INTERVIEW I

DATE: June 13, 1989

INTERVIEWEE: FLORENCE MAHONEY

INTERVIEWER: Michael L. Gillette

PLACE: Ms. Mahoney's home, Washington, DC

Tape 1 of 1, Side 1

G: Now I want to begin by asking a general question and that is, how did you become interested in health issues?

M: I was very young. I went to a woman's college where I had premedical education; premedical courses. It was so long ago that I didn't pursue it from the standpoint of being serious about it as a doctor because women weren't supposed to do anything, not even go to school or universities or anything. You wouldn't remember it, but it's true. So I guess that's how I got interested in it. I was always interested in mental health and when I was in school they sent us one time to a big public hospital in New York and the clinic. I was seeing children who had had polio or other congenital diseases to see how badly their muscles had been hurt and so I had been trained that--I knew a lot about that so I could explain to the doctors what was wrong with them and then they were given different kinds of therapy. There were a lot of them. They were very young actually, and sometimes their mothers would come in with five of them and I was so distressed about what was going on. Then I got interested in birth control because they would often ask you what they could do about having more babies and I actually didn't know very much

either what they could do, but that's how I got interested, knowing the problem was there, because some of the children were very badly crippled from polio and from various other things. So it was very depressing working there. But, of course, we were centers for education, not for any other purpose.

Then when I got married I lived in Ohio, in Dayton, Ohio, and Miami, Florida, and I was interested in trying to get a mental health clinic started there. That was very difficult to do because I'd met people like the governors of states and was always talking to them about population and birth control. For instance, North Carolina had the best program at that time in the United States on population. It was a very forward-looking state from a health standpoint. I think it was when Frank Graham was there. He was a very famous educator. The other states were not very interested but did talk about it a great deal. Then in Florida I was trying to get this mental health clinic started, but it was so distressing and awful. Then one day I read a story in the paper about a man, an Oklahoma newspaperman [Thomas Francis "Mike" Gorman, see his interview]. He had gone to see the state mental hospital there, and he told us what he saw. He was there working for the newspaper. In the morning he was there working on the newspaper. He'd been from New York. So he started writing about the horrors and even though it was a Republican newspaper, the publisher allowed him to print the article. So he did articles for a long time and changed the mental health picture in Oklahoma.

So I asked my husband and, I think, [Ohio] Governor [James] Cox if I could have him come to Miami and stay there for two weeks and they said yes. He came for two

weeks and was so appalled there too that he stayed for six weeks having these stories every day in the paper about the horrors that were going on and raised the circulation of the paper, which was a good thing, too. Then my husband sent them to the state legislature and he got three million dollars for the mental health in the state, first time anything like that ever happened. So that's how I first learned that we got money from the federal government.

G: Was the clinic established or--?

M: No. I asked all my friends if they'd pay a little bit of money to start a clinic. This was a long time ago. It was about 1927 or 1928 or 1930, so it was a long time ago. And then when he came from Oklahoma, it was probably after that, too. I'd been there for some time. I've always been interested. I was so appalled always with the problems of younger people and illness.

G: Did the money that was appropriated improve the conditions?

M: Well, it helped some. That plus the educational program and so I think the money was appropriate. I think they tried to start a state mental health committee with it that would go all over the state. At that time I don't think any states had any money connection with mental health. So I think they may have set up something for that.

G: When did you first become involved in working on a national scale?

M: Well, I got the idea when they got money that that would be helpful and then later Mary Lasker and her husband used to visit us in Florida. They personally weren't very interested in anything like that because he was an advertising man and they were more

interested in advertising than anything else at that point and worrying about the Lucky Strike packages. Isn't that extraordinary? That long ago? And then Mary was also interested in mental health and we both were interested in birth control; so we actually had a great deal in common. So then Senator [Claude] Pepper was a great friend--well, not a great friend but he was a senator. The papers had supported him and I knew him and Albert Lasker. Mary and I thought if we went to see him--we'd gone in the meantime to see the people in the Cancer Institute in New York [to] see how much money they were spending and they weren't spending very much at all. This was all news, everywhere, so there's no point in me going over those figures.

