified than anybody to speak for him. So let's reason this out. You know--if you don't know, it makes no difference--I know that when I entered that White House in 1967 and 1968, we were running for re-election. Why would I be down there?

Why was he talking to me every morning? Let's take this to start out with. Lyndon kind of liked for me to beg to work. [Inaudible] One morning he said, "Where were you yesterday, Sam Houston?" I said, "Oh, I took the White House car and I drove over to see the doctor at Baltimore." "I want to you go down to the Democratic National Committee and look around and see what's going on down there." "Lyndon, you'll have to call, or get Marvin Watson to. I don't want to be going down there all--you know."

All right. I came down for dinner that night and he said, "Well, what went on there?" I said, "Lyndon, John Criswell called me and told me that he had the state chairmen in for two days and for me to come down after that." First time in my life I ever heard him say "oh, shit!" at the table. First time, at the table. He picked up a telephone, said, "Marvin, didn't I tell you to get Sam Houston down there to the Democratic National Committee?" "Yes." "Sam Houston says that you're having him to wait there, that John Criswell says--that's what I want him down there for, at that cocktail party tonight, to meet the state chairmen. In every campaign I've ever had, he's been in it, and he knows me better than any living person. By God, when I wanted him down there most to meet these people, y'all come up with that." And he hung up the phone. Now, that's it. Of course, the next morning I was down there. And I spoke before them. John Criswell, who was executive director, introduced me, [said] that I'd been in every campaign that Lyndon Johnson had ever had and so forth.

I just stood up there and nodded, said, "I'm here to learn," and go on with it.

But there was never any indication to me that he was not going to run. There were people coming up, for instance, [when] I was down at the committee. When they'd come in, the state chairmen, I'd get a White House car and meet them in the East Room, sit down and have coffee and talk to the state chairmen there, and Lyndon would appear at five o'clock and make a thirty-minute speech and leave. When they were holding the governors' conference, I went out with Marvin Watson. He [Lyndon] had gotten in an argument with Governor Hay [Richard Hughes?], whatever his name is, up there in New Jersey. I told him he'd lost his temper. He said, "No, he was hitting at me." I said, "No, Lyndon, it was about the war, and everything that was on his mind was on the other governors' minds, and you just cussed him out, and you shouldn't have done it." Lady Bird agreed with me, but anyhow, he--

G: What did he say to him?

J: Oh, he brought up a minor thing; I can't remember what it was.

G: The Governor did?

J: Yes.

G: And what did your brother say to him?

J: Well, Lyndon said, "I'm tired of answering those damn silly questions," something like that. We got in the car and Bird said, "Lyndon, you shouldn't have done that." He said, "Oh, he was kind of needling me there." I said, "But Lyndon, he was asking a question

that was on every governor's mind about it." [Inaudible] He had something in him that he felt like--he had done that [before] when you hit a sore spot or something.

But the thing of it is--now, you've been around the Library, you've heard other people talk, you've heard Lady Bird talk, at least you've got records that are from everybody. What is their opinion why he quit and didn't run?

G: I think the explanation there is that he quit in order to not have his actions considered political, so that his actions with regard to diplomacy, with regard to Vietnam, wouldn't be considered in a political light. So he could work for peace without--

J: Well, let's see. The question is why didn't he go on and--I know why he quit, of course. [The reason] was this, that he thought that the Tet offensive, that the North Vietnamese knew they were whipped, they couldn't run us out, you see. They tried it at the Tet offensive. They did every damned thing they could; they threw in everything China could get in there and everything else, and it was a hard, tough fight. Goddamn, I sat up at night and listened to it and all that.

Then he was making--it's a funny thing about intuition. Congressman [Jerome] Waldie came up to the White House to see me. He said, "What can I do to help?" I said, "Well, Bobby Kennedy is going to run," this and that, or something like that. I said, "Now, you go out to California and you attack [Jesse] Unruh, make him answer the questions. Start a good, all-out attack on Unruh, because that's a Bobby Kennedy man." "I can't do it, Sam. He's my roommate and made

me majority leader of the [California State] Assembly when he was speaker. I'll find you someone." So he went out, and called me on a Saturday--I had an apartment separate from anybody else, Suite 9, 12, or something like that. The Johnson-Humphrey committee was on the seventh floor, the Democratic committee was on the second floor, and I had a suite to meet people that did not want to be seen coming in the Democratic commmittee or coming in and out of the White House. If you called for me at the White House, [they'd say], "Just a minute, please." They'd call me at the Watergate; "Mr. So-and-so is calling." So then I'd come on the line and you would think I was talking directly from the White House.

