

INTERVIEW I

DATE: JUNE 13, 1975
INTERVIEWEE: CHARLES (CHUCK) LIPSEN
INTERVIEWER: MICHAEL L. GILLETTE
PLACE: Mr. LipSEN's office in Washington, D.C.

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L: Okay, I can start out by saying that I am from Mazomanie, Wisconsin, which is a town of about 800 people. I'm a farm boy. I met my wife, who at the age of seventeen years old was a junior at the University of Wisconsin. I had just gotten out of the Marine Corps and was on the 52-20 Club. I took her out a couple of times and liked her. I asked her to marry me, and she said, "Well, I'm not going to marry an ordinary farm boy. I want you to go back to school." I decided okay, fine, so I decided that I wanted to be an FBI agent. I went to the University of Wisconsin. Before I went to the University of Wisconsin I had to go back to high school, because I left for the Marine Corps when I was 17 years old and got back when I was 21. In order to go to college, I had to go back to high school, so I went back to high school when I was 21 years old. I was there for two months, took an examination, and they gave me my diploma. Then I went to the University of Wisconsin. I took up sociology and criminology because I wanted to be an FBI agent, and I had heard that was the best way to do it. Then when I graduated, they said that I had to be a lawyer or an accountant. I didn't think I would be a very good accountant, so I decided to be a lawyer.

So I went to law school. When I was in law school, the dean called me in one time and told me that a man by the name of Ronald May was writing a book in Washington on McCarthy, the Man and the -ism, and would I do some research on the book, especially the fact that Joe McCarthy had ten

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pounds of shrapnel in his leg. I did the research on that and did a little investigating on the thing. So there's one chapter in that book on his Marine Corps career in which he actually did not have ten pounds of shrapnel but was initiated into the Shellback Club. Whenever you cross the Equator in a ship, those who have never crossed the Equator are initiated into the Shellback Club. He had injured himself in the initiation rights, and that's why he had his limp.

Estes Kefauver came at that time to Wisconsin and made a speech out there. He had heard about me, and he said, "Why don't you come to Washington?" He promised me a job if I would after I finished law school. I decided that I would come to Washington, so I did. But he had no openings at that time, and I ended up with Senator Olin T. Johnson of South Carolina and became an investigator and then assistant counsel on his Manpower Policy Subcommittee. I served there until the Republicans got in in 1950, and then I was out on my own looking for a job. For six months I was making nothing a year, and finally I got myself squared away. I started to work with the Retail Clerks' International Association and other organizations, too, and did some practice of law.

The important thing about President Johnson--and I really was very impressed with him--was this. I was up there on some legislation on the minimum wage bill. He had made a commitment to me that he was going to go along on it and also do some work on it. I felt very comfortable about it, and I came back to tell all the guys in the labor movement that Lyndon Johnson was going to be with us, and all that sort of stuff. They said, "Aw, don't believe it. He's just a big bunch of stuff. He's not telling you the truth," and all that. About a week or so later I got a telephone call from the Majority Leader saying that he wanted to talk to me.

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I said fine. He said, "Do you want me to come downtown?" I said, "Oh no, sir. I'll come up there to see you." So I went up there to see him. He said, "I made a commitment to you, and I find out that it's downright embarrassing to me because of other reasons. I want to get off on the commitment. However, if you have acted on the commitment to your embarrassment, my word is my bond. But for other reasons, I would like to get off the commitment." I said, "Let me see what I can do," so the rest of the day I was working on trying to put votes here and votes there.

The next day I called him up and I said, "Senator, you are off the commitment. I think I am in good shape." He said, "Well, I just want to let you know that I have been doing some work too, and I'm back on again." I was very impressed, because here I was just a plain, ordinary little guy who really didn't amount to very much. Here he was the Majority Leader of the United States Senate who felt that even a commitment and a bond to somebody who was of no consequence was important enough that he wanted to get off the commitment but would not do so because he was a man of his word. I think I'm making some sense to you, but maybe the way I'm saying it [is confusing].

Then the other story which I think is also very important is that not too long afterwards, I got called into his office and he wanted to see me. It was at that time when Senator [William] Proxmire had delivered a speech some place, somewhere in which he attacked Lyndon Johnson as a member of the one-man gang and wrecking crew. It was a very nasty, mean speech. I got called into the office. He had heard that I wrote the speech. I told him that I did not write the speech. I said, "Where did you get it?" He said, "That's my information; I'm not giving you a laundry list, but I understand you wrote the speech." I said, "I think

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I know why you think that. Number one, because he's from Wisconsin and I'm from Wisconsin, and I also like the guy, and you think that I wrote the speech. Well number one, let me tell you this, Senator: the speech was a damn good speech, and it was too good for me to write. I couldn't have written it. That's number one. Number two, I wouldn't have written the speech because I have too high a regard for you and I don't agree with the speech. Three, the speech was damn good for him because in Wisconsin the citizens like their congressmen and their senators to take on the giants. Think about LaFollette; think about McCarthy. Now think about this guy." He still didn't agree. At that point, Bobby Baker walked in the room. He heard all of this screaming back and forth. All of a sudden he started to hunch, and I said, "Hey Bobby, come here." He said, "No, I don't want to get involved in anything." I said, "Wait a minute, Bobby, look. The Leader and I are having a big fight right now and a big argument." He said, "What's it about? I don't want to get involved." I said, "You're not involved. I just want you to answer one question." He said, "What is it?" I said, "He said that I wrote Proxmire's speech. I said I didn't. Now Bobby, God damn it, you have known me for a long, long time." He said, "Mr. Leader, if Chuck Lipsen said he didn't write that speech, he didn't write that speech." I said, "Thank you very much, Bobby," and Bobby left. [Johnson] looked at me and he said, "I apologize to you," and he shook hands, and we were friends ever since.

G: I wanted to ask you one question on that minimum wage. Do you know why he initially wanted to get out of the commitment? Do you know what the embarrassment was?

L: I have no idea. I think that probably some people from Texas were

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probably giving him a rough time on the thing, I don't know. I'll be very, very frank. I think it was the minimum wage deal. I'm just not positive that it was the minimum wage, but I knew it was something to do with labor. In the back of my mind, I thought it was the minimum wage and I may be incorrect. I'm not quite sure that it was. I couldn't swear in court that it was, but I think it was.

G: Do you have any idea what he did as far as getting other senators to support it?

L: Oh, yes. He worked right around the clock on that. I also worked with him on civil rights, and I know he used to complain to me about Senator Douglas and about Senator McNamara from Michigan and a few of the other senators who, he said, "get on soap boxes and get up there and make speeches, and then you can't even find them here to go ahead and make a quorum." He was always complaining to me about it. He said, "Why don't you get those guys. That Senator Morse, and I love Senator Morse. You know, these guys don't trust me. I'm for the civil rights bill, and you know it seems a damn shame that the Northern liberals can't believe that a man can be a good American and be for the right things just because he comes from the Southwest." He always mentioned Southwest; he never mentioned the South. And he thought that they [the Northerners] were bigots.

G: Do you think this was sort of a trace of populism in him?

L: Yes, absolutely. You have to get back to his history during his NYA days in Texas when he worked for Roosevelt. Roosevelt had a high regard for him. He was a real operator, but he was sincere. I have talked to him many times, and he used to tell me, "You know, everybody should work for a living and have some pride in their work. But at the same time, I don't think that any man, woman, or child should go to bed hungry, and

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everyone should have a roof over his head. It's the responsibility of the government to go ahead and protect those who can't protect themselves."

G: He had friends and enemies in the labor movement.

