INTERVIEW IV

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INTERVIEWEE: ARTHUR KRIM

INTERVIEWER: Michael L. Gillette

PLACE: Mr. Krim's office, New York City

Tape 1 of 3

G: You were saying that you met with the President a good deal during the period from April through June, [1968], I believe.

K: Yes, both at the White House and at the Ranch. Is there any particular question you'd want to start with?

G: Let's talk a little bit about the impact of the March 31 speech and your reaction to it. First of all, were you aware of any of the foreign reaction? For example, did it take the South Vietnamese government by surprise?

K: Well, obviously I was not privy to that, but I do know that their response came very quickly, more quickly I believe than the President had expected. My best recollection is that when I came back to the White House after the March 31 period, it was only two or three days later and I was there the day that he got the news that the North Vietnamese had made an announcement overseas that they were ready to talk with the U.S. representatives.

G: What was his reaction to this, do you recall?

K: Well, he was not effusive about it, but I could get a quiet sense of satisfaction. He was rather prescient about it, because the first time I mentioned it to him he indicated that he

expected they were going to try to embarrass him by the site of the suggested meeting, and sure enough, that's what happened. I watched him go through this whole process, because I was seeing him I guess almost every day in that period, of trying to reconcile his statement that he would meet them anywhere, anyplace, with their first two requests, first to meet in Laos, and then to meet in Warsaw. He took an awful lot of pressure to accept their suggestions in order to establish his own credibility.

G: Why didn't he want to meet them in Warsaw?

K: Well, he was very clear on that. He felt that if the meeting were either in Laos or in Warsaw, the access to western journalists and all that would go with that would be very limited. He felt that the North Vietnamese would be in total control of the form of the negotiations, of the regulation of the communications that would be sent out to the world, and that our representatives would be in a hostile atmosphere, which would have a negative psychological impact on them. He stood firm on that for several weeks. It was a tough period. You must remember that he had made a big point of saying anywhere, anyplace, but he kept saying later that didn't mean anywhere, anyplace where all the cards would be stacked in their favor.

Then after a few weeks they did agree to Paris and he was rather ebullient on the day that that happened, and he was very proud of a wire that he got from the United States Ambassador in Laos--I remember his showing it to me that day--in which this ambassador, I forget his name, said, "You stood eyeball to eyeball and they winked." He was pleased with that.

G: Were there any within the administration that urged him to go ahead and accept the site

of Warsaw?

K: Oh, yes. I don't think [Dean] Rusk did, but I think there were some of the members of the cabinet who didn't urge him so much as to say, "Isn't this inconsistent with what you had said?" Of course, I don't remember this in any detail, but I rather imagine there were some editorials around the country to that effect. But I had many talks with him during these few weeks about that, and he was adamant. It almost appeared as if what was then considered a terrible thing could happen, and that is they would say, "All right, you don't want to go to Warsaw, no talks." But he stood his ground.

G: How did our allies in South Vietnam respond to the March 31 speech? They didn't have any advance warning of it, did they?

K: No, and I'm not--I don't have any knowledge to bring to bear on that. I know that I knew a lot later on about their attitude, particularly after the convention in August, and the games that they started to play to wait for Nixon. That part I was privy to. I'm sure I discussed it, but I don't like to just speculate. I do not remember specifically.

G: Did you get any sense at all that once the prospect of direct negotiations came into sight, that there were those in the administration who opposed direct negotiations with the North Vietnamese?

K: No, I didn't hear that on any side.

G: Now, in mid-April the President traveled to Honolulu to meet with President [Chung Hee] Park of South Korea and Admiral [U. S. Grant] Sharp. Do you recall any details of that?

K: Yes, I do, and of course so much was happening during this period that I don't know quite

how to organize my answer, because the Honolulu trip, as you know, was postponed. He was supposed to meet [William] Westmoreland out there and get a report, but instead he met him at the Ranch, and there were a lot of circumstances that led to that. Maybe we ought to try a little chronology here; we can always sort it out later. Because when I came back to the White House on either April 2 or 3--probably the second--I had come there, amongst other things, to prepare for the President's visit on the fourth to the fund-raising dinner in Washington. I can't recall, and your notes didn't help me on it, whether it was the [Democratic] National Committee or the congressional Democratic committee, but it was a fund raiser. Initially, of course, the President was to appear there as a potential candidate, but it was agreed that night on March 31, when I talked with the President after he had withdrawn, that he was going to keep that appearance.

I came down just to keep the ball rolling on that, and several things happened in that hectic couple of days, including the Vietnamese statement and including the visit with Bobby Kennedy. We talked about that, because he said he was going to take the position with Bob that he had mentioned to me the night of March 31, and that is that he was not going to take sides. You remember, he told me not to take sides. He would prefer if I stayed out of it, which was my preference, so he was walking through an open door on that one.

He had that meeting, and I gather it was cordial. Bobby Kennedy was somewhat apologetic and even a little obsequious. Of course, that was quite a change from the public Bobby Kennedy. And he was very complimentary about the President. You have the notes of all that in--

G: Are those notes that I sent you accurate?

K: Yes. Yes, actually refreshed my recollection exactly what he said. Well, actually, I think the notes were written by somebody who was at the meeting, and it took that general form. During this period, and actually in the conversations that my wife and I had had with him just before he made the announcement on the thirty-first, he kept stressing that there were three or four things he wanted to do before he left the presidency. One of them was to resolve the Vietnam situation. Another was to defuse the adversarial position between Russia and the U.S. That was very high in his mind at that time. The third was to accomplish a tax increase, which he had done a lot of talking about in 1966, but had been in a sense touted off it by the business community.

You and I haven't gone into that, but there were many meetings on that which were interesting. I never knew which was the chicken and the egg. Because I was present when he met with a hundred of the top business people in 1966 and asked them do they want a tax increase. Do they think there should be one? And only one man raised his hand. I think it was Sidney Weinberg. Later he quoted that a lot. But being at the meeting, I had the feeling that they were intimidated, so I never really knew whether if there had been a more open discussion the same consensus against a tax increase would have occurred. But that was then. Now, he was talking about the absolute need to do something about a tax increase because the economy just wasn't capable of continuing to carry the costs of the war and the costs of the social programs. So that was important to him.

Doing something in the Middle East was the fourth. That was tied in with Russia

in a very interesting way. Again, should I digress and just try to pick up the pieces later?

G: Sure.

K: Because in 1967 there had been a lot of events in connection with the aftermath of the Six Day War in Israel. I was very much involved in that, because in an unofficial basis he used me a good deal to be liaison with the Israelis when he didn't feel he wanted to go through the State Department or the Pentagon. The big issue in January of 1968 was whether we should deliver a fleet of Phantoms and some additional Skyhawks to the Israelis. This was considered by the Israelis to be, frankly not to exaggerate it, almost a matter of life and death for their security.

The President received [Levi] Eshkol at the Ranch in January of 1968--Eshkol was then the head of Israel--and Eshkol brought with him not only his ambassador and other members of his cabinet on the civilian side, but he brought his chief of staff and his chief of the air force. Johnson in turn summoned our chief of staff, and the heads of State and Defense and so forth. It became kind of a full-dress meeting on whether our military people confirmed the need to restore some kind of balance in the Middle East which would give Israel security, and also whether it was something that made good sense on non-military grounds.

