INTERVIEW III

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INTERVIEWEE: JAMES R. JONES

INTERVIEWER: JOE B. FRANTZ

PLACE: Mr. Jones' home, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Tape 1 of 1

F: Just to get this started, let's get specific for a minute. Do you remember the article that Townsend Hoopes did that made such a splash on the Vietnam War? I heard some criticism that Hoopes wasn't at the center of the decision-making. Was there a tendency to be more authoritative in your statements when you weren't so close, as against the people who were closer and saw the subtleties and complications better?

J: Very much so. I think that was one of the criticisms of Townsend Hoopes. To my knowledge, he never sat in on any of the decision-making meetings in which the President was deciding issues. But you found this throughout the government and throughout the White House. The farther away from power someone was, the more authoritatively they spoke. Eric Goldman, for example, when I would visit friends or dinner parties and things like that, would speak very authoritatively about what Lyndon Johnson was doing, what he was like and all that, and to my knowledge, in the four years I was there, the only time he saw the President was at that ill-fated Arts Council display on the South Lawn and it was only a passing thing.

F: Since you brought that up, did you have any involvement at all with that?

J: No, really the East Wing of the White House set that up. The only involvement I had was to make sure the President was there at the right time.

F: Did you ever have any problems getting the President to show up at things after he had indicated he would?

J: Oh, yes. He was probably the most complicated personality that I have ever known, in that he would make a decision to do something and he wanted to always keep his options open. In my judgment, in his mind he had never made a final decision until he did it. That included personal appearances or anything else. I think that was his kind of escape valve. The people that were closest to him acted as the escape valve for him because he could blow off on the little things to them. And then on the big things, he was just absolutely magnificent, as far as I'm concerned, in his decision-making because he got all of his frustrations out on the petty things.

F: Where were decisions made? In his room at night, in the breakfasts, in the NSC meetings?

J: I don't think there'd be any way to pinpoint that. I would say that his mind probably formulated the kind of decision he was going to make the majority of the time between six-thirty in the morning and ten-thirty in the morning from his bedroom. He would think and be on the phone. I think that was his best decision-making time, as far as I can tell.

F: I judge he made his decisions, in a sense, in the midst of a lot of activity, not like apparently President Nixon does, going alone in a room with a pad of yellow paper and thinking something through.

J: Yes, he liked to be around people, particularly people that he had developed a trust or a feeling of rapport or camaraderie with, loyalty with. This was always an amazing thing

to me, that he received sustenance from crowds and from people being around him, whereas Mr. Nixon apparently is just the opposite, and to a great extent I'm just the opposite. Whereas I'm a private person, he was a very gregarious person.

F: Did he ever show any indication to you that he was sort of losing touch with Secretary McNamara?

J: Yes, my timing would be off, I guess, but it would be sort of late in 1967, I think he felt Secretary McNamara was on the verge of a nervous breakdown from overwork or whatever it was because Mr. McNamara was showing emotional responses to things. Whereas in the past he had been very businesslike and cold and calculating and doing it on a logical basis, he was showing more emotion toward the last few months. Consequently, I think he leaned more heavily on Secretary Rusk in those last few months.

F: His relationship with Rusk was always one of really close confidence.

J: I think probably of all the people, he admired Rusk more that any other because, one, Rusk was very logical in his exposition of positions or in his arguments. I believe that he would use Secretary Rusk to be a devil's advocate at times when the various inputs on a decision would come into a meeting. He would call Rusk in advance and say, "Argue such and such a position." He did that with Clifford even more, I think. But I think the steadfastness of Rusk and the total loyalty was something that he admired so much, and I think he probably admired Rusk more than any other cabinet officer.

The remarkable thing, in his heart of hearts, I think he probably really admired Ramsey Clark.

F: Ramsey gave him some real trouble though, didn't he?

J: Nixon in 1968 had some very vile things to say about Ramsey and how he was weak-

kneed and all of that sort of thing. But I think of--all of the cabinet officers, with the exception of Rusk, Ramsey probably was the most solid individual that I knew and the one person even probably superseding Rusk whom President Johnson really didn't just steamroll over.

I know there were many times when Ramsey, was about to do something and the President would call me and say, "Get Ramsey over here. I'm going to tell him this and I'm going to tell him that and I'm going to tell him he's wrong. I'm going to tell him thus and so." I'd figure it was just going to be a knock-down-drag-out between the President and Ramsey Clark. They'd get over in the Oval Office and sip coffee or Fresca or whatever, and have the most cordial conversation, and it seemed like they were talking about everything except the thing the President wanted to talk to him about. Ramsey would come out of the President's office and just as he was going through my office, which was next door to the President's office, the loud ring of the President's phone would ring on my phone. I'd pick it up, "Yes, sir," and he'd say, "Now, I want you to tell Ramsey to do this and so and so, and I want you to make it straight. Don't mince any words with him." Whatever that relationship was, whether it was fraternal or an admiring relationship or whatever, to my knowledge, he just couldn't confront him. When he did, Ramsey was awfully strong in his position, a very strong-willed person.

F: I have a number of cases of evidence in which Ramsey seems to have just had a sort of quiet stubbornness or even mulishness about him that he would not be moved.

J: That's right. It's really funny how history has, so far anyway, portrayed Clark Clifford and John Gardner and Arthur Goldberg, for example, as standing up to Lyndon Johnson and giving him "what for," and how Ramsey Clark and Dean Rusk, particularly those

two, were just sycophants, or were just "yes men" for the President. It's really just the opposite. I've seen John Gardner in cabinet meetings where he would be espousing a position. He'd bring it up in a cabinet meeting, someone would jump on it, and he'd just back off his position very readily. Arthur Goldberg, I don't think, was any at all outspoken with the President, had a lot of verbiage but not a whole lot of outspokenness; whereas Ramsey and Dean Rusk were very steadfast, quiet, immobile to a certain extent, and got away with it.

F: Did the President, in a sense, cool off on Clark Clifford as a result of the new postures?

J: I think very much so, because on the one hand Clark Clifford and Abe Fortas, prior to Clifford coming into the cabinet, were really the hawks on Vietnam and were giving him advice that would be in a hawkish position. I didn't see Clifford really backtracking on that considerably even after he became defense secretary, but yet you would hear or read these things in the national magazines and the ***New York Times***, how "Clark Clifford is trying to lead a dovish position, a change in policy on the war." The public print just didn't match with Clifford's private actions with the President. I think the President thought probably that some of that was to protect Clifford, and I think he must have thought that some of it was planted by Clifford himself.

Consequently, my impression of Lyndon Johnson was that he considered government, the White House, his official family, as a family. He did not want yes men. He wanted people who would take issue with him, but who could back up their statements logically and with facts. But he felt all the arguments within the family should stay within the family, and once a decision was made everybody pitched in and accepted that decision. You didn't have any kiss and tell stories of "how I really wanted this" or "I

really didn't agree with that." When he would see that type of thing in the newspaper, justly or unjustly, if the ***New York Times*** reporter would give laudatory comments to someone indicating that they disagreed with policy, that they were going along with it anyway, I think he really felt a kind of distrust for the person who happened to have his name in the paper.

F: Who actually did that spring of 1968 turnaround? Was it Clifford or was it Rusk, or did you have any opportunity to observe that?

J: Yes, I felt, surprisingly enough, in the discussions I saw that the moderate advisers on Vietnam, as far as kind of getting off a big hawkish position, were Rusk and Earle Wheeler, even more so than Clifford or just previous to that, McNamara. Wheeler, I thought, was very solid in his position. Neither Rusk nor Wheeler felt we ought to be pulling out. I would kind of judge both of their positions of being a commitment to the Vietnamese to buy enough time to allow them to, one, become viable as a government politically, and, two, to become viable as a military force. This was just kind of my interpretation of it; this was a time-buying operation as far as Rusk and Wheeler were concerned, and that we had to live up to the commitment until both of those things could be done. I think that's one of the reasons why President Johnson wanted to get open elections in 1967, or whenever it was, and to have different factions from this country observing them so that we could build up a confidence in this country that they were open and democratic elections, and give them the political viability in Vietnam which would meet one commitment. He was always, whether it was Westmoreland or Abrams, talking to them in terms of when and how the Vietnamese were doing in taking-ever the military operation.

F: Did Johnson seem to favor one of our generals over another?

J: I think he favored Westmoreland, and I don't know exactly why. My guess would be, one of the problems in the entire Vietnam operation was one of gaining public support. I think Mr. Johnson may have looked upon Vietnam in terms of World War II, realizing that we don't have popular support for the war in this country partially because we don't have a feeling of hate toward the enemy. In other words, Ho Chi Minh was never considered a Hitler or a Hirohito in American terms, and secondly, we didn't have any heroes. Although Mr. Johnson would have to verify this, I got the impression one of the reasons he was so fond of Westmoreland over the others is that Westmoreland had all the characteristics of becoming a national hero in helping to mold public opinion behind our efforts in Vietnam. He had a charisma, he had the looks and the kind of flair of becoming a national hero, and so I think obviously Westmoreland was the favorite. But I think Wheeler became a real trusted adviser of Mr. Johnson's.

F: Back to McNamara for a moment, did you have a feeling that he quit as secretary of defense simply because he realized seven years was wearing him out, or that it was a conflict over interpretation of the war?

J: I get this only from conversations the President had about it, I've never had it from McNamara's side, and I don't think anybody else was in on these conversations. But basically he was becoming emotionally drawn out by his own statement, according to Mr. Johnson. He had had some personal reverses, I think a child in his family had either been robbed or beaten or killed or something. His vacation retreat out in Colorado had burned down. All of these things piled on top of each other and he really was emotionally drained. I think, again according to what I heard from Mr. Johnson, that Mr. McNamara

had a desire to do some social good. And when this World Bank thing became a possibility, Mr. Johnson--I don't know whether he offered it to Mr. McNamara or vice versa, but in any event they both mutually agreed that this would be just what Mr. McNamara wanted. So from everything I gathered, it was the type of thing that McNamara was less disenchanted with the war as much as he really was wanting to get out from the daily grind of early morning-late night hours and lots of pressure and have some more time with his family, and also be able to go into doing some social good in the world.

F: Speaking of social good, the Defense Department--the military specifically during this period, the whole realm of the sixties--did a lot toward especially improving the civil rights situation as far as the servicemen, regardless of local feelings. Did this sort of come from the White House down, or was this something that worked up from within the Defense Department or within the military establishment? Where was the impetus?

J: I gather that the initial impetus came from the Defense Department and from McNamara, maybe from some of his aides. But McNamara, as I gathered, presented it and Johnson wholly supported it.

Mr. Johnson was kind of a strange dichotomy. If you talked to him in private, he had a lot of what might be considered racial slurs that were part of his Texas background, but he was very deeply committed to civil rights. I remember one night in the Cabinet Room he was talking about the problems that were going to develop in the country, the period of strain that we're going to go through merely because he was successful in getting so much social and civil rights legislation passed. He likened the minority groups to a group of wild stallions who have two pens around them. You open the gate to one of

those pens and they get through that gate, and they'll kick down the other fence in order to have complete freedom. He said, "That's what's going to happen in this country the next few years. They're going to kick down the gates to have all the freedoms that everybody else has enjoyed. It's going to be painful, but it's right. It's the right thing to do." So he, I thought, was very courageous about that.

F: He wasn't, then, surprised or disillusioned by the fact that the civil rights advances, instead of bringing gratitude, really just sort of opened a Pandora's box of problems?

J: I think that he really kind of expected that. I think he was disappointed that some of the civil rights leaders gave him too little credit.

I think he was the consummate politician. I guess probably the best political personality that maybe we've ever had in the White House. But he understood balances of power and how to maneuver to get things done. There were a lot of times, just when he had something on Capitol Hill that may not have been strictly civil rights--it may have been poverty legislation--when he just about had the votes and then somebody would come and march on the Capitol or create an urban disturbance or something, and he'd have to go back and mend the feelings of the people on the Hill that he had the votes in his pocket to get. I think that was a big disappointment because he really did not like stupid actions. If there's anybody that I've ever met that looks for excellence in just your everyday living, it was Lyndon Johnson. He just had a hard time understanding or forgiving stupid moves. So I think that was a disappointment to him.

F: Did you ever personally witness a talk between him and Martin Luther King?

J: I didn't personally, no.

F: Did he ever talk to you about his relationship with King?

J: Yes. Of course, there were a lot of FBI reports on King, as you know. I guess they're down at the Library, and, true or not, they indicated that he had a good many orgies in various hotels around Washington and elsewhere. I think Mr. Johnson thought he was a little hypocritical, but I think the main disagreements he had with King or other civil rights leaders is that they were impeding the type of progress he was trying to get through the law by some of their type of activities. I don't know that he could understand some of the marches and some of the soundings off that they would pull at strategic times in the legislative history of something he was trying to get passed. I think that was the biggest thing.