So then we asked Senator Pepper. We saw Doctor [Cornelius Packard] Dusty Rhoads [who] at that time was head of the--he was doing cancer research at Memorial Hospital [Manhattan's Memorial Center for Cancer and Allied Diseases] and he just got out of the service. I've never forgotten, he looked so thin and so weary but when we talked to him he said he didn't think anybody would be interested in federal money of any kind. So we said, "Well, how much money do you get otherwise?" And of course it was a very small amount. We said, "How long do you think it will take what you're doing now to cure cancer?" And he said if he continued what he was doing then, that particular field--he was doing something; I've forgotten what he called it--he had five years he thought he could have the answer to cancer. That was rather discouraging that he thought that and couldn't have any money, so then we went to Senator Pepper and asked him, if we could get this man to come and testify, Dusty Rhoads, and he [sic] to hold hearings

and he was agreeable. Albert supported him financially, I think, and our newspaper supported him and so that's how it all got started. He started listening; I guess he got interested. So he had other people come to testify and that was the first outside witnesses that I know of that ever testified in the Congress before a senator for money for anything connected with health.

G: And this was right after World War II?

M: Yes. About 1944.

G: And then did you form an organization after that to--?

M: No, not really. Mary and I just worked--

G: Worked together?

M: --together.

G: How about Lister Hill's involvement? When did you first link up with him?

M: In 1952, that was the year after--there was a Republican Congress the first year Eisenhower came in, being a Republican Congress. So then we lobbied even before that though and Senator [Edward] Thye had been very helpful to us and he was in Minnesota. He was chairman of that committee at that time and then when Senator Hill--I thought he'd be wonderful to be chairman of that committee because I knew him and he had great priority, and he could have done anything he wanted to. But I begged him, begged him to take this committee. I was at his house one night at dinner and we [inaudible] sat there and talked to him about taking it and he was torn between that and several things he could have taken being very important to him in Alabama. Before that, I think, I've

forgotten what committee he was on before but he had passed that Hill-Burton bill and so I told Mary I thought he was the one. She was a little apprehensive that he would be too interested in that but she was sort of thinking about [Harley] Kilgore of West Virginia, and Senator [Dennis] Chavez.

G: Jacob Javits.

M: No, not Jacob, a senator from New Mexico.

G: Oh, Chavez.

M: Chavez. She knew them, so she thought they might be better. So I was talking to Senator Hill and I told him it would make him more important than anything else he could ever do if he'd take this subcommittee. So I told him a story about how I'd been with Governor Cox in Atlanta after he'd had a readership test on the *Atlanta Journal*. He kept telling me it cost twenty five thousand dollars to have this readership test and when I looked they had paper spread out all over a huge, huge room, spread out on the floor, and the only article on the newspaper that had 90 per cent readership was on health on the front page. It was a rather interesting story of course, but some of the other articles on some of the editorial pages only had 24, 25 per cent readership and it was really-- So I told him this story and said that if he would do this it would make him more important than anything else [inaudible]. Well, he did do it. That's how that happened.

G: And was he the principle supporter then in the Senate along with Senator Pepper or--

M: Yes. I don't even know if Pepper was in the Senate at that time then or not.

G: That's right. In 1950 he was--

M: And Albert wouldn't support him the next time he ran because there was some talk about his being too close to communism and even our paper wouldn't support him that time. So I went out and tried to raise money for him.

G: Now, let's talk about the House side. Who did you work with in the House of Representatives?

M: Two congressmen. One was [John] Fogarty, [who] was on the committee.

G: John Fogarty.

M: John Fogarty was on the committee and there was a judge somebody who was on the committee. So we went to see them one day and they thought we were--I don't know what they thought, but they were amused by the whole thing. Then finally John Fogarty, my big Irish friend--he thought I was Irish; I'm not, but that's besides the point. But anyway, we had long conversations and I went to their [Fogarty's] house one time with the children and all and my sons, and then he finally got interested and when he found out how much good it would do for him--that was good for him, too. And then he had a sister who died of cancer. Then he really got more interested than any other time but over a period of years he learned and learned and learned and was pretty wonderful about it. He knew all the details; he'd have hearings, and he would move the rest of the Congress, he was never afraid to talk back to them.

G: Now, you also as I understand represented the National Committee against Mental Illness.

M: Mary started that as an educational program, something you'd use as a background. I got Mary to bring Gorman--

G: Mike Gorman?