All right, Congressman Waldie called me on a Saturday afternoon. "Sam," he said, "I've got two people here that are ready to take advice from you, work under you alone. There's Senator Pro Tem Williams [?], and then another fellow. I'm bringing them back with me to Washington. Now, they will do what you say; they don't want to have any connection with anything else." I said, "Don't do it now. Let's wait until after Lyndon's speech tomorrow night," which was Sunday, March 31. It was embarrassing to Waldie because he was getting ready to come right back. I knew nothing, but intuition told me to wait. I never saw his speech. I left the next night. I had Governor [John] Tawes, the Speaker of the [Maryland] House [of Delegates] Marvin Mandel, I had the [Maryland] Attorney General. The Chairman of the Baltimore County Democratic Committee was in Florida. We sent a plane and had him flown back up there. [Thomas] D'Alesandro

was supporting Kennedy, but I was blocking it right then, you see, sitting there in the penthouse when Lyndon said he wouldn't seek or accept, and I said, "Hell, I didn't know about it. Do you think I would be wasting my time and yours?"

Now, I said that when he began [his speech], that even though he had the war won, when they couldn't stop us with all the people that they threw at us, [that] they would be willing for a compromise, and then instead of Lyndon--he thought that they would be willing to meet him at the peace table. He offered the peace table; he put [Averell] Harriman in as chairman and Cyrus Vance in as deputy. Now, he made that deal, but let me show you. His statement reads, "I will not seek or accept the nomination as long as I am your president." Maybe he possibly--now, let's just reason this, that maybe the North Vietnamese--

G: I'm out [of tape]. Let me--

Tape 3 of 3

J: --unless you've got some basis for making it, you see. Now, there's one or two things. Was his health all right? The answer to that is unequivocally it was as good as it had ever been, and I have no other word other than Dr. Voss. And he'd have still be living if he'd observed it. Because he didn't have heart trouble. I checked that. Doctors were watching his diet, Lady Bird was, he kept pretty regular hours. So it wasn't that fact.

(Interruption)

I don't say when he first accepted for vice president that he was worried about it at all, because the vice president has no duties other than to preside over the Senate and vote in the case of a tie. But then when he became president in 1963 and [was] re-elected in 1964, he selected Hubert Humphrey to be his running mate, and you always should select a vice president that you think will qualify for the presidency, because you could suddenly be assassinated or have a heart attack or something, and there he thought Hubert Humphrey was the best man for the office. So if he had died in office, he'd have had his own man in, you see.

Now, you noticed the other night Stuart Long [on his television program "Capitol Eye"] began to ask me--I don't know if you noticed it or not--he said it was a cinch that Lyndon could be re-elected. You know, I questioned him. I said, "Wait just a minute." I had Stuart to go ahead and elaborate on that rather than me. I let him go on and explain it. That's all right. [Long said], "Well, the fact is that Humphrey just barely lost by a hairsbreadth in there. Lyndon could have run a better race." I let him do all that rather than me. I would be very impartial to that.

But anyhow, the question of it was peace. You thought they'd be at the peace table, number one. Next, he'd give up his whole political career for peace. Now, according to his calculation, or mine, we would have a depression in four years under Nixon, or [under] either one [of them]. Did we ever have a depression when Lyndon took control of the Senate? We had a slight recession under Eisenhower, and Lyndon

stopped it under Eisenhower. We never had any unemployment or a recession under Johnson's administration at all. So what would be better than to give up politics for peace, then be in a depression and the people saying, "I want Lyndon back. We want Lyndon, we want Lyndon." So in my opinion, I said that he would run in 1972, because of the way he worded it, the postulate [?] is "as long as I'm your president." But in 1972 he wouldn't be president. [Inaudible]

The next thing is why didn't he want Humphrey president? I was down in Acapulco having a good time; I was down there with Herbert Brownell staying at the Las Brisas Hotel. I said, "Why aren't you up there helping your old friend, Nixon?" He said, "I wouldn't vote for that son of a bitch. Why aren't you up there helping Humphrey?" I said, "I wouldn't vote for that son of a bitch either." So we'd sit it out and go up at night and get the election returns, because I've got a radio that could pick up everything.