F: As far as you know, did he and Ramsey pretty well see eye-to-eye on the handling of these marches and other demonstrations?

J: I don't know that they saw eye-to-eye. I was just trying to remember here some of the specific differences. I'd better pass on that, because I might distort it.

F: What was your position during the April riots?

J: You mean April 1968?

F: Yes.

J: Have I gone into that Martin Luther King thing?

F: No.

J: I was then appointments secretary and we were getting ready to go to a Democratic fund-raising dinner there in Washington. I brought the message in that Martin Luther King had been shot--this was about seven-thirty or so--into his Oval Office. We turned on all three television sets, and he commented that "This is really going to be a flare-up and we'd better get on top of it." He sat there and watched the television; he was on the

phone, I believe, to Ramsey, to talk about having some security as far as urban disorders were concerned. We sat there most of the evening, and then he brought in John Criswell and Arthur Krim and maybe one or two others who were in charge of the dinner and made the decision not to go to the dinner.

F: Was there much argument about whether to go, or was this pretty automatic?

J: No, there wasn't any argument either way. I didn't push him and nobody pushed him. He just finally decided he should not go. Then the next day or two, again in trying to build consensus, he had all of the Negro leaders who were coming in for the funeral over to the White House. They discussed the legislation he was sending to the Hill, and they just all sat around the cabinet table and conducted discussions on how to keep the country together and things like that.

F: Did you get the feeling that he felt he knew King, or were they just sort of correct in each other's presence?

J: I think they were mostly correct in each other's presence. I don't think he ever understood King, and I really don't think that he could understand in personal terms the cause that King was really fighting for. I think he grasped probably the injustices against the Negro more than just about anybody else, but I don't really know that he grasped the full impact of what they considered to be injustices.

F: The Chicano situation hadn't really developed at that time to the extent it has now. Did he anticipate that as sort of a concomitant of the black problems?

J: I never heard him [say so]. No, I don't really think so, neither Chicano nor Indian. I think most of it was the black problem.

F: What was your role during Resurrection City? Getting ready for it and living through it?

J: Actually the only role I had was to make sure that he got all the intelligence reports he wanted and to make sure that the Justice Department and FBI and the Defense Department fed us all the information and we had all the security that the President wanted done. It was just to follow up everything he wanted done. So on Resurrection City, it wasn't greatly different from the ordinary operations every day. I believe Joe Califano and his staff had primary control of that.

F: I know in the latter days some coolness developed between him and Senator Richard Russell over an appointment. When appointments came up and someone tried to pressure the President, was that ever done personally? In other words, would he see me as a Senator X or a Mr. VIP of some sort to let me plead for the appointment of my friend and colleague, or was that pretty well handled by notes and phone calls?

J: No. If a senator really wanted to see the President, he saw the President.

F: He was open to legislators.

J: Oh, yes, very much so. He was keenly sensitive to the Congress, and more so to the Senate. I think he understood the Senate even better than the House.

F: Were most of these appointments off the record?

J: Some were and some weren't. If there was a way to camouflage a senator coming to see the President for other reasons than discussing a particular appointment that hadn't been made yet, we would try to put it on the record because we wanted to have as full an on-the-record schedule as possible. If it was obvious that it was only for the reasons of an appointment, we'd keep it off the record.

F: Did you send all requests for appointment through to him and he made the on-the-record, off-the-record decision, or did you sort of send in two logs yourself?

J: No, I got a feel for what he wanted and I would make it up and show it to him and he'd either approve it or disapprove it. Sometimes he would make some changes and then we'd go ahead and publish it. But that was my responsibility, to kind of anticipate him. That was the one thing that I tried to do, was to anticipate all of his needs. I don't know what you'd call that position, a factotum, or I don't know what. But in any event my interest in sitting in on the meetings--and part of the reason that I'm a little vague on some of the meetings is that I was less concerned with the nuances and the content, as far as policy developing or from a historical standpoint--my main concern was when the President said something that indicated he might want a document or a study or an investigation or something, without him having to tell me that "This is what I want and get it for me," I tried to anticipate. I was looking in terms of trying to make things run smoothly from a technical or administrative standpoint. So I would jot the notes down and then follow up on it.

F: Did you have complete freedom of access so that any time you felt you ought to break in on the President or on a meeting you could?

J: Very much so. This was hard for me to get accustomed to at first because of my youth primarily. But he made it very clear to me on one occasion--I don't remember what the circumstance was--he had asked me to call a certain cabinet officer and get something done, and on my scale of things it was kind of minor. I didn't want to disturb the cabinet officer with it. I instead called the deputy or the assistant secretary or somebody and it didn't get to the cabinet officer by the time the President got on the phone and called the cabinet officer, saying, "Did you do such and such?" When he said, "Nobody told me," the President got on the line to me and made [known] in no uncertain terms the fact that

when he says to call a cabinet officer, to do it, and anytime I needed to get him to come in personally and not to Juanita Roberts or someone else. He wanted to deal directly. So access to him was always free and open.

F: When you were working with Marvin--Marvin of course was senior in age and time in harness and so forth--was there any kind of a division between where you came in and Marvin stayed out, or vice versa? Or did you all just sort of play everything flexibly by ear?

J: When I came to the White House Marvin told me the reason he wanted me was that he didn't know anything about Capitol Hill and I had had experience on the Hill and friendships there. So he wanted me to add that dimension to his staff and also, to be kind of administrative head of his staff. He told me that President Johnson did not like a bunch of faces around him that he wasn't comfortable with, didn't know, and he didn't want memos coming from people he didn't know. I didn't know Lyndon Johnson really before I went to the White House. So, consequently, for most of the first year and a half, as Marvin's assistant, I wrote up all the memos that went to the President--not all of them, but more than half of them--and did all of the work for all of his appointments and the travel and all that sort of thing and signed Marvin's name to them. They just went into night reading, or went in to the President, Jones with Marvin's name on them.

Then I guess after about a year and a half I would sign my own name and he got to recognize me. About that time I was going down to the Ranch. I was the guy that would go to the Ranch instead of Marvin. Then Jake left, so I was the one going to the Ranch. So the President got comfortable with me and then I'd start sending in over my own name.

F: The President was always remarkable to me because you could send him something at five o'clock in the afternoon and you'd always get an answer the next morning.

J: Right.

F: If not sooner. You've discussed the night reading situation, but one thing you did not say, what is the volume of the night reading? How much did he go through on a representative evening?

J: I think on the average evening he went through notes that required decision, a yes, no, or see me decision--there would be probably be on the average at least fifty every night. A lot of these I don't think were logged into night reading that Juanita had because a lot of them were personal things that I would put on a memo not addressed to anybody and not signed by anybody, or sometimes I would sign it "Jim J." so that you'd never know where it came from, or who it went to. We didn't log a lot of that in. I would say on the average he had at least fifty decisions to make every evening, plus FBI reports which would on the average be at least ten typewritten pages, plus the intelligence reports from the Situation Room, plus editorials from around the country that would give him a feel of how people were handling his presidency, plus just letters. He liked to have sample letters that came in. Of course, we never had a set policy. Sometimes he wanted letters and he'd say, "Pull out every tenth letter and send them in as a sample." And then other times, we'd rock along with that for a while, and he'd say, "I've got too much night reading. Why don't you cut something out?" So we'd cut those out. But he was remarkable to me. A lot of the cabinet officers would feel they had to go to the President for a decision, or to keep him informed on something, and these were decisions that should be made at the cabinet level or at the department level. One of the things that I

tried to do was to really screen what went in to the President from the standpoint of if it could be handled at a lower level, either at the White House staff or at the cabinet level, if it could be handled there, then send it back to them and ask them to scratch their heads and make a decision themselves. That got me in trouble every once in a while because I obviously didn't have his thinking down pat, and he'd like to be involved in a lot of those small decisions. But I think overall it saved him a lot of worry and grief.

F: I never have known a man who wanted to know more what was going on at all levels than he did.

J: That' s right.

F: How did you protect him on this without just tying him up in eternal trivia? In other words, if Jim Jones has a new cat, he doesn't want to be the last one to find it out.

J: That's right. It was all a matter of timing really. It was remarkable to me, for example, Mrs. Johnson could be incredibly bad on her timing. She'd come into the bedroom some mornings when he was really uptight about something and she would talk to him about a luncheon she had to go to or someone who was going to have tea with her, or whether or not she was going to make a trip, thus-and-so, which was the farthest thing from his mind and would really send him into a controlled frenzy. So it was just a matter of timing with him. In a relaxed moment he wanted to know everything, and he logged it all in and spouted it out. He had the most phenomenal memory. For example, I remember at one point there we had a stockpile problem. I don't remember what metals, but we were going to have a release of stockpiles or something. Joe Califano had been working on it and really was bogged down, and the President said: "There was a guy back in 1930 some-odd who was clerk of the Armed Services Committee who was really an expert on

that particular metal. What is his name?" And finally he remembered his name and said that the last he had heard of him he was living in Syracuse, New York. "See if you can locate him." Califano did locate him, he did have the right name, and this guy turned out to be the expert and broke the logjam. So he logged away everything in his mind, and it was amazing how he would pull it out again.

I think the things I remember about him most is his real coolness under pressure of big decisions, how he would let some of the little decisions get him down but that was really an escape valve to free him for the big decisions.

I remember. . . . These are just personal observations. I called him a real bird because he was a uniquely humorous person. Did I mention about Wong, the Chinaman, on the other tape?

F: No.

J: This is a funny story. We were in the Latin American Summit Conference in late 1967.

F: In San Salvador.

J: Yes. We went to San Salvador and stayed in Ambassador [Raúl] Castro's house. Castro was just being appointed ambassador to Bolivia, so he was going to leave there. Our first night there, Ambassador Castro had told President Johnson that he had this excellent houseboy named Wong, who was Chinese, and that the President ought to have him. I hadn't been privy to that conversation. The next morning the President of El Salvador called on the Ambassador's house to pick up President Johnson and we were going to our first stop which was the dedication of a school or something. I sat in the front seat of the car and the two Presidents sat in the back seat. I was of course worried about the details and movements and making sure we were on schedule and this and that. I noticed that

they were talking. The President of El Salvador kept talking about some AID funds or something for educational TV, something they wanted in El Salvador.

F: They've got a real program started in that.

J: Yes, I understand they do. But, in any event, whether Lyndon Johnson was trying to--I thought he was trying to change the subject. In the middle of the President of El Salvador explaining their needs, Mr. Johnson yelled to me, "Jim, did you get that Chinaman?" I kind of shook my head a little bit. I figured, well, he's just trying to change the subject, and I said, "Yes, sir." Anyway, we rolled on a little bit more, the President of El Salvador explaining more, and he said, "Jim, make sure that Chinaman is on the plane when we leave." "Yes, sir." So I figured this was just another of his wild things, I didn't even really know what he was talking about--a Chinaman. So anyway, we got through all of his schedule in El Salvador, and we got on the plane, the plane just took off, the President turned to me there in the President's cabin and said, "Where's my Chinaman?" By this time I said, "Mr. President, I'm sorry. I don't know what you're talking about, about a Chinaman." He had a few choice words to say to me. He said, "I want my Chinaman brought up here." He explained the story.

In any event, we got back to Washington, I got on the phone, and we arranged through the State Department and elsewhere to get Wong brought to Washington. So he was flown to Washington and brought straight to the White House one evening. Here is this guy who didn't speak a word of English, he spoke Mandarin or Cantonese, anyway, a Chinese dialect, and Spanish. They had him put up at the White House.

The next morning we got in there and the President wanted to see the Chinaman. So I got two Secret Service men, one who had spoken this Chinese dialect, and the other

spoke Spanish, and brought two Secret Service men and this ninety-five pound Wong up to the President's bedroom. The President was in bed with his night clothes, kind of slouched up, propped up on the pillows, as he usually was. The President wanted to know about the Chinaman so he was going through all of this. He asked him what were his duties. The Chinaman would start out in one language, like Spanish, and end up in Chinese. One Secret Service man would explain, he'd say, "That's as far as I got," and the next Secret Service man would explain the rest of it. Then he asked him what were his hours, and I think Wong said he came at six in the morning and left at midnight. The President kind of raised his eyebrows. He got that little crook of a smile on his mouth and said, "That sounds good." What were his wages? I think he said a hundred dollars a month or seventy dollars a month; whatever it was, it was quite low. The President turned to me and said, "We ought to raise that to a hundred," something like that. But in any event, he'd start the stories in Spanish and he'd wind them up and these two Secret Service men would then try to interpret.

F: I bet it was a weird scene, in a way.

J: The President was so funny. Finally he just couldn't take it any longer. He sat up in bed and he pointed his finger and said, "Now, you tell him, when he starts in Spanish, finish in Spanish! When he starts in Chinese, finish in Chinese!" Of course, Wong didn't know beans about what he was talking about.

