INTERVIEWEE: JOHN W. MACY JR. (Tape #1)

INTERVIEWER: DAVID G. MC COMB

March 18, 1969

Mc Let me identify the tape first. This is an interview with Mr. John W. Macy, Jr. He is the former head of the Civil Service Commission. The date is March 18, 1969. The time is 11:15 in the morning in his office at 1250 Connecticut Avenue in Washington, D.C. My name is David McComb.

Let me know something about your background, first of all, starting off with where you were born and when.

M: Be delighted to. I'm a product of the Middle West, although Lyndon Johnson always thought I was from the Northeast. I'll explain why later. I was born in Chicago the day the United States entered World War I, April 6, 1917. My parents had migrated westward from New York two years previously. My father was an advertising executive--was for his entire career until he retired in 1951. He was associated primarily with Field and Stream magazine, so I have something of an outdoorsman background via the advertising route. My mother had been a school teacher. [I] lived a suburban life among the over-privileged and the unduly affluent as a child. I attended a private school--one of a professive brand of the 1920 educational vintage, the North Shore Country Day School. My father said it should really have been renamed the "Country Day and Half-the-Night School" because it was a very comprehensive and broadly based curriculum, with a large variety of opportunities for the students to participate in activities of various types. This was in the suburb of Winnetka, outside of Chicago.

The depression came along during this period. The family was reduced substantially as far as income was concerned, but my schooling was not interrupted.

It was possible to obtain scholarships in order to remain in the school. I graduated in 1934 and went to Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, on a scholarship that I thought I had earned on merit, but there was probably some reflection of economic need as well.

I went to Wesleyan primarily because I was interested in a liberal arts education in a relatively small New England college. Wesleyan filled that bill. And as an institution and as an inspiration it has been a part of my career ever since. I've never been very far removed from the institution. I've served as an active alumnus; I became a member of the Board of Trustees as early as 1954. I served three years as Executive Vice President of the University from 1958 to 1961, which is really the largest break in my public service career--although I considered that public service. And I continue on the Board of Trustees at the present time. This is really one of my primary avocations. It was during the Johnson Presidency. This was one of the few outside activities I continued to pursue, although a number of times I expressed to my colleagues on the Board that my inability to attend many of the meetings really should disqualify me as a trustee.

I graduated in 1938, had been there during the Roosevelt years. I recall very distinctly the 1936 election. I was a political science student at the time. I had elected to major in government and had a rising interest in public affairs--an interest which had started during the depression in Chicago where I was, in an immature sort of way, very much impressed by the human consequences of the economic conditions of that time, particularly as it was revealed on the streets of Chicago. The suburbs were well insulated from this kind of exposure.

In 1936 I was taking a course in political parties by the man who was the head of Weslayan's government department, one fairly well renowned in subsequent

years, Elmer Schattschneider--one of the longest names I've ever had to spell. And on the morning of the election Mr. Schattschneider was asked by his class to predict the outcome of the election. Most of the students were of a Republican persuasion. In fact, in a straw poll that had been conducted the week before, Mr. Landon was an overwhelming first and Mr. Roosevelt ran third behind Norman Thomas. And before a student sample of this type he predicted that Mr. Roosevelt would carry all but two states, those two states being Maine and Vermont. He has not been as reliable a forecaster of political outcome since that time, but he holds the record on that event.

Toward the end of my career at Wesleyan, after having been unsuccessful as a nominee for a Rhodes Scholarship, I was much attracted to a program that was then in its early stages called the Government Intern Program. This was an activity that was financed by the Rockefeller Foundation and was designed to attract to Washington activists from the college generation to give them a firsthand exposure to the ways of government through an assignment in a government or a related office, through seminars with big names in the Washington scene, and through graduate work in American University. The program appealed to me; I applied for it; and I was selected.

Mc Was the purpose of this to train future government--?

M: Basically to train for future government career service, although there was no commitment that this would be the ultimate outcome.

Mc Is it similar then to the White House Fellows Program?

M: No, the White House Fellows Program, as that was designed, was and is aimed at people who are farther along the career track. Our intent there was to find people who had completed their education and had moved along far enough in their chosen profession to give indications of subsequent leadership in that profession.