He didn't make a commitment, and he made it clear to me that the reason he didn't make a commitment was that he wanted to come to some accommodation with the Russians and that this would be a red flag. They were then much more deep into the Middle East with their surrogates in Syria and Iraq than they are today--1982. He felt, number one, that it would be some months before the Phantoms would be deliverable--it

would be the end of 1968--and therefore there's nothing he could turn over to them that day. Secondly, he felt it would take six or eight months for Israeli pilots to learn how to fly Phantoms, and he felt he could overcome that obstacle by allowing a certain cadre of pilots to go out to McDonnell-Douglas, where there were some Phantoms, and I don't know where they learned or intended to learn, but he was ready to let them learn without the commitment. He called me the last day of the meeting and he said, "I know that Eshkol is going to see you tomorrow with his group. I did not make a commitment, but I have their needs in mind." And a few minutes later Jim Jones called me and said, "The President has gone far enough. You, in a quiet way, can tell them not to worry, not to feel disappointed."

The reason I bring this up now is that that was tied in with his feelings about Russia. Of course later in the year he went through a very detailed process of getting the Joint Chiefs on board, getting the congressional leaders on board, and he waited until he had both Nixon and Humphrey on board before he finally announced the Phantom decision in September or October. At the time I'm talking about, he was holding back because of the Russian situation. He may have had other reasons, but that was the big one.

G: Did you agree with his strategy at this time of holding off on the commitment?

K: Yes.

G: Did the Israelis receive this combination of no commitment on the one hand, but an assurance on the other, an informal assurance?

K: Absolutely. They got nervous as can be on March 31. The calls I got were really legion,

because they had no inkling of that, of course. They wondered what that did to their arrangement. By that time the Israeli pilots were already here learning how to fly the Phantoms, the Phantoms were under construction, and I did get permission to reassure them.

So to return to the chronology, we had this fund-raising dinner on the fourth. The President was planning to go to Honolulu right after the dinner, so I know we talked about that as something that was going to happen. He was going out there, and I'm pretty sure, and your notes seem to confirm it, that he intended to see Westmoreland out there to discuss the situation in Vietnam. This was of course in the aftermath of the Tet situation, which he consistently and frequently referred to as a victory for us, which had been misinterpreted by the media. Of course that's been Westmoreland's thesis, but it was also the President's at the time.

G: Was there also some confusion about the size of the area north of the DMZ that would be excluded from the bombing?

K: Yes. After his speech there was that confusion. It made things a little more fuzzy than had been intended.

But that night, the fourth, I had been staying at the White House these few nights and the fourth I went over ahead of the President to be at the dinner. Ed Muskie was the chairman and during the course of the dinner he announced that Martin Luther King had been assassinated. You know, it struck a terrible note. The dinner was immediately adjourned. The President, of course, never came.

I rushed back to the White House and there were four or five of us with the

President, I think Marvin Watson, Marie Fehmer, and I forget who else. But it was sort of the staff group. The decision was made immediately to postpone the trip to Honolulu, and he immediately got on the phone, and I think he had Marvin on the phone and others, to call the black leadership for an emergency meeting. I don't know whether the riots started that night or the next night, but it was all like one continuous event. The riots started very soon in Washington, and from where we were in the White House we could see fires in the air.

G: Did he anticipate the rioting?

K: Well, I can't remember that, it came so fast. Didn't it start--it might have started late on the fourth. It certainly started on the fifth. He was very depressed, and the thing that was so clear--and I remember Mathilde was there part of this time, because we talked about it--[was] how short-lived the euphoria of the announcement had been. Because the first couple of days, with the Vietnamese making their move, with Bobby Kennedy full of apologies, with editorials and calls and everything, and with his talking about concentrating on the big issues, it had seemed as if it had all paid off. Then to have this happen was a devastating blow to the country and to LBJ.

The next day he did have this meeting with the black leaders. Of course, his rapport with them was very great, but they didn't control what happened on the streets. He used the moment to make sure that the Congress was going to pass another piece of the civil rights pattern. This one had to do with the equal rights in housing.

G: Open housing.

K: And he moved that along on the aftermath of the Martin Luther King assassination. So

that's a long way of getting back to the fact that the Honolulu trip was postponed until about ten days later and actually in the interim I think we went to the Ranch. I think I was not there when Westmoreland came, but he came to the Ranch.

G: Do you know anything about the President's decision not to go to the King funeral?

K: I was thinking of that as I was talking. I know he made that decision, and I can't remember why. I wish I could shed light on that.

G: There is some suggestion that it was strictly a security issue.

K: Well, it could be. I know that happened later with Bobby. He called me on the day of Bobby's funeral and I think he called several other people, should he go. He felt the atmosphere might be wrong for him, and also the security. I know I advised him to go, and I assume he talked to a lot of other people to factor in what his final decision would be. And he went. But I can't remember why he didn't go to the Martin Luther King funeral.

G: Can you tell me a little bit more about the atmosphere in the White House during the rioting?

K: It was very low. You know, I was with Marvin in his office, and Marvin could shed a lot of light on that. Of course, there had been other moments of this sort before, like when Cy Vance went out to--was it Detroit?--there was a similar kind of thing. But this, right on the back doorstep of the White House, was a shocker. I remember it as a very traumatic kind of a feeling in the White House. As I say, we could see the fires from Marvin's office.

G: Anything in particular on the President's support of that open housing bill? Do you recall

any particulars of his, for example, leaning on senators or congressmen?

K: Oh, I know he did. That's the kind of thing he used to do so well. He knew where to push the buttons and he used them to the hilt.

G: Now, going from the King assassination back to some political questions.

K: Yes.

G: Did that meeting with Bobby Kennedy change their relationship any, do you think?

K: I doubt if he had any other meetings with Bobby. If he did, I don't recall them. I do feel that he publicly lived up to his promise not to intervene in the campaign. I know that privately he was of course supportive of Hubert Humphrey's candidacy. If he met with Bobby I do not recall it, so obviously it's difficult to say that it changed their relationship.

G: Well, did it modify his attitude toward Kennedy at all? Did it ameliorate the friction between them?

K: I have no evidence on that one way or the other.

G: Now, I notice that after the March 31 speech, both Senator [Mike] Mansfield and Mayor [Richard] Daley cited the possibility of a presidential draft, that even though the President would not run, that there still remained the possibility of the convention drafting him.

K: Well, I don't know about Mike Mansfield. I think I have related in my past interview the part Mike Mansfield played in forcing the President's decision not to run, and that was only a few days before March 31. So the fact that he would say that would surprise me. However, you'll also recall in that narrative that I have prepared leading up to March 31, I had thought when I came down the next morning at nine-thirty and the door was closed that the President was still sleeping. He told me later that I was completely wrong, that

he was already on the way to see Mayor Daley and that Mayor Daley had told him, "When you come out here, we're going to start a draft for you for president." So it was that kind of draft; I don't think it was an organized effort to be started by Daley.

As we come to the days just before the convention, and the convention itself, I'll have more to say about Daley's feelings on that.

G: As long as we're on the subject of Daley, let me ask you. In April, it seems that there were suggestions of changing the site of the convention to another city. There was a lot of unrest in Chicago.

K: Yes, that's true.

G: How was this decision made to leave the convention in Chicago? Do you recall that?

K: No, I don't. [John] Criswell will have to give you that. I should imagine Daley would have been very negative on taking it out of Chicago.

G: You didn't give any advice one way or another on that?

K: I wasn't involved in that decision.

G: Now, on the question of remaining neutral publicly, did it bother LBJ when important members of the administration would take one side or another, for example?

K: Yes, it did.

G: [Robert] McNamara?

K: Well, and also [Willard] Wirtz for Humphrey, and there were a few others. He had some rather acerbic comments about that that he would give to me. He thought it was a mistake.

G: What did he do privately to help Humphrey?