L: Yes. I think in the labor movement I was probably his first friend. Jim Suffridge, who was president of the Retail Clerks' International Association at that time and who also was a Republican, was quite impressed with him. He was impressed with him because number one, he knew that I had a good relationship with him. I was sort of a favorite of [Suffridge's], too. It was almost one of those things [where] he used to raise hell with me and holler at me and everything else, but I could do no wrong. And then I would take him in there to meet with President Johnson, and they just hit it off well. He was one of the first men to talk to [George] Meany and say, "This guy's got it, and he's one that we can work with and we can trust. I would rather take a Lyndon Johnson than ten of these candy ass liberals who talk out of both sides of their mouths and you can't find them when you need them on a quorum call."

G: How about Dave Dubinsky?

L: Dave Dubinsky didn't like him in the beginning, but he finally came around and became one of his strongest, stalwart supporters. And I think we were responsible for that. We were responsible with a lot of the labor people. We worked on Meany and we worked on a lot of these people. Because they didn't want him there for Vice President. Hell, I was down on the floor there working those guys over and over. I remember I used to walk into a room at the A.F. of L.-C.I.O. and everybody's talking, and all of a sudden the room would quiet. You could hear a pin drop, like I was an enemy because they knew of my relationship with Lyndon Johnson. It was quite embarrassing at times. That was in the beginning.

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G: What about Walter Reuther?

L: Walter Reuther was one of the biggest bullshitters there was as far as Lyndon Johnson was concerned. He did not like him at that time. Of course, he came around. He recognized his power, but he was a strong anti-Lyndon Johnson [man]. He was one of those complaining to Kennedy he didn't want him on the ticket.

G: Did you have any association with the fight--I guess it was within the labor movement--there in that convention?

L: Oh, yes.

G: Can you recall what happened?

L: Yes, I can recall. I worked very closely with the A.F. of L. side of the A.F. of L.-C.I.O., the building trades. I just went over there and told them, "Look, we have got to go for Lyndon Johnson. Kennedy is not going to get elected dog catcher without him, and I think it's ridiculous that he put up this fight if he's going to make it anyway. The candidate for President certainly has a right to go ahead and pick his running mate." I was very, very thrilled about it. I said, "Look, he won't cross you. One thing about him, he's an honest man. He's a sincere guy, he's a populist." They said, "Well, he's from Texas." I said, "Jeez, so what? There are a lot of people from Texas." I said that I just felt he was the only one that really knew where it was, knew how to get those votes.

G: Were you privy to any of the dealing between, say, Walter Reuther and Robert Kennedy on that?

L: No, I wasn't privy, but I did do a lot of setting up of a lot of things through third parties and fourth parties, saying, "Let's get this doggone thing together and let's work it out." I was not very close to Bobby Kennedy. I did know and did like President Jack Kennedy, but

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I did not know [Bobby].

G: In any event, Lyndon Johnson was selected.

L: That's right.

G: Did you begin your career as an advance man then?

L: No, I was an advance man before that for Estes Kefauver, when we used to go out there with just about a hundred dollars and be gone for about two weeks. We had to live off the land and find our transportation and eat at county chairmen's homes and stuff like that, and hitchhike from one place to another. I worked with Adlai Stevenson during that campaign. The second campaign I worked with Sparkman. But he was the one I really worked for. I had had a great deal of experience even before I started with him.

G: You did work in the 1960 campaign?

L: Oh, yes.

G: How did you do this? Did you just go on leave from your job?

L: Yes.

G: And who were you working under?

L: Really nobody. I would just get a call and they would say, "Just do the job." Then I would do it. It all depends on who was at the desk at the Democratic headquarters. Bobby Baker was one of the fellows that I would talk with, and George Reedy. George Reedy probably more than anybody else.

G: It sounded like you worked with the Johnson end rather than the Kennedy end.

L: That's correct. I never did do any advance work for Jack Kennedy.

G: I take it you didn't do any advance work on the Johnson for President thing before the convention, is that right?

L: Oh yes; from there on in, yes.

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- G: Were you part of that group that set up the office that I think John Connally was a co-chairman of ?
- L: Partially, yes. My sister, too.
- G: Well, do you want to talk about that?
- L: Well, my sister probably more than anybody else. She was the one that got the sign, and they had trouble putting the sign up. Esther Coopersmith is the one you want to get in touch with. Esther Coopersmith probably was the one advance "man" who was a woman. The President called her up one time and said, "I'm sending Chuck down there to Honolulu, and I'm sending you over there to watch Chuck. That was a joke, meaning for him to behave so that he does a good job. I never was a loser with him yet." But she was there when we were in the Hawaiian thing. We had some problems there. "LBJ, LBJ, how many kids did you kill today?" You know, with the signs and all that. Esther was there. Some of the Secret Service men were very, very concerned because they never had a female advance "man," not for women or anything like that. She was right there in that damn crowd. Whenever they started screaming like that, she would just make a sign to the band, and the band would go ahead and play a song and drown them out. Then I would be working out there with some of the labor people and just tell them to cut these guys out because it was embarrassing. But she could probably tell you more than I can on that.
- G: They had the problem with the sign, I think, because President Johnson hadn't authorized it or something, and the sign painter went ahead and put it up. Is that what happened?
- L: I don't remember what it was. Esther can tell you. We're talking about the sign here in Washington?
- G: Yes.

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L: Yes, I think you're right. I just remember it very, very vaguely. We sort of jumped the gun on that damn thing. And also I worked on the floor for him, too. I worked on the floor for Lyndon Johnson for Vice President and for President, really.

G: At the convention?

L: Yes.

G: Let's talk about some of the primaries before he got in, particularly the West Virginia. Was Hubert Humphrey pretty much a stalking horse for Johnson in that primary?

L: No, that is not true. To the best of my knowledge he was not. Hubert Humphrey wasn't a stalking horse for anybody.

G: Did Johnson view a Humphrey victory as something good for himself?

L: I think he did. I think that anybody that would beat Kennedy . . . you're talking about when Humphrey took on Kennedy and got defeated?

G: Yes.

L: Yes. Johnson felt that the guy that had to be whipped was Kennedy. He felt that way all the way through.

Incidentally, there is a very interesting story. I don't know if you want to put it in here. It's kind of a cute one, where George Reedy and [Walter] Cronkite were together with President Johnson. Well, he wasn't President then, and they asked him why he was running for President. He said, "Because I feel that I'm the most able, capable person to run for President, and I think I would make the best President." They said, "Well, what do you think about Jack Kennedy?" He said, "I think Jack Kennedy is one of the finest men I have ever met in my life. He's a darn good United States senator. But he reminds me of a young bull, walking down the pathway and seeing this field of all those female

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cows, and he wants to take care of all of them all at once, and he just can't perform." Then the next question was: "Well, what do you think about Hubert Humphrey?" He said, "Hubert Humphrey is one of the most brilliant minds that has ever served in our government. No man's tongue is better connected to his mind than Hubert Humphrey's. But he reminds me of a kid sitting on a curbstone, playing with himself. When he talks, he talks and talks and talks. He reminds me of a kid who is sitting on a curbstone playing with himself. He knows he's got to quit, but it feels so good he can't quit." George Reedy could probably tell you that better than anybody else. George, I know, is sort of persona non grata with the group there, but I kind of like George.

G: I talked to him Saturday. He was in town.

L: Did you? Did he tell you that story?

G: No, he had some others. Did LBJ help Humphrey in that West Virginia primary?

L: I don't know if he did or not. I would not be surprised that he did. I have a funny feeling that he did through Bobby Byrd, too.

G: There is a story that he contributed considerable money to Humphrey's support.

L: I would not be surprised. I would have. I mean, I would have recommended it. I certainly would have, because that's the way you stop them if you're going to stop them, so he can't win.

G: Anything else before the convention that you feel is important?
Did you have some delegations that you thought you had, cave in on you?