Clearly the intent there was not to use this as a recruiting device for the government, but to try to give those who would lead in other segments of the society an exposure at the very top of government.

The interns back in the '30's were placed at substantially lower levels in the government than the White House Fellows have been the last few years. Also we had a great distinction, and that was that we served without compensation--a condition that would be unthinkable to even propose on the contemporary scene. But we came at our own expense; we served without pay, so that there had to be a certain amount of commitment to it.

I was always amused at my father's reaction to that period of my career, particularly as it related to my subsequent public service. He liked to tell his fellow businessmen in Chicago that he never could understand why I selected a career of public service but that there was one period in which the government received full value for its payment to me and that was during my period as an intern when I received no compensation. So this necessitated a certain amount of spartan living on the Washington scene. I startle my own youngsters by explaining that I had room and breakfast for $15 a month during the first few months that I lived here.

There were 55 of us all in the same boat. This was the greatest collection, or bringing together of extroverts, that I've ever seen. I never did quite understand how I ended up being the chairman of the group, but apparently my political maneuvering was more effective than that of my competitors.

But it was a wonderful group of men and women. Friendships were formed during that year that have lasted ever since. Many of the members of that group have gone on to do prominent things, not only in government but in the academic world, in law practice, and in other fields of activity.

Mc Therefore, that program did have some benefits?

M: Oh yes. I feel it had tremendous benefits. It continued until the early '50's, at which time the grant ran out. The government--namely the Civil Service Commission--picked it up, and it has become institutionalized as a government program with compensation for those participating and with maybe 25 different government agencies participating. Last year over 500 people were selected from the results of a competitive examination to become management interns in the government. So that's the successor program to the one in which I participated. And each fall, as these groups gather here in Washington, I have addressed them and have always bored them with some reference to my own earlier experience and the contrasts that exist between their experience and my own.

Mc Incidentally, where would a young man in that condition live?

M: We lived in boarding houses around DuPont Circle for the most part. That was before the hippies moved in. We were an earlier breed of hippies. Or they lived at the "Y", or they lived with families they knew. We could find blue plate specials where for 37¢ you could get a five-course dinner; that kind of livelihood sustained us.

My assignment during that year--my intern work assignment--was with the Social Security Board. I selected it, and it selected me after a two week orientation period. But I was particularly interested in the social programs of the New Deal. I had entered college as a rock-ribbed Republican reflecting the attitudes of my parents and the community in which I lived. And by 1936 and my exposure to the study of political science and government, I had become a stalwart Roosevelt supporter, thereby indicating the insidious nature of education. Once one learned, one changed one's political views. And so, coming to Washington at that point in time, I was eager to become a part of what I felt was government's response to the social problems that existed in the country.

Mc Did you, incidentally, have any connection with Wilbur Cohen?

M: Yes. I met Wilbur the very first month I came to Washington in September 1938, so I've known Wilbur for over 30 years. He was a recent graduate student of the University of Wisconsin. He was in his early 20's. He was really the staff resource to the commissioners of the Social Security Board, particularly Arthur Altmeyer, who was chairman at that time. Wilbur was one of the first people that I met. I found him an immensely valuable resource of substantive knowledge about the Social Security Act and all of the social conditions that had produced it. So, yes, he was in that picture.

Many others who have since come forward into leadership positions in the government were in the Social Security Board at that time. This was the first of the New Deal agencies that did a concentrated job on trying to attract professionals who had an interest in a career. The economic times were such that many a college graduate competed through Civil Service examinations for employment at the generous annual salary of $1680 a year. This was considered a good employment start. The head of the Social Security Administration today, Robert Ball, was among those that came in at that time. So it was an agency with the kind of glamour and prestige that the Peace Corps had in 1961-62. It was the place to be. There was great conviction that the provisions of the Social Security Act would have a material effect on improving the lot of those who were economically disadvantaged at that particular time.

I remained with the Social Security Board upon the completion of my internship in June of 1939.

After the war started in the fall, my attention turned increasingly to the need for defense preparation for the United States, and I transferred in 1940, in November right after the Roosevelt reelection, to the War Department

in the personnel field. This was really my first professional entry into the personnel field.

Mc Now, is this dealing with civilian personnel?