K: Well, during this particular period we're talking about, I don't think very much. He knew of certain things that were being done, such as solicitation of funds from his friends. He was not opposed to that as long as it was not being done by his people. He knew of things like that and if he had wanted to create an obstacle course there, he would only have had to lift a finger. I mean, people close to him who were now giving money to Humphrey. But the word was out--and I don't know whether he participated in it or not--that Humphrey was his favorite candidate, as a result of which there was never a moment of doubt in my mind, despite all the history that's come out since then about Bobby would have had it or [Eugene] McCarthy might have made it, that from the minute the President withdrew, Hubert was going to be the candidate. This was before the reforms, and all the organizational strength was behind Hubert. Really, Bobby could not have broken the back of that, in my opinion. And this all came from the fact that everybody assumed that was the President's choice.

So in that sense, of course he helped him, but what he did directly in this period, I don't know. He let me know constantly that of the three people running, he was for Hubert.

G: Someone suggested that Humphrey never actually received something that he really wanted in that campaign, and that was the mailing list of the President's Club members.

K: That's not so.

G: He did have it?

K: Yes. That's not so. Another false report is that the President tried to withhold from him a six hundred thousand dollar fund that had been improperly collected a few years back and

which was in a trust fund. My instructions were that that should be released if possible to the candidate of the party, and later when Hubert became the candidate, the instructions were clearly to get it to him if possible. We tried mightily, but there were a lot of newspaper reports that the President was sabotaging the effort to get that to Hubert. The same thing with this list of the President's Club. Everything that the National Committee had was available. The President's Club list was made available, even though, looking back, it might not have been proper to do it with McCarthy and Bobby also running. But it--

G: So it was before the nomination?

K: Yes. I think that was done--not by me. I'm trying to recall who was running Hubert's thing at that time. It was [William] Connell and [Richard] Maguire and some others. But they had access to that list.

G: Why did Humphrey delay his announcement so long, almost a month after the March 31 speech?

K: He had no reason to rush it. He was doing a lot of backstage preparation for it. If you will recall, the day he announced, all the news media announced that he had over a thousand delegates. The day he announced, he had a clear majority. So he didn't have to rush that.

G: Do you know anything about Lawrence O'Brien leaving the administration to go to work for Kennedy's [campaign]?

K: Yes, of course. Larry, you will recall, had said he would not be against LBJ as long as he was in his cabinet. You will recall that I tried to get him to say that he would not be

against LBJ, period, but he had left that little door open. Shortly after the announcement he resigned from the cabinet and went over with Bobby. You will recall, about March 10, 11 or 12, when we had that meeting in New York, he had told me about the tremendous pressure from Bobby Kennedy's group for him to leave at that time and take over the management of Bobby's campaign.

G: What sort of pressure could they exert?

K: Well, you have to remember that Larry went back to the early days of Jack Kennedy's run not only for the Senate, I think even for the House. The pressure was family pressure, and understandable. Larry was part and parcel of the fabric of the Kennedy family in a non-nuclear sense. He had lost some of their respect when he stayed on with Johnson, and I feel that Larry's sense of who had made him what he was led back to Jack Kennedy and therefore to his brother. I know that one of the things LBJ said to me that day when he asked me to talk to Larry--which was before he had decided not to run, or I should say, he had decided but he was still keeping the options open--was to tell Larry that "I was the president who made him a cabinet minister and not Jack Kennedy." So that was in LBJ's mind. And it is true that he elevated Larry to a higher post than Larry had had under the Kennedy Administration.

So Larry went with Bobby and later went with Hubert Humphrey.

G: He made the rounds in that one.

K: He did.

G: Now, the President's popularity went up sharply in April.

K: Yes.

G: How did he feel about that?

K: Well, I think he had anticipated it. You know, his popularity shot up tremendously the day after his meeting with [Alexsei] Kosygin, and this was even more of a popular reaction to his taking a center stage position on world affairs.

G: You resigned as the DNC finance chairman.

K: Yes, I waited a few weeks and then along about the end of April, I guess, I resigned in keeping with my promise to the President and in keeping with my desires. I didn't want to stay there.

G: But the press account quoted it as saying "to accept certain assignments for the President in the days immediately ahead."

K: Well, the President didn't want to mention what that was, because it had a lot to do with his Library and the School of Public Affairs. So he skirted an answer when he was asked. He talked to me about generally helping him on a number of affairs, but he wanted me to get into that Library and School.

G: Did you at any point in this period receive a presidential commission, presidential appointment--

K: Yes.

G: --that was not released? I mean, it was just sort of unannounced.

K: Yes. You'll notice it starting in April. When I'm invited to a state dinner I'm "The Honorable . . . Special Consultant to the President." Actually, the first time I knew I was that was when I saw it on the manifest of a state dinner. Then somewhere along the way he gave me a big certificate. Is that it? In the back there?

G: It is. "Special Consultant." But it didn't carry with it a specific assignment within the administration, did it?

K: No, it carried with it an office in the Executive [Office] Building, and it carried with it the usual requirements to have my fingers fingerprinted and get a White House pass. I voluntarily renounced the salary.

G: Why did he do that? Was it more to make you officially a part?

K: I guess I'll mention it this time. He had for a couple of years kept saying, "I want you in my cabinet." I had made it clear that I--

Tape 2 of 3

K: I think we left off where I said he had, for a couple of years, said, "I want you in my cabinet." After a while it became just a kind of repetitive dialogue where he would say that and I would say, "I'd like to serve you the way I am, and let's leave things as they are." Then I remember in 1967 just after the Six Day War, I was at Camp David and Mathilde and I and he had a quiet drink together. He was kind of very grateful for the success of the fund-raising events that we had had, and the one that we were about to have in California. And he said, "All right, no cabinet. But wouldn't you like to go to the Court of St. James? Wouldn't you like to become the ambassador to France?" I mean, it was that kind of a thing. I said, "I can't speak any French." He said, "Well, Mathilde will take care of teaching you," and so forth. It was one of those things, but leading up to this consultancy, he finally figured out that's something that he could do.

Of course when Larry O'Brien resigned, the day he resigned he [LBJ] called me and he said, "You know, any cabinet office that opens up now, you have first priority.

Now, this one is postmaster general." I immediately said, "Please, I really don't want it." He said, "Well, if you don't want it, I'm going to give it to Marvin Watson." I said, "That is great. Give it to Marvin Watson." And he gave it to Marvin. That day when I came down, Marvin said, "I thank you." I said, "You have nothing to thank me about, because it was not for me."

But when I went down that day, he talked to me at great length about why--he said, "I would like to do something where you'd be good for the country and where it would be something that I could do for you. I'd like you to be ambassador to the United Nations." I told him that at that particular time, I felt it was wrong for a Jew to take that post because of what was going to be coming on, even though Arthur Goldberg was Jewish. Also, I was deeply involved in my own personal affairs in business and so forth. So I turned it down. That was the only thing I came close to, in my own mind, because that would have been in New York, and I knew by then it was only going to be for a limited period, and I've been deeply interested in the United Nations. Arthur Goldberg thought I was going to do it actually. He talked to me later and said he was surprised I didn't do it. But I didn't.

Then the President tried to reach me, I remember, in San Francisco before appointing George Ball. By the time he reached me, he had made the appointment, and I told him I thought it was a great appointment. Later he bawled me out for that one. (Laughter) Because it didn't turn out the way he wanted it to, because George Ball got involved in speechwriting for Hubert Humphrey on certain lines that the President felt fouled up his negotiating position with the North Vietnamese. That also comes later.

G: Now, Goldberg resigned in April.

K: Yes.

G: Do you recall the circumstances of his resignation?

K: Oh, he had told the President for some time that he wanted to resign. When the President talked to me about the U.N., it was while Goldberg was still there, but Goldberg knew about it. Goldberg talked to me before he left about "well, I hope you take over," that kind of thing.

G: Was there a strained relationship between Goldberg and the President?

K: Yes. Because Arthur felt that he had been promised a return to the Supreme Court, and the President told me that he had never said anything to give Arthur that feeling that he was entitled to that.