L: Yes. I know that the one delegation that we thought we had, Lyndon made a mistake because he depended on [Carl] Hayden, on Arizona. Udall stole it away from us, and he did a beautiful job. It was a master job.

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G: How did he do it?

L: I don't know, he just went out there and just worked the damn delegation. He was one of Jack Kennedy's close friends. Of course, he was rewarded, and rightfully so, but he was a capable, able mind. What he did is he just knew the people better than Hayden. Hayden was out of touch. Unfortunately, most of our leaders in the Congress look to these old reprobates who have lost touch but just seem to be coming back, getting their seniority. I understand what happened there. Here Stewart Udall was a young congressman who was very popular in his congressional district, but here he was up against Hayden, the sheriff. I don't know if you know that he was a former sheriff, whom everybody loved and respected. Hayden just didn't produce. He stole that.

And then of course the Wyoming delegation was an interesting one, too. That was the one that killed us. That was when they put Kennedy over the top.

G: What happened in this [instance]? Did you think you had the Wyoming [delegation]?

L: I think some of the Johnson people thought that they had it, but I never really thought that they had it. I frankly thought that there was an outside chance that Lyndon could win. I didn't think Lyndon worked hard enough before the convention. He didn't get into the primaries, and the Kennedys were zealots. They did a beautiful job on that floor.

G: How so? What in particular was awesome in their machine?

L: Well for one thing, I think they were better coordinated. They had the money, but they had a bigger bang for their buck than the Johnson people did. The Johnson people were throwing it down the sewer. They had it too, but they just didn't know what to do with it. Aside from myself

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and about two, three, four, or five of those guys, we had a bunch of novices, cigar-chewing old mavericks who were talking about what they did twenty years ago. Electronically, and this is sort of funny, too, because you know Lyndon Johnson was really a nut on electronics, but the Kennedy people just had a better communications system than we had. Our communications system broke down half the time.

G: What did they use, walkie-talkies?

L: They had walkie-talkies, they had everything. God knows what the hell they had. And also they had signals, you know, two rings, three rings. They had everything. It was like a war; it was like an army. And as an adversary at that [time], looking back right now, I admired it. You felt frustrated, but God damn, when somebody's doing something right you sort of admire it. No sort of; I admired it. I was impressed.

G: I wonder where they got the experience, the knowhow for this sort of machine?

L: They had a lot of people there that were very, very bright, very issue-oriented people. Yet they were able to break down some of the pros. What was the old favorite? "You're for Jack Kennedy today, and it's patronage. Tomorrow, you're for good government. After the convention it's good government." He played Bobby up pretty well. Bobby was "Ruthless Bob." He was the one person that I think Lyndon Johnson had a problem [with]. And I loved Lyndon Johnson. It's been my theory, and I think it's a good one, that Roosevelt had Harry "The Hop" Hopkins, Eisenhower had Sherman Adams, Harry Truman had General Vaughan, and Kennedy had Bobby Kennedy. These were their lightning rods. They were the bastards. The President was always the good guy, and when anything would happen, they would say, "Well, it's that damn Bobby," or "It's

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that damn General Vaughan." But with Lyndon Johnson, he was his own lightning rod, and I think that's what helped destroy him. Did you ever hear of Jim Jones?

G: Oh, yes.

L: Nobody knows him. Jim Jones was one of the most effective, obsequious, quiet guys who did a beautiful job for him, but he never let him out front. Incidentally, I don't think Jim Jones was that kind of a guy, just didn't get his picture in the paper. He was just a good, hard-nosed guy. Then there's Marvin Watson. People don't know who they are, and they were very powerful people within the frame of reference. The only one that was really known was Bill Moyers, and Bill did capitalize on it and did very well. And George Reedy, up to a certain point, because Goerge just looks different than anybody else.

G: After the convention, as you said, you worked with the Johnson end of the campaign. Can you recall which trips you advanced?

L: I can't remember too many of them.

G: There was one in New York. Did you go there?

L: Yes I went to New York. I did New York with him. You mean when he ran for Vice President? No, I was not in on that one. I'm sorry, I was not.

G: How about Chicago?

L: Yes, I did Chicago and Mayor Daley. He found out afterwards, really, that I was doing a lot of work with National COPE and also with the Retail Clerks and our own people. I would go into various cities and work with the labor movement.

G: You said he would reserve some of the worst ones for you, the hardest ones to do.

L: Yes. I guess probably anything that was real, real tough, like Detroit,

Michigan, for example, I had the honor or whatever you want to call it. I went to Detroit four times, which is unusual. Most advance men go in there and milk the damn town and make a lot of promises and make a lot of commitments. And then they go ahead and they milk the damn town dry. And they make a big show for the President. And they make a lot of promises and a lot of commitments. And then they leave and they can never come back. Well, I went back four times, and every time I had a big crowd, and also everything just worked out fine. I was the one responsible for getting Henry Ford involved, and they didn't believe it.

G: How did you do that?

L: I just called over there and just said the President wanted to see him, I wanted him in the receiving line, right up there. I tried to get the governor out of there, because the governor then was a Republican; I forget his name, now. I had that one, for example. I had one in Townsville in Australia, where the word was out that they were going to kill him there. What had happened: he had gotten up and said, "Look, I want to get out. I served in Townsville when I was in the service, and I want to go back there." Well, that was the hotbed of the Communist Party in Australia, and they were very, very concerned. I was going on to Vietnam, so they just pulled me out of there and told me to get out over there and get up to Townsville. Well hell, I never heard of the damn place. They had some FBI men, Secret Service, the whole bit. We went out there and worked it, and then I decided to work with the labor movement over there. I said, "Look fellows, I'm the only guy in the labor movement that's ever been an advance man for the President. The eyes of the world are on us now, with the satellites, television. Man, I don't want him to get bumped off here. For God sakes, you have got to

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help me." They called meetings together and everything like that, and I had them surrounded all over that crowd. I had my own FBI and Secret Service, and boy, those guys were just beautiful for me. I came back here, and the CIA guys wanted to know what the hell I did over there. I just said, "Well, you've just got to know what the hell you're doing." Finally they told me to cooperate with them, so I told them.

Then we had some sticky problems; for example, the sticky problem where we had two United States senators, and both of them wanted to introduce the President.

G: Who were they?

L: They are both [in the Senate] now. West Virginia [Senator Robert] Byrd and West Virginia [Senator Jennings] Randolph. So Jack Valenti said, "Settle that God damn thing." He would call me up all the time and say, "You got it settled yet?" And I said, "No." He called me back again and said, "The President wants you to get the damn thing settled now. Get it settled now. What are you going to do about it?" I said, "Don't worry about it. I don't have a handle on it. I'll work it out somehow." Then I went to bed, and all of a sudden about three o'clock in the morning it came to me. I got on the phone, called Jack Valenti up, and I said, "Look, we're sending Bobby Byrd up there, back to Washington, and he's going to fly down here with the President. He'll get off the plane [with the President], and Jennings will introduce him." Everybody was happy. Bobby Byrd got in his car and drove up to Washington to fly down with the President.

G: This was in 1964?

L: Yes.

G: Let's say you were asked to go advance Chicago in '60, or something like

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that. What would you do? What is the procedure that an advance man follows?

L: Well, what I would do is go down and see the key man, which in this case would be the mayor, and have the mayor assign somebody. In this case, it was a man by the name of Bush, I believe; I'm just trying to remember. Then I would sit down with Bush and tell him, "You're going to be the man I am going to coordinate with and work with. These are my requirements and my needs." Then he would call key people in, and these key people would call [others], and it would just [fan] out, with the Young Democrats, the women's groups, the city employees, and the whole bit. And that's the way we operated.