F: You needed some kind of measuring machine to test the sort of human wonderment at this. Wong really must have wondered what had happened to him.

J: Oh, yes. It really was funny. The President would just talk to Wong like he was talking to Dean Rusk, and all Wong would do was smile and just kind of giggle. I thought he

was a great escape valve and sounding board for the President, too.

I'll never forget down at the Ranch, I was trying to get the visa or whatever the papers are to let Wong be a bona fide citizen or resident of this country. I was working on it down at the Ranch. I noticed that that particular day was Wong's birthday. I got a note to the President and he said, "Let's have a cake and let's get some of the gifts." He got him the tie and the presidential cuff links or something and presented it to him in the President's office down at the Ranch. It was so funny. The President was presenting that to him, I looked at the corner of the doorway leading into the dining room at the Ranch, and it was just like one of those cartoon characters, three Filipino heads on top of each other peering around the corner, seeing this presentation. They were so proud of that. They went out to the kitchen and they were all just chattering away about those gifts.

F: What became of Wong?

J: He's still at the Ranch, as far as I know. We were down at the Ranch within a year after the President went out of office, and I think it was Dale Malechek or somebody who told me that it was really funny, the President got him one of these what he called the chocolate suits, which was a cowboy suit. The President liked to drive from the Ranch to Austin, and he'd drive, down the road there just talking a while a minute to Wong who didn't understand a word of English and just would smile--the big man and then this little guy in his chocolate suit.

F: Did the President make any effort to get Wong tutored in English?

J: Yes. As a matter of fact, we had a special State Department tutoring for Wong to improve his English, had a special class set up, I think it was in the afternoons. He would learn his English.

The President was funny in many ways. He was a very, very warm person who liked to give but had a very difficult time receiving gifts--I mean, showing he appreciated. I remember, we were going to New York in late 1968 or maybe January 1969 for that farewell dinner that Krim and Mary Lasker and all gave for him. I don't remember when it was, but either I was just married to Olivia or we were engaged. He was fond of Olivia because she was quick-witted and he liked to banter, particularly with women. I think that's why he liked Vickie so much.

F: Vickie who?

J: Simon McHugh's wife.

In any event, I had purchased on one of our foreign trips some pearls, real pearls, and had given them to Olivia, and she was wearing them that night. We were sitting back in the President's cabin. The President leaned over to her and felt the pearls, and he said, "Where did you get those?" She said, "Jim gave them to me." He said, "Where did he get them?" She said, "Out of a crackerjack box." He thought that was great. He said, "Come to my office tomorrow. I'll give you some real pearls."

I was a little incensed at that, that he would think that I didn't give her real pearls. But in any event, the next day he had had four sets of pearls that he had gotten in Japan when he was vice president, he had given one to Mrs. Johnson, one to each of the daughters, and he had one left, so he called twice that day. He said, "Get Olivia over here. When is she coming? I want to give her these pearls." He really had been just like a young boy wanting to give this present.

She came over from her law firm about five that afternoon or so, and she went into the little office. He said, "Here!" Just handed them to her and that was it. He was

really a dear, dear person and he had difficulty giving or receiving gifts, but he loved to do it.

F: Did he take a personal interest in your romantic inclinations?

J: Oh, yes. He loved to kid.

F: Did he ever give you any advice on how to close the deal?

J: No, he was just always kidding me on how much time I was spending--

F: How much time could you spend?

J: Not very much. Olivia and I learned to enjoy Italian food because by the time I got off at the White House the only restaurants open were two Italian restaurants, and we'd have late night dinners there.

I was petrified of ever having my name in the paper because he liked anonymity on his staff and I appreciated that. One Sunday, I guess it was the summer of 1967, we were on one of the boats, the ***Sequoia*** or one of them. We had gone out on Saturday and spent the night down by Quantico. The next morning we got up, I think Marianne Means and Bill White and one or two others, maybe Jake Pickle, some of his close friends. We were all reading the papers. That particular Sunday in the society section they had an article on eligible bachelors in Washington, and I was listed in there. I had made some quote about how I didn't have time to participate in the social swim or something like that. The rest of that day he was talking about my ad in the paper and kidding me about how "I don't have time for this sort of thing."

Then when I was dating Olivia he kidded her about how I didn't have time, and then he also kidded her . . . . I did not like to share a room down at the Ranch with anybody. When he got Wong, one particular trip down there we were short of space and

he wanted Wong to sleep with one of the staff people that was down there, and they sent word to have Wong sleep in the room with me and I said no. Of course I guess it registered on him because when we got engaged, Olivia and I, he told that story at a party, how I said that "I don't sleep with anybody." Then I countered to him and I said, "There's a big difference between Wong and Olivia."

F: You brought up something I wanted to ask. You know, there was some, it could have been anything from professional jealousy to reality, but some sniveling by the Washington press. I'm talking about the larger press, that Marianne Means and Bill White were sort of captives of the White House. Did he ever feel that they were in that sort of position, or were they just two news people that he could trust?

J: I think that was basically it.

F: He didn't feel he was doing them any disservice?

J: No. Bill White was a longtime friend of his, going back to congressional days, and he trusted him. Marianne Means, I never did figure out how she made the transition from Kennedy to Johnson, except she is pretty and she is very quick-witted. He appreciated that in women and she became one of the favorites. I think he figured he had enough enemies in the press that he wasn't going to worry about giving too much information to friends in the press. He had a very difficult time ever understanding the press. Essentially, he was, I think, a private person.

I remember again one time at the Ranch the press had been hounding me about somebody Luci was dating or Lynda was dating, or something. They had inquired about it, and [asked] could we just tell them something. Or whether he was going to church, or this or that. I told him that they wanted to know, and he said, "It's none of their damned

business. That's my private life." I tried to tell him, "If you could just give the press some of these small tidbits, they would probably be more friendly toward you," but he never could understand that. He thought they were a nuisance, following him to church. He felt they were disruptive on his private things. He never could understand the newsman's game. In other words, he felt that, I think, all too often a newsman should print what he gave him, and it was really his side of the thing. That was one of the tragedies. He never could develop a rapport with news people.

F: Going back, what was your role during that period of the March speech which, as you know, went off in two directions: one, the peace offensive, and the other thing, of course, his renunciation of any future plans.

J: Did I go into any of that before?

F: No. You haven't led up to that incident.

J: I'll go back to September 1967. Marie Fehmer and myself went down to the Ranch with him, and he had asked to see Connally, who came by the Ranch. Connally and Mrs. Johnson and the President drove around the Ranch most of the day, and the discussion was about whether or not the President would run for re-election. During that day's conversation, Connally told the President that he wasn't going to run for governor of Texas again, and the best I can gather he recommended the President deserved to retire, but that he would support the President, whatever. Mrs. Johnson had strongly argued not to run.

So Mr. Johnson intimated down at the Ranch in September 1967 that he wasn't going to run again. Marie Fehmer and I talked about it, whether he was serious, not serious, just again blowing off steam, or what have you. We both concluded that he

would run.

Then we go up to December of 1967. I had the responsibility that year for coordinating the State of the Union speech and we were coordinating it down at the Ranch. He mentioned then that he wanted, I think, George Christian and Horace Busby to do a peroration to the State of the Union Address that he would not run. Again, I had difficulty believing he would actually do it, but he seemed to be pretty intent. So we got the "not running" speech developed for the State of the Union and we went back to Washington. His side of the story is that he left it on the night table before he went to the Hill and when he reached into his pocket it wasn't there. I do know there was only copy of that speech, his copy.

F: Just an original, in effect.

J: Of the speech that he wouldn't run. I do know that he was looking for it and talking to Mrs. Johnson about it on the day and evening of the State of the Union speech. We did go to Capitol Hill and he did deliver his speech. I remember Marvin Watson and I were in the back of the House Chamber. It got to that point, we didn't know if he was going to say it or not say it, but he didn't say it. Then we kind of turned to each other and said, "Well, he's going to run."

Then in early 1968 Marvin and I just switched offices and everything. In fact, we may have done it in 1967. Marvin took my office, which was down by Mildred Stegall, and I took Marvin's. His primary and almost sole responsibility was getting an organization going for the 1968 campaign. So I figured it was all systems go and really didn't think much more about it.

March 29, which was a Friday, he had a press conference in the Rose Garden, and

he announced that he was going to have a major address on Sunday evening. During the period of time from, say, late 1967 to March there had been several peace feelers from different foreign capitals, within the United States, and what have you. Lots of conversation about bombing pauses, *quid pro quos*, the whole business. So he was going to make his major address on the bombing pause thing.

After the press conference Friday evening, he asked to see George Christian and Marvin Watson and myself in his little office at eight or nine o'clock at night. We were all having our drinks and he just threw out, out of the clear blue, "I think I'm going to announce that I'm not running for re-election." He invited conversation on it. We all argued pretty vigorously with him. George Christian felt strongly that the President should not run. I don't know what motivated George. He wanted to go back to Texas.

F: Yes. And it may have been a reflection of John Connally's thinking, since George was fairly close to him.

J: Could be. Whatever it was, George argued vigorously that he should not run. The President took issue with George. Marvin and I argued vigorously that he should run, that he had to run, at this stage of the game there was no alternative. We argued, for example, that Bobby Kennedy had announced that he would surely be the nominee, and that wouldn't be good for the party and he would erase all of the things that Johnson had accomplished; that there was nobody else that could pick up the mantle of the Johnson-type leadership, and that he just had to run; that he had waited too late. He argued with us. He mentioned that he didn't think he was indispensable to the party or to the presidency, he deserved a rest, he deserved a chance to know his grandchild. He mentioned about his heart attack and how his father and grandfather had died of heart

attacks at age sixty, and he'd be sixty the next year or that year, what have you. So we didn't know at that stage.

I think it was that evening, March 29, he asked for us to get together a speech announcing that he wouldn't run. So all day Saturday, March 30, we frantically had Harry McPherson and Charlie Maguire and then the support people from Defense and State working on the main body of his speech. They did not know, to my knowledge, that he was even considering not running.

Saturday evening, I believe it was, Arthur Krim and Matilde were brought to the White House, and I think he broached it to them. Arthur was very disturbed by it, because he had been raising money and he was strongly identified with Johnson and strongly felt Johnson ought to run, and Matilde was the same way.

The next morning, Sunday morning, Horace Busby and George Christian were working on the speech that he would not run, on the last part of the speech. To my knowledge, only George Christian, Horace Busby, Mrs. Johnson, then Saturday, the thirtieth, the two Krims, and myself were the only ones that knew it. Marvin suspected it, but he doubted it. So, to my knowledge, those were the only ones that knew it. He may have told Luci that evening.

Sunday morning, the thirty-first, he called me at my apartment about six or maybe seven, it was very early Sunday morning, and he asked me to come by the White House. He wanted me to go over the speech and the details with him. He wanted to get the latest copy. You might suspect that every speech that I coordinated, there were many, many, many drafts, and he wanted to get the latest draft and he wanted to make some changes, make sure that I did that.

He wanted me to go church with him and Luci. So he dressed. Luci, the President, and I went to church at St. Dominic's down in southwest Washington. While we were in church he leaned over to me and said, "Have the Secret Service tell Humphrey not to leave for Mexico until I can come by and see him, and have them go back to the White House and get the full text of the speech," plus the part where he said he wouldn't run, "bring it back in a sealed envelope and have it in the car after church is over."

So I told Arthur Godfrey, I think was the Secret Service agent, and he went out and did that. After church we got in the car and went down to Humphrey's apartment, drove in the basement and went up the elevator. Mrs. Humphrey and the Vice President were there and they showed us around the apartment. Then Luci and Mrs. Humphrey went in to the back part of the apartment, and the President and Humphrey and myself stayed in the living room. The President asked for the speech and I gave it to him. I was pouring a cup of coffee for all three of us. Humphrey was reading it, and he got to the last part--the President asked him to read the last part--and Humphrey just became ashen and almost just stark in his expression. He said, "Mr. President, you can't do this!" At that point, Lyndon Johnson told Humphrey, "If you want to run for president, you'd better start organizing tomorrow. Now I have not finally decided, and I don't want you to tell a soul about this, but I am virtually certain I am going to say this tonight. If you want to run, you'd better get started now."

Humphrey just kind of shook his head and, again, just ashen-faced, said, "Mr. President, there's no way I can compete against the Kennedy machine." He was just defeated from the start. Anyway, Humphrey was quite shook up about it. We got up to

leave and the President had told Humphrey, "Now, don't even tell your wife." He put his finger to his mouth and he said, "Now, don't say anything, and let us know where you'll be tonight. Be by a phone at eight o'clock tonight in Mexico and Jim or someone will call you."

We worked on the speech all that day and went through more revisions. The speech was at eight o'clock. About seven o'clock he called me over to the bathroom in the family quarters. Steve Martini was giving him a haircut and getting him made up. I forget the lady's name, I think it was Evelyn Brown or something like that, doing the makeup. He said, "Have them put the last part on the teleprompter, but get somebody that is totally trustworthy and tell them that if they say one word they're off to Siberia because if I don't use it, I don't want anybody to say anything." So I came over and got the teleprompter guy, and I stood with him the whole time.