G: What is your own interpretation of that?

K: My own interpretation of it is that Arthur wanted the U.N. job, to be in the shoes of Adlai Stevenson. That he, at the time, had felt he had had the career, the glamour, and the opportunities of service on the Supreme Court and that this got him into another important arena. He may have expected that he would be a choice if anything happened on the Supreme Court, for return to the Supreme Court, but I know the President believed he had not promised it to him.

As for the fallout between them on any other front, I'm not privy to that. This thing about the Supreme Court really came to a head a little later than the moment of resignation, when the President got word from [Earl] Warren that he wanted to leave and there was a vacancy created.

G: Let me ask you a few things about travels this month. I think you did go to the Ranch for Easter in--

K: I think I went to the Ranch every weekend in April.

G: Is that right?

K: Yes.

G: What do you recall about those visits?

K: Well, I guess a lot of what I recall is what we've been talking about up to now. Of course during that period, the President started to talk to me a lot more about his vision of his activities after the presidency. He outlined his thoughts about the School and the Library, and as with so many things that the President planned for the future, what there is today is what he planned in those conversations. He asked me to do what I could, while he still had the prestige of the presidency and without violating anything ethical, to marshal support for the School and the Library.

G: Where did he get the idea of setting up a foundation, do you know?

K: Well, he had a family foundation all during this period. It was a natural thing for him to think in terms of a foundation to support the School and the Library. He did not want the money to go through the University of Texas. He felt that that would not give him the discretionary powers over the funds that he would otherwise have. As it turned out, it took a while for the foundation to be qualified after he left office, so a number of the early grants did go to the University of Texas.

But during this period he also talked about some writing that he wanted to do and we began to plan on several fronts. One was an article that Bill Benton wanted him to

write for that year's Encyclopedia Britannica on how he visualized the future needs of the country, what he felt were the important priorities for the next administration. We discussed how to tackle that. He had ideas, but he wanted somebody to put them down. I think it was late in the month of April that he came up with a suggestion that I thought was a good one, and that was Howard K. Smith, who had always been one of the more favorably disposed commentators. Later on in the summer we met with Howard K. Smith at the Ranch. He asked me to negotiate for that, and I had meetings with Bill Benton and we arranged for a stipend. It was fifty thousand dollars or something like that, maybe a little more.

The eminence of that stipend made it important for the President to decide how he was going to handle income of this nature. He discussed it with his tax people and asked me to discuss it with Mrs. Fortas, who is a tax lawyer in Washington, Abe Fortas' wife. I think probably the seed of the foundation may have come out of that, because he wanted to be able to say that this income was not going to come to him but go to the School of Public Affairs and the Library. That would have to be true of any income that he was getting during the remainder of his presidency that had to do with his being president. Later on, after he left the presidency, there was a separation of income. The income that he got for the book, [The Vantage Point] from Holt, Rinehart, went to the Foundation, but the income that he got from CBS for certain broadcasts went to him personally. But that arrangement was made entirely after he had left the presidency. And I think that precedent has been followed by Ford and Nixon and probably now by Carter, who are probably keeping the proceeds. But with the President, he did not keep the proceeds

from his book. During this period he did ask me to negotiate for the rights to his book that he would write after he left the presidency.

So during this period--and by this period I mean between April and January of 1969--I did work on getting the interest started in the School and the Library. I did work on the encyclopedia thing. I did act as an agent with all the publishing houses, but no deal was made until after he left the presidency. But I did plow the ground, as it were. And I did work on an ancillary offshoot of the Encyclopedia Britannica story with the Reader's Digest. I did meet with DeWitt Wallace several times and I told him the Encyclopedia would only pay fifty thousand dollars for this, and that wasn't what it was really worth, and he should do something for the Library and so forth. In any case, DeWitt Wallace paid a hundred and fifty thousand [dollars] to reprint the Encyclopedia article, of which Reader's Digest paid seventy-five and DeWitt Wallace's foundation seventy-five. I think that's the way it was. So that that article resulted in two hundred thousand going to the Foundation. Subsequently, of course, the book commanded about a million and a half, which at that time was a high figure. We had all of the publishers bidding.

G: Was it a package deal with both Mrs. Johnson's book [A White House Diary]--?

K: No, no. Completely separate.

G: Was it always going to be the same book? Did it ever--?

K: No, it was going to be four books at one time, and the deal was for four books, but I guess I was responsible for seeing to it that the payment for the last three books was very miniscule compared to the payment for the first, because I never felt he could commit to

do four books and have the payment plan split four ways. I remember he got a million and a half for the first book. I think the others only commanded a hundred thousand apiece or something like that.

So I worked on that during this period. I do believe I worked on Lady Bird's book later. I think she wanted the President's negotiation out of the way. But then I did negotiate for Lady Bird. That was something I took on later. But there was not a joint deal. They were separate deals. They ended up with the same company, Holt, Rinehart.

G: Were there other publishers who were reasonably close to Holt, Rinehart?

K: Oh, yes. There were others that hit the million mark, Doubleday for one. There was a suggestion later that Holt, Rinehart reached this way because Frank Stanton was close to the President. If that's so, I didn't sense it because I never dealt with Frank on this except I think I had one or two meetings of a general nature on the--well, I know I had meetings on the broadcast part, but on the book part I dealt with the head at Holt, Rinehart. If we hadn't made the deal with Holt, Rinehart, I think we would have gotten a million, one or a million, two from either Doubleday or one of the others.

So that was what was going on in April. In addition, toward the end of April and maybe during April, I started a series of meetings which were held both at the Ranch and in the White House with important people to hear the plans for the Library and the School, but without solicitation. We had several lunches or dinners at the White House. They all appear in your minutes. And we had several visitations at the Ranch of groups where the main purpose, apart from--particularly with respect to those who came to the Ranch--an opportunity for the President to thank them for what they had meant to him in

the past, but where a purpose was to begin to interest them in the School and the Library. I was in charge of orchestrating those meetings.

At the White House we would have these very prestigious groups, and the President would say a few words and then introduce Joe Califano and me to talk about the structure of things to come. Never asked for a dollar. A couple of Washington columnists got a little nasty about the President holding meetings on the premises for fund raising for personal purposes, but we navigated that I think very ethically, and those columns were wrong, because we didn't ask for anything. In any case, even if we had asked for something, it would have been like a president asking for something of a public nature.

G: Tax deductible. . . .

K: Yes.

G: Was this, in a sense, the way the Foundation board was formed?

K: Yes. Well, the President selected the members of the Foundation board, but the board was formed to make it possible to have a foundation to receive these funds.

During this period also we had a couple of meetings on a film that we were going to do for the convention. That was on the assumption the President would not run, but it would be a film that would highlight the accomplishments of the administration. And you know, my memory has played such a trick on me that I don't know whether we made it or not. My feeling is we made it, and it was not shown. You'll have to look that up in some other way. But I know we had the meetings, and your notes indicated that. I had a meeting with the President along with Criswell and a couple of others to talk about

making the film. That was in April. Then somewhere along the line in May, I had the actual people who were going to make it--it was the [David] Wolper organization--at the White House, and your notes indicated that we went in at my request saying they'd like to shake the hand of the President. So they went in, and you'll notice they were there for three or four minutes. That was a courtesy.

So we did plan that film, but I can't remember whether we made it.

G: I'll check.

K: During this period, too, you'll notice there was a lot of moving back and forth between our place in Texas. The President, he was a little more relaxed, and he'd drop in for lunch or dinner. We had our little chopper then and we went back and forth like next door neighbors.

G: I notice he visited President Eisenhower on part of that Hawaiian trip.

K: Yes.

G: Do you know anything about that visit?

