

INTERVIEW I

DATE: May 4, 1971
INTERVIEWEE: CRAWFORD C. MARTIN
INTERVIEWER: DAVID McCOMB
PLACE: Attorney General Martin's home at 5314 Western Hills Drive, Austin, Texas

Mc: To start off with, let me ask you something about yourself. Where were you born, when, and where did you get your education?

Ma: I was born on the thirteenth day of March, 1916, in Hillsboro. That's up in Hill County below Dallas, a rural community. I received my education through high school and junior college there. Then I attended the University of Texas and the University of Texas Law School, and have a J.D. degree from what is now called Samford University at Birmingham, Alabama, Cumberland School of Law.

I have been in politics most all of my life. My father was a state senator, and therefore I was pretty well acquainted with most of the political figures in all of the thirties and forties, and of course I've been in state politics in the fifties and sixties myself.

I was mayor of Hillsboro after the war. I was in the service for a while like everybody else and, after the war, I was mayor of Hillsboro.

Mc: That was 1946 to 1947, wasn't it?

Ma: That's right, 1946 to 1947. And in 1948, which was the same year Mr. Johnson ran for the United States Senate, I was a candidate for

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the state senate myself and was elected on the Democratic ticket, of course. I served from January 1949 until January 1963, at which time I was appointed secretary of state by the new governor, John Connally. I was his top appointee during the time that he was governor--well, at least for about four and a half, nearly five years at which time I resigned, and ran for attorney general in 1966.

I was elected, and took office in January of 1967. I've been attorney general since that time, been re-elected twice. I'm serving my third term at the present time.

Mc: Right. You had a connection with a Hillsboro law firm, did you not?

Ma: Yes, sir. At one time I was connected with my brother; we were partners at one time.

Mc: Was that Martin and Martin?

Ma: Martin and Martin. Then after Mr. Bob Calvert, Robert W. Calvert, who's a contemporary of Mr. Johnson and former speaker of the [Texas] House, now chief justice of the Supreme Court [of Texas], was elected to the Supreme Court in 1950, we moved down with his law partner, Mr. Will Morrow. He's dead now, but he was the brother of Wright Morrow and Tarleton Morrow. Wright Morrow still lives in Houston and had been a figure in the Democratic politics in Texas for a long while. Of course he's inactive at the present time. We continued this arrangement until Mr. [Will] Morrow died. Then I continued with my brother until I came to Austin in January of 1963. I was in the private practice of law during those times.

Mc: When did you first run into Lyndon Johnson?

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Ma: I think the first time I ever met Lyndon Johnson was in the NYA days. He was state director and one of my close friends was a district director by the name of Fred Basham from Whitney, Texas. That's in the western part of Hill County.

Mc: How do you spell Basham?

Ma: B-A-S-H-A-M, Basham. Fred is retired now and lives in Whitney, Texas. He was the district director at that time over I don't know how many counties. Mr. Johnson was the state director and came up and visited, and we got acquainted at that particular time. I also had a close friend that was active in those days. His name was Jack Cowley, C-O-W-L-E-Y. He was a county judge up in Hill County a little later on; he was elected in 1938. He was a close friend of Mr. Fred Basham and they were both good friends of Mr. Johnson, and they wanted to introduce me to Mr. Johnson. Mostly the associations I had with him in those days, in the NYA days, were just friendship and all of us were interested in the Young Democratic movement in Texas at that time. It was real prolific. Mr. Johnson took quite an interest in it, Mr. Rayburn took quite an interest in young Democrats, and several other state politicians were interested in it. That was my first connection with Mr. Johnson.

Mc: Did you have any early impressions of Johnson's ability or disability, as the case may be?

Ma: Oh yes, there's no doubt about the fact that in those days Mr. Johnson was an impressive looking fellow. He's a big fellow, which makes any man more impressive, and he had a voice that was deep and

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had a good vocabulary. He had probably more drive than most anybody I've seen in a long time. There were a few people I've known in my life that probably had more drive than he did, but he had more drive and more direction. It takes both. And desire, he had more desire than probably anybody I've ever known, and in politics, desire is the main ingredient. Without desire, you don't get very far. He had all three of these ingredients.

He was not an eloquent speaker. He was not that type of fellow, but he was a real worker which later on he developed into a real science of working with people in small groups. He was a master at that and in particular at what we call lapel man. That means he'd get up to somebody and get him to pretty well agree to what he wanted him to do. This was developed at an early age. Of course, [with] our connection with him at that time, that's about the best I can tell you about the impression we had of him at that time. Of course, even in those days everybody seemed to think or take it for granted that he was a young fellow who was going to get somewhere. Mainly because of his appearance, his mode of doing business, but more than anything else, his desire to get ahead.

Mc: Did you have anything to do with his early campaigns?