F: Was the teleprompter man a White House employee?

J: He was with the White House Communications Agency; he was a Signal Corps man.

F: You didn't leave that up to a network man.

J: No. I personally stood right there and I wouldn't let the guy get out of my sight. He [Johnson] said, "Put it on the teleprompter, I'll walk over and practice it one time." He came over at 7:20 or 7:40--it was less than an hour before the broadcast, as I recall it--and went through it one time. There was only the teleprompter man, myself, and the President, and I think Clark Clifford was brought over by this time, and I believe he listened, and maybe Mrs. Johnson, and Horace Busby.

F: But even then, you still weren't sure.

J: I wasn't sure, even then. Anyway, he said, "Well, put it on the teleprompter and don't tell

anybody." So I put it on the teleprompter and I held the actual text of the speech myself. Then we came back over for the eight o'clock speech and I gave the full text of the speech to Bob Fleming [including] the last part. He had had the first part, and I gave the last part to Bob Fleming because he was to follow the speech and if the teleprompter broke down he was to shove the speech at the right place under the President's nose so that he could read it from the copy itself. We were standing maybe five or ten feet at most from the President, right at the side of the President's desk. Bob Fleming, as the President started his address, flipped through the last part that I had just handed him. He started reading that and he got to the point that "I will not run," and Bob started palpitating and wheezing and he had to hand it to me because he was about to wheeze, he was so surprised and nervous. He left the room, and then I followed the script from there. The President went through the whole thing and then went into his small office with his family and, I think, Clark Clifford and Busby and a few others--I forget who all.

It was our responsibility then to call the various people. We had Marvin Watson come in to call. I had called Marvin maybe at six o'clock that night and asked him to come down and do that; Barefoot Sanders; Mike Manatos, I think; Larry Temple; maybe one other.

F: Each man had a list?

J: Had a list of key government people to call. Marvin, for example, had to call Terry Sanford, who had just been to Washington that day and had a strategy meeting on the Johnson campaign and was on a plane back to North Carolina, as I recall.

I don't remember now whether I talked to Humphrey in Mexico or whether Mr. Johnson did or Marvin Watson did, but one of us talked to Humphrey. Then I had to call

Dean Rusk who was on a plane between Hawaii and Japan, somewhere over the Pacific.

F: And who had no inkling?

J: Who had no inkling whatsoever. It was funny. It was on a radio-telephone hookup, and I got on the phone and I said, "Mr. Secretary, this is Jim Jones. Do you read me? Over." He said, "I read you. Over." I said, "Mr. Secretary, President Johnson delivered an address tonight and he announced that he would not run for re-election. He wanted me to call you to tell you. Over." He said, "Thank you very much. Over and out." (Laughter)

Then the phones started lighting up and the White House operators were directed to give them to all of the assistants who were there. I remember the funny one was Tallulah Bankhead called from New York, and of course I, as a kid, had known her and considered her a celebrity. Sure enough, that very deep, resonant voice said, "Darling, it's just terrible." Went through the whole routine. I finally got her off the phone, but it was humorous; it was a very dramatic speech she made about how bad it was. Everybody was shocked, and the most relieved person in the whole group was Lyndon Johnson.

F: What was the atmosphere like around there? Of course you were busy with routine for a while.

J: I was busy with routine, but then I would go back into his office and give him notes from people who had called in.

F: When you talked to people, did you then send him little notes on their reactions or anything they had to say?

J: Right. Mostly I'd tell him verbally who called. He was in there watching the post just enjoying it thoroughly because for the first time all of the self-styled experts from television were flabbergasted and stunned because they had no idea it was coming. It just

seemed like it was the most logical, best decision he had ever made.

F: He was actually, you think, relieved at that point.

J: Yes, very much so.

F: I'm sure Mrs. Johnson was.

J: Right. Luci was tearing, she was crying, and everybody else was kind of somber about it except for Mr. Johnson and, of course, Mrs. Johnson. But he was more ebullient that ever.

F: Did they break out the drinks, or anything like that?

J: Yes, they were having drinks. Then everybody went back to the Mansion and stayed up late.

Then he got a call from Governor Rockefeller of New York and he went into the bedroom and took it. I didn't hear the conversation, but he came back in and told a few of us that he had told Rockefeller on the phone that he didn't know of any other man in America that he'd rather have be president if he wasn't running than Nelson Rockefeller. Nelson Rockefeller apparently said some very, very nice warm things to him, also. He had a real affection for him.

He had mentioned during the day or two days before this announcement that another reason for it was that he didn't want to be tied by political considerations in gaining peace in Vietnam. He really felt he was on the verge of gaining some meaningful negotiations in Vietnam. As it turned out, I think his wisdom was correct because when he announced the bombing pause a week before the November elections, there was some outcry that that was timed in order to help Humphrey. It may have even cost Humphrey some votes. Had he been running for president, that would have been a terrible decision

to make, because your inclination would be to hold it off one more week until the elections are over so that there wouldn't be this backlash of considering it as just a political move. And if you held it off another week, that moment may have passed forever.

But during the campaign he wanted to keep all of the presidential candidates well advised. He wanted them not to make Vietnam an issue and to just generally espouse support for the President, who was then nonpolitical. Nixon did that. It was politically advisable for him to. Humphrey got off the wagon at Salt Lake City, and that made Mr. Johnson very mad because he felt that Hanoi and foreign capitals would not understand political process in America as we do and would consider Humphrey as a vice president of this administration announcing a new policy change on Vietnam. So Mr. Johnson was very mad at that.

He was also very mad at one other thing during that campaign, I don't remember the timing, but I believe it was in the fall. It was after the nominations anyway. We got word that there had been some communication from the Nixon camp to the Vietnam Embassy, requesting that they not cooperate in these peace initiatives until after the election and Nixon would make them a better deal. There was some feet dragging from Saigon.

F: Was that North Vietnam or South Vietnam?

J: South Vietnam. If you'll recall, there was some feet dragging and some obstreperous moves by Saigon at that period of time. I, at various points, had to kind of ride herd on this. So the President directed me at the Ranch one time--I don't remember the timing, but it was in the fall--and I had to call Senator Dirksen and get a message across that this

was very, very dangerous and bordered on treason and he'd better get the message across to Nixon that this sort of thing had better stop. Well, all those messages were transmitted and Dirksen called back and there was no truth to it.

The thing that always astounds me is that the President wanted to get to the bottom of that. I contacted Deke DeLoach, who was the FBI liaison man--we are able to put this stuff [under restriction]?

F: Yes, in perpetuity even.

J: All right. I contacted him to try to get to the bottom of that: who called whom. The best we could gather was that the message to the Vietnamese Embassy was delivered by, what was her name, Anna Chennault. And the best we could pinpoint was that there was some telephone call made by someone traveling with Agnew from someplace around Albuquerque, New Mexico to Anna Chennault to the Vietnamese Embassy. But the thing that amazed me was the total inability of the FBI to turn up any kind of hard evidence when they had been able to do it on so many other cases. I often wondered about that. I know Deke DeLoach is now with Pepsico, which is owned principally by Don Kendall, who is one of the chief Nixon supporters. Someday somebody may look into that.

F: I'll try to see him without giving anything away, although my efforts to see J. Edgar Hoover came to absolutely nothing.

Going way back, did you get any reaction out of the South Vietnamese on that March 31 speech? Did they call in, wire in, or do anything like that? Did you hear from the embassy locally?

J: I don't know.

F: It didn't come through you anyhow.

J: It probably came through me, but there were so many communications and calls during that period of time that I was just trying to separate the wheat from the chaff. I wasn't reading it that carefully, so I couldn't really say authoritatively.

F: By and large, did you get the feeling that Humphrey was the President's candidate? Do you buy these stories that Mr. Johnson was quietly sabotaging him?

J: No, let me put it this way: I really don't believe that President Johnson had a candidate as such.

F: He probably had some non-candidates.

J: Yes. I really think that uppermost in his mind was now who was going to be elected president. Of course, this fluctuated. Let me back off. There were times when he really didn't care who was elected president, but what he wanted more than anything else was to get peace in Vietnam, some kind of meaningful negotiation.

(Interruption)

Mr. Johnson's support fluctuated because I think that was uppermost in his mind, to keep all of the presidential candidates on an even keel so that it looked like we had a united front. No matter who was going to be elected president, he wanted the rest of the world to get the impression that those policies basically would be followed. He felt that Humphrey listened to whoever the last adviser was, he listened to that, and fluctuated too much. He just didn't have enough--

F: Single-m indedness.

J: Yes. So we would have Humphrey in a couple of times during the fall campaign and Mr. Johnson would try to explain everything to him and keep him on the administration path.

Of course Mr. Johnson was very earthy, and he told Humphrey one time about how, like McCarthy wasn't supporting Humphrey right off the bat**,** and Humphrey was just everybody's friend, and he said, "Hubert, somebody could knee you in the balls and you'd just come up giggling and saying 'Knee me again.' You're going to have to hang tough. Don't get off on a Vietnam issue. If you stay tough, Nixon has a way of blowing it. He'll blow it. But you've got to stay tough and on a single path, not go jumping all over the lot."

So I think he was disappointed with Humphrey from time to time. But I think, probably, after this episode of the alleged message to the Vietnamese Embassy, Mr. Johnson then felt that Humphrey was his choice for sure. And he did pitch in at that point and went to Houston for that big rally and did some other help for Humphrey.

F: Did you go down to Houston?

J: Yes.

F: Tell me you role and what you saw there.

J: We were at the Ranch--

F: It wasn't a long-planned event, was it?

J: No, it was spur of the moment.

F: It was a whopping success for such short term.

J: That's right. We flew down on the Jetstar to Houston and then drove in to the Astrodome. Nancy Sinatra and some other stars like that were there and then Humphrey, Connally, and Johnson.

F: Did you have any problem bringing Connally in?

J: No. I guess Johnson and Connally talked privately on that. I don't recall any discussion

on that.

But, in any event, he considered that the margin of difference. I remember on January 20, when we were driving from the White House to Capitol Hill for the inauguration, in the President's limousine were Mr. Johnson, Mr. Nixon, Everett Dirksen, and myself, a driver and a Secret Service man. I'd say outside of looking at the crowd--there was one place where there were some demonstrators and things like that--the bulk of the discussion centered around Mr. Nixon's regret that he didn't carry Texas, how close he came and how he felt that Johnson's and Connally's visit to Houston, that rally, made it go over the top for Humphrey, and how much Nixon really wanted to carry Texas. Anyway, that did have a significant impact.

F: When Johnson talked straight to Humphrey in that "kick in the balls" story, how did Humphrey take it?

J: Just like Johnson told it. It's funny. In October of 1968, I think it was, Humphrey asked to see Johnson. He had been asking to see Johnson, and we set it up one evening about eight or nine o'clock. It was about that time. They went into the small office. We had a lot of things to do and I was trying to move the thing along, I'd bring notes in ever so often, "You have thus-and-so to do," and he'd just say, "Fine, we'll get it in just a minute."

F: You've got two big talkers going on in there. It could go on forever.

J: That's right. I did not listen to enough of the conversations to know what they discussed. But I do know that Mr. Johnson would drink scotch and soda and he had a special jigger that just almost was a thimbleful of Scotch and the rest of it soda. He'd jug those down, I don't know but he could have had twenty and they would be equivalent to about four or five regular mixed drinks. Anyway, he was jostling those things down and Mr.

Humphrey was trying to keep up with him, but the Filipino houseboy that was mixing the drinks didn't have the same small jigger for Humphrey.

At eleven or midnight or so when they finally wound up their conversation, Humphrey came bounding out of the President's office into my office. He was about ten feet off the ground, just happy and smiling and running around, and he walked into two closet doors, thinking that was the door out into the hallway. I figured that he got the short end of that drinking bout.

F: Right. Where were you during the convention?

J: I was at the Ranch with Mr. Johnson.

F: What was it like, mainly just sitting around waiting?

J: No, there was great concern on--

F: Did he keep the TV on at all times?

J: Kept the TV on, and we had lots of telephone communications to John Criswell, to Carl Albert, to Hale Boggs, to the people at the convention. His main concern in the whole thing was--well, he had two concerns, in my judgment: one and the most concern, was over the Vietnam plank in the platform. He wanted to make sure that a plank was written that would basically support what he was trying to do on the peace negotiations. There were some wishy-washy people on the platform committee at the convention who felt that they couldn't hold the line, that they had to come out with a peace plank in the platform. But in any event, they would rewrite parts of it and phone down to me. They never had any direct communications with the President. They'd phone it to me. Then I'd go over it with him and he'd give instructions and I'd phone back.

F: Who was the chief contact, Marvin?