K: Well, he had a great respect for President Eisenhower, and as you must know from other sources, he used to check with him frequently on the strategy in Vietnam. He always felt Eisenhower was the one who started it all, because on leaving office he had told Jack Kennedy this is the most important area for our security. And of course Kennedy had started and then Johnson had to finish it. Johnson himself had been very opposed to intervention in that area when he was majority leader. So he always wanted Eisenhower brought along in anything he did there.

Now, of course in June--if we can go to June now--we had the assassination of

Bobby Kennedy. That was another traumatic episode.

G: How did you get word of it?

K: How did I get word? On the TV. But I think I mentioned that the President called about whether he should go to the funeral. I think it was very painful for him on several levels. Because certain deep loyalties to Bobby Kennedy came to the surface, like with Bob McNamara and others who stood guard on the coffin. The commentators were cruel enough to imply greater loyalty there than to President Johnson. Of course, there was no way of tying this to President Johnson, and yet there was I believe a feeling on that funeral train--which I didn't go on although I was asked to--of resentment about President Johnson, that he shouldn't have come to the funeral. That he was so antagonistic to Bobby that it was unseemly for him to participate in this. It was dirty, unjustified and dirty, but it was there, and I'm sure he felt it.

G: Did you have any specifics of that? Of any slights?

K: I know a lot of Bobby's friends who said what I just said about his coming to the funeral and participating in Washington and so forth. They resented it.

G: Who in particular do you recall?

K: Well, I don't recall specific names.

G: I wonder if this also brought back memories of the earlier Kennedy assassination? Surely this must have resurrected a lot of old [memories]?

K: That I don't know. But I do know that it was widely interpreted as clearing the way for Hubert's candidacy. As I said before, I don't think his candidacy was ever in doubt. I've had that argument ever since with a lot of the people in the Bobby Kennedy camp. But

when I mentioned it and talked with Larry O'Brien in later years, he agreed with my assessment.

G: Was any of the doubt do you think based on some question of what Mayor Daley was going to do? Would he have supported Humphrey?

K: No. At that point Mayor Daley was clearly in Humphrey's camp. There was never any doubt about that. The doubt occurred whether Mayor Daley was going to swing to Teddy. That's a different thing.

G: Did the fact that Bobby Kennedy was now dead, did that change the President's own view of the election or the nomination? Do you think that made him more inclined to reconsider his withdrawal?

K: I do not know. I know that this must have been churning in his mind, but I don't remember his saying anything that would shed light on it for me. I do know, and of course you'll get this from other sources, that he set up this committee to study the causes of violence in the country immediately after this [National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence]. He was looking for ways and means of showing that it mattered to him. He did again try to do what he always wanted to do on gun control and even in the face of this he couldn't accomplish it.

G: He must have received a tremendous amount of pressure not to go forward with this stringent gun control?

K: Oh, always did, particularly in his part of the world. But he did. He fought the good fight on that. And he lost.

Now, of course during this period we have the whole episode of the Supreme

Court.

G: Let's talk about that.

K: Well, I don't know how it happened, but I was there when Chief Justice Warren advised him he wanted to resign.

G: Was this done in--?

K: In the White House, yes.

G: Tell me about that.

K: Well, I wasn't at the whole conversation but I was there when he came in. We sat down and had a cup of coffee or something, and then later the President told me that's what he had come over to tell him. I don't remember what day it was, but I know I was there because I remember. . . .

G: I think it was June 26.

K: I remember seeing Warren personally for the first time. Later we got to know each other well, because he was a member of the award committee for the LBJ Foundation and we would meet every few months. But I remember meeting him there. And of course this was a very important move. It was a way of Warren protecting against the possible election of Nixon, whom he despised.

G: Do you know how the wording of that resignation was decided?

K: No. I don't even remember what the wording was.

G: Well, it was something [like] "resign effective the appointment or confirmation of my successor."

K: Oh, yes. No, I don't know. I wasn't privy to that.

Then the President, of course, made his move with respect to Abe Fortas and Homer Thornberry. Now, I had known Homer in Texas and I had never thought of him as a choice for the Supreme Court. But after it happened--and it was a big surprise to me--I went over his record, and it was a very good record as a judge, particularly in civil rights. I had known Homer as a social companion, not as a judge, but I found out, to my pleasant surprise, that he had been a darned good judge. But it still did smack of cronyism in a high place.

But the issue clearly, everybody knew, was going to revolve around Abe Fortas. And the President, as he must have with everybody else, asked me to help with whatever senators I was close to, and he told me he had broken the back of Senator [Richard] Russell, I guess it was. Who was head of the Judiciary Committee then? It was one of the southerners.

G: Let's see, Russell was Armed Services. Was it [John] Stennis or [James] Eastland?

K: I don't know why I have the feeling it was Russell he talked about. Probably it's wrong, but that's my recollection. And he had eliminated that particular source of opposition. I remember he had Ed Weisl go to see a couple of these southern judges [senators?], because Ed told me about it. I had no problem, because I was assigned to talk to Jack Javits, and Javits was all for it, and a couple of others.

G: Why would Weisl have influence with the southerners?

K: Well, he had some influence. You'll have to check that out. He was a friend of one of the important southern senators. I'm sorry Ed isn't here to clarify us on that, but I do remember that.

The President asked me to meet with Abe and find out where I could be of help. And I did meet with Abe, and Abe told me to meet with his partner, Paul Porter, who was managing it. We had several meetings during the summer, and I must say that they were all very upbeat. We were working very much on the assumption that this was going to succeed, although it was going to be tough. I remember the day the President made this announcement was a day that we had a motion picture meeting with him. Jack Valenti had arranged a group of executives of the motion picture companies to come in. I remember the President walking in and saying, "I've just sent up the nomination of Abe Fortas and Homer Thornberry."

The meeting with the motion picture people was rather innocuous, it was just sort of a courtesy except that I remember some of the executives were very apprehensive that he was going to blame violence on their product. But he stayed away from that subject and actually complimented everybody on what had just been done by Jack Valenti in establishing the voluntary code to alert parents of the contents of pictures.

G: Was there any hesitancy on the part of Abe Fortas to accept that nomination?

K: Not that I noticed. I know there was a tremendous hesitancy on his part to accept the nomination to the Court. That was one where the President did some arm-twisting and actually called him for the announcement without having his approval and did it on TV. But I don't remember that with respect to the chief justice.

G: Was there ever any suggestion that Fortas' business dealings outside the Court, the fees and things, were going to cause problems before the press actually brought it up?

K: No. That's why I'm saying we were operating on the theory that we didn't have an

obstacle course. Because when the obstacle course occurred, the President knew that the chances were very slim.

G: Yes. Now, there were two senators I guess that were really important to this. One was Senator [Everett] Dirksen, who was initially in support.

K: Well, the other was this Griffin.

G: Well, he opposed it, Robert Griffin of Michigan.

K: Yes. He was the leader of the opposition. He was nasty.

G: But Russell evidently, at least according to the President, initially supported Fortas.

K: Well, that's what I'm talking about when I said Russell, you're confirming it now.

G: He did. There was a judgeship in Georgia that he was very interested in, the Alex Lawrence nomination.

K: And the President had given him a tough time on that because of Ramsey Clark.

G: Right. Right.

K: Yes.

G: And Russell ultimately wrote a letter.

K: Was there a trade off there? Did the man get the nomination? I didn't know that.

G: He did. He did ultimately, but this was after Russell declared that he thought he was being taken advantage of and that his vote was being held hostage, more or less.

K: You know, I think you're going to find that Weisl saw Russell. How or why I don't know, but I don't think my recollection would play that big a trick on me.

G: But do you know anything about the relationship of those two appointments, the judgeship in Georgia?

K: No. No, I knew that he felt he had Russell's vote for Fortas. On the trade off, I didn't know.