But Humphrey, I don't know. You were here. I didn't hear Lyndon make any speeches for Humphrey, maybe one, about like he did for [George] McGovern. Did Chicago, [Richard] Daley, get out the vote for Humphrey? No. They went for Nixon. Did the bosses that Lyndon controlled, or they liked Lyndon very much, did they do it? No. But he damn near won, regardless. Now, when Nixon got in as president, did he change one thing of Lyndon Johnson's program or war effort? Not a thing. Regardless of what he campaigned on, but he didn't change one thing, domestically or foreign. He didn't try to.

Now, Lyndon Johnson had a second heart attack up in Virginia. I don't know whether you knew about it or not.

G: Oh, yes.

J: You don't know what brought it on, though, do you?

G: No.

J: I don't know either. But anyhow, I think you know and I do, too, so we'll leave it at that.

But anyhow, after that second massive heart attack in Virginia, then he knew his days were over. Then what? You don't take a man in politics for forty years and then suddenly put him out on a ranch. What did he do? He started drinking. He never had been a heavy drinker. I don't know that he did then but they tell me he did, and he got to smoking cigarettes. And he used to cuss me out, saying, "Don't you know that damn thing's going to kill you, cigarettes are going to kill you?" He gave up. He had nothing to live for. When he gave politics up, he gave up his life. He had it open up until--he was planning on coming back in 1972. Oh, yes. Until this second heart attack. What he wanted to do, goddamn it, he did it in his own way. Drinking and anything else that he wanted to do, and there wasn't any stopping him. And I don't know whether anybody tried to stop him; I wasn't here.

Now, isn't it funny, amusing--it is to me--that John Connally was appointed secretary of the treasury and that Nixon had him placed in the second spot? Did you hear [H. R.] Haldeman on this "Sixty Minutes"? [He] said that if John Connally had accepted the vice

presidency, that Nixon was going to resign and let John be president. Did you hear that?

G: Yes.

J: But did he? What did Nixon know about John? Nothing. So there you are.

Now, getting away from LBJ. You heard me the other night on that television [program] in which I said that it would be Ford and Connally? The next day they came out quoting--they took a survey of all the Republican delegates. I don't know, I've got a letter from the man that produced the program saying that "when you came out for that, they immediately took a survey of all the delegates." Now do you want to know something else? Who's going to be the next president? John Connally. You want to know my reasoning for that?

G: Yes.

J: Didn't Ford call him up there the other day? Didn't you see John coming out of the White House and say, "We didn't discuss the vice presidency"? I said six months ago that if Ford began to fail--I have it on tape; I talked to Holmes Alexander--it would be Rockefeller or Connally. I told Helen Thomas that; it's on the UPI wire.

All right. If John Connally--if Ford called him up there to stop Reagan, which I assume he probably did, if he could stop Reagan and switch the delegates, uncommitted, over to Ford, he could also stop him and be uncommitted for Connally. And John Connally, did you hear him on "Meet the Press" in which he articulated all the way through it? You ought to have heard it. I was out in my yard. I said, "Oh,

hell, I've got to go in and record this." [Henry] Kissinger did articulate or something, but Reagan couldn't articulate in the South. Well, Ford couldn't, nor Reagan, [neither] one couldn't. And if you've got to get votes, the main thing is that 35 per cent of the Reagan people will defect to Carter if he doesn't get it, and 35 per cent of the Ford people will defect to Carter if he doesn't get it, so the main thing is to get votes away from Carter, too. Who does that leave? John. I said, "Dear Mr. Articulate"--this is on my tape--"You're not fooling Sam Houston a damn bit. I just want you to know it." I put it on tape; you ought to hear it sometime. But if he's powerful enough to stop Reagan, he's powerful enough to stop Ford. I don't know, that's just a wild hunch.

All right, now get along with your questions.

G: Let's go back to the early years and talk some more about the family. Did you go on any family outings together, any trips?