J: No, I'm not even sure that Marvin was at the convention.

F: Yes, he was at the convention.

J: Was he? Our principal contacts, the main ones that I called anyway, were John Connally, John Criswell, Carl Albert, Hale Boggs, Mayor Daley. Those were the main ones.

In any event, the platform plank was written and generally to the satisfaction. Then it came to Humphrey's nomination, and then it came to the vice presidential choice. Mayor Daley had exhibited a strong interest in wanting Ted Kennedy to be on the ticket. Humphrey had exhibited some interest in wanting Shriver. Ted Kennedy, from the feedback I got at the Ranch, said that there would be no half-a-Kennedy on the ticket. So Shriver was scratched. Then Fred Harris was a possibility, and Mr. Johnson asked me, because I was from Oklahoma, what I thought about that, and I gave him my opinion. He had some doubts about Fred Harris, and so he generally exhibited a negative reaction there.

Then the Muskie thing came up. So that was generally agreed upon: Muskie would be it. We were having lunch at the Ranch. Maybe I'd better turn this off a minute and let you tell about it. I don't know--in any event, Muskie became the most likely choice that Humphrey wanted.

F: That suited Johnson.

J: Mr. Johnson didn't have any strong feelings one way or another, and it ended up Humphrey chose Muskie.

F: Did Mr. Johnson, either directly or indirectly, work on any of the delegations?

J: I think maybe through our conversations with Governor Connally and Mayor Daley, Mr. Johnson's thoughts and preferences, particularly on platform, were expressed. They-were

kind of the floor men to get things done. But he didn't personally.

During that period--this was something else that I noticed in a newspaper article that was terribly distorted, how Johnson really wanted to go to the convention to be crowned, or whatever it was--the fact of the matter is Hale Boggs strongly wanted Mr. Johnson to come and speak to the convention. They had made all of the arrangements; Criswell had made the arrangements; Carl Albert felt he should come. They could whisk him in by helicopter, land at a certain place, he wouldn't see the demonstrators and all of that, and they could have this great tribute to Lyndon Johnson. He had his doubts about it from the start. He felt he should not be at the convention. He wavered a little bit when Boggs made a personal plea on the telephone, but then decided his original judgment was best, not to go.

F: How did he react to the television scenes of what was happening on the streets?

J: He thought it was very distorted. I think he was pleased with Walter Cronkite, who later apologized for distorting the whole news coverage of the convention. He thought Mayor Daley was right in the way he had the security and met force with force. Probably in retrospect Mayor Daley was wrong to this extent: I'm told, you might get this better from Criswell or somebody else, that Mayor Daley had made the decision not to allow the demonstrators to have Soldier Field to have their own convention or caucus or what have you. Then they had no place else to go but the streets, which was a tactical mistake.

F: Of course, one thing you never know are the alternatives, and you can't have it both ways. You know that, despite the nastiness of it, there was no loss of life.

J: That' s right.

F: And who knows what might have happened, but that's neither here nor there.

Did you ever sit in on any of the President's meetings with either Ky or Thieu?

J: Yes, I did. I don't believe I did in any private meetings.

F: How did they get along? Were they just correct and cordial, or did it go beyond that?

J: He seemed to work very well with Thieu.

F: I think at this time we might move ahead to January of 1969 and that sort of Johnson farewell address to Congress, which was a moving and memorable moment in both presidential and congressional history--a man bade goodbye after a third of a century. Tell me a little bit about the circumstances leading up to it. Did the President feel the emotion, did the people around him feel it as much before they went up to the Hill as they did after they got there? I saw admirals and justices and whatnot with tears in their eyes.

J: I don't recall that the President was particularly emotional about it nor that the people who were scurrying around and working on the message were that emotional about it.

F: Too busy.

J: Too busy.

F: He didn't make any conscious effort in trying to tug at the heartstrings?

J: There really wasn't, no. As I say, from March 31 on he was a very relieved person.

F: You never heard him make any second guesses that "I wish I had stayed in this political race"?

J: No. Every statement I ever heard him make, no matter what anybody else said, was that he was always supremely confident that he made the right decision.

F: He never had any doubts beforehand, you don't think, but what he could have gotten the nomination and the election.

J: None whatsoever. As a matter of fact, all this business that McCarthy scared him out of

the race really wasn't accurate because if you put it back in context he won the New Hampshire primary on a write-in vote. He defeated McCarthy by several thousand votes and McCarthy was on the ballot. Beyond that, I believe Lou Harris or somebody conducted a poll for us just about the week prior to March 31, pitting Johnson against various candidates. And there was never any question on that poll or in the President's mind that (a) he would get the nomination and (b) he would be re-elected. So I don't think that was it at all.

The only time that I thought he had regrets was on the Fortas matter. From March 31 until after the election we persevered. He kept the pressure on us with the same impact, the same high tension speed--(Interruption)

J: Let's see. Where was I?

F: We were just discussing the look back on whether he should have run in 1968.

J: Oh, yes. I was explaining that he kept the pressure on so we could move the legislation through Congress and so that he would always be in control of the reins of government. That kept up until after the election. Then, for all practical purposes, they didn't look to Lyndon Johnson anymore.

But he had recommended Abe Fortas to be chief justice of the Supreme Court when Warren resigned.

F: Was there any discussion in your presence of this appointment?

J: I didn't hear it, but I'm told that he had to talk Mr. Fortas into it, that it was almost the same way as when he had to talk Mr. and Mrs. Fortas into taking the appointment as justice to begin with. But he wanted the thing done and moved and gotten through the Congress quickly, with Fortas as chief justice and Thornberry as associate justice. Of

course, the thing dragged on and he kept telling us, "It's going to build up and we're going to lose the whole thing." We had several meetings during the summer and then everybody on the staff was confident it could be done; it was just going to take time to work it out with out with the Congress. There again he had a much better feel for the Senate than we did. Sure enough, his instincts were right.

F: Did these revelations on Fortas' fees upset him, or did he pretty well take that in stride?

J: I think they upset him for two reasons: number one, he knew Abe Fortas was a very sensitive person, and I think he felt somewhat responsible for getting him into the public scrutiny anyway; but, secondly, it really fouled up the whole nomination process. He really wanted Fortas and Thornberry on there, he had great confidence in both of their abilities and their loyalty. He wanted them on the Court, and he could see the whole thing going down the drain. I think that did upset him.

F: Then, of course, he brought Sanders in there, too, at the end.

J: That' s right.

F: But that was really due more to Nixon influence by then.

J: That's right. You've mentioned about his moving State of the Union Address. To me, it was another workaday speech, as far as I was concerned.

The real moving speech to me was the night of January 19 when he gathered I don't know how many couples but a lot of the White House staff and some of his close friends for a kind of goodbye reception at the White House up in the family quarters. He gathered us all around in the Yellow Oval Room and gave us kind of overview of his presidency, of the office of the presidency, of what he tried to do, what he accomplished, what he didn't accomplish, what we ought to do as good Americans having seen it from

the inside, what we ought to do to help Mr. Nixon, the next president. I don't know of anybody taped it or not, but that, to me, was one of the most moving, sentimental, clear perspectives of the presidency that I've ever heard enumerated.

F: How long did he talk, roughly?

J: I would say twenty or thirty minutes. I don't think there was a dry eye in the whole room, and the only one who was completely in control of his entire emotions was Lyndon Johnson. If they could have taped that twenty or thirty minutes and played it in college classrooms that are studying history or the presidency, it's probably one of the greatest summations of his presidency and of the presidency in general that I've ever heard. That was the moving one.

F: Do you think he had thought through it and anticipated it, or he just got started talking?

J: Spontaneous. He just got started and, as he can do so well, it just flowed. That was the real tragedy, in a way, of Lyndon Johnson: his inability to communicate on a mass scale. Gosh, in the privacy of a small room full of good friends on a one-on-one basis, he was just overpowering and magnificent, persuasive. But you put him in front of a camera and he just froze up.

F: Did he ever talk to you about his camera stiffness?

J: Yes, he talked to several of us. We would try different things. We recommended, for example, in about December 1967--he had a press conference in the East Room. I don't remember now who exactly made the recommendation, but he wore a lavaliere mike and there was no podium, and I think that was the only time he ever did it. It was a magnificent press conference. He handled the questions as if he were in his Oval Office on a one-to-one basis. And for whatever reason he never went back to that format.

F: Now, you had both the CBS and the NBC presidents down there at one time or another. They never could break that little barrier, could they?

J: We had more experts coming in on lighting, on teleprompters, on glasses, on contact lenses, on presentation, on format. That was a constant thing of "How does he get his message across and how does he become Lyndon Johnson?" I think he mentioned to me one time that all of the formative period of his political career was so tied up with speaking from the back of a pickup truck, either just using his own voice or one of these amplifiers, that he just never became settled on the use of television. One time he kind of wistfully marveled at Eugene McCarthy, the way he could come across on the low-key style on television and that Johnson couldn't do that.

F: As far as you know, did he look on McCarthy as a particular threat to the nomination, or did he just feel this was a sort of pied-piper operation?

J: I think he looked on McCarthy as just a gadfly. I don't think he ever took him seriously.

F: Did you sit in on any of these briefings he gave of the prospective presidential candidates in the summer and fall of 1968?

J: Yes, I sat in on some of them.

F: Were you there for the Wallace one?

J: No. I remember I think it was the day after March 31 speech, we were flying out to Chicago for a noon address to the NAB, National Association of Broadcasters. I thought he made a magnificent speech there. It was written, but he adlibbed some, I believe. But anyway, just prior to that trip, or just after, I got a call from Senator Bobby Kennedy, who wanted to see the President. DeVier Pierson had gotten some indications, I think through Ted Sorensen, that Bobby Kennedy wanted to see the President, and Mayor

Daley somehow got into that. Anyway, it was set up for shortly thereafter, like April 2, just right in that period.

Bobby Kennedy was on one side of the cabinet table with Ted Sorensen, and Charlie Murphy was asked to sit in, Walt Rostow was on the other side with the President at his usual chair. Kennedy and the President were face to face across the table. I was in and out of the meeting. But in every one of the discussions I heard there was one man in control, and that was Lyndon Johnson. Bobby Kennedy was being cowed by him. There's no question about that.

But apparently Bobby Kennedy had made the offer, from what I had picked up, that he would either drop out--I don't know what the *quid pro quo* was--but he wanted Johnson to set up a commission to run the Vietnam policy, and if he did that, then Bobby Kennedy might not be interested in the presidency, or something. Johnson was incensed that anybody would be that arrogant, as to take the constitutional responsibilities of foreign policy away from the President of the United States. He lit into Bobby Kennedy pretty forcefully in the times I dropped in and out of that meeting.

Then, shortly after that, Gene McCarthy called me and said he wanted to come in and see the President. I asked him if it was a briefing, and he said, "No." This is how flippant he was. He said, "I just read in the paper that Bobby Kennedy had been in there, and I thought maybe I ought to come in too, and get some press coverage."

F: Did you pass that along?

J: Yes, and Johnson saw him. I did not sit in on that briefing. I don't recall sitting in on any of the other briefings as such until after the nominations. We called Mr. Nixon at Miami Beach after he and Agnew were nominated, and they were flown to the Ranch. I worked

mostly with Bob Haldeman. They came to the Ranch and visited and he gave them a briefing.

The two impressions I had: number one was Agnew's total lack of any kind of preparation or feeling for foreign policy. He really was totally ill-prepared for anything in the foreign policy arena. They went ahead and had their briefings. Humphrey was brought in and I know Mrs. Humphrey, and I can't remember if Muskie was in that group or not. This was also at the Ranch after the Democratic Convention. I remember it was a much more personal thing with Humphrey than with Nixon. Mr. Johnson warned Mrs. Humphrey and I believe Bill Connell [who] came with him. He said, "Keep the bad news away from Humphrey because he's got enough problems just being a candidate. Just shield him from the bad news and let him go ahead."

Another impression. Every time during that whole transition or the briefings prior to the election, Nixon was like a boy scout around Johnson. It was like Johnson was a big, hulking professional football player and Nixon was the autograph seeker. It was really a contrast. There is no question that one man was in charge totally. It was really amazing.

F: Was there much of a transition? Did someone come in and sit up with you for a while? I know the orders that went down for an orderly transition, but how much of a transition was it?

J: Really it was a very effective one. I worked on the phone very closely with Bob Haldeman, who was going to be my counterpart kind of administrative chief of staff under the Nixon deal. We were on the phone all the time, and I was explaining what we did, how we did it. He had asked a lot of questions.

Then I had set up a meeting, at Mr. Johnson's request, for all of the Nixon White House staff to meet and have a thorough transition indoctrination with their counterparts in the Johnson White House staff. They hosted a reception down at the White House staff mess for them and answered any questions, went around the room and things like that.