G: Were you responsible for transportation?

L: The whole bit, everything. I would get hold of somebody over there and say, "We need eight or nine cars, or ten cars, and we need buses," and that was all furnished by the local people.

G: Did you ever have any trouble with the height of the podium?

L: Yes, all the time. You're right. Which incidentally is another interesting story, why I was a little bit his favorite. He called all of the advance men in one time. Well, they weren't all advance men; they were all close friends of his. And he started ranting and raving and screaming and hollering about some God damn thing. He said, "Now God damn it, Lipsen, what the hell do you have to say for yourself?" Sheez, I didn't even know what the hell he was talking about. I guess I was awake or something, because I said the right thing. I blurted out, "It won't happen again." I still didn't know what the hell he was talking about. Then he went on with the rest of this doggone thing, and he said, "Okay, fellows, the bar's open. Help yourself." So I

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got over there, and he said, "Not you, Lipson. I want to talk to you." I said, "Yes." So we walked out and he closed the door and he put his arm around me. He said, "Do you think our friend got the message?" I looked at him and said, "I sure hope he did." He said, "Well, Chuck, you've got the hide of an elephant. I figured that if I really took him on, I wanted him to get the damn message so he doesn't do it again." It was that podium deal, and the acoustics. When he got over there with the mike, the damn thing died. He said, "If I would have taken him on, I would have probably lost a good man, so I had to do it with you. You didn't mind, did you?" I said, "Nah, whatever you say, Boss." To this day, I don't know who did it.

G: Was that in '64?

L: Yes. I don't even want to say [who]. I think I know who the guy was that blew it, but unless you want to know . . .

G: Sure.

L: Ivan Sinclair.

G: I understand the podium had to be a certain height, too.

L: Yes, so many inches.

G: Were you responsible for getting it?

L: Yes. Yes.

G: Did he ever complain to you about it?

L: No, never to me. I'll tell you about the podium, though. I took off one time to go to Burlington, Vermont. The President was making a trip up to New England. That was in '64, and Goldwater was the candidate then. We rode one of those small jets up there. They dropped us off to take a look at the place there. Jack Valenti said, "Just have a standup mike here. We don't need a podium on this thing, because it's just going to

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be an airport stop and nothing to it." I said, "Jack, I'm up here. We're going to have 50,000 people here." He said, "Fifty thousand people! They don't have 50,000 people in the whole city of Burlington." I said, "We'll get 50,000 people."

[Telephone interruption]

Anyway, he said, "It's going to be a standup mike; he's only going to speak for fifteen or twenty minutes, greet everybody, and that's all." I said, "Well . . . okay." I had the standup mike and everything, but I don't know, I had a sixth sense about it. It just bothered me. So I went over and had a podium built for him, just in case. Understand now, no podium was sent or anything. And then I started to work, and boy, we got over 55,000, 60,000 people there. It was the biggest damn crowd they have ever had in the city of Burlington. He came out there, and he saw this big crowd and all of a sudden he sees the doggone standup mike there. He says, "What the hell's going on around here?" And Jack Valenti said, "I told him that we were going to have a major speech. Chuck, I told you we were going to have a major policy address here." I said, "Jack, that's God damn lie. You never said a damn thing like that." At which point, Rufus leaned over and said, "You God damn liar, that's all you told him." And the damn thing went over the microphone. So I said, "Don't worry about it. I've got it." Then I told them to wheel out that other thing just in case. So I wheeled it out, and it was ready.

G: Rufus was talking to Valenti? He was siding with you?

L: Yes.

G: Did you work pretty closely with the Secret Service agents when you were advancing? I'm sure you did.

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L: Yes, very closely.

G: I'm sure they had their considerations and you had yours.

L: Yes. It almost became a scandal with the Secret Service. I worked very closely with them. A lot of the advance men were fighting the Secret Service. You know the primary interest of the Secret Service was security. My philosophy was that the show was mine. I was responsible for giving the President the best crowd, the best everything, and the people the best everything. It was my responsibility, period. And it was their responsibility for security. I also felt--and I always let them know. I said, "Look, I am the so-called chief advance man, and all that sort of stuff. But remember this. I am aware of the fact that you can overrule me on any security problem, and I respect it. I will not make any end runs. Anything I do, everything I do, you will be in on." Many of the advance men used to go off in little corners and make a lot of end runs and do a lot of cute little things and surprise the Secret Service. The Secret Service didn't appreciate it. These guys have been around and they have seen how the darn thing is done, so what I did, they were arms and legs for me. They would get out there and do things that they would not do for any other advance man.

G: What, for example?

L: They would sit in with me on a lot of the doggone meetings, and they would help me in my dealings. Sometimes, for example, [someone] would want to do something, and I would give a wink and say, "Secret Service says they can't do it." It was me making that decision, and these guys would back me up right away. With anybody else they would just walk off. Some of those [advance men] they didn't like because they were arrogant; they were power-crazy. But I really had a good time; I really enjoyed it.

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The last hour I would put on a clean shirt, because the hour before he came there were decisions that had to be made every doggone four or five seconds. I always had somebody standing next to me, with me, who would usually be a local person or maybe somebody that I would have with me. Because for some reason or other--it's an idiosyncrasy--I can never think when I've got something in my hands, when I'm standing up. So they would always carry everything if I needed anything, and I would make these damn snap decisions. An hour before he would come, I would be absolutely dripping wet. I don't give a damn how hot it was or how cold it was. Then I would just slip in and put on a clean shirt by the time he got there so I would at least look like I was clean. A couple of times he would come in there and say, "Hey, you need a haircut. You look like a hippie."

G: Do you think the Secret Service would let you do things that they wouldn't [let other advance men do] with the President's, say, motorcade route, or something?

L: Oh, no. Oh, no. But there would be more cooperation with them. They were not antagonistic. I always felt that I had a day in court with them. I never worked with a bad Secret Service man, I honestly can say that, and I must have traveled with about sixty of them, a hundred of them, two hundred of them, I don't know.

G: It must have gotten to the point where they were sort of looked upon as campaign men.

L: Oh, yes. And they did their job. Some of them maybe didn't even like President Johnson, but they wanted to have a good show and they wanted him to be happy. Because they knew if he was happy, their boss would be happy and they would get commended. There was no need for a lot of that

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[dissentation].

G: I get the impression that one of the problems with advance men is that they would make deals with the local people. They would commit the President to this or commit the President to that. And his schedule just didn't leave room for things like that.

L: That's right. And they could never come back.

G: Is that right?

L: They could never come back. I never would do that. I would say, "Let me try it out. I will let you know ahead of time." And also I made sure that letters came to every one of those people. That was my bribe, because I felt--and you'll excuse me if I use the word 'I' because it sounds like I've got 'I' trouble--but these are decisions that I made. When I would say, "I will see to it that the President knows about it," or something to that effect, then I would have a list afterwards and I would give it to somebody at the White House. The White House would go ahead and see that those letters [went out]. I couldn't do it all myself. A lot of the guys would make the reports and say, "I did this, I did that." Well, the President's not stupid. He knows what the hell's going on over there. I always got [the information] on anybody that did anything special, like the women's groups that went over and decorated the float, or the bandstand, or whatever have you, and who the chairman was, and all that sort of stuff. Also, he would send fountain pens and little gifts. I often did the same thing, too, depending on who the person was.

G: Did President Johnson enjoy campaigning?

L: I think yes, he absolutely did. He absolutely enjoyed it. He enjoyed I guess you would call it "pressing the flesh." He just loved to shake hands with people. He liked to be right in the middle of a crowd. I

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have been in more than one of them with him. He used to taunt the Secret Service by just breaking the barriers and just going right in there; he was terrible. And then some days he would be in a bad mood, but generally, he liked it. I think he did.