M: Mike Gorman to Washington. She had somebody working for the foundation before that, but not in connection with health and otherwise. So I said, "Why don't you get somebody really good because Mike Gorman is really intelligent; he's really good." So she got him. That's how he happened to come here. This was sometime after he'd been in Florida.

G: I see. And what role did he play?

M: Well we started something called the Committee for Mental Illness--the Committee Against Mental Illness, but before that, I guess that was when he got here. He was a chairman of it and so he used to try to get a lot of things in the newspapers to educate the [inaudible] who were really just lobbying and he helped because he was a very good writer. He helped that way and Senator Hill was very fond of him; he used to write speeches for Senator Hill. Mike Gorman wrote a lot of speeches for everybody, for the congressmen and the senators. He would help in that way.

G: Did you play a role at all in getting the polio vaccine disseminated?

M: No. No. The only thing that happened about that was [Oveta Culp] Hobby was in with--when Mr. Eisenhower was president he appointed her secretary of HEW [Health, Education and Welfare]. Now if I get ahead of the dates here, you'll figure them out. And that was--she used to come over to my house for dinner and I would get several doctors to come. We had a lovely time and then she was very agreeable, of course, and

charming, and so she said, "You will help me won't you?" and the doctors all said they'd be happy to help her, people like Howard Rusk and Dr. [Howard?] Magnuson, not Senator [Warren] Magnuson but Dr. Magnuson. I don't remember, I'd have to look up who else. Then when she became secretary none of them could get near her and that's when Eisenhower was trying to lower the budget and before Mr. Eisenhower came in the Trumans were--Mrs. [Bess] Truman is a great friend of mine and the President, of course. I knew all the people around him like Clark Clifford and everyone, so they finally raised the NIH [National Institute of Health] budget forty-six million at that time to fifty-two million and Eisenhower dropped it back to forty-six million. We had this terrible time trying to get it back and that's when Hobby was there. Being in the newspaper I could go as a correspondent and I could go to the gallery all the time. By that time we talked to all kinds of people and talked to them all about this. This had been going on then when she became head of the HEW, been going on at least seven years, since 1944 and it was 1952.

I was walking down the hallway in the press gallery one time and some--one of the young men in somebody's office came out and said, "I thought this would interest you," and it was a memo that she sent to the conference people in the Senate saying, "I beg you not to go along with the President's figures. It will"--let me see, from 52 million to 46 million, trying to get back to 46 million. She said it might discourage private enterprise. So I went upstairs to the gallery to show [inaudible] it was the first bad publicity she'd ever had. This is just bringing up, you asked about vaccine. So we

got--did get the budget back; they were not able to cut the budget. We got that back. Senator Hill was helping by that time, too.

G: Who was helping?

M: Senator Hill.

G: Lister Hill?

M: Yes. Because he was back there, you see, in 1952. That's when the Democratic Congress, back when the Senate, 1952--

G: The Republicans came in in 1953.

M: Yes.

G: And then the Democrats regained control in 1955.

M: Not 1952. So Senator Hill didn't have the--he just got back and had the chairmanship at that time, 1952. And then when the vaccine came along Senator Hill was holding hearings. One time he was holding hearings and she went to testify about the [inaudible] and he was so polite and he said, "Madame Secretary, how do you propose to disseminate this vaccine?" And she said, "Give it to a doctor and let them give it to their patients," and he turned purple. I have probably never seen anybody look so mad in my whole life. So that was very tough on her and actually I think she got [Laurence] Rockefeller to come down and help with the program. But she was there I guess, I don't know, about four years?

G: Yes.

M: But the last few years I don't think were very happy ones--

G: No.

M: --for her.

G: What other legislation did you lobby for in the 1950s?

M: Mental health. That was in 1948, the mental health bill, and then the heart bill in 1948 also and after that arthritis and metabolic disease. So I went down the line.

G: Did you see John F. Kennedy as a supporter of your health programs?

M: We were very good friends so he knew what I was--yes. But he never--we had to make the big push in the Senate to get extra money always because, of course, they were always trying to do their budget.

G: And who did you work with in the Kennedy Administration?

M: In the Senate or in the White House?

G: White House.

M: Larry [Lawrence] O'Brien. They were all friends; all of them were friends. And Doug [Douglass] Cater was there later on and the President told him to pay attention. At that time when Larry [?] went to Mr. Johnson, he'd said, "We're going to see Doug Cater."