G: What was his reaction when Russell deserted him on this?

K: That I don't remember.

G: Do you know if this whole incident was a source of strain or friction in their relationship, which had been so close?

K: I'd be guessing if I said I did now.

G: What about Dirksen? He initially supported the nomination.

K: I don't remember the specifics on Dirksen here as much as I do the story he loved to tell about how he got Dirksen to go along with the civil rights [legislation] early on. Was it the civil rights? That I do remember. He loved to talk about Dirksen, and he used to mimic him in talking about him. I think he had a lot of respect for Dirksen and felt he knew where to push the buttons to get things done by him, even though he was the opposition. But I don't remember on this, I'm sorry.

G: There's some suggestion that that board, the Subversive Activities Control Board, that Dirksen was very interested in seeing the continuation of that.

K: Yes. Is that the one that Simon McHugh was on?

G: Right.

K: Yes. Because I remember there was an interplay there. But I don't have any helpful recollection on your question.

G: Do you know what the President's reaction to the Fortas nomination was when the publicity started about the [Louis] Wolfson deal?

K: Well, yes, I did talk to him during that period. I sensed a sadness at the problem, but never an overt criticism of Abe. I don't remember his being angry with Abe at any stage of this. I think he very soon sensed that this was a matter on which he was going to have some difficulty resolving it before he left the presidency. Once it became clear that Abe was in jeopardy, I did have the opportunity to be in conversations with him on alternatives, particularly one I remember in Camp David shortly before he left office.

Oddly enough, my recollection is it was while both of us were riding bicycles. I don't think he did that so often, but I have a recollection on the bicycle his telling me that Arthur Goldberg, through some people who had called him, felt he was the one and he had kind of a commitment that he should be the chief justice. I do recall that the message he had gotten was that Arthur Goldberg was Warren's choice. I have again the recollection that he had checked that out and found that Warren did not want to be quoted to the effect because that was not anything he had said. He wanted to maintain complete neutrality on that. The President was not partial to that solution and felt that the way things were going, anybody he selected would be turned down now so that they could delay it until after Nixon came into office. This was after Nixon was already the president-elect, the conversations I'm talking about. He tried till the last minute to figure out some way of navigating it, but all his testing in the Congress indicated nobody was going to go for anybody he selected at that time, out of fairness to the incoming administration.

G: Was he aware that this would really change the Court because it was [inaudible]?

K: Yes. Oh, he was very aware of the importance of this. Although you know Warren had

been appointed by a Republican, he had been totally supportive of the President's objectives. One of the things that bothered him most about Nixon--and yes, he did mention it--was how many opportunities Nixon was going to have to change the face of the Court. Everybody knew [William O.] Douglas--at that time they were even talking about Bill Brennan being too ill to survive, but here he is still on the bench fourteen years later. And there were some others that were imminent possibilities for resignation.

G: Another charge that surfaced during the Fortas confirmation was the issue of Fortas being an adviser to the President, the whole separation of powers charge.

K: Yes. That was one of the things that came out. Another that Griffin stressed was that Abe Fortas had refused to look at dirty pictures and said there's no such thing as their being too dirty for censorship. This was a big thing, that he was responsible for so much of the pornography, so called. That was something, and then of course the income thing. Well, the income thing came later.

Tape 3 of 3

G: But on the question of separation of powers, was the President, do you think, sensitive to this problem, the fact that a member of the judicial branch was actually working within the executive branch?

K: I personally never felt he was sufficiently sensitive to it, but what surprised me even more was that I didn't think Abe Fortas was sufficiently sensitive to it. I have always had some trouble accepting it. I have been told that this was not at all the first time such a relationship had existed, that [Felix] Frankfurter and Roosevelt and [Louis] Brandeis and--

G: [Harlan] Stone and Hoover, [Roger] Taney and [Andrew] Jackson.

K: President Hoover and Stone, yes. So I guess maybe my sense of purity was somewhat exaggerated, but I felt it rather strongly, so much so that, as you know, I told you I wanted to embargo some references to that relationship and to my observation of it.

G: Well, do you want to go ahead and talk about the convention now?

K: Yes. Well, you were mentioning before Hubert Humphrey's statements.

G: Right.

K: Throughout this period, President Johnson was very concerned that because of the kind of people around Hubert Humphrey, he would say something to derail his efforts with the North Vietnamese. He always was fearful that if Hubert began to say what he would do as president, and it was different than what he, President Johnson, was doing, such as that he would immediately terminate all the bombing, that he would immediately withdraw the American troops and so forth, that he would have great trouble with the South Vietnamese at the conference table. And he was holding his breath on this, and more so of course after Hubert was the nominee. It reached rather dramatic proportions after Hubert was the nominee, this worry of his and the impact of such things as the Salt Lake City speech and so forth. But at this time there was less of a problem because he was still clearly the President and there was no nominee of the party, so he was still in charge. He was not a lame duck in that sense.

But Hubert made a few injudicious statements during this period, but none which got the President as disturbed as the one he made shortly after he became the nominee, which was that it was the intention of President Johnson to withdraw substantial numbers

of American troops right after the turn of the year. Of course, that was something that was the intention of President Johnson. He conveyed it to [Nguyen Van] Thieu at some meeting, but to have it said, and to have it said by Hubert, just disturbed him greatly. But that was later on. That was Hubert saying something that he felt was in the cards, and from my best observation, it was in the cards. But after Hubert said it, it was no longer that clearly in the cards. So that was true during this period.

With respect to the events that started to churn up in August, the President was thinking a good deal at this time of what his role should be at the convention. Or whether he should be at the convention. I remember a very significant conversation that occurred at the Ranch the weekend before the convention when John Connally and the President and I were riding around the Ranch. He was quizzing us about whether he should come to the convention. Now, I want to say again in connection with conversations of this sort, that the only ones I know about were the ones that I was participating in, but I haven't the slightest doubt that this was just a miniscule part of the testing he was doing with a lot of other people.

But he was testing us at that time. Connally took the position he should not come to the convention; I took the position he should. My feeling was that after the years he had spent leading this country and this party, he was entitled to that podium to make his statement of whatever was on his mind, and that he should do it. I recognized the reality of the fact that there would be an anti claque in the audience, but I felt his friends would overcome them. Connally felt that he would be subjecting himself to a humiliating experience and should not do it. It was undecided at that time.

Early after my return to New York--I must have returned Sunday night--I believe on Tuesday the President called me and said, "I want your reaction to the following: I've just received word from Russia that they are agreeable to a meeting on arms control in September. [Anatoly] Dobrynin is coming over to finalize the date." I think it was September 19 or something like that. I remember one of my first comments to him was I said, "Look, Mr. President, you've invited me on other trips, which I haven't been able to make. This one I want to make with you." And he laughed about that and indicated that I would be able to go along. I was really excited about it.

Then he said to me, "But what I want your advice on is, do I announce it and thereby give the convention the feeling that I'm looking for a draft for the presidency, or do I wait?" I knew there was only one answer to this, and he knew it, too, but he did ask me that question. I said, "Obviously you have to announce something of this importance the minute it takes place and not worry about the political fallout. It's wonderful news and your delay in the Israeli thing is clearly justified. But what is most significant about it is that all the nay-sayers who said that until you resolve the war in Vietnam there would be a state of constant tension and danger with the Russians are being proven wrong. It's a great tribute to your management of all of these problems simultaneously."