G: Was he more difficult to please than other campaigners? Did he demand more?

L: Yes, he was very demanding, he was very, very difficult. He was tough.

G: Why, do you think? Was he a perfectionist in that sense?

L: [That's] part of it. I think most of the people around him were playing way over their heads, really. I think he got the most out of everybody. Anybody that ever worked for him was playing beyond their Peter Principle. I think it was sort of a love-hate relationship that most of them had with them.

(Telephone interruption)

They were afraid of him. I wasn't. I was sort of an enigma to him, I guess, because I never ever really wanted anything from him. I didn't want a job; I mean, I didn't want to go in the government or anything like that at that point in time because I was waiting for my pension with the Retail Clerks. The only time I have ever asked him for anything was one time when we had a board meeting. We had a legislative conference and we had a meeting in the East Room of the White House, and he spoke to our group, which is very unusual. And it was good for him, because these guys went out and just worked like hell for him.

i: You had an anecdote you were going to tell.

.: Yes. If you get a chance, read Liz Carpenter's book. Have you read it?

i: Yes.

.: Did you read about men who make advances? There is a chapter there on me.

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There is more to the story than that. They were trying to get hold of me, and we didn't have a very good communication [system]. Had a communications breakdown anyway. When I got on the plane, we didn't even know where in the hell we were going or anything. It was very interesting at that point. My sister was going to have a twentieth wedding anniversary party for us. Then they had to go ahead and call it off, because I was leaving but they didn't know where in the hell I was leaving. The word got out, and Drew Pearson had called up my wife and said that the word was out that we were getting a divorce. So it was really embarrassing. My sister was embarrassed. She had to go ahead and write everybody and call everybody up and tell them that there was no party. Anyway, I took off. When I got on the plane they said, "Well this time, Chuck, you've got a piece of cake; you've got Samoa. You don't have to kill yourself this time. Do Samoa, and then after you do Samoa, you'll go to Australia. [There] you'll just be excess baggage, and you can just take it easy and have a good time." That was before the Townsville turned up, which turned out to be really rough, as you well know.

So when he got off the plane there, he said, "Where in the hell have you been? I've been trying to get hold of you." They sent two people out there to look for me, too. Then he said to me, "I heard you played around with every doggone female native on this island." He used some other language there. Marvin Watson wouldn't say shit if he had a mouthful; he looked [startled] at that. He just turned white. He couldn't understand this repartee that the President had with me. From that day on, Marvin turned out to be a very, very good friend. Everybody said he was mean, but he really wasn't. I didn't think he was. I think he was

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doing his job, and doing the best job. But we then became very, very good friends. So I looked at the President and I said, "Well, there are a couple of them that I missed." And he said to me, "I'll tell you what I'm going to do with you. I'm going to send you back here in about nine months to find out how much you really did accomplish." The irony of the thing is Holt, the Prime Minister of Australia--you know about that. He drowned and they never found [his body]. So it was about ten months later that we all went back there again. And of course I got Samoa again. Of course, this was a sad trip and all, but I wanted to liven it up a little bit like I generally do. We just called everybody over there. Anyway, to make a long story short, he went through the line, he met with the chiefs and the high chiefs, the high talking chiefs and the talking chiefs, all the people that are very, very important. As he went through, instead of giving leis they gave ulas, which are these shells, cowrie shells or whatever. They are very, very heavy, and after we got ten or twelve, we had to take them off and then start them all over again. It was a very, very long line. Generally he didn't like more than twelve or fourteen people, because it was very tiring. He wanted to get to the business of the thing, but he also wanted to meet everybody that he possible could. But these were generally longer lines than I would ordinarily allow. After he finished up with that line, he said, "Okay, what's my next move?" I said, "We've got another group here." He said, "What's that?" I said, "That one over there," and there were about thirty kids. They must have been about three and four years old, all in whites, all lined up. I said, "You've got to go through that line, too." He said, [sharply] "What for?" I said, "Do you remember what you said ten months ago, that you were going to send me back to Samoa to find

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out just exactly how much I accomplished? These are my kids, and I want you to say hello." He thought that was the funniest damn thing, and he went through that line and shook hands with every one of those kids, and they put the ulas on. So he was really a great guy.

G: Was it that trip in Australia when the paint was thrown on the motorcade?

L: Yes. The Australian trip, the first one, I think, is the one that they threw the paint at him.

G: Were you in that motorcade at the time?

L: Yessiree.

G: What happened?

L: I got some in my eye.

G: Can you describe the sequence of events?

L: I can't. I'll be honest with you. I was looking at other things and all of a sudden it happened. When that car ran over what's-his-name from the Secret Service, it ran over his toes. One of the Secret Service men. I can't remember his name right now.

Oh. And at the first trip that I had with him in Samoa--I had forgotten about that--I was told by some of the chiefs that they would really appreciate it when he drank the kava, which incidentally is a narcotic. I told him not to drink it, but just to put it to his lips. I said it would be very, very great "if you would say Tofah sui fua," which is 'May God be with you,' and the Samoans will just go out of their minds." He said, "Okay, say it again." I said, "Tofah sui fua." ~~He said, "Tofluh bui--" "No," I said, "try it again." We did that for about five minutes, and he said, "Aw shit, I can't pronounce it."~~ So he never did it. It was so simple I couldn't understand why the great man couldn't pronounce "Tofah sui fua."

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G: I understand he liked motorcades.

L: Yes, he liked motorcades; he liked driving. He would have liked to have been driving himself.

G: [I understand] that he liked to stop at Dairy Queens.

L: Yes, all the time. Oh, you've got to be kidding. He would stop right in the middle of the damn motorcade, see a Dairy Queen, and run in there and get ice cream for everybody. That was his big passion.

G: Can you recall any other side trips like that during his motorcades?

L: Yes. If he would see a special sign or something like that that was very different or unusual, he would stop the thing. I had signs there in Australiz, for example, that said, "LBJ is fair dinkum," which to the Australians is "a bit of all right." It's the highest compliment. And he would stop and shake hands with everybody there. He was often unpredictable. You'd never know what the hell he would do. A lot of the advance men would get in a lot of trouble with the Secret Service people because they thought that [the advance men] were making end runs, and a lot of it was really not their fault. I was never ever questioned, because the fellows just knew that that wasn't me that pulled that stunt. I would never pull a stunt like that. But I used to get a big kick out of him when he would do it, and he liked to do it, too. Lyndon Johnson loved to press, and I think that he just felt that no one was going to kill him.

G: Were his speeches pretty good?

L: His speeches generally were pretty good. I remember one time in Detroit he delivered a speech there, and he was absolutely fantastic for the first 45 minutes. Then he started to go on and on and on and on. People were getting tired. He came down the platform, I'll never forget it, and

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all this time I was going [signalling] "Cut it, cut it." He just ignored me, went right on. He came down the ladder, and the guys would shake hands with him and say, "Oh, you did a great job, Mr. President. You did a beautiful job. Boy, you had them eating out of your hand. You were just fantastic, Mr. President." He came up to me and said, "How was it, Chuck?" I said, "Well, if you really want to know. The first half hour you were really fantastic. You're President of the United States, you were worth another fifteen minutes, and from there on in, it was horrible." Boy, I'm telling you he looked at me, and the next thing you know I was on the shit list with everybody.

G: Really?