G: There has been a lot of indication that President Kennedy had an unusual sensitivity to mental illness and strokes because of his family's experience.

M: But she had not had the stroke then, his father-in-law [father]; they didn't know a thing about stroke at that point. But his sister was mental, I don't know. She had problems; I don't know what they were exactly, but he was interested in that of course, but medically he was not interested in the beginning. I don't know if he ever thought about it. Most

people didn't; it came as a big surprise. But he knew that I was always interested in birth control because we used to talk about it.

G: How would you describe President Johnson's interest in these health issues?

M: Well I think that--I don't know how interested he was before he had the heart attack but one time I went to see him and I went to see Lady Bird, and I maybe heard what the heart doctor said and I asked her if she would come--there was some kind of medical meeting in Washington and I asked her if she would come to the meeting to hear. She did, and that's the first time I remember her ever doing anything specific about it, but I did go to talk to her about it. What year did he have the heart attack?

G: 1955.

M: Well, he had no problem before that, did he?

G: No.

M: Well, I guess it must have been after that that I got her to go and hear--there was a medical meeting; they were talking about the heart program, and she went to hear that. We'd go talk to Mr. Johnson about things and he was always cooperative.

G: How about after he became president?

M: That's what I'm talking about. We used to go see him in the Senate before and he was always then very helpful. Not just helping us lobby, you know. Ask him and he'd tell you who to see or what to do.

G: He appointed the Commission on Heart, Cancer and Stroke in March 1964, I think.

M: That's right.

G: And you, of course, were named a member of that commission. Let me ask you to describe how the commission was established and your role on the commission.

M: Always we were trying to get something like that started so there would be educational programs and it could help the senators and congressmen when they wanted to get more money; give them something to go on. And at that time there wasn't very much money in the budget, not to speak of, so having this commission appointed and you have the commission report to go back to when you wanted to raise appropriations. And then the commission was appointed with the various people, both Republicans and Democrats, but all outstanding people in their field. There were a few lay people on it, but not many.

G: And Michael DeBakey was the chairman?

M: He was the chairman of it. And then Mr. Johnson's doctor from Mayo was on it.

G: Jim Cain?

M: I think he was on it; I think so.

G: [John] Willis Hurst.

M: I know Hurst was on it. But I'm not certain about Cain; maybe he was not on it, but Hurst was. A lot of people were on it who were interested and were very well known in the medical field as professors in medical schools and all.

G: Was there anything in the commission's hearings that surprised you with regard to what the health needs were?

M: [Inaudible] I'm sure it did a lot of people. Maybe got the figures all down.

G: What role did you play in the--?

M: I was just one of the lay people on the commission and I was--

G: Did you focus on one aspect of cancer or--

M: Not really. I was just interested in the whole [thing] because back in 1940 and 1946 and 1947 I had been interested in a national health insurance bill; so I knew a great deal about all the problem. I'd been listening to all the figures all those years, about how much money was raised for cancer, how much for heart. So it was just a general, overall thing.

G: Now, the commission in its report seemed to underscore the fact that there was a gap between medical knowledge and the dissemination and application of this medical knowledge at the doctor-patient level and the need to close that gap.

M: That was always talked about, but I don't know how great it was. Did you ever hear anything else about it? One time we tried to get a bill through for federal aid to medical schools and that was defeated by Mr. [inaudible] during the Eisenhower Administration and Taft who had said he'd be for it turned out in the end to be against it. I can't remember, Senator [Robert] Kerr played some part and I have that written down but I'm not certain what it was right now. But the bill did not pass for the federal aid to medical schools because all medical schools were complete [?] and all the money we ever got for all this research was helping us support all the medical schools in the United States. Although we couldn't get a bill for federal money for medical schools, they were using this money more or less that way.

G: Another issue that the commission supported was the development of an artificial heart.

M: Yes, but there wasn't an awful lot of talk about that.

G: Was this a special interest of DeBakey?

M: I think they might have used this as saying this could happen. I don't remember any big talk about it at all. They wanted to do research on the valves and all that but I don't remember anything about an artificial heart.

G: Another issue that the commission took on was the need to underscore the hazards of cigarette smoking.

M: What year was that?

G: This was 1964.