When I hung up I felt so strongly about it that I wrote him a letter--I have some longhand notes of it here, but it's in the files, I'm sure--in which I said that. Tuesday, August 20, this is my longhand note: "Dear Mr. President, After our conversation this morning I began to visualize the electrifying impact of the news and its many implications. I could not resist writing you this note to express once again my warmest

congratulations on the vindication of your policies. This is such a repudiation of the attitude of all those who have said that the meeting could not take place until you had first acceded to Hanoi's conditions. Just the announcement will be a reminder of your tireless efforts against many obstacles to reduce tensions in the world. From there on, the possibilities both short-range and long-range are so great that I am sure nobody will rock the boat in the weeks immediately ahead. Whereas there may be some sniping about timing, I'm sure the overwhelming reaction will be for many skeptics and critics belatedly to recognize that it will be many years before the country can look to be once again under such strong and effective leadership."

I sent him that letter in longhand that night, and at eleven o'clock that night I turned on the news and heard that the Russians had moved into Czechoslovakia, which of course I knew would abort the whole thing. The next morning I was in the White House with the President and he told me how he had convened a late meeting I think of the Security Council and a meeting with Hubert and so forth.

G: Did he feel betrayed by this?

K: Oh, he was devastated. I don't think anything in his presidency hit him quite as hard as what the Russians had done. You know, he had had I think Leslie Gelb and others planning for an arms control agreement ever since the idea had come up at the Glassboro meeting with Kosygin. He was preparing for it. He had been doing a lot more there than I ever knew about. It was very high priority for him.

G: Did he also see this as a possible avenue for solving the Vietnam conflict?

K: Well, it was an avenue certainly for showing the North Vietnamese that the Russians

were not necessarily on their side. But he was thinking of what it could mean in reversing the nuclear race. I don't think he was quite sure what approach he was going to take, but he knew an approach had to be taken. I know that in talking subsequently with some of the people in the State Department, they were working on various alternatives. One of them was the seed of the ABM treaty that later was negotiated in a subsequent administration.

But he was very low that day. We had lunch together. I think there was just George Christian and a couple of others. He spoke of his disappointment and how he had expressed it bitterly to Dobrynin. He went to take a nap just after lunch and asked me to come in to the room and we had a talk at that time about two things that remained very clear in my mind. One was, get over and see Hubert and tell him this is a critical moment and he will do us untold harm if he takes a position at the convention, or between now and the convention, that will muddy up the waters in the Vietnamese negotiation. He was very disturbed that Hubert was listening to the wrong people and felt in order to get the nomination he had to compromise on this issue. He said then, as he said many times later during the campaign, and as I said to Hubert on his behalf, there can only be one president. When you're president, you do what you want. But there can only be one president. And he asked me to please get over to see Hubert right away and get him straightened out on that. He said, "I've told him, but I don't know. You know, you tell Hubert something and he changes." He loved Hubert, but he felt Hubert was the kind of guy that it's said if he were a woman, he'd be constantly pregnant because he didn't know how to say no.

That was one thing. The other thing we discussed was--oh, we discussed several things. The next thing was the convention again. He said I would be out there to give him a reading on whether he should come. He was disposed not to come at that time but I should give him a reading. I told him on the way out to Chicago I was going to visit [J. S.] McDonnell of McDonnell-Douglas to try to drum up some support for the Library. I said, "From there I'll go to the convention. If there's anything of importance, we'll be in touch."

The other things we talked about again I remember was the Israeli thing. He said that now that this was behind him, he felt he had a clear track to move ahead on that and put the ducks in a row.

I went over to see Hubert right from that meeting, and sure enough, Hubert--and I don't remember the words now. Don't ask me to recall it, because I can't--but Hubert said of course he understood and he was going to say this, that and the other thing. And while I was in there, the intercom rings and Ted Van Dyk is on the intercom and asking him to say something completely inconsistent, which was so typical of him. Everybody around Hubert, the people he had closest to him, were anti-LBJ in that sense. They felt Hubert could only be nominated by being his own man, as they would put it, by repudiating the President. Some of them even felt he should resign as vice president. The Hubert I knew didn't feel that way, but as in the film City Lights with Charlie Chaplin, when his patron was sober he didn't know who he was, but when he was drunk he was his greatest friend, there was a schizophrenic aspect to this. But I did go over immediately. I told Hubert and then I advised either the President or Marvin about the conversation.

The thing that surprised me was that before the day was out--the President did not mention this to me--Jimmy Jones called and said, "The President would like you to get a poll very quietly on how he would run against Nixon." I said I would do it and I immediately called Oliver Quayle, who had done polling for us, and I said, "How soon can you give me a decent reading on a poll of how the President would run against Nixon?" He said, "I can have it for you by Monday." And I told Jim Jones--

(Interruption)

I told Jim Jones that we could have it by Monday, and he said fine, and I went ahead and commissioned it.

I went to St. Louis the next morning or late that night. I saw McDonnell. He was a big fan of the President's, and even though I didn't ask for any amount other than that I wanted support, he gave me a commitment of a million dollars for the Library and the School. I felt good enough about that so when I got to Chicago, which was before the day was out, I called the President and told him the good news on McDonnell and told him I was in Chicago. He said if there's anything there I should be in touch with Jim Jones, as things develop. He was anxious to be in touch. I knew that his main source of information would be Marvin Watson, but he apparently wanted to keep this line open as well.

On Saturday there was all the maneuvering about the Vietnam plank and things like that. But on Sunday morning I was invited to a meeting in John Connally's suite. As I recall it, there was John Connally, Ed Weisl, Marvin Watson, and myself, and there may have been one or two others, but I don't remember who. It was a meeting in which I

would say Connally, on instructions of the President, was exploring whether a movement could be started at the convention for the President to run, because there was great dissatisfaction with Hubert's vacillating on the Vietnam plank and on everything related--

G: The unit rule, I guess was--

K: --and the unit rule, too, yes. It was a bit of a switch for John Connally, because he was now talking in a way completely different from what had occurred at the Ranch only a week earlier. There was a good deal of talk to the effect that Daley was a key to this, and I think Daley was keyed in by somebody, because he postponed the selection of the Illinois committee, which came as a big shock to Hubert. I told everybody that I had this poll coming out the next morning, and the decision at that meeting was a holding reaction. [The instructions] for the President's representatives, whomsoever they might be to the different delegations, should be "hold." Don't commit to Hubert quite yet.

Later that day we all attended a big party given by Mrs. Lederer, Ann Landers, you know, of the Ann Landers column. Most of the important Democrats were there. I don't remember John Connally being there, but Hubert was there and I remember feeling a sense of not knowing where it was all going to go. Up to then I thought it was Hubert, go and get it over with. Actually, I felt a little embarrassed when I saw Hubert at the party, because he seemed very ebullient, although later I heard he was very uncertain because of Daley's action. What message was it conveying to him? At that party there were a lot of crosscurrents of conversation.

G: Anything in particular?

K: Well, about the fact that there seemed to be a hold on the momentum to Hubert and that

Teddy [Kennedy] was being talked about, and Teddy might very well get an emotional movement in his favor, all that kind of thing.

Well, I talked to the President through Jim Jones, I believe, that day, just to give him my version of the meeting. I was much--not much--I was careful not to ask any blunt or direct questions about intentions or desires, but under the circumstances, I had to feel that the President was giving a last-minute consideration to running again.

The next morning I got the results of the Quayle poll. I have them here. I have what I wrote down: "Nixon, 42 [per cent]; LBJ, 34 [per cent]; [George] Wallace, 17 [per cent]; undecided, 7 [per cent]." On a distribution of the undecided, in accordance with those percentages, it would be Nixon, 45; LBJ, 37; Wallace, 18. My note is, "Humphrey reasonably close." In other words, by that I meant not close to Nixon, but about the same as LBJ. I have a note here, "[Louis] Harris closer." Harris I believe had LBJ behind but probably not as far behind as this.

Then there were some other things that Ollie Quayle had asked about North Vietnam and urban riots and so forth, but this was the basic thing. And when I called, I called Jim Jones but the President got on the phone, and he was disappointed.