J: The kinfolk all met up at the Christadelphian church up there and camped out, you know, when we lived at Johnson City; they still meet up there and camp there. Family trips. . . .

G: Did you travel into Austin much as a group, as a family?

J: Yes. Daddy would bring us into Austin some, back when we were kids. He'd give a nickel to the one that could spot the Capitol first, coming over the hill there.

G: Is that right?

J: Yes.

G: Where would you stay when you came into Austin?

J: I think it was the Hancock Hotel. The old Hancock Hotel. [Inaudible]

G: You mentioned that education was a very important thing in the family, or that they saw to it that--

J: Well, Daddy said this: "I don't have any money to leave you. I won't have. But if I can give each one of my kids an education, it's worth twenty-five thousand dollars to start out with, if they can get a college education." That was Daddy. He wanted every one of his kids to finish college. From there on you're on your own. So we moved to San Marcos, and [when] my baby sister finished in 1934, he packed his bags and went back to Johnson City. There you are.

As far as--don't think that because of some things my sister Rebekah has said--you know, [she's] kind of bossy, but she was--we were raised a pretty loyal bunch. Not loyal to the extent of being crazy, like the Kennedys. Did I get that dig in there? Hope I did. Not being nutty but. . . . See, Daddy died in 1937. He lived long enough to see Lyndon become congressman in May, and he died in October after that.

G: Do you remember where he was when the vote came in, when he learned the news of the election?

J: No, but you've seen a picture of when Lyndon left out on the train, kissed him. So I would say that he was probably in Johnson City. Might have been down here with Lyndon, I don't know.

G: He'd moved back to--

J: To Johnson City.

G: --by then, yes.

J: That's where he was.

G: What about his work with the--let's see, he worked with the highway department?

J: Yes.

G: What did he do there?

J: He got this appointment as supervisor of the highway, and the thing of it is, [it] was to keep--we rebuilt a highway. I used to rake gravel there on that road, and he had two different foremen, L. B. Sharklen [?] and the other one from Blanco, and they were building a road from Johnson City to Blanco, adobe road, you know, and things like that. They had a big scandal in the Ferguson Administration in the highway department. Joe Burkette [?] was commissioner; I forget the other two. But there were some pay-offs on the letting of contracts and things like that, to where Mrs. Ferguson's pardoning of the prisoners and the highway scandal defeated her for a second term. Dan Moody was elected [governor] and then he served two terms. Then he named as chairman of the Highway Commission, Ross Sterling, to succeed him [as governor], and then Mrs. Ferguson came in and defeated him for a second term.

I guess Lyndon had about--well, he wasn't a human dynamo as a boy, as captain of the football [team] or captain of the basketball [team], something he took up. He damn sure didn't take up violin, I can tell you that. But he passed his grades and he shot marbles and he played baseball.

G: I've heard he was good at marbles.

J: He was good; he could shoot straight. I can see him squirting down there and his goddamn knocking them right out, just like he did up in the Senate.

G: People have also recalled that he--

J: Played first baseman on--

G: --that he was a good athlete, but he was injured. Do you recall that, that an injury kept him from--

J: He had something wrong.

G: --participating in athletics longer?

J: No, hell. He couldn't be an athlete because he didn't weigh fifty pounds wet. He could play center in basketball because he was tall, and first baseman, but he didn't--both of us were very skinny. Daddy was, too; we weren't the athletic type.

G: But didn't he also have an injury that impaired him somewhat?

J: Well, that's the best hidden secret yet. I don't recall of any, but he might have had a bad leg. He fell and broke it carrying a sister of the Valts [?] up there in Johnson City. That might have been bad. But that's one thing, he conceded all those to me, the injuries, I mean. I got them; he didn't. I inherited that part.

No, I would say that Lyndon would like to have been an athlete, but he wasn't built for it.

G: Let me ask you, where do you think he derived his ability to persuade people and argue with people so effectively?

J: Daddy.

G: Really? Did he have the same skill?

J: Yes, Daddy. Daddy had that, very muchly so. Mother's family were quiet, religious, nothing out of the ordinary. They enjoyed the old-time religion and "Bringing in the Sheaves" and "He Walked with Me," and this and that, like I do now.