M: 1964. By that time I think the Surgeon General had come out against it, too. Finally all heart doctors had spoken against smoking. In the late forties nobody had ever mentioned smoking in connection with health as far as I can remember and the first time I remember ever hearing anything about it was I went to a medical meeting--I don't remember where it was now but it was someplace--and some doctor mentioned that maybe smoking might have something to do with heart disease and I was absolutely fascinated. So I went home and asked my husband if he could put it in the paper and he said, no, I was crazy. "Smoking, you can't put that in the paper."

So the next time I went to a medical meeting everybody talked about it. I got the paper and gave it to Drew Pearson and Pearson wrote a story about it, and it was such a good story that the next week both *Time* and *Life* had to pick it up. That was, by and large, the first time anything had been written about the hazards of smoking for your health. Isn't that interesting?

G: Yes.

M: First time.

G: There was strong opposition from some of the tobacco producing states'--

M: Oh, I know.

G: --congressional delegations.

M: Before that probably everybody smoked and thought nothing of it, and I suppose by the time that commission, there was talk about it, I'm sure.

G: I have a sense in reading through the files that the Public Health Institute was reluctant to underscore this fact that smoking was--

M: Public health?

G: Institute, yes.

M: It seems to me they were always reluctant about anything that was new or different.

G: The other element being birth control here.

M: I always talked about that, and Fogarty and I used to have a lot of talks about it. Of course he didn't realize I wasn't a Catholic so he thought--he didn't mind talking about it but Mary would never discuss it with him.

G: Is that right?

M: Yes.

G: Why not?

M: I guess she didn't want to do anything [with] somebody didn't like it, I guess and she didn't think he liked it.

G: But you talked with Fogarty.

M: Oh, yes. And Kennedy, too.

G: Were they reluctant to do anything?

M: Kennedy said at one time I helped get Dr. Russell Lee to Washington and he was the man who started the Palo Alto Clinic in San Francisco and his son, Phillip, was here and was the assistant secretary. He got appointed assistant secretary of HEW. Now this was about all we were saying about it.

G: This was President Kennedy talking about it.

M: Yes. So when I talked to President Kennedy one time and he said well, AID [Agency for International Development]. He had started the AID program and they were trying to take the money from the AID for anything connected with population. So he said to me, "Just tell them to use their money that they'd be using for health otherwise for that and then in various places and let them use the AID money for the things there's no controversy about. But he was [inaudible] for them using their money and using American money, which was just another way around. He was very knowledgeable about it.

G: I see. And President Johnson's views on birth control?

M: I never knew. I never thought about it. I just took it for granted that he was for it. I just never brought it up to that way. In the meantime, before that happened [Ernest] Guening from Alaska got a bill he talked about in the Senate; more information was widely disseminated by that time.

But Drew Pearson's article really started shaking people up.

G: On the cigarette smoking?

M: He was not willing to take on a fight as you know, wouldn't know anything about it. You probably don't remember him at all. So I got all kinds of newspapers to write about Hobby being against money for research.

G: Really?

M: Because I knew all the writers here. Even Doris Fleeson wrote a long article.

G: Did she? Now, my impression is that Secretary of HEW Celebreeze opposed having the Public Health Service involved with birth control.

M: I'm sure he did. I think he was a Catholic. But some of these things you had to understand were political; they couldn't do otherwise. In fact I think the senator from Alaska I just spoke of is the only senator I've every known who came out and talked about it.

G: Ernest Gruening?

M: Yes. He was a doctor you know.

G: Now you proposed a follow up to the Heart Cancer Stroke Commission to sort of gauge how--

M: It was being implemented?

G: Yes. Let me ask you to describe that.

M: Well, I think we used the figures from it to lobby to get more money always and that was [inaudible] I can think about. It was really to enlarge the program, and I think that may

be the beginning of trying to get some heart and cancer satellites around the country where they could do research and clinical work.

G: Regional stations.

M: That's right. I'm trying to remember what they're called now but I don't think they were called satellites. But they were called--

G: Regional centers.

M: That's right, regional centers. That's right. And I used to work for Senator [Richard] Russell and Senator Russell always said, "Stick to research and don't try to dissipate it because if you're going to say this, you're going to have all these senators and you're going to do all these programs that are big federal program and you'll never get enough money to do all that. So just stick to the research part." I was trying to think what else he said. I said, "But you're the one who started the program feeding children lunch." Well, I think he was one of the ones who started it and he said, "But that's different." It was very difficult to get more money from him.