L: Oh, yes. I would get on the plane and practically get put in the baggage compartment. They didn't even care about transportation for me. I came home that one day and talked to my wife. I said, "I think it's my last trip. I think he's really upset with me." You could feel the pecking order. Everybody said, "Stay away from that guy." About a week later I got a call from Juanita Roberts. She said, "The President wants you to go to Morgantown, West Virginia." That was that trip I told you about earlier. I went there, and he made a speech, and he was great. Oh, he was fantastic. And then he started to do the same damn thing he did in Detroit. And I stood up there like this (demonstrating): cut it, cut it. I could see people getting weary already. Then he looked me right in the eye and he said, "Ladies and gentlemen, Lady Bird just passed me a note and said I have been talking too long. Y'all think I've been talking too long?" And everybody said, "Hell no, give 'em hell, Mr. President! Yay!" Cheering and all that going around. And then he went on and he made that damn speech drone on and on and on.

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He came down the platform, and he said, "I fooled you that time, Chuck, didn't I?" I said, "No, Mr. President, you fooled yourself. It wasn't worth a shit after I told you to cut it." And again, back in the baggage compartment, on the shit list, and the whole damn thing.

G: Did he like "yes" men around him?

L: I don't know if he did or not. I guess maybe some of the Presidents did, I don't know.

G: Was it hard to say something like that to him, something negative?

L: I think for most people, it was, but it wasn't with me, because I really loved him. I felt I knew his strength, and I felt I knew his weaknesses. I mean, he was a mortal man and I have been through too damn much with him. I would tell it to him like it was, and I think that he respected me for it. He would get mad at me and wouldn't talk to me, but deep inside I think there was a feeling of what I felt was a mutual respect.

G: [Did he] have a difficult time with the telephone during these campaigns, when he was off speaking? I know that he liked to use the telephone a great deal, and it was sometimes inconvenient, probably, for him to make and receive calls when they were mobile like that. Did this ever create any problems?

L: Well, it created problems, but one of the things that I always did was make sure there was a telephone around there, even if it was a pay telephone. But generally I would be working very closely with the WHCA people, the White House Communications [Agency]. I would say, "He's going to be here, so we had better have a phone here, and you'd better have a phone [there]." They generally knew about it, and I just said, "Look, it's your job, fellows, but I don't want him to get mad." They would always go out and do a lot of wiring and a lot of things.

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G: They must have had a fabulous--

L: Oh God. He was very difficult in that respect. I'll never forget, he called up our house one time and wanted to speak to me. Jan said, "He's on his way to work." He said, "Well, what's his telephone number in the car?" She said, "He doesn't have a telephone in the car." He said, "I told him that no matter where he is he should have a telephone. Put one in the car." I got to the office, so I called him right away.

Oh, one time he called up, too, and my kid answered the phone, and she said, "Dad, you wouldn't believe it. Some damn jerk is saying he's Lyndon Johnson." And it was, and he heard it.

G: What did he say?

L: I said, "Oh my God, Mr. President, I want to apologize." He said, "That often happens."

G: He said that?

L: Yes, he said that often happens. He was in a good mood.

G: Did he bring up the subject that your kid had said that?

L: Well, I heard it. I was right there. You see, I have a friend of mine whose name is Fred Israel. He used to play with my kids all the time. A telephone to us is not an instrument of pleasure; we don't use it for that. But he used to always call up and say, "Hello. This is Mickey Mouse." "This is Zorro." It's Fred Israel, the friend who was a law partner of mine. He's a real nice guy, used to play all these cute games. They thought it was he, or one of my kooky friends, and I had a lot of them. Don't we all?

(Telephone interruption)

G: I have read that LBJ was phenomenal at scanning an audience while he was speaking and being able to tell who was there and who wasn't there. For

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example, being able to tell if the post office employees were there by spotting their uniforms in the crowd.

L: Yes, this is the case. And then at the same time, and this is the irony or the contradiction, he wanted the place swelled up and he wanted the uniforms there, but he wanted the uniforms as inconspicuous as possible. Because he felt that uniformed people were there because they had to be there. So I always had them swelling the crowd, but I wouldn't have fifty postmen sitting together. I would spread them out.

G: What about Dick Tuck? Did you ever have any contact with him at all?

L: Oh sure, everybody has.

G: He was really an artist, wasn't he?

L: He was an artist. But there was a difference between Dick Tuck and what the Nixon people did. Dick Tuck, for example, pulled a lot of things, but nobody got hurt and nobody had to pay, like poor Senator Muskie when they came in there and ordered a thousand pizzas there, and they had to go ahead and pay for that.

G: I never heard of that one.

L: Oh yes, the Nixon tricksters. They had a black-tie affair, and they called up some doggone pizzeria or something like that. And they ordered 1500 pizza pies, and they brought them in there. The guys already had eaten, and it wasn't a pizza affair, and they got stuck with the bill. You see, Dick wouldn't do anything like that.

G: His were pretty harmless.

L: They were harmless, mischievous, funny, cute.

G: What was his best one?

L: Oh, I wasn't there, but the best one that I know of was the one that he had written in Chinese, and it said, "When are you going to pay off

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the Hughes loan?" He did a lot of things. Then he had that girl on the train there. I think you probably know about that thing, too.

G: Do you think LBJ enjoyed hearing about Dick Tuck's exploits?

L: Oh, yes. He liked that. He was a gossip; he liked to gossip a lot. My communications with him would be that I would never ever tell him anything unless he had, one, a need to know. And two, I would never, ever badmouth anybody no matter how much I felt about the guy. I don't have a negative reaction about too many people. But I would often tell him cute little stories and say, "Hey, did you hear about so-and-so who got caught doing such-and-such?" You know, something funny or something like that. He would rear back and laugh, and he would think it was real funny. He used to tease me a lot.

G: He would always exaggerate your faults in teasing you?

L: Oh yes, absolutely. Absolutely.

G: Can you give us an example? I think the one about your being successful in hard advance jobs is a good one, the one you mentioned earlier.

L: Yes. He would say, "Send Chuck." "Send Chuck on this one." He'd get over there and call up there. I made one mistake with him, and George Reedy told me that I made the mistake. I did Jeffersonville, Indiana, and it was right in the campaign where we didn't know where in the hell we were, what was going on. I had the biggest crowd ever. It was night, he was an hour or two late, which was unusual. He was always late, but not that late, and it wasn't his fault. Honest to God, it was the most fantastic doggone thing. Somehow or other, he had forgotten that I was the advance man there. He saw me there, and he said, "Hey Chuck, what are you doing here?" And I said to him in a flip way, "I heard there was a crowd here, and I heard you were here, so I decided to drop by."

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He thought that was funny, and I guess he believed it. Then after that happened, he said, "Who put this doggone thing together? It is absolutely fantastic." He turned to a newsman. The newsman's only contact at that point was young Tom Johnson, the press aide, and Tom Johnson had absolutely nothing to do with it. All he did was come over there just to check the mikes; he came in about an hour or two before the President came. [The newsman] said, "Tom Johnson did it." Well, from that day on, Tom Johnson's star started to rise with the President. George Reedy and a couple of guys overheard this conversation. They said, "Chuck, we just wanted to tell him who it really was. That was the one mistake that you made and we made." But Tom Johnson got the credit for that.

G: Did they straighten the President out on it?

L: They never did. They always forgot about it or something like that. That's the irony of the thing: I never really knew about it until after he was out of the White House. And I don't think I would have done anything. I certainly wouldn't have done anything about it anyway. You know, what the hell, Tom was a nice guy, too. He didn't say, "I did it." Somebody else said he did.

G: Did the President feel that you booked him for too many speeches a day?

L: He complained a great deal about it to many of them. I felt that I would try to keep it down as much as possible, but at the same time try to exercise whatever judgment that I had [about] which were the right people [to speak to]. It was very difficult, and I knew that if he was in a bad mood that he wouldn't appreciate it. But if he was in a good mood he liked it, especially if they were responsive.

G: How about Mrs. Johnson? Was she good campaigning with him?