M: Civilian personnel, right. The civilian component of the War Department was being expanded at that particular time to meet the initial increments in defense expenditures, in the procurement of military supplies, and the development of military resources. You see, the invasion of Poland was the first of September of 1939; the draft act had been passed in '40; and appropriations were being built up to prepare for potential U.S. involvement. The civilian element of the Department had been expanded, and consequently for the first time the War Department was developing a personnel management capacity to deal with the growth of the civilian population. So I came in at sort of the beginning of the rising wave.

And that rising wave had a very substantial impact on my career, because in the course of the period from November 1940 until I was drafted in June of 1943 I was carried by that wave to successively higher levels of responsibility, because there were so few people with any kind of background in civilian personnel management that there was a constant demand for what little experience existed. So by the time the war came into full peak I ended up as Assistant Director, at age 24, of the Civilian Personnel Division of the War Department.

Mc Let me clear up a point. You first came into the War Department as what? Personnel specialist?

M: I came in as an administrative aide, as a grade GS-7. I went through a training program, and then went out and set up a small civilian personnel office in Chicago.

Mc Now, this is really your first experience with personnel?

M: This was my first, and this was really my first supervisory experience. I went out to set up a civilian personnel office in the headquarters of the Sixth Corps area of the Army in Chicago. They had never heard of civilian personnel out there. I went in and introduced myself to the commanding general who was there with two stars on his shoulder and with the impressive name of Bonesteel.

Mc All one name?

M: All one name. That conjured up all kinds of visions. This is a very distinguished Army name, I subsequently learned. I introduced myself. I had a letter from Secretary Stimson's office telling him that I was going to be there as a civilian personnel adviser. He gave me some office space, and I set up a small staff and became involved as his adviser on civilian personnel policy--and representing the Secretary of War, who had the appointing authority for all civilians at that point in time.

So it was a very rapidly maturing experience because I was dealing with colonels who were older than my father, on a peer basis. One of the more lively experiences was a request on the part of the general to serve with him and the corps area chaplain in the selection of hostesses for Army social centers, which was a program that was being inaugurated at that time to make the newly drafted young men feel more at home. Apparently the general thought that it would be helpful if his judgments were checked by the chaplain and the civilian personnel officer. I felt honored to be involved in this assignment, although I had some doubts when I found that the general and I were almost inevitably outvoting the chaplain on the selections. This was an early experience in multiple judgments in the personnel selection process.

Mc What did the chaplain want?

M: The chaplain was seeking certain qualities which, I gather, the general and I didn't feel were absolutely essential for an assignment of that nature.

I stayed in Chicago until April 1941, and then I was called back to head up the home office for all offices of that type. We were creating new offices across the country as new concentrations of civilian personnel arose. From that assignment the following year, in the spring of 1942, I became the Assistant Director.

This was an interesting episode. By the spring of 1943, a year later, the problems relating to civilian personnel had captured some national attention. By that time, the Department had about a million and a half civilian employees, an increase from a hundred thousand in 1940.

Mc Now these employees are at various levels--typists, clerks--?

M: It was all the support. It was virtually every occupation and profession that you could think of, from the day laborers that were involved in maintaining the posts up to professionals in science and engineering, in research and development, and everything in between.

So, as there comes at some point in any program, there was a congressional investigation of the civilian personnel program in the War Department. The hearings for this were conducted by the House Civil Service Committee under the chairmanship of a Georgia congressman named Robert Ramspeck. And at one stage in the hearings my superior, the Director of Civilian Personnel of the War Department, was asked if he had as his assistant a young man named John Macy. And he vowed as how he did. He was then asked how old was Mr. Macy. He had been dealing with me on a peer basis, and he couldn't quite remember. So I had to remind him that I had reached the advanced age of 25. The next

question was, "Well, why isn't Mr. Macy in unfform?" It so happened that I had just the day before received my notice for induction, so the cross-examination was concluded.

I entered the service in July of 1943 as a draftee--as an enlisted man--and I went through the enlisted ranks and saw a somewhat different part of the War Department. I went to Officers Candidate School for the Air Corps at Miami Beach and then as a second lieutenant was assigned to civilian personnel work in one of the division headquarters of the Air Transport Command. So it was a square peg in a square hole, as far as I was concerned.