G: Is that right? He was on the appropriations committee?

M: Yes. But just for the reasons I'm saying he didn't want it dissipated.

G: Did the fact that you had the newspaper in the largest city in his state, did that help you at all?

M: We were just friends. We were friends. [Inaudible]. He was just trying to be helpful, I think, by saying that and then he died of emphysema, you know. He used to go down--and he didn't know I knew this, but he used to go to the University of North Carolina at

Duke where they had one of those machines to help breathing. It was put there by the navy only for research and they never used it for outside people, but he did use it. I don't know whether its ever been said by anybody or not.

G: That's amazing.

M: What'd they call them, hyperbaric chambers.

G: Now you also proposed a conference on health. Do you remember that? A national conference on health.

M: What year was that?

G: I believe it was 1965, 1966.

M: What else do you say about that that may help my memory.

Tape 1 of 1, Side 2

G: Let me ask you to talk about your interest in training nurses.

M: Well, I just realized there was a shortage, especially after the war, and I was trying to see what they could do to get more nurses. The nurses had their own organizations, were very articulate on what they wanted and I still have always thought that if they had a bill where they had boys do some kind of selective service and all girls were taught in high schools about nursing, it would help them the rest of their lives. If we ever had an emergency, they'd be trained but I never got very far with them. I'm still talking about it. Last year we were working for it. But the thing I remember most about it was that--

G: For Medicare?

M: Was passed it 1965.

G: You were saying that the thing you remembered most--

M: Yes. I was just trying to think what year it was. That was after Kennedy was killed.

G: 1965.

M: Yes. It was brought up in the Senate and didn't pass before that, was that it?

G: That's right.

M: What year was that? That was 1963, I think. That year we'd been trying to do all we could to help. O'Brien called me one day; I spoke to O'Brien and he said, "We need one more vote to pass this bill," and Senator [Carl] Hayden was majority leader.

G: He was president *pro tem*, and chairman of the appropriations.

M: That's right. So they said if there was a tie he would break the tie. And there were four senators, [Jennings] Randolph of West Virginia and Hill and [Mike] Monroney. There were four, and he asked me if I'd vote that day. We'd all been talking about it anyway all this time. So he said, "Would you go and see if you can just get one of them to say they would vote for it, we've got it." So I got up at six or seven in the morning and was in the Senate when it opened and I had an appointment with--and I went to see Randolph whom I had known not awfully well but knew. He was almost rude about it. And then Monroney, who I loved--he was a dear man--he said, "I want to be with it so bad I can't tell you but this office has been filled with doctors the past few days and I can't do it." He was talking about reelection; Hill said the same thing. They couldn't change their vote, so that year it didn't pass. It didn't pass until 1965. I'll never forget that morning begging them, "Just one vote." I said, "I'm sure you can get anything you ever want in

the White House if you just change this one vote," but Monroney and Hill both said the number of doctors had been sitting in their offices.

G: Did you work on it in 1965 when it actually did pass?

M: Well, yes, but I mean nothing spectacular. It was sort of on its way by that time. What year was that?

G: 1965, the mental health facilities bill.

M: Was that when it made a separate--well, that was just a natural progression because the only way you could get money for anything outside of the research was to have it separated like that. We tried to put facilities around the country. But in 1947 I went to all kinds of governors conferences as a newspaper reporter trying to convince the governors to appoint mental health--what would you call it then? They didn't have any people in charge of mental health in the states.

G: Were they commissioners?

M: Yes, Department of Mental Health commissioners. And Senator Williams [?] of Michigan was the only person who was willing to do it right, do it then, and he was very good on it but it was very difficult. I went to one meeting in Boca Raton, Florida, and the governor of Texas was there, very handsome man, and we tried to talk to him about it. I don't think we got very far. He was very polite and nice, but it was very complicated.

G: In the late 1960s when the budget was so tight, did President Johnson resist your initiatives to support more money for health programs?

M: He was having a lot of problems then, wasn't he?

G: Yes; Vietnam.