Then I forget how many, but there were two or three Nixon-Johnson meetings where they just had a wide range of talks about the world situation, domestic situation. You'll have to ask Mr. Johnson, but I believe at that point, in either late December or January, Mr. Johnson pointed out that the Joint Chiefs of Staff had recommended in a study late in 1968 of troop withdrawals, if I'm not mistaken, it was like fifty thousand without hurting our military posture, so that you had this orderly withdrawal. I believe Mr. Johnson mentioned that to Mr. Nixon and told him that Johnson didn't plan to have that troop withdrawal in that last month in office because he wanted Nixon to be aware of it, but at the same time he didn't want to make a lot of splashes in the last month that Nixon had to live with. He wanted him to make those decisions.

I also remember during one of those transitional briefings between Johnson and Nixon, I brought a message up to Mr. Johnson and Mr. Nixon said, "Anything that you want to communicate to me, if I'm out of pocket, talk to John Mitchell. He's the only one that speaks for me." So I got right then from Mr. Nixon's own mouth that there was nobody else that had the confidence of Nixon that John Mitchell did.

F: Was it your impression that the President felt warmly or correctly or what toward Nixon?

J: I think correct would be the more proper thing. They had had their differences politically throughout the years. I think Johnson appreciated the fact that Nixon didn't rock the boat

on Vietnam policy during the campaign; that Nixon had been pretty receptive to everything that Johnson did. I think Johnson also understood that, as a retired president, all the accoutrements of being a retired president were basically at the whim of the then-sitting president. I don't think he wanted to rock the boat. I think he wanted to make a good transition.

I believe Mr. Johnson told me one time about President Eisenhower, how he appreciated the fact that Johnson had worked with him and kept him informed and how important it was to really have this bipartisan support for the man who happens to be president. I think that among the shortcomings that people might attribute to Johnson is one that they wouldn't ordinarily attribute, and that is, he was not enough of a partisan political animal. When he came into office, he didn't have the killer instinct to get rid of the Kennedy people. They were sniping at him, and I think that hurt him in popularity. Too, he was really not a partisan in the 1968 campaign. He really is a consensus "bring people together" type man, and in the rough and tumble of politics, sometimes that hurts him.

F: Did you have much opportunity to observe his feelings as some of the governors who had formerly been with him began to snipe at him some?

J: Yes, I guess it was in 1966 or 1967 when the Democratic governors had their meeting in West Virginia, and Governor Harold Hughes led the kind of opposition to his policies. And that hurt him. He didn't like it. I think he felt Hughes was both opportunistic and somewhat unstable because of his previous drinking problem, that he would flip-flop on issues, in other words. He didn't like that. He really appreciated the loyalty of the governors that stuck with him. I suppose of all the governors, he appreciated Nelson

Rockefeller more than any of them.

F: Did you observe his relations with John Connally?

J: Yes. It was a peculiar relationship in that they would go for periods of time and wouldn't speak to each other. Marvin, before me, I guess, and that last year, me--I was kind of go-between, the interlocutor, between Connally and Mr. Johnson. I guess they were so close that they could get mad at each other and not speak to each other.

F: Did he ever explain to you why you had to be an interlocutor?

J: Just by virtue of the position. He looked upon that particular position, appointments secretary, of being able to do anything, from being a mouthpiece for him, to carry out orders, to anticipate, to political, to budgetary. He just figured anything he wanted done that was the person he had there to make sure it was done. I guess that's why he had me to do it.

F: You know, Connally, I think, basically, is more conservative than Johnson.

J: No question about it.

F: And gave him some flak from Texas, particularly on the social programs going too far and too fast and so forth. I wondered if this nettled the President, or if the President felt like, well, this was just a part of Texas politics that Connally had to go through.

J: The funny thing about it, the President to my knowledge never voiced even a flippant opinion about John Connally, and I guess he's the only person that I know of--

F: He didn't second-guess him?

J: No. Lyndon Johnson, if you didn't know him or weren't around him a long time, you would pick up bits and pieces of his conversation and you'd say, "He hates this person or he loves that person or he's ambivalent on someone else." He was given to just some

outrageous statements about people which, in my judgment, really had to be put into context as to his true feelings about those people. It was just a way of blowing off steam. To my recollect ion he never made any kind of flippant, outrageous, or blowing-off-steam statements about John Connally, and to my knowledge he's probably the only one he hadn't.

F: Did the President take a kind of avuncular position with regard to his staff and the people that he put in jobs around Washington that naturally were going to go out of a job when he left? Did he try to place them or do anything like that, or did he pretty much leave it up to everybody to look after themselves?

J: He was quite loyal to his people. I think most everybody pretty well had their plans or their desires and were making their own plans. I don't know this first hand, but I'm told that it's true that he developed a lot of clients for Horace Busby, for example, when he left. I don't know about the others. I think Marvin Watson got his own position, and I know that the offers that were made to me were all individually made, I don't think through the President's good offices. But he really looked out after his staff. For example, when George Reedy had the hammer toes operation, he was very concerned that George Reedy, one, get the best treatment; two, that Mr. Johnson pay for it, or at least a substantial part of it; and three, that George Reedy never know that Mr. Johnson paid for it, nor that anybody else knew it.

F: What happened to him and George? Just one of those things?

J: My feeling on the thing is that the White House press secretary job was more than George Reedy could handle in the style Lyndon Johnson wanted it [handled].

F: Where were you during the Bobby Kennedy shooting?

J: That was the night I proposed to my wife. I had left the White House and gone to my wife's apartment. We had dinner there. I went home just as Bobby Kennedy was coming on television to announce his victory statement. As soon as he finished, I left to go to my apartment to go to sleep because it was one o'clock in the morning or so.

I went home, went to sleep, didn't have my radio on, so I didn't know there was a shooting. I got a call about two o'clock or so in the morning from Pierre Salinger in California who wanted two special planes to bring the Kennedy family out to California and to take staff people back to Washington and New York. Wanted all of these government planes and wanted a bunch of government cars from the government. Apparently, I talked to him and carried on a sane conversation and didn't remember it at all. I went back to sleep and Salinger called me again about six or six-thirty in the morning and asked if I had gotten the things. I told him no. By this time I was awake and he told me what had happened, and he said he didn't think I understood when he'd talked to me earlier.

I went to the White House and told Mr. Johnson what Salinger and Ted Sorensen had requested, in all these planes and cars and security and all that sort of stuff. Mr. Johnson said that he wanted to provide anything that was necessary, but he didn't want to make this look like we were turning cartwheels for Bobby Kennedy when we didn't, for example, with King or others. He wanted the requests to have somebody's final approval, not just anybody calling in with requests. I was to be the contact in the White House and Ted Kennedy was to be the contact for the Kennedy family. Most of the time it was conversations between myself and Jim--he's still on Kennedy's staff, either Kennedy's administrative assistant, I think his last name starts with a B. But, anyway, any requests

that came through from anybody, Salinger, Sorensen, or what have you, I'd call this guy on Kennedy's staff and he'd clear it with Ted Kennedy, and Ted Kennedy would okay it or deny it. It was amazing. I was very impressed by Ted Kennedy through this ordeal of being levelheaded and self-composed. That's why the Chappaquidick thing seems kind of incongruous to me.

But that's where I was.

F: Did the President get along with Ted Kennedy, as far as you could see?

J: As far as I could see, he got along with him. I think there was a natural distrust of the whole Kennedy operation. They had so many people who were Kennedy informers and Kennedy friends and admirers in the press and the government, I think there was always that mutual distrust. But I think of all the Kennedys, Ted Kennedy was kind of liked or appreciated by the President probably more than any of the others. I think appreciated for his political abilities.

F: Did the President ever express himself to you on Jack Kennedy?

J: Yes, he expressed himself to the extent of their mutual loyalty toward each other; that Jack Kennedy did try to keep him informed; that Jack Kennedy always treated him with great courtesy and respect, and that he reciprocated it. I think he felt Jack Kennedy was not as decisive as perhaps his public image would lead you to believe. He cited, for example, the Cuban missile crisis--that there was a lot of tension and a lot of kind of wringing of hands by Jack Kennedy and some of the others as opposed to the coolness and calmness, I believe he said that. I think that he mentioned once that particularly Bobby Kennedy, but Jack Kennedy also, were very skittish about some open housing being legislated by executive order, as Mr. Johnson recommended. So I don't know.

Maybe Jack Kennedy's political toughness was appreciated by Mr. Johnson. I really can't say that either. I don't know. They did have a lot of mutual respect anyway.

F: Going back to Martin Luther King, was there any agonizing over the decision of whether to attend the funeral, or was that pretty foregone from the beginning, that he would not?

J: I think that was pretty foregone.

F: You know everybody showed up down there.

J: To my knowledge, there was no agonizing. Mr. Johnson wanted to stay at the command post in Washington and he did attend the memorial service out there on the hill, the National Cathedral. Beyond that I don't think there was any consideration given going to the funeral; not that I can recall anyway. There may have been.

F: Did the President talk to you about the possibility of his becoming a Catholic?

J: He mentioned that he felt more comfortable, primarily because of friends and a few things like that. He mentioned that he was very comfortable and if he ever changed religions, he'd become a Catholic. But I don't think he ever gave it serious thought. I know he enjoyed what he called "the little monks" down at St. Dominic's. I'll never forget one summer, it would be the summer of 1967 probably around August or September, we'd been out all Sunday on the boat on the Potomac with Arthur and Matilde Krim, Mrs. Johnson; there were one or two others.

We came back to the White House and had dinner. We were sitting up there in the West Sitting Room, and he asked me to call the "little monks," as he called them, over at St. Dominic's because we hadn't been to church that day and see if they could put on a religious service for him. I picked up the phone and called the rector or the head guy, and said what the President would like, and would that be too much trouble. They said, "No,

come on, and we'll just have it in the private chapel." I told them that the President didn't want publicity on this; we'd be coming in an unmarked car and when would it be ready and all. So they say, "Well, come on now and we'll have it in the chapel."

So we drove in the stealth of the night. The Krims were both Jewish, there were two other people there and I can't remember now who it was, but I think they were both Protestants, I was Catholic, Mr. Johnson and Mrs. Johnson were Protestants.

F: Only one Catholic out of the crew.

J: Maybe Marie Fehmer went with us, I'm not sure about that. But, anyway, we drove up in this station wagon. We got out and the priest met us, and we went into the little chapel behind the main church. They had the little side pews, sort of like English 15th century setup, and we all took our places there. They had two kneelers in the middle of the thing, and the President and Mrs. Johnson knelt there. They had a little chair. They had one priest who'd read from the Bible, and they had another priest back on the organ and he'd play a song or two and read some more from the Bible. They'd have some prayers for the President, prayers for this and that. Mr. Johnson just knelt there the whole time and seemed to be enjoying it. There was a kind of lull and the head priest came over to me and he whispered in my ear, "This is all we worked up. Do you think this will be enough for him?"

I later told the President that and he howled. He thought that was a great story--said, "This is all we got."

F: Were you along on that trip in which the President put in at Williamsburg and the preacher preached *at* him?

J: Yes, I heard a lot about that. I was *the* person along on that trip.

F: Tell me about that. It was a minor incident and yet it's indicative.

J: I believe he had come up from Florida. Wherever it was, we came up and Williamsburg was the last stop, and we were going to the church service. This was really amazing, because we had no reason to suspect anything, except we were going to church. There hadn't been this great clamor from the pulpits about Vietnam at that time. The morning of the service, just thirty minutes or an hour before we went off to church, we were there in the house where the President was staying. He was getting dressed and he said, "Have you checked out the preacher?" I said, "Well, the Secret Service has checked out the church and they've given it a clean bill of health." He said, "Have you checked out the preacher?" I said, "No, but I'll do that now." So I sent the Secret Service out. They came back and gave a clean bill of health: the preacher was legitimate and the whole business, everything was safe.

We got in the church and, lo and behold, I was sitting right behind him and the preacher started from the pulpit. I just wanted to shrivel up to nothing. To this day I have no idea how he had the instinct to even question that the preacher might use the pulpit as a method, because there had been no intelligence reports on it, the Secret Service couldn't find anything, and yet he just had that instinct.

F: Did the President give you a look during the service or anything?

J: Yes, he was able to give me a look that I understood exactly what he meant. He commented a little bit on it in the car on the way back to the house. He was fine as the day wore on, though.

F: But his feelings weren't exactly theological about that time?

J: No. As a matter of fact, that was an Episcopal Church, and I think he rode Mrs. Johnson,

who of course is an Episcopalian, and I think what she would really like is to have Lyndon Johnson going to the Episcopalian Church with her all the time. For some reason he was always leery about the Episcopalian Church, and he rode Mrs. Johnson a little bit about that.

F: Did she get defensive on occasions like that, or did she take things pretty much in stride?

J: No, she really took them in stride and tried to laugh them off.

F: Did he look on her efforts to beautify with a great deal of seriousness, or did he look on it as kind of a woman's work?