Mc It made sense.

M: It made great good sense. I served at that headquarters in Cincinnati where a fellow junior officer was a subsequent colleague of mine, Frank Pace, who was first lieutenant when I was a second lieutenant in the personnel section of the Ferrying Division of the Air Transport Command.

Another officer, who was our superior, was to become Secretary of the Navy in 1962--Fred Korth--who was a part of that group. Our commander was William H. Tunner, who became well known in military circles as the commander of the Air Force operations at the Berlin Airlift, and other major transport activities.

My overseas service came after both VE and VJ days. Because I had entered the service so late, the point system and my marital and family status were such that I had the lowest number of demobilization points of anybody in the headquarters. And, in view of my desire to return to public service, and my preinduction brush with congressional inquiry, I decided that I would follow the routine that everyone else followed to the absolute limit.

So in the spring of 1946 I was put on special assignment from the Secretary of War's office to go to China to join the military advisory group in China,

working with the Kuomintang, with the Chiang Kai-Shek government, in the creation of a Ministry of National Defense. This was part of our advisory effort to strengthen the central government at that particular time. So I spent several months in China.

Then in the fall of 1946--

Mc One point about that. There's a general historical judgment that Chiang Kai-Shek was very difficult to work with and, therefore, we had trouble with them as a nation. Is this borne out by your personal experience?

M: Yes, I would confirm that. And I would say that, although the officer with whom I worked--General Bai Chung-Shi, who was the Minister of Defense--those relationships were very cordial; my impression was that the Generalissimo, as we all called him, was extremely difficult to deal with, and that he was quite inflexible politically. The thing that disturbed me was he made no move to try to broaden the political base of his government by bringing into it the non-communist liberals who did exist in some numbers.

I remember being in the railroad station at Nanking one morning when a group of government representatives beat up a delegation of political protesters--non-communist--who had arrived on the train from Shanghai. So it was very difficult to get a total sympathy for his government. Concurrently, with our effort, General Marshall was trying to bring about the truce between the central government and the communists, which was totally abortive.

I was requested by the Secretary of War to make a tour of all of the Pacific commands on my return trip to inspect civilian personnel operations which had grown up behind military operations in China, in Japan, in Korea, in Okinawa, in the Philippines, Guam, and finally in Hawaii. So I returned home late in the fall to Washington, gave my report to the Secretary, and then was demobilized

and returned to the War Department in the same position that I left in 1943 as Assistant Director.

I found however the period early in 1947 to be rather unrewarding. It was largely a matter of demobilizing the civilian buildup that had taken place during the war, and going through just one reduction in force after another.

In the meantime I had become interested in the developments in the atomic energy field. And, having been a long-time admirer of David Lilienthal's, I was attracted to the newly formed Atomic Energy Commission. I transferred as a personnel specialist to the staff of the Commission in early-July 1947, with the intent of being one of the key personnel staff men to the Commission as it was getting underway and growing.

However, during the first week I was there, I was introduced to the man who was going to take over at the Los Alamos project in New Mexico--Carroll Tyler. Tyler had recently retired as a Navy captain with a great deal of experience in ordnance research and development. He was looking for some civilian staff members to go out with him to take over the laboratories at Los Alamos, and the community, and to try to bring about an environment in which peacetime research and development could be pursued in atomic weapons, and to produce a town which we euphemistically described as "a normal community." I was much attracted to Tyler and to the task that he had. So I agreed to go out for ninety days to work with him in setting it up. I ended up staying four years and served in the capacity of Director of Personnel and Organization. I had many of the town government functions under my direction during this period and really served as a personal assistant to the manager.

Mc There must have been a great turnover at Los Alamos during that period.

M: Yes, it was. This was a very critical period, because immediately prior to that--mind you, this is now July 1947--nearly two years after the Trinity

shot--many of the top scientists had followed Oppenheimer out of the Laboratory. There were deprecatory comments about how the second team was now there. And there was a belief that there was something evil about working with weapons systems and a certain amount of overconfidence that we would have a nuclear superiority for a rather extended period of time. So there was a task before us, as managers, to create a community and an environment that would be attractive to the talent that was there so they would stay and so we could bring new younger talent into the laboratories to assist in the development of further application in the weapons systems--

Mc This is not only a work environment, it's a total community environment.