M: I think we really made up our minds early. We just went around President and tried to get the money from the Senate and the House and that kept them off the hook, too. [There was] nothing they could do about it by that time, it had a life of its own in the Senate and the House, too. I don't remember his ever being against anything but as President he didn't come out and say, "I want more money." Mr. Truman is the only president I've ever known who came out and said he wanted more money but that was--

G: Truman said he did want more money?

M: Well, he raised the budget, yes. I used to go in and see him all the time about the budget.

Who was [Frank] Pace there with? I don't know if this was 1948 or not. Then I got three million dollars in the budget that year for mental health and they took it out, the Bureau of the Budget took it out. I went to see Mr. Truman about it and he said, "Go and see Frank Pace." He was head of the Bureau of the Budget then so I went to see Frank Pace and he said, "But I can't tell the budget"--. Mr. Truman said he couldn't tell the budget people what to do, then Mr. Pace said he couldn't tell them and I said, "What do you mean? You're the boss aren't you?" So then he said, "Make an appointment." I had to go up to Princeton, New Jersey; he said he was going to be there for the weekend and I said I was going to be there, too. So we met at the hotel in Princeton and I told him, "Please put back the three million." It was so small and it had to do with the whole mental health program of the United States. Well, they did put it back but it took quite a lot of movement to do it. It was just three million dollars, think of it.

G: Who did you work with on the White House staff during the Johnson years?

M: Mostly Cater.

G: Douglas Cater?

M: Yes. And Mike [Myer] Feldman helped. We went to see him several times about the Commission for Heart [Cancer Stroke].

G: My impression is that you were a source of ideas from the medical community with regards to suggestions, ideas that the administration may wish to follow up on. It was known that you were a friend of the President's, so doctors and specialists would submit ideas to you.

M: Specialists, yes, but the AMA [American Medical Association] was always against us.

G: Really?

M: Always, yes. One time Mr. Johnson when we were having the heart cancer--he pulled me aside and asked me something, and I said, you know--no, maybe that was when I was trying to get the aging bill . . . He asked me one time what he should say and I said, "Well, just say, in a few years we'll have to change the whole economic program of the United States because of the aging situation and we may have some answers to some of these things." He said, "You're serious?" and I said, "Yes, dead serious." So he went back and said that to reporters [inaudible].

G: Was the National Institute of Health a problem in terms of focusing on the issues that you wanted to do and delivery systems that would--

M: They were bureaucrats. They were all terrorized of saying anything to a senator or a congressman. Oh yes, it was awful. I've got all that chronological stuff in a book I'm doing. I'd have to stop and think about the details.

One thing about Mrs. Johnson that I wanted to tell you is that one day I was on the advisory council, the Child Health and Human Development Council, and there was a doctor, and his name was Dr. [Inaudible] and he was from Cornell and was a very interesting man who had at one time lived in Russia and spoke perfect Russian. He was at Cornell University teaching oh, I don't know what all . . . psychology and other things. So he in the council meeting one time told about what it was like in Russia with young, young children. Any mother could bring their child at any age and put it in this nursery and they had beds all stacked and cribs, and they had people that tried to teach them about colors. They were doing fantastic things. I was absolutely so excited about it, so I asked a lot of people in the press to come here for dinner one night and Dr. [Inaudible] talked to them [inaudible] at that point. So then I went to ask Mrs. Johnson if I could bring him to see her and she said yes. So she got the cabinet wives to come and we were having tea upstairs and none of the cabinet wives were very interested, but Mrs. Johnson was absolutely fascinated; I think that was the beginning of Head Start. Then she got interested in children's [education].

G: That's remarkable.

M: And I've never forgotten because, as I said, the other women didn't pay much attention, but Mrs. Johnson understood the whole thing. And the girls came running home from

school, you know how they were; they came in and interrupted all the time. That's why I remember the day so well.

G: Anything else on your association with the Johnsons?

M: Well, except I used to see them a lot and when we were at Senator Monroney's house for dinner one night and the President was there. There were very few people there and he said he'd drive me home. So we went to get in the car--this is in comparison to what's going on now--the chauffeur was there, a man, and the other man was walking around the house someplace and Mr. Johnson, "Come on let's go, let's go," and he tried to get the driver to drive on and not wait for the other man, but the driver waited.

G: Is that right? Is this while he was president?

M: Yes. [Inaudible].

End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview I

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