J: He looked on it with a great deal of seriousness. I think he was really proud of her, that she was doing that and doing it on her own. I know, for example, he personally and through some of his staff twisted some arms to vote for the highway beautification bill, and twisted some arms of congressmen who really didn't like to be twisted. It was a tough vote for them to back in their districts because the billboard lobby was pretty well entrenched on Capitol Hill. The President personally took that on, and Mrs. Johnson did too, but he did that for Mrs. Johnson and for the program, which he thought was good.

F: What's your version of what happened between him and Udall there at the end?

J: I really don't know.

F: You weren't mixed up in that.

J: I think he felt betrayed. I think he really resented the fact that Udall would name the D.C. stadium after Robert F. Kennedy and not ever tell the President. He heard about it, and I can't remember now whether he read it in the paper or whether Udall called and said this was what he had done. I think it was the latter. I think Udall called our office and said, "I have done this," and I gave the President a note. By this time it had been

released, as I recall it. He really resented that fact.

F: Was there any really serious deterioration in his relationship with Willard Wirtz that you got to see?

J: I think the deterioration was more an aggravation in that by the time this so called deterioration took place there were a great many critics on Vietnam, and Mr. Johnson still felt he was on the right track, doing the right thing. Then when Willard Wirtz became sort of a self-styled expert on Vietnam, I think Mr. Johnson was aggravated, because I think he did respect Bill Wirtz very much in his field--labor secretary, labor negotiations--but I think he really resented him jumping out of his field into a field that he really didn't know anything about in Mr. Johnson's eyes. From the timing standpoint, if there was anything you were going to do to aggravate the President, that was the worst thing you could do: become a self-styled expert on Vietnam.

F: What was the last morning like there at the White House?

J: Frantic. I got there early, went over to the President's bedroom, and he had appointments out to kazoo that he wanted done before twelve noon--lots of commissions and things like that. He wanted me to come up with names of people that he couldn't remember or that he might have overlooked to be sure that we appointed them to something before he went out of office. It reminded me of the night before my wife went to the hospital to deliver our first child. It was sort of like mothering instincts, all of a sudden our house here had been torn up upstairs, all of a sudden that particular night my very pregnant wife had to have it all done, and the next day, prematurely even, she was ready to go to the hospital to deliver the child. Well, that's sort of the way Lyndon Johnson was the morning of January 20. He had just a jillion things he wanted done, phone calls made, appointments

made and sent to the Congress to be approved, just everything like that. Make sure that Mr. Nixon knew where he was supposed to go, all the arrangements for the reception and the coffee before the inauguration were done correctly, make sure that the plane trip and everything that he was taking to Texas was going to be all in the right place, just a frantic bit of activity.

Then, as I say, we rode up to the Capitol before noon with Mr. Nixon and Mr. Dirksen and went into the room on the Senate side where they had the little reception with the leadership of the Congress. We came out. The inauguration was held. Then we came off the steps, the two Presidents shook hands and departed there in the hallway.

F: Was the parting particularly ceremonial or did they just shake hands and go on about their business?

J: It was just kind of a warm, friendly bid adieu and good luck to both of them, bidding exchange of good luck. Then the Johnson family came down and got in the backup limousine. This is when he's no longer president, so he doesn't have the number one limousine. I think the only ones in the car were Mrs. Johnson, the two daughters, the President, and myself. There might have been one other, but I don't think so.

F: On things like this, what did your wife do, just kind of get there the best she knew how?

J: On that particular day, she stayed at the apartment and watched it on television.

F: It was a miserable day.

J: Yes. Clark Clifford was having a party out at his house in suburban Washington or Maryland, whatever it was, so we left the Capitol.

I'll never forget, there was the Governor of Oklahoma, as a tourist, with his little Brownie camera shooting pictures of the President as he left.

F: Who was that?

J: Dewey Bartlett. He's my former governor. We drove out of the Capitol and not a whole lot of people noticed because everybody, of course, was getting ready to parade and wanting to see the new President.

F: When you drove out of the Capitol, how did you drive out?

J: We drove out toward the House side and straight down Independence Avenue because the parade was on Pennsylvania. In the conversation there were some tears and nostalgia among the Johnson girls, and President Johnson was chattering away. First of all, he was kind of silent and then he just was chattering away about inconsequential things. He talked about Mr. Nixon's address and how he said a lot and didn't say anything, a lot of rhetoric and nothing said. He discussed his speech, as to the applauses, where they came and this and that.

Then we drove on out to Clark Clifford's and were there a while, and he wanted to make sure everybody was on the plane and this and that.

F: There was a surprisingly large group around Clark Clifford's at this time.

J: It was all the Johnson crowd, yes.

F: Did that seem to affect him one way or another?

J: No. Whether it was natural for him or whether he felt he should, he again was the life of the party. Like that was the right thing to do, and he made the right decision, he is happy he did, he can't wait to get home and get a rest.

We left the Cliffords then. I had to make two or three phone calls of things he wanted. On the appointments, he wanted to make sure they got to the Senate on time and I had to call back to my office, and assure him that everything he wanted done was done.

We left the Cliffords and now it's kind of a blur, because I don't remember where the helicopters were parked. But wherever it was, we got on the helicopters and flew out to Andrews. He shook hands there and I left him at the plane. He got on and went off to Texas.

F: Was it ever suggested you might go home to Texas with him?

J: He had talked to me some months before in early 1968 about going to Texas and doing what Tom Johnson ended up doing. I explained to him that I had a commitment to public service and I had a commitment to Oklahoma, and that I was turning down all offers. I really appreciated it, but I wanted to come back to Oklahoma and set up my own law practice.

F: I don't think that was really a lawyer's job.

J: No. And, besides, I had never practiced law since getting the degree. I looked on those four years as a tremendous education and a tremendous experience, but I never once looked on it as anything permanent. In fact, my mental frame of mind was kind of funny. From the time I went there, when I saw the magnitude of the job itself of anybody that's fairly close to the president and the tremendous opportunity to screw up, right from the beginning I said to myself, "I'm going to do the best I can, give him 100 per cent, but if I screw up or if anything happens, if he goes out of office, if he becomes incapacitated, for whatever reason, I'm going back to Oklahoma, and I will say that it has been a great experience, it has been fun, but it's not my life. I'm going to build my own life."

Yet with all of that mental preparation, when I left the helicopter, I had a car and a driver still, he drove me to our apartment in Georgetown and I saw Olivia. It was really just kind of numbing, because all of a sudden it was all over. It was difficult for me and I

know it must have been difficult to him to suddenly go with all the pressure, always fighting a time limit, always having a problem arise that you really just had to work ten times to solve, to suddenly [have] "no more train to pull." Suddenly you had time on your hands, nobody cared whether you got something done or not.

F: You realized you and Olivia could go to a movie, or sit on the divan and read all afternoon.

J: That' s right.

F: It left you empty, didn't it?

J: Yes. It was just kind of a numbing experience. We didn't talk a whole lot. We wanted to move on, I told the Nixon people that I'd help them out in any way, and I did talk to them that afternoon on the phone. That night we went out to a little restaurant in Georgetown and had dinner. The next morning we got in the car and went to Oklahoma.

F: There's one place I've had some understanding that there are some things about the post-John Kennedy period that I think are not very pleasant for some of the Kennedy people. There were quite a number of months after January 1969 when I'd go by the White House, and I just couldn't get used to the idea that there was somebody else there. And that's knowing it from March that there's going to be somebody else there. I can understand how the Kennedy people, just having it pulled out from under them in just a matter of minutes, [felt]. As pros you might ought to make that kind of transference officially and publicly, whether you can on your interior make it or not, but there is something about the end of an administration that does leave you empty.

J: It really does, because for the four years I was there I literally never backed off and looked at it as a historian, objectively as a journalist, or anything else, because there was

so much constant pressure just to keep treading water--not ever to get ahead of the game, but just try not to get too far behind and to try not to mess up where it would end up in the newspapers.

Suddenly you've got time to think. It's just a totally empty, numbing feeling.

F: Did the President ever reminisce in you presence, or analyze would be a better verb in this case, about how he thought his administration had gone, other than that January 19 night?

J: No. I think he did in bits and pieces at various times. He never sat down as a teacher and verbalized on it. I think basically he has said the biggest drawback of his administration was his inability to communicate with the masses of the people.

F: He knew it.

J: He knew it, recognized it, and the most frustrating part, didn't know how to solve it. He reminisced about that.

I think he was steadfast in his belief that what he did in Vietnam was the right thing to do, and I don't think he ever wavered in that. I think he felt that sometime down the line in history it will show up to be the right thing. The thing that he feared was all of the instant historians who were interpreting history erroneously, or without knowledge: the Roger Hilsmans, the Townsend Hoopes, the New York Times and that bunch were going to distort it so much that maybe historians never could really get a fair evaluation of what went on and why.

The domestic programs, he has reminisced his pleasure at getting the things passed and his displeasure at the administration of them, particularly, for example, the Community Action programs and the Poverty programs. I think he bought the concept

from, I don't know who, Bill Moyers or some socially bent person, but that was the concept whereby the money was funneled not to politicians like county commissioners and what have you but to private individuals and private groups like churches; and, consequently, a lot of abuse of funds such as purchase of things for militant organizations that never really got to the people occurred. He felt the administration of that would have been much better served if it had been funneled through politicians who have to stand for election and account to the people for what they do. I think that that was kind of a disappointment to him.

But with the exception of his inability to communicate and be understood, I don't think that he looked back on many of his decisions and considered them wrong or considered he would have done it much differently.

F: Speaking of Bill Moyers, did he and the President have a sort of friendly divorce or was there a blowup?

J: I don't know the intimacies of that. You know, Bill's brother, Jim, died or was killed, I forget. Anyway, he expired, and Bill allegedly felt a responsibility for Jim's family. Bill came down to the Ranch and he and the President drove around by themselves and walked around, so I wasn't privy to the conversation. But, in essence, Bill was explaining to the President that he had this offer from Harry Guggenheim on ***Newsday***, and from what I gathered the President was telling Bill that it was a mistake, that Guggenheim could be fickle and Bill could be getting into a situation that wouldn't be to his best interest. You've got to appreciate that Bill was talented. Even though the President suspected Bill of being too friendly with the Kennedys, for example, Bill was a talented person and the President, both fatherly and professionally, looked on him with fondness.

When the President ran across someone like that, he didn't like them ever to leave him. Once he developed a working relationship, he liked to keep it. So I think he did not like the fact that Bill was going to leave him. If something more went on, I don't know a about it. It could have, I don't know. I do know there was a coolness for a period after that, which I gather now is not cool. I don't know.

F: They're rejoined to some extent.

On those trips to the Pacific where you met with the leaders of South Vietnam, did you sit in on any of those conferences?

J: Yes, I made all of the trips. We went to Guam. I think we made two trips to Guam; maybe it was one. But I remember we had conferences with the American advisers and then we had conferences with Thieu and Ky in Guam. We also had the Manila Conference in 1966 and that whole world trip. Then in 1967 when the President went to the memorial service for Prime Minister Holt, he had individual meetings with all of them. Outside of the briefings, I didn't sit in on Thieu and Ky in presidential meetings that I recall.

F: You don't have any idea whether they were sort of unilateral or free interchange of opinions?

J: I did walk in and out on one, I recall. It was like Lyndon Johnson talking to Mike Mansfield, you could always tell who was in control and who was in charge. He was very conscious of the size difference, I think, and the language difference. He was very cordial and made them feel at home, but still you knew who was in charge.

F: Did they use interpreters?

J: No. Thieu spoke English and Ky spoke English. I don't believe there were any

interpreters for either one of those. We used interpreters when we were in Mexico and when we were down at Punta del Este and at El Salvador and on the Glassboro conference, but I don't recall any interpreters--

F: What was your function during Glassboro?

J: I was Marvin Watson's assistant then. Marvin was setting up the bulk of it. My function was to carry out everything Marvin wanted done.

F: Did you go up there?

J: I went up. In fact, we went up on Friday for the first meeting, and then flew from Glassboro to Los Angeles for a fund-raising dinner at the Beverly Hilton, I think. And we went from there to the Ranch in Texas--I went to the Ranch by myself, Marvin went back to Washington. I'm pretty sure of that because I'm sure I was at the Ranch by myself with Marie Fehmer. I of course gathered all the briefing material that came on cable from Rostow, and then worked with Marvin on the phone on the details because I was, by this time, handling most of the movement details since I was the one with the President.

But a new thing developed in that Kosygin's daughter, whose name I forget, was going to be involved, and so Mr. Johnson thought Mrs. Johnson should entertain her. So we got Lynda Bird and Mrs. Johnson and we lined up a little bit of a schedule for them.

F: Mrs. Hughes.

J: Yes, Mrs. Hughes. For them to take this helicopter ride around and stuff like that to entertain Kosygin's daughter while the talks were going on. So the rest of the afternoon I pretty well stuck with the ladies. Then we rejoined the main party just before leaving the house and the press conference.