M: Exactly.

Mc Schools and shopping centers and everything else.

M: When we came in, in 1947, it was really just a wartime encampment.

Mc And highly secret.

M: And it was behind a high fence with a great deal of security. So the question was how did you, in that setting with that removal from any other community--the nearest community was an Indian pueblo, San Ildefonso, about fifteen miles away. Santa Fe at that time was well over an hour's drive and Albuquerque was close to three hours. And how did you transfer this isolation and this tight security environment into the kind of place where creative scientists would want to work! That was really our mission. As non-scientists, as managers, this was the task that we dealt with.

I think we were a little naive on what really constituted a normal community. We thought, for example, that the citizens would want as much freedom as possible; and we worked diligently to try to relocate the classified portion of the community so that we could take the residential areas out from behind the fence.

We found that there wasn't any real eagerness on the part of the people that lived there to have the fence come down. The fence provided for them a means for keeping out door-to-door salesmen; it meant that if your mother-in-law came to visit you, she'd have to give you due warning because you'd have to get her a pass. These were certain assets of living, from their point of view, that were not available in a normal community. We found that there was an interest in the normal community as long as it didn't interfere with some of the added services that were provided.

I remember the day we closed the commissary and opened a supermarket. We thought we'd be cheered, but we were jeered because it meant the prices went up. No longer were there subsidized prices. And so it was a step-by-step proposition, conditioning some of our plans based upon the reactions that we had from the people there.

We found, interestingly enough, that the Army, when it had taken over the school that was at that site in 1942, had taken exclusive jurisdiction for the federal government so that we had a political entity that was comparable to the District of Columbia. So it was necessary for us to initiate a legislative proposal for the U.S. government by act of Congress to retrocede that property to the State of New Mexico; then for the State of New Mexico to accept it via statutory action; and to create a new class of county which only described Los Alamos, and a county that was contiguous in its boundaries with the boundaries of the project, so that the federal government was the sole proprietor of that land but the State of New Mexico had concurrent jurisdiction so it was possible to use their courts and their school system and so on.

But it was a fascinating experience. As I say, I was there for four years. During the final months I was there I was the executive officer for

the first nuclear test conducted within the continental limits of the United States. By the time--this is now late '50 and early '51--we had learned that secrets had been purloined from the laboratory during the war. We realized that the United States was threatened by the Russian capability. And many of the scientists who had left, notably Edward Teller, came back to work on the thermo-nuclear bomb.

There was a good deal more urgency than there had been about finding a proving ground where the various developments could be tested. Up to that time the testing was exclusively in the Pacific at the Eniwetok Atoll. So we conducted a study to see where such testing could be performed with sufficient safety within the United States, and we identified the area of the bombing range north of Las Vegas in Nevada. And I'm proud to say that on relatively short notice, in six or seven weeks, we were able to mount a testing program that took place in late January 1951 on that proving ground. That was the first test series conducted in the United States since Trinity in 1945. This was the beginning of a long series of tests that took place there above ground until the Test Ban Treaty of 1962, and subsequently in caverns that have been dug in that proving ground.

Mc What was your role in this?

M: My role was really the administrative and logistic support director. I was concerned with getting the supplies there, with making sure an adequate supply of manpower was on the site, that the communications system was functioning. The test director was Carroll Tyler in conjunction with representatives of the laboratory and the military, and I was really the logistics coordinator.

A fascinating job. I spent several weeks in that den of iniquity, Las Vegas, working virtually around the clock to mount the support operations for that first test series--the Ranger Series, it was called. And I have among

my memorabilia a color photograph of one of that test series which looks like a purple flowerpot on a stem of smoke rising above the desert there. This is my first direct exposure to the end product of nuclear research, and like everyone else I was terribly awed by the physical phenomena.

Mc Did you come under fire at all, since you were a personnel director of sorts? Did you come under fire when the news leaked out that Russia had gotten secrets from the United States? Was there any investigation?