G: But I suppose since his mother taught elocution, that people associate his public-speaking ability with--

J: Mama taught everybody elocution, not [just] Lyndon. Every one of us kids had to get up and say a rhyme and say a piece. As a matter of fact, Mother taught everybody in Johnson City, any play they put on. Now as far as being a debater and things like that, it was just something that was born in him.

G: But you say that his father had a lot of the same characteristics that he had in this--

J: As a persuader. But Daddy operated behind the scenes, and Lyndon did, too, until he had to get out on a limb. He went up there to the Senate; after he was there two years he became assistant leader, always operating, getting votes. [Ernest] McFarland, if I heard him once say, "Lyndon, you ought to have this job." Lyndon enjoyed being the man behind the scenes. Then one morning I was in his office. McFarland was out campaigning for re-election, so he wasn't going to be [there] that week, you know. And he gave Lyndon about fifteen-minutes notice that he was [inaudible]. He went in there and urped in the toilet, the bathroom. I walked over with him to the Senate gallery, and I'll never forget it as long [as I live]. People have asked me on television and radio and other places I've been over the last

couple of years, what impressed me most about my brother. And I would say, "The way he treated the president of that company was one thing; how he would work with Eisenhower and get the mistakes that were made within the Eisenhower Administration without publicizing himself; to be satisfied with a subcommittee rather than a Johnson committee." But it's just like this: dodge it all, let someone else do it, and you get the credit for it anyhow, but when you're thrown in the ring, that's what counts. And I saw him thrown in that ring that day.

He was notified at the closing of the session, about a week to go, that he would be acting majority leader, you see, to close out the Truman Administration in 1952. All right. When he took that front seat, left-hand side, when he rose up and said, "Mr. President, this is what will be considered," he rose--I had my eyes fixed on him; as a matter of fact, I never took them off him--he rose to be about ten-foot tall. Because there was old Bourke Hickenlooper from Iowa. He didn't know Lyndon. No one did, because Lyndon hadn't made any speeches. He whammed into Lyndon and Lyndon cut him off so goddamned sharp he fell down, he didn't just sit down. Taft was the next one. Taft asked him about something, and Lyndon knew more about the subject than Taft did, and he was the Republican leader. And one by one they began to hit him, the first day. Boy, you should have seen that man. His mind, it seemed like that he'd had an electric shock that would bring him through with caustic language and get the job done. And, brother, if the figures were right or not, I don't know; I don't know whether he knew or not, but he quoted it.

George Reedy came in there that evening and sat with me, because they were holding night sessions to end up, you know, in the Senate. And I said, "George, do you see what I see? McFarland will never get this back." Lyndon loved it! [He'd] been scared, heretofore, to get up. "But, boy, is he eating this up. He knows he's smarter than anybody on this damn floor, and he is showing it every five seconds. And McFarland will never get it back."

McFarland came back at the end. We'll say Mr. [William] Jenner or [John] Bricker or someone would ask McFarland a question, and then Lyndon would say, "Will the Senator from Arizona yield to me to handle it?" Every time they'd ask the Majority Leader something, Lyndon would say, "Will they yield to me to handle that?" McFarland, he never got it back. He [Lyndon] just loved it. And he was a master at it. You see, here's the thing. Once the people realize that you're not scared of them, that you've got brain power, then you get a little bit frightened of asking questions very much. You're willing to go along.

Then another thing, Lyndon went over backwards to be fair. Oh, he had a bunch of goddamned ADAers, you know, they'd formed a Democratic Advisory Committee: since we don't have a president, we will advise him. In other words, the Democratic Advisory Committee, appointed by a bunch of liberals throughout, sitting back there, set up, and pledge us for what? He and Rayburn just went on as if they never existed. Hell, who were they going to advise? Just themselves, as to how to attack Lyndon. And he loved it. And he knew when to--

well, he'd shot them up before they even got started. He was a great strategist. But the point of it is, he got a little nasty, a little bit, but not too far to where he couldn't retreat if he thought he went too far. But then he grew so in stature in the Senate, where he gave Eisenhower more Democratic votes than Republican votes in the Senate. Yes.