G: What did he say?

K: Well, he didn't say a thing other than that--about reaction to this--but he said, "I want you and Marvin to meet with Daley and ask him whether there's any support for me to let my name come before the convention. And show him this poll." He had hoped to show him a different kind of poll.

I don't know how he conveyed that same thing to Marvin, but when the

convention started--and by this time there was a lot of talk about Teddy Kennedy--that evening Marvin said, "Well, I guess you have the same instructions I had." I said, "Yes." He said, "Well, let's go down and see Daley on the floor. And we went down to see Daley. We didn't say, "The President wanted you to do this," but "Since it looks as if Hubert would lose to Nixon by present circumstances, what's your feeling about the President coming in?" And Daley said, "He can't make a move in that direction, and he's made that clear--" I don't know to whom, but he said it to me as if he had repeated it. He said, "The President has got to announce or do something to show that he wants it. Otherwise there's nothing I can do." I will never know what the results would have been if the Quayle poll had been different. I have no reason to know whether Daley would have had a different view. But our message was that it looks as if Hubert could not make it.

G: Did you tell him also about LBJ's position on the Quayle poll?

K: No. No, I didn't. We were not going to say "the President wants this" in any way, shape or form. Our approach was to see if Daley would start it. I remember showing the poll to him. Now, I believe I reported that to Jim Jones and to the President, or else Marvin did. Marvin had many more talks back there than I did. In any case, within a very short period of time, Daley announced for Humphrey because Johnson sent out the word, "go for Humphrey," to everybody, and then the momentum started.

G: But the implication of what you've just said is that if LBJ would come forward, Daley would have supported him?

K: He didn't make that a commitment, but that was the implication, yes. In other words, if

you're asking would he have then foregone any support either for Hubert or for Teddy--the Teddy thing was a rumor; I, to this day, don't know where Daley stood on that--I don't know the answer to that. But it was a moment of somewhat high tension because it was all tied up with all the excitement downtown and the rough stuff going on between the rostrum and Daley, and the argument on the Vietnam plank. I mean, there was so much going on at that convention. I remember we were--well, I remember the whole scene so well, kneeling there with Daley and whispering about all this. Daley was annoyed, because he was always a Johnson fan and I think he was thinking, "Why didn't you tell me this six weeks ago?" or "Why now? Why at this minute?"

G: Do you think he took it as a move initiated by Johnson?

K: Yes. Seeing Marvin and me there, how else could he interpret it? But we didn't say it was a move initiated by President Johnson. But everybody knew how close Watson was to the President. Daley also knew from various events that had occurred and things Johnson had said in my presence, how close we were. So he knew that.

G: Could this whole notion of a draft have been merely a device to keep Humphrey on board on the Vietnam plan and the unit rule?

K: Yes, I can't discard that. But the reason I find it difficult to accept is that he never told Hubert about all these moves. I think Hubert died without knowing about them.

G: Did the President ever talk about this in retrospect?

K: No.

G: In later years he never--?

K: No. I talked about it with Daley in retrospect when I was running the policy committee

for the party several years after the President died, and Daley was on my committee. I talked about it, and he didn't shed any further light on it other than that he again said, "If the President wanted that, he should have let me know earlier." But I never told him the President wanted it. This is the first time I've put this on any record, because I could only interpret it as something the President at the last minute decided he wanted, despite all his doubts about whether he could lead the country. I think what had happened was he hadn't resolved the Vietnam thing, the Russian thing, he had a sense of unfinished business. The Russian thing was very much on his mind. You know that in the period after the election, when Nixon was president-elect, that came up a lot. When we get to that I'll talk about it.

G: Was this also tied in with his tentative plan to come to the convention?

K: Yes. That night Eddie Weisl was very tired and decided to go to bed. I stayed with the convention. Both Eddie and I were members of the New York delegation, which was a very divided delegation. The leadership was in the hands of the anti-Johnson faction. They had had a caucus that day and had authorized I think Jack English to be the spokesman for the delegation. But no vote had been taken on any of the big issues. That night the question came up on the seating of the Texas delegation. It was a bitter fight, but Hubert came down in favor of seating the delegation and sent word out. To my shock, sitting in that delegation, Jack English gets up and votes the entire New York delegation against the Texas delegation, a couple of a hundred votes. And I could imagine that going down to Texas and the President saying, "Where the hell was Ed Weisl? Where the hell was Arthur Krim? Don't I have any friends on that delegation?"

So I immediately got up and called for a caucus of the New York delegation and a withdrawal of the vote pending the caucus. Because I felt we had at least a third of the delegation, maybe a half, and it would be symbolic. When I got word to the rostrum that we were going to have a caucus, that I had called for a caucus, I got a call from Johnny Crooker. Crooker was--you know Johnny Crooker? He was someplace there at the telephone behind the rostrum, and he said to me, "Look, I know how you feel and I know you don't want this on the record. Believe me, it will not be misunderstood. Don't hold things up with a caucus. We've got this thing won. Let it go." So I let it go and to this day I've regretted it, because it did cause a lot of feeling in the Texas delegation about "those New York people." Because if we had had a caucus, I think almost half, if not half, would have been on the right side of the fence. I wasn't thinking of me personally or Ed Weisl; Crooker could cover for us and I'm sure he did. Ed was appalled when he came in the next morning.

G: Oh, I bet he was.

K: I was kind of carrying the torch, but I had a couple of friends. I remember Howie Samuels stood up for me and a few others. But it was a traumatic episode, and it showed the President the kind of reception he might have with that whole New York delegation howling and hooting, which is what they did on some of the motions and things. And the President, having let the whole thing go, wisely decided to celebrate his birthday in Texas. I think that decision wasn't finally made until Tuesday--when Ed Weisl left Monday night, he and I still thought we ought to invite the President. In retrospect, I don't know why we were so optimistic about what would happen, and I think in

retrospect again, it was wise he didn't come. It's terrible to think of a president not being able to come to a convention like this, but that's the reality of it.

In any case, the next day, that Tuesday, I had a call from Jim Jones. I explained to him what had happened. He already knew. He said the President wanted me to spend time with [Joseph] Alioto and give him an assessment of him as a vice presidential possibility. That was my assignment. The President was leaning, as far as I could tell, to [Daniel] Inouye, you know, the senator from Hawaii. But I gather Hubert didn't listen very much to the President and selected Ed Muskie, which turned out to be a good choice, I think, but it was not the President's choice. I think he wanted Inouye. I spent several hours with Alioto, and he knew what was happening. I'd question him about his life, was there anything there that would be discrediting and so forth and so on. By the time I called back to report to the President, they had already reached a negative decision back there, so that was my assignment at that stage of the game.

Then of course Hubert was nominated. He made his speech. I spent time with the group in Hubert's suite while the speech was being written. Jack Valenti was doing a lot of writing. It was a very tricky speech to write, to avoid booing for the President of the United States and at the same time let him know that he was not going to deviate from his policies. If ever there was an obstacle course, it was that. I thought it was a brilliant speech. I thought the President would find it satisfactory. But to my surprise, when I saw the President the day after the convention when I went to the Ranch, he was very bitter about it.

That brings us to a point where I think we can close today because the next phase

is the campaign phase through to the election, and then from the election to the end of the presidency.

[End of Tape 3 of 3 and Interview IV]

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In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 21 of Title 44, United States Code and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth, I, Arthur B. Krim of New York, New York do hereby give, donate and convey to the United States of America all my rights, title and interest in the transcripts of the personal interviews conducted on October 8, 1981, May 17, 1982, June 29, 1982, November 9, 1982, April 7, 1983 and October 13, 1983 in New York, New York, and prepared for deposit in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

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