M: Oh, yes. We had been subjected to an extended investigation, starting in June of 1949--the Hickenlooper hearings. Hickenlooper charged Lilienthal with "incredible mismanagement" of the atomic energy program. And a part of his mismanagement, allegedly, was the administration of the security program. And, of course, this was further exacerbated later in '49 when it was learned that the Russians had the device. Then the revelations came that there had been people like Klaus Fuchs at Los Alamos and that some of the secrets had escaped. Yes, there was pressure and criticism. None of us had been there at the time these occurred, and we felt that our system that we were administering was sufficiently tight to avoid any kind of repetition of that type of experience. But nevertheless we were jittery, and there was again this problem of balance--how do you protect the individual adequately, and at the same time assure yourself that you are not bringing people in who were of questionable loyalty, or who were security risks! There was a constant pulling and hauling on this.

The Oppenheimer episode, which really finally broke out in full array in the press after I left the AEE, further excited this whole situation. And the rivalry between Oppenheimer and Teller produced great tensions among the scientists at Los Alamos.

And I've kept in touch with this through the years. These are many of the people that I knew out there for whom I had high admiration for. I've kept, through my personal interest, intelligence concerning the situation at Los Alamos.

I proposed late in 1950 that the headquarters element at Los Alamos, which was now concerned with the total weapons program of the Atomic Energy Commission, be moved from Los Alamos to some other more accessible point, thereby freeing up housing and office space for the activities that were directly related to that community. The concept was accepted by the commission, and I was asked to seek a location. I ran the circuit from Denver on the north to Amarillo on the east to El Paso on the south, to try to find a location which met all the criteria that we had laid out, and would also have the lowest cost for us. I found a location which met all the criteria in Colorado Springs. But when I sent in that recommendation the answer came back, "You can't be serious! No official headquarters could be in a watering spot." So instead they took our second choice, which was Albuquerque, and my final act there was to develop a plan for moving the headquarters.

In late July of 1951 I responded to a call from my former colleague, Frank Pace, who was then Secretary of the Army and who had heavy responsibilities in connection with the Korean war. So I came back as a special assistant to him, served in the Pentagon during the final eighteen months of the Truman Administration.

Mc Did you have any special area of work?

M: Yes, I had what I call a hunting license on mismanagement in the Department. I was Special Assistant for Management Engineering, and my concern was organization. My concern was the management effort that was being applied in the

Army to improve processes, to reduce costs, and the like. This was a period of two years really outside of the personnel business. I really was engaged in a lot of special projects.

It was during this period that I had my first exposure to Lyndon Johnson. He was the Senator from Texas at that time. I'm sure there was another one, but I can't even remember who it was. He communicated to the Secretary reports of mismanagement in the operation of the Red River Arsenal at Texarkana. His stature was such in the Senate that we were immediately responsive to his report. I became a member of the military-civilian team that went out to conduct an investigation. To make a long story short, and to contract in one minute what took many, many days and several trips out there, we ended up by removing the commanding general and cutting the staff by about 40 percent. So the reports that the Senator had given us proved to be if anything understated rather than overstated.

Mc Did he keep close contact?

M: He kept very close contact. Frequently, I would go to his office to report on what our findings were. He was very gracious about the responsiveness that we had demonstrated in pursuing this. Naturally, we put a good deal of heat on the military to try to improve their own inspection systems so that this wouldn't happen again.

I was there in the Department at the time of the Eisenhower election in the fall of 1952. I remained for the transition to that administration. The Secretary departed. A new Secretary was appointed. His name was Robert Stevens. He had been head of the J. P. Stephens Textile Companies and had been a lieutenant colonel in the Quartermaster Corps during the war.

I was charged with the civilian side of the briefing for that transition. My military counterpart was a young brigadier general named William Westmoreland.

General Westmoreland and I worked together to prepare what we thought would be a helpful compendium of background information for the new Secretary. However, I guess we over-prepared because when we had our material all lined up, and we had oral briefings to supplement the written materials, we went through one single hour session and came to the end of it, and we asked Mr. Stephens if he had any questions. He said, "No," and he got up and walked out.

We got started in the second session and he stopped us after about ten minutes and said: "I don't think I really want any more of this. What I want to know is why the Army can't cooperate with Joe McCarthy. The White House has told me that I'm expected to get along with Senator McCarthy, and I want to find out who's responsible for the difficulties that the Department is having with him." So we filed our books. Whether they were ever looked at or not, I don't know.