But who was Eisenhower? Who was he? A general. He was elevated by General Marshall from a colonel to a general. Why would General Marshall pick Eisenhower to go to Europe? Because Eisenhower could take orders and [was] a diplomat. The reason I'm saying this is because I know it, because I was in psychological warfare and was told this in that, you see. Every Friday they sent him--you see, they can have maps of Africa and France and Berlin on the Pentagon wall, just as easy as they could at Algiers. They'd pinpoint where it should be, you see, General Marshall and all the others. So then off to London went McCrutcheon [?]. Eisenhower carried that out. Now, I've never been in a war except by propaganda and things like that, subversiveness or whatever you want to call it, but anyhow, you have the people that can anticipate what the enemy is going to do, logically, trained that way. General Marshall was the father of the Marshall Plan. Truman made <u>him</u>, of course, but Eisenhower made him, too. Then when it came to Truman, that Eisenhower closed it out on Roosevelt [?].

Now, Ike's won it [?]. He could sit up and when Churchill would finish the bottle of brandy, he'd call Ike up, give him directions where to make the next attack, "Goddamn, this is where you are going

to attack." "Yes, sir, Mr. Prime Minister, yes, sir." He'd go right on; he'd get along with Churchill, you know.

But do you know who won the war? Russia. Why did Russia win the war? Let me show you. Let's see what started the war. Of course, Hitler, we know he was a maniac. We knew that Stalin agreed to sign a nonaggression agreement with Germany months before the war started. That meant a wreck [?]. All right. We know they attacked Poland. What did Russia do? Come in for her part. Roosevelt sent Harry Hopkins--Lyndon used to get after me when I said something one time about Franklin [?], "Do you know that you're sitting in the same room that Harry Hopkins used and [inaudible]?" You see, Harry Hopkins lived in the White House. He sent Harry Hopkins over to Russia to talk to Stalin, to see whether Stalin would stay with Germany and use us, or whether they would stand up and fight if we gave them the material to fight with. That was the decision. Harry Hopkins came back and advised Roosevelt, "If we give them the material and send it in through Vladivostok and all and rebuild their railroad, they will fight to the bitter end." Roosevelt trusted Harry Hopkins. We had nothing to do but trust Roosevelt. That was the decision. Then when Sweden and Norway, France, what's that--Pétain, Marshal [Henri Philippe] Pétain, whoo, goddamn, boy, they threw their guns down before they even left Berlin. Hell, they gave up so quick. But Russia, hell, they lost millions, millions. So when they go to talking about the Russians, don't misunderstand me, their line of thought

is to control, control. Their idea of fighting America is from within, not on the battlefield.

But Russia and the United States control the world. They do now. Russia used China to get in the Korean War. We're using China right there; if Russia gets out of line, we tell them, "Go on in. Give a little trouble there in Manchuria. [Go] right on in, give Russia a little trouble." We keep China as a threat to Russia all the time. Russia gave them the atomic bomb to build them up, but they don't know what to do. They don't know what. Let me tell you something, these countries that Russia controls, had they rather be controlled by Russia, the dominance of Russia, telling them what they can eat and what they can wear and what they can do, what hours they can sleep, or would they rather be controlled by us? Every country that you've seen Russia go into, they had rather be with us. So Russia can overstep themselves at any time.

I noticed a statement the other day by some commentator that Russia negotiated peace with us at their lowest ebb. We were at our lowest ebb. Kissinger went over there, God knows what he has signed, or what he didn't sign, because of Watergate. He had to come out with a new statement of agreement over there in Russia and China in order to try to get the heat off of Nixon in Watergate.

Well, go ahead. We're not going into World War IV. [Inaudible]

G: Shall we stop?

End of Tape 3 of 3 and Interview V

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON LIBRARY

Legal Agreement Pertaining to the Oral History Interviews of

Sam Houston Johnson

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 21 of Title 44, United States Code, and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth, we, Alfred and Peggy Staehely of Austin, Texas, do hereby give, donate and convey to the United States of America all our rights, title and interest in the tape recordings and transcripts of personal interviews conducted on April 13, and 14, 1976 in Johnson City, Texas, on June 9, 15, and 23, 1976 in Austin, Texas, on July 13 and August 26, 1976 in Austin, Texas, and October 1 and November 18, 1976 and on March 31, 1978 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 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 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.

Donor

Margaret (Peggy) Staehely

Date

NOV. 10, 1993

Acting Archivist of the United States

Cindy Hudson Peterson

Date

June 16, 1994