Ma: Yes, Fred Basham and myself and a fellow named Will Bond, B-O-N-D, who's now in the hardware business at Hillsboro, and Jack Cowley were his managers in his first endeavor for [the Senate] office. I had nothing to do with his congressional race. I was a real close friend of Ray Roberts who's now a congressman, and Ray Roberts was

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a close friend of Mr. Johnson in those days, one of his chief supporters, monetary and otherwise, when he ran for Congress. Ray and I have always been close friends, but I had nothing to do with his [Johnson's] Congress race. But when he ran for the Senate the first time against W. Lee O'Daniel, we were his campaign managers for that particular part of the state.

Mc: Is it fair to say this is where you came into close contact with him?

Ma: Yes, sir, that was probably the first real contact we had other than just casual friendship and working in the politics in a casual way. This was the first time I ever had anything to do with him in his race. We undertook to try to carry that part of the country for Mr. Johnson. Mr. W. Lee O'Daniel, you know--well, I don't know how to describe him except that he took Texas by storm. He was a unique figure in politics and had a tremendous grassroots following. We were undertaking to carry that part of the country for Mr. Johnson against Mr. W. Lee O'Daniel, who at that time was governor. The vacancy had come about by the result of a death of a United States senator and, if I remember correctly, the race was in the middle of winter or early spring. Mr. Johnson was very active in that campaign. He was in Hillsboro quite a few times. We attended his political meetings that he had at the LCRA lodge and the Austin hotels and various and sundry places on Sunday. That was his favorite way of doing business those days. He would send a telegram out to all of his workers and we'd all come in on Sunday. He'd give us a

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briefing on what we needed to do and give us a good pep talk: "Let's get out there and get after 'em on Monday morning!" We did the best we could. Of course, as you know, Mr. W. Lee O'Daniel beat Mr. Johnson in that race.

Mc: Did you carry your area?

Ma: He carried part of our area; we carried Hill County for him which we thought was a great undertaking because Mr. W. Lee O'Daniel had been in Hill County the year before and had purged the county of a [state] representative he didn't like. He'd gone over the state, and the ones he didn't like he'd go to their home communities and make a speech and he'd point out the man. This particular man was a fellow named Ed Hamilton; Ed Hamilton was a representative. He [O'Daniel] would make a speech and say "I can't do anything about this fellow Hamilton, but you can, and I want you to see that you do. He's not for the people, he's for the special interests." At that time he used the expression of "professional politician" and he'd use that particular expression. This was difficult to do, but we did carry a good part of this [area]. I don't know how many counties we carried. I do know we carried Hill County.

Then the next thing I recall we came on to Austin after the primary and we were in Mr. Johnson's suite in the Austin Hotel--I don't remember what floor it was, but it was one of those top floors. The question at that time he had to resolve was whether or not he would contest the election. This went on hour after hour, and various and sundry ones of us would go in and talk to him. To be honest

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with you, the great majority of us were advising him to contest it because there were just a few thousand votes difference and we felt like that there was a lot of foul stuff going on in different parts of the state. But he finally called us all in there and made us a little speech, if I remember right, and he said he was not going to contest it.

Mc: Did he give you a reason for that?

Ma: Yes, sir, he said the reason he wasn't was because he was still a young man and that if he contested it and won, it might work out all right, but if he contested it and lost--and he didn't know whether he could win and the likelihood of winning was not real good--he would be completely finished with politics as far as statewide races were concerned. He thought that that was his best choice and he made that choice. And of course, history's proved that he was correct.

But I remember one thing that was right interesting. He said that he didn't know whether or not he'd ever have another close race, but if he did, he wasn't going to be the loser. He wasn't ever going to get caught a few thousand votes short. And of course in his next race ten years later, he proved to be correct on that. I have no idea what he meant by that, except that he did say that. He meant it at the time.

Mc: Then he must have learned something from that.

Ma: He learned something from that thing. Of course you can get from somebody else exactly what all took place, but one of the main

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things I think that he learned was not to bring all of his votes in at one time. That got to be a pattern in Texas for many years after that. It still is somewhat of a pattern in a close race, and some counties withhold their votes until they find out what somebody else has done. Not that there's any crooked business going on about it. I don't charge anybody with the crooked business, but it just seems this works out better.

But that was the last contact I had with him to amount to anything until he ran in 1948.

Mc: Did you campaign for him then?

Ma: No, sir, I did not. Let me explain that. That's one reason why I probably don't know as much about Mr. Johnson as you'd like to know. Mr. Coke R. Stevenson was governor and, prior to being governor, he was lieutenant governor and prior to being lieutenant governor, he was speaker of the House. Mr. Stevenson and my father were good, close friends. And I was in need of a job awfully bad. I went to the University of Texas and had to support my way through school. In other words, I had to make my own way. My father had three children in college at the same time. My brother, of course, had priority, and he was going to Baylor and tuition was higher at Baylor. My sister, while she's younger than I am, was in the same class because she had been promoted up to where we'd graduate at the same time which was a mistake, as far as finances are concerned. But she went to a girl's school in Denton and there wasn't any way for her to make any living up there. So my father had the whole burden,

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and I was the guy that had to do the work, which I didn't mind. I was glad to work. So Mr. Stevenson gave me a job when I really was down and out and needed it.