After that session I concluded that my days there were numbered. I felt that I had gone about as far as a career man could go in government. I had had a fascinating experience over a span of fourteen years. So I looked at a number of opportunities that were exposed to me on the outside, particularly in the management-consulting business.

But before I could make up my mind I was approached by the recently appointed chairman of the Civil Service Commission, Philip Young, about transferring to the Civil Service Commission as its Executive Director--the top career post in the commission. I told Mr. Young that I wasn't at all sure that I was interested; that I had been very critical of the performance of the Civil Service Commission.

He said, "Well, then you're just the man that ought to straighten it out. Monday morning quarterbacks ought to have a chance to call some signals."

I said: "Well, that may be well and good, but after all, I'm a Democrat. This is a Republican administration. You may find that I'm a liability to you in dealing with not only other members of the Administration, but in dealing with the 83rd Congress which has a Republican majority."

He said: "No. I think I want to make this as a career appointment, and the fact that you're a Democrat will give some credibility to my efforts to operate on a meritorious basis."

With those arguments before me my decision could only be yes. So I came onboard in August as Executive Director of the Civil Service Commission, became a Grade 18--the top of the career service--and had responsibility under Chairman Young for the direction of the agency's programs, personnel, and activities.

Mc One question at this point. Did you run afoul of the McCarthy hearings at all?

M: No, I was really very fortunate because I left the Army before the Army hearings on McCarthy took place. The only contact I had was really through indirection. Once I came to the Civil Service Commission--because the commission had removed one of its employees who was supplying files to Senator McCarthy during the Truman period--there was a good deal of reopening requests from the senator when the Republicans took over. But I must say the administration stood firm and there was no reopening of that case. So, no, I would say that my involvement personally in the McCarthy atmosphere of that time was largely in my role as the administrator of the loyalty security program during the Eisenhower years. I was frequently projected into a position where I had to defend that program against attack, particularly in my communications with the colleges and universities.

Also, our task of attracting able young people into the government was severely handicapped by the McCarthy atmosphere--the feeling that

loyalty and security standards were more important than ability. A good many able people were just not interested in working for a government that was still haunted by the vestiges of McCarthyism. Certain right wing sources continued to keep much of that alive.

One of the more difficult and least appetizing aspects of my responsibility was to support the chairman in an investigation of the loyalty security program that came when the 84th Congress was elected, and there were Democratic majorities. There was an effort to penetrate some of the rhetoric that had been uttered about the loyalty and security program during the first two years of the Eisenhower Administration. And I must say that figures--statistics--were used very loosely and without adequate definition in an effort to create the political impression that the incoming administration had routed out a lot of people who, if they weren't disloyal, were at least security risks. I was particularly critical of the role of the then-Vice President in perpetrating much of this rhetoric. In fact, this has had a lasting impact on my assessment of his capabilities, because I feel that he intentionally distorted figures that we provided him in order to make political issue out of the program.

Mc It is 12:15.

M: All right. And we haven't gotten to Lyndon Johnson yet, have we?

Mc We'll get to him.

M: I'm sorry to take so much time on this background.

Mc No.

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to the

Lyndon Baines Johnson Library

In accordance with Sec. 507 of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, as amended (44 U.S.C. 397) and regulations issued thereunder (41 CFR 101-10), I, John W. Macy Jr., hereinafter referred to as the donor, hereby give, donate, and convey to the United States of America for eventual deposit in the proposed Lyndon Baines Johnson Library, and for administration therein by the authorities thereof, a tape and transcript of a personal statement approved by me and prepared for the purpose of deposit in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library. The gift of this material is made subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Title to the material transferred hereunder, and all literary property rights, will pass to the United States as of the date of the delivery of this material into the physical custody of the Archivist of the United States.

2. It is the donor's wish to make the material donated to the United States of America by terms of this instrument available for research as soon as it has been deposited in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

3. A revision of this stipulation governing access to the material for research may be entered into between the donor and the Archivist of the United States, or his designee, if it appears desirable.

4. The material donated to the United States pursuant to the foregoing shall be kept intact permanently in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

Signed John W. Macy, Jr.

Date December 15, 1976

Accepted James B. Rhoads
Archivist of the United States

Date December 17, 1976