L: She was his secret weapon. She is probably the most beautiful human being

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I have ever met in my life. She's an angel. Anything you asked her to do, she would do. She was just beautiful. I always made it a point to make sure that she was always taken care of. I didn't want her neglected whenever she traveled with him. Some of the guys, unfortunately, forgot she was even around. Sometimes I've seen her strolling all by herself. Then I would go over there immediately. For example, if I had just got off of a trip, or I had the one before and then I'm riding back with him on the plane and everything like that and I had absolutely no function whatsoever, I'm excess baggage. Many times I would see her all by herself, neglected. I would come over to her and I would say, "Hi, how are you? What's up?" shoot the breeze, and then get the right people over there and say, "Would you take Mrs. Johnson--" so-and-so. She was just a beautiful person.

G: I understand that she was very good at soothing over the feathers that he had ruffled up in the course of his whirlwind, is that right?

L: Yes.

G: Did you ever [see that]?

L: I can't recall, but I know for a fact that it's happened. She would say, "Oh, you have just got to understand Lyndon." Or she would say, "The President isn't feeling well today," or "He's got a bad cold." Or "Chuck, he's got something on his hand that hurts him. I hope they don't shake his hand too much today and squeeze it." Everybody's got to squeeze his hand, you know. But she also would unruffle his feathers, too. I always felt that whenever she was around, we would have a better trip. I was always happy to have her here.

G: To keep him from getting out of control?

L: Sure.

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G: In what sense?

L: Oh, that he would get nasty, or something like that. He took being President seriously, I guess. He was just tough. I remember one time we went into a room, and the Secret Service wanted to go in with him. We were in Nicaragua then to see some paintings. Three of the guys came in there, started to walk in, and he said, "What are they doing here?" I said, "Well, they're Secret Service." He said, "Get 'em out of here!" I said, "I'm not going to let you go in that damn room by yourself." He said, "You're with me!" I looked at the guys and they looked at me. I took another look at the room, and I just said, "Let me go in there with him." So we went in there together. When we were in the room, it was a very interesting conversation I had with him. You want to know what he said to me and what I said to him?

G: Sure.

L: Nothing. No word was said. He was in a bad mood.

G: Could a good crowd pick him up again?

L: Yes. Oh, yes. When I was in Nicaragua, I got a call immediately after the short period of time after Bobby Kennedy was shot by Sirhan Sirhan. I was up there in the room working up there with the Secret Service, going over the plans in the hotel in Nicaragua. Got a call from an Israeli mission, and he said he'd like to see me. So I went downstairs to talk to him. He said that there were about five thousand Arabs there and he said, "They may be a little restless and some of them have guns. I'm telling you, you may have some problems with the Arabs." So immediately I got hold of the Secret Service agent in charge. I can't remember his name; it started with P. Ponce? I'd remember it in a minute if I heard it. Hell of a nice guy. I called him down, called the FBI, and

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said, "Well, what do we do?" So we had a meeting with Somoza's people. I said, "Look, we've got some problems here." And he said, "What do you want us to do?" I said, "Well, lock them up. Keep them out of the way. I just don't want to have them around here until the President leaves." And one of the guys said, "You can't do that. This is a democracy." I said, "Not here." End of story.

G: Did he have much trouble with hecklers?

L: He didn't like them. He didn't like them. I don't think he lost his outer cool but I think he lost his inner cool. He did not like them. And I'll tell you one thing. He used to blame the poor advance men if he had any hecklers, too.

G: Is that right?

L: Yes. Or at least that was the impression [I got]. I never had that problem. I don't know, but I mean, that's what I heard. I think actually it was an over-reaction with some of the people around him, than him. I was not there when he read anybody . . . I've been chewed out by him. And I'd be chewed out by him and then I'd get a wink afterwards. You never knew if you were on foot or on horseback with him.

G: Well, I've heard that after he'd do it, he'd always make up to you in some form: give you something, or ask your advice, or something like that.

L: Yes. He never did that to me. I guess I was his favorite whipping boy. I told you. Getting back again, he said I had a hide of an elephant. I'll tell you another story about him, too.

He got up one time. . . . We were in the White House, and we were sitting there and he's talking about the guys getting their pictures taken, you know, and being big shots. And he said, "You guys are working for me. You're an extension of me. When you're out in the field and out in the

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cities and all that, remember that you are representing the President of the United States. That's me, and my ideal is somebody who doesn't drink, smoke, or chase women. That's my ideal." At which point I just got up and started to walk out of the room. He said, "Where are you going, you God damn clown? Get back in there and sit back in there." That time I was really shook up, so I sat down and didn't say another word. Afterwards he says to me, "What the hell? What's the matter with you anyway? Don't you take anything serious?" I said, "Well, I'm sorry if I struck a nerve." "No," he said, "I was right in the middle of a sentence and I lost my trend of thought." He said, "You clown, get back in there." So I said, "Okay." And that was it.

G: Did he start pretty early in the morning on those trips and then go pretty late in the evening?

L: Yes. I was very concerned about him, Mike, because I knew he had had a heart attack. I remember the story that after he had his heart attack and he was in the hospital and his wife was up there, she said, "You ordered two suits. Which should I get, a blue or a brown?" And he said, "You might as well get the blue one, because you can always use that for laying me out." You know that story.

G: Yes.

L: But no, I was concerned about him because I just could not understand where he got his stamina from.

G: I hear he'd take a nap in the afternoon.

L: Yes, he would.

G: I was going to ask you something else. A lot of politicians have very gifted memories for people's names and faces. I've heard that John Kennedy could do it and Bobby Kennedy could do it, and John Connally

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also could meet a room full of people and then remember each of their names. Could Lyndon Johnson [do this]?

L: Lyndon Johnson was very, very good at that. Yes. He was very, very good at that. But what I used to do all the time was I would give him three-by-five cards, and often times when I would be standing next to him I would say to him, "First man in line is Frank Murphy. Frank Murphy's wife's name is Jan. Jan, you remember, is the one who did such and such and such and such. And the one behind her is so-and-so and so-and-so and so forth." And boy, I tell you, he'd snap it up just like that [Snaps fingers]. He knew exactly. Then he'd say, "Hi 'ya, buddy. How ya been? How's your wife, Jan?" And I'd say where he'd met her last and maybe an anecdote, and he'd pick it up just like that. That's one of the reasons why he always felt fairly comfortable with me, I think. I hope he did anyway. What I would always do is I'd come up on the plane, hand him some three-by-five cards, and say, "This is on the receiving line. These are the guys." And I'd get off. And sometimes I wouldn't even have any connection with him at all. I'd just give it to one of the guys and say, "See that he gets it." Most of the advance men would always have to be hovering around him all the time, and I never did. I know I did get a call from my Dad one time, in which he said he was very, very disappointed in me. I said, "Why?" He said, "I saw you on television with the President, and the President was talking to you and you're not even looking at him. I didn't think I would raise a son that would be discourteous to the President." I said, "Dad, I appreciate it very much, but if you remember, I was in the crowd, and I never look at the President when I'm in a crowd." He said, "Well, what are you doing?" I said, "I'm looking at the crowd." He said, "What are

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you looking for?" I said, "Well, I'm looking at eyes, I'm looking at hands, just in case." You know what we're supposed to do. But I didn't want to get my Dad scared. He said, "Well, what happens if somebody pulls a gun?" I said, "I get the hell out of there." But you know what we're supposed to do.

G: No, I don't. You're supposed to watch the crowd?

L: Supposed to watch the crowd.

G: I didn't know that.

L: Oh, sure. The reason why you watch the crowd is in case somebody wants to assassinate him. If they do, you step in front of him.

G: Yes. I thought this was almost an exclusively Secret Service [action].

L: Bull shit.