So when the campaign came on, Mr. Johnson and one of his workers first came to see Mr. Will Bond, because Mr. Bond got to be his campaign manager in 1948 for that section of the state. Mr. Basham was working for me and of course the NYA days were over. Mr. Bond then got to be his campaign manager for that section, and he and Mr. Johnson approached me about working for him. I told him that I, in good conscience, just couldn't get out and work against Mr. Stevenson. I was not going to do that. I had a race of my own and I was not going to take any part in the race that time. [I said] that I was running in the same primary and that I felt like the best thing for me to do was to just stay out of the race. Which I did. I took no part in that race at all and of course that's one reason my relationship with Mr. Johnson, while it was cordial it was no close tie or anything like that for all the time that he was United States senator. I didn't have much [contact]. I met him a few times, when I'd go to Washington or he'd be down in Texas.

I don't recall ever having anything close to do with him until I got to be mayor of Hillsboro and I do recall meeting with him over in I think it was Longview. I had breakfast with him and had a conversation for at least an hour. I was greatly interested in water supply and conserving ground water--I mean the surface water in Texas--and particularly for us, the municipal supply. I was mayor

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of a little town that needed water and I talked to Mr. Johnson and I found him to be really up on every bit of this and very interested in what I had to say.

Mc: Did you seek him out or did he seek you out?

Ma: No, I sought him out. He was there and I sent word to him that I wanted to talk to him because we needed some help. He and his predecessor, Representative Buchanan, had done a tremendous job on conserving the water in the Colorado. The fact of the business is it's one of the best conserved watersheds, I guess, in America. I don't know of any better one. It works that this series of dams takes advantage of all the water here. There is just quite a bit of rainfall up there and it's hilly country and it's made for dams. But he did take an interest in that, following Mr. Buchanan who was chairman of the Ways and Means Committee at the time of his death. He was interested in it. I sent him word, and we talked it over. About Mr. Johnson, I'll say this: I'm sure he didn't do it just for me, but he did do quite a bit of work on that while he was in the Senate and particularly when he was majority leader, along with Senator Kerr of Oklahoma, in conserving the waters and doing a tremendous job.

Mc: Were you asking for something specific for Hillsboro?

Ma: Yes, sir, we were asking about the use of water at Whitney. Whitney Lake is about two million acre-feet when it's full. There are two problems there. One problem was getting the water, in other words, the right to the water which we eventually got. Hillsboro has never

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used that permit. We worked through and got it through Congress to get fifty thousand acre-feet a year out of the lake. But there's been one other problem that was associated with it that has never been cured in Texas and that's the salt of the water. It's not sodium chloride; it's other kinds of salts that's come in. We call it salt--it's a sodium that's in it and the water, well, it's useable but it's not palatable and it's not being used there. That's the largest inland lake in Texas and it's not being used at the present time on account of the salts that get into it up in the upper branches. That was one of the things I talked to him about at that time that he was vitally interested in. But this problem has never been solved in Texas. He was interested in the problem. I wanted you to know that he did carry out this other, that is, we did eventually get a permit for the little town of Hillsboro which Hillsboro has never used.

Mc: Then he helped you get the permit through Congress?

Ma: Yes, sir, he and, at that time, Olin Teague [who] had gone up to the House of Representatives. He was elected in a special election in 1947 and he took the place of Mr. Luther Johnson of Corsicana who retired early in order to go on a court. Mr. Teague ran and was elected. He's the one that passed the thing in the House and it went on through with Mr. Johnson's help in the Senate.

It's a small matter, but that's one thing about Mr. Johnson: he attended to these small matters that are big matters to local

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people and that's one reason that he had a popular following in Texas. A lot of people were [affected].

Mc: He was perfectly willing to help you then?

Ma: Oh, yes, there was no doubt about that. One thing about him, if some constituent came to him with a problem, he would listen, which is unusual. Usually a man that has this much drive is ordinarily not inclined to listen to you. They usually brush you off and say, "Well, I'll let some of my assistants handle that," or something of that sort. Mr. Johnson didn't do that way. Every time I ever talked to him, he'd sit and listen to what you had to say until you got through. He might have some comments, he might not, and he usually tried to take some action or he'd tell you why he couldn't take some action.

I think of all the characteristics of a congressman or senator, the thing that keeps them there in my opinion the most is the quickness of response when a constituent makes a request. This is the biggest secret, I think, of the whole process. If you write a letter to your congressman or your senator and you get a reply back in the return mail even though it's not favorable, well, you feel like you accomplished something. Mr. Johnson always did that. He worked his staff awfully hard up there in Washington, but that was one of the ways that he did. And that made him popular with a lot of people including myself because we felt like we needed these things and he did that.

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Mc: You've said that you didn't have much contact with him during his senatorial years. Did you happen to have anything to do with that fight among the Texas politicians in 1956 