F: Did your ladies' tour go all right?

J: Oh, it went very well. Mrs. Hughes was magnificent; she's a very bubbly, chattering lady. And Mrs. Johnson was apologizing for the helicopter. We looked down on the New Jersey seacoast and at one point all you could see were filling stations, concrete super highways and billboards, and she was apologizing for how the landscape had been uglied and how [with] this program of her beautification [she] hoped to restore and recapture all that. Kosygin's daughter was very charming and very interested in all of these things. It went very well, though.

F: Then what did you do?

J: Then we flew back to Washington, helicoptered back to Philadelphia or somewhere and flew back to Washington. I'd have to refresh myself, but it seems to me that we prepared that night for a speech on--did we go to the UN? I can't remember. No, that's right, Kosygin went to the UN, and we were watching on television.

F: Did the President seem pleased with the Glassboro Conference?

J: Very much so. He commented that there developed a good rapport between himself and Kosygin, talking about grandchildren and farming. They had a lot of mutual interests. And the thing that he marveled about was that the difference between him and Kosygin and the two systems was when Johnson could speak with authority, "Yes, we will do this, and will do that," Kosygin was always very guarded. Johnson got the impression that there was a change of signals between the Friday meeting and the Sunday meeting in that Friday Kosygin was very open and very agreeable to a series of things, from Vietnam to the Middle East, and that by Sunday there was a coolness in attitude and a change of attitude. And Johnson felt that Kosygin probably had called back and the Politburo and

his counterparts in the triumvirate did not go along with that, and they gave him new signals.

But apparently the rapport they established was good. After the Friday meeting, Mr. Johnson was really buoyed about the possibilities, and he couldn't wait for the Sunday meeting. After the Sunday meeting, he was a little bit let down.

F: What was Saturday: sort of a cleaning up and a sort of re-inspiriting for the Sunday meeting?

J: Yes. Saturday he drove around the Ranch and relaxed, and I was gathering all the cables and all the briefing materials from Rostow. Then he studied that. Then he flew up early Sunday morning about six or seven o'clock.

F: The President likes everything short, both talk and written briefs. How did you discipline Rostow, who cascades words? He does a brilliant job, but he still--

J: Basically we just put a rule that either my office did it or the person originating the memo would have to summarize on one page.

F: And Rostow would stick with it?

J: Well, he sometimes went to a page and a half or two. But you'd have to summarize the whole text of the underlying memo in one page.

F: What was your role at Punta del Este?

J: Really as Marvin Watson's assistant, to take care of the phone calls, the gathering of the briefing materials. Marvin Watson was the major domo on that.

F: Did you advance it?

J: I advanced it, yes. I went down there--I can't remember who I went down there with now, someone from the press office though--and we advanced the site of the location, all

of the things that you do in advancing a trip like that. Then in the trip itself, I just backed Marvin Watson up. When was that? 1966, early? I think at that stage I still was not that close to Johnson. I didn't sit in and have a drink with him like the last two years, so I mainly just anticipated everything Marvin wanted and carried out his assignments.

F: The President can get to talking about something and sort of get wrapped up in a story and talk a long time, talk well and it's fascinating. Now then, Jim Jones has work he has got to do for the President. Could you ever excuse yourself, or did you sit there when you got caught in one of those sort of expository sessions and just make it up later? You know, for example, for instance, that you've got to have something for the President at nine o'clock and he's going to talk until 8:59.

J: We had kind of a funny relationship. I don't know exactly how to put it. We would pout at each other a little bit. Obviously I didn't tell him off, but I could be very short with him and he could know when I was irritated or if I had something to do. But I tried to never tell the President I had to do this or was going to do that. I always tried to put it in terms which he knew what the right answer was, but "You might consider thus and so." What I'd try to do if a phone call came or something, I'd try to slip out, or if someone walked in I'd try to maneuver the conversation around to where I became superfluous and I'd slip out. You just had to play that by ear.

F: If a call came through to him while you were in there and you figure that it's going to be a conversation of some duration and there are things you can be doing, could you, in a sense, leave without a "by your permission"?

J: Oh, yes. Say, if he was in the Oval Office, the phone came through to him and it looked like he was settling down for a pretty good visit, I'd slip out to my office and dictate or

answer phone calls or do whatever [was needed]. Particularly when you were with him, he would make a lot of assignments and I'd carry these reminder cards around and write them all down and check them off at the end of each day. I'd get into the other room and try to have my staff carry out some of the things that I wanted done. And as soon as the red button went off, which meant he was off the phone, then I'd hustle back in there.

F: Did the President ever run into any of these foreign heads of state with whom he couldn't make conversation? I can't imagine Johnson not being able to establish some sort of rapport with anybody, but did he run into someone along the way?

J: I can't recall anybody. I know it used to aggravate him that we'd have to spend so much of his time in these arrival ceremonies with the President of Chad, or some of these countries that were smaller than Oklahoma in size, population; that he would have to go through all the folderol of receiving them and exchanging welcoming remarks. Then invariably part of the protocol is they have to have a reception line, and then they have to walk over to the President's office and talk about nothing virtually. He kind of resented that time wasting. He thought that the Vice President ought to take some of those protocol things. I never can recall any head of state that he couldn't get along with or establish some rapport.

One humorous incident. It was one of the African heads of state who had all the garb of gowns and African native garb, and it was some small country. After the arrival ceremonies and the receiving line and the march back to the Oval Office for the traditional meeting with the interpreter, the President's dog Yuki, which was the mongrel mutt, had been accustomed to sleeping under the covers with President Johnson. So when this African head of state kind of lifted his gown to sit down on the couch, Yuki

jumped underneath and Mr. Johnson looked over at me and said, "Do something." I was kind of puzzled and the dog got out before I had to do anything.

F: Did the President ever deliver you little lectures on political procedure, on morals, on how to work, or whatnot? In other words, what kind of person you ought to fashion yourself into?

J: I don't think he directly gave any lectures like that. Through his expositions of the things that were important to him and the things that he didn't like in other people, such as loyalty versus disloyalty, things like that, you just can't help but be consumed by the enormous personality of Lyndon Johnson. I find myself today being basically the same personality I've always been, and yet I've picked up a lot of Johnson traits. For example, in dealing with my staff now, I'm what might be considered by Tulsa standards unreasonable; and yet it was what Lyndon Johnson expected of people that he had confidence enough in to have on his staff. But I don't recall any lectures as such.

I may have told Dorothy this, but I remember shortly after I came to the White House I was pretty anonymous and writing the memos and doing Marvin's work but signing his name to them. On one occasion, as every Tuesday we had a congressional leadership breakfast, I went ahead and published and gave the thing to the press desk--have I told that story?

F: Yes, we'll skip that one.

J: That's the only moralizing that stands out in my mind.

F: Did the President come to your wedding?

J: Yes, he did.

F: What was that like?

J: First of all , the President--

F: It increased your attendance, you had a few Secret Service men.

J: Yes. First, we were just going to have a very small, private wedding. And then we started putting a list down both among friends and people we felt who were in the same official status of friends that ought to be invited, and the thing was getting out of hand. So we had a large wedding to begin with. Olivia's mother and aunt came from California and my parents and sisters and niece came up from Oklahoma. President and Mrs. Johnson had a reception for us on the Friday night before the Sunday evening wedding.

F: At the White House?

J: At the White House in the Yellow Oval Room. He was just marvelous. Gave us some gifts and a nice presentation. We were sitting over there with crazy Aunt Ollie. Olivia's aunt's a former actress. Her husband was an actor named Harry Carey, and Olivia was raised by them out in California.

F: Aunt Ollie?

J: Olive Golden, yes. She was in silent movies. So crazy Aunt Ollie--I call her crazy Aunt Ollie--is seventy-eight years old and has a beautiful vocabulary, cussing and otherwise, and just a really sharp mind. She wore this muumuu to the White House; she wears a muumuu everywhere. She is a very close friend of Barry and Peggy Goldwater. She shoots the rapids with them every year, even at age seventy-eight, at the Colorado rapids. Anyway, the President gave Aunt Ollie a presidential lighter there sitting on the couch. She said, "That's great. I've already got one of Barry Goldwater's." He laughed. He thought that was the funniest thing.

The wedding was at eight o'clock on Sunday evening at the church in Georgetown

that President Kennedy used to attend, Holy Trinity. President and Mrs. Johnson came. We held up the wedding; they got there about eight-fifteen.

F: That's fairly prompt for him.

J: That's right. But he was really great. We had a reception down at the Federal City Club, I think it was called, down at the Sheraton Carlton Hotel, he and Mrs. Johnson came to that. We had a large crowd there and he danced and circulated all evening. One of the society columns said, "the last big blow-out of the Great Society," or something. It was a fun evening.

F: It was about the last one for four or five years, at least.

One time the President said to me, "I'm eager for you to see Senator Dirksen and find out what I've had to give him through the years to get him to come around on some issues." Well, I was a long time getting Dirksen pinned down and then he died before I got very deeply into it, so I never got to run that through. Do you have any insights on what he might have been talking about, what he might have had to do in the way of a *quid pro quo* for Dirksen? I can identify the issues that Dirksen came around on.

J: The dealings I had with Senator Dirksen, there was always a *quid pro quo*. I recall one of them, I don't recall the issue, but I do recall that Senator Dirksen wanted somebody appointed to CAB, or one of those independent agencies, and we turned cartwheels and got the appointment. We got Dirksen's support; that was the key part in getting the vote in the Senate.

There was another one. He had a friend down in Florida. Again, I think it was a CAB thing, that he certainly would like CAB to know that this guy was honest and certainly would like any help. With all of his molasses, he always made it seem like the

American thing to do.

F: I judge the two men understood each other perfectly really.

J: Very, very well. They were real politicians. If you haven't talked to Barry Goldwater, it would be interesting to talk to him.

F: I have one interview and have got more to go.

J: I remember it was after the elections in 1968. Barry Goldwater had been re-elected to the Senate, and he asked to see President Johnson. We set up an appointment, and they went in, and that's when Mr. Johnson reiterated about crazy Aunt Ollie and the lighter and all. They got a big laugh about that. They were in there a good long while and then Goldwater came out and there were tears in his eyes. So they must have had a nostalgic reminiscence or something. It might be interesting to find out what they talked about in that meeting after he was elected to the Senate.

F: I'll do it. Did the President have certain senators he just could not deal with? I'll grant you've got some quixotic characters that maybe won't stand hitched and that kind of thing.

J: Yes, I think he dealt with all of them. I remember one evening he was going to have Fulbright in the family dining room for dinner. It seems to me like it was on a Saturday evening when you normally would let down and not politick and not have business. Mrs. Johnson was a little disturbed that they would have Fulbright over after all the bad things Fulbright was saying. I remember President Johnson turned to Mrs. Johnson and said, "Dear, if we didn't have dinner with our enemies, we'd end up dining alone."

F: That's kind of a poignant statement, isn't it? Did he ever talk about the fact that he'd kind of put Fulbright where he was?

J: No. He did talk about what he considered an inconsistency in Fulbright in that Fulbright apparently had told him that we had no business being in Vietnam because these were not our kind of people, and yet he thought our allegiance should be to Europe because those were our kind of people. He didn't think Fulbright was a true liberal in that he'd vote against civil rights legislation for Arkansas and not help the blacks of Arkansas and wanted to be friends with Europeans, and yet put the Vietnamese and the Asians in the same category as blacks as not being our type of people. So I think he didn't care much for that kind of inconsistency. But I don't know that he ever mentioned that he got Fulbright where he is.

F: He was more or less responsible for getting him on the Foreign Relations Committee. In fact, as majority leader he had to bounce or persuade someone to retire early so that Fulbright could have the seat.

J: I didn't know that.

F: If he looked back, he must have thought about that a few times.

Did the President take any more than kind of a highly placed citizen's interest in Texas politics? There were always rumors of Johnson's heavy hand in Texas politics.

J: I don't recall him pulling any strings or being the final say on anything in Texas politics. What he did in Texas politics, which is a marvel to me, was really maintain his ties to people that had helped him way back when he was a congressman. I know somebody would be in town and say they wanted to see the President, somebody I had never heard of, and they said they were from Texas, so I always was flagged to at least tell him that this person was in town. And it was amazing! He could recite chapter and verse as to where they helped him back in 1937 or something when he was a congressman, and

always either talk to them on the phone or have them by the White House. This kind of thing, he maintained that kind of constant contact with even the lower elements of Texas politics. But I really don't recall him ever pulling any strings. I don't recall him ever influencing John Connally in his political machine. I don't really recall him ever grooming Ben Barnes or things like that. All these things he's given attribution for, but I don't recall him doing anything like that.

F: I think, Jim, we're just about to run out now. Can you think of anything we haven't covered?

J: No, I don't think so.

F: Well, let's quit, at least for now.

[End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview III]

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