G: The advance men are charged with that, too?

L: Well, I don't know if they were, but I know that's what I was. . . .

G: How about the local contacts? Did they get into this, too? Were they supposed to sort of monitor the crowd as well?

L: Yes. I had to monitor the crowd. Always with me. I always had to monitor the crowd. I remember one time we had a guy that was really a concern that was playing in the band, [a man] who killed his wife two years or three years earlier and was put in the insane asylum. And he was playing in the band. When I was up in New York, they had captured somebody who escaped from a prison or jail or insane asylum, or whatever have you, that had threatened to kill the President. We caught him about three miles away in another hotel. I was always for some reason or another--and most of the advance men were not--told about any bomb scares or anything. The Secret Service always told me.

G: Was there any last minute changing of routes?

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L: Oh yes, quite a bit.

G: Did this create any problems?

L: Yes, always.

G: How did you deal with it?

L: Jeez, Mike, I can't tell you. I don't really . . . we just did it. I would just get on the phone and just get the guys out there. Most of that responsibility, of course, was the Secret Service's. But I remember one time; it was very disappointing, too, because we had a whole bunch of people at a bridge, and at the last minute something happened which I was not privy to, and they changed the route and we left about, I don't know, about a couple thousand people standing there waiting for the President. They never did see him. I felt badly about it. I didn't make any commitments or any promises, but they knew he was going to be there. But he took a different route.

G: Did the Secret Service ever divert him from the scheduled route for security reasons, do you think?

L: I'm sure they did. I can't quite recall, except for that situation. But I never would question it.

G: One interviewee told me that in the 1960 campaign when they had that joint appearance in New York on Long Island, that Kennedy's motorcade got lost. Had you heard that?

L: Oh, I can believe that. Yes. Yes.

G: Did you ever have navigational problems?

L: Yes. We've had that, and we've had some of the cars missing. Then we had a situation where one of the cars stopped and we couldn't go any farther, and we had to pack everybody in a bus. I had senators in the buses and everything. Oh, yes. We've had some screw-ups. I always look

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at these things--everybody would get mad and rankled, and I would look at them and I would say, "Let me tell you something. [In] two years you're going to be talking about this incident and you're going to be laughing like hell." "Yeah, I guess you're right, Chuck." Then they wouldn't say anything. They'd just go right on the bus, or whatever have you.

I remember in the Australian trip when we were in a motorcade and it was a long motorcade. It was a long motorcade. And he loved it. He must have stopped about twenty-five times. The Secret Service was absolutely livid.

G: Were you part of the group that went down to Mexico for that trip?

L: No, I didn't hit that one. Incidentally, the guy that did was Marty Underwood. Marty Underwood did that one.

G: They had all of the colored confetti and everything.

L: Yes, I knew about that. I knew about that. And then not only that, when I did one of them there, I had a couple of guys over there and the confetti didn't work out. I started screaming at these guys, saying, "What in the hell did I have to bring you guys out here for? You didn't do a good job. You threw the God damn confetti, but you forgot to take it out of the box."

G: Did you enjoy the foreign trips more than the domestic?

L: No--yes, I did. In a way I did. I enjoyed every one of the trips. In fact, knock on wood, I didn't have one bad advance in any of the trips that I've ever had. They've always been successful; he's always been pleased with them. As I said earlier, I think every time that there is a shit detail or a can of worms, I ended up with that damn thing. And I was pleased about it, too, because I always had the feeling that the

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President himself wanted me there. It wasn't like somebody making an assignment. I ended up with [it] any time there was any problem.

G: Did you go to Arizona the time he flew to Phoenix in the '64 campaign--

L: No, I did not.

G: --when he took the mayor and drove all over town?

L: No, I did not.

G: How about the whistle-stop campaign through the South in 1960. Were you in on that?

L: Yes. I was in on that, and we had problems there because we had to back the engine up three or four times where the podium was, and we just couldn't make it. We did it about four or five times. It was a big crowd. I had bought a brand new suit and I felt very, very comfortable about the damn suit. And I got up there and I stood up on a fence there and tore my whole suit, ripped the whole suit up.

I was in Portland. The President was very pleased with that Portland trip. There was a whole New England swing. I had my suit and the Secret Service man next to me had his suit--we both had them torn off of us, ripped apart.

G: Did you get any compensation for something like that?

L: Nah.

G: Really?

L: He didn't, either. The Secret Service guy didn't either; I don't think he did. I felt sorry for him.

G: Well, is there anything else that you [would like to talk about]?

L: I'm sure there is; I'm just trying to remember.

G: Well, do you want to take a break and come back?

L: Yes, maybe that might be a good idea. [Suddenly thinks of something].

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Oh. Yes, it was at the Boggs wedding. Hale Boggs and Lindy had a wedding for one of their daughters, and we were very fortunate in being invited. The President walked in. Of course, the crowds just swelled all over the place. Then the next thing I knew, the President was all by himself with my wife and this bunch of photographers and cameramen and everybody. They're engrossed in a conversation. You couldn't get in there. I started walking over there, and the Secret Service guys were there, and they were ready to open up. Somehow I just felt he wanted to talk to her, because he was very engrossed with her. So then people were taking their pictures and everything. This one press man said, "Hey, who's that? Who's that pretty woman he's talking to?" Of course, that made me feel real good. The pretty woman is that one over there. I said, "Well, that's my wife." And this guy looked at me and said, "Who are you?" (Laughter) Well anyway, I asked Jan afterwards, "What was that all about?" She said, "Well, he was complaining about the way you were talking about his two speeches out there." I said, "Did he say it in front of everybody?" She said, "Oh no, he said it to me." She said, "Well, Mr. President, if you want a "yes" man you can go down to 14th and F Street. You can go down there and wait a couple of hours and you can get about fifty of them if you want them. But Chuck's not a "yes" man. He loves you." Then he said, "Well, I've got an appointment for him, too. I'm going to give him a real good appointment; he'll be very, very pleased with it." She said, "He doesn't want that, either. You really don't understand him, do you? He doesn't want anything." And that was what the conversation was all about.

And then one time in the White House when just Jan and I were there together, he was mad at me that time, too. We walked in the Oval Office,

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and he said, "Hello, Chuck," and I said "Hello, Mr. President." He took Jan and he put his arm around her and walked over to the veranda, you know, where the windows are. He spent about twenty minutes there talking to her and I was sitting there like a--by myself. He finished up, and he said, "Jan, it was very nice being with you," She said, "It was lots of fun," and they were just talking there. He gave her a big kiss and he said, "Goodbye, Chuck."

G: Is that right?

L: Yes. He was mad at me!

G: Did you find out what they talked about?

L: It was funny, because we were in the car and my wife was playing games. I said, "What was that all about?" She said, "Can't tell you." I said, "Come on, Jan, what was it all about?" She said, "Don't worry. Don't worry, he was sort of disciplining you." Of course, it was just that he wanted me . . . I don't know, I guess he wanted to get more approval from me than he got. Believe me, Mike, the approval was there, but sometimes I'd frown on some of the--if he'd get tough with somebody and I felt it was a bad deal, I'd get sort of upset about it. I sort of wanted him to be a little bit . . . not a little bit, but way, way special. And he really was. I think he was a great humanitarian. I feel that he probably really wanted to help poor people and the disadvantaged, and I think he did the most that he possibly could under the circumstances. I think today he'd probably turn over in his grave to see what's going on with some of the programs that he started. I hope someday that we may take a lesson from some of those programs and start them again and do them again if we can, and with some of the lessons we learned, correct some of them. Because when you're dealing with human beings, sometimes people

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take advantage. I think he was a great man.

G: Well, I certainly do thank you.

L: Thank you.

(End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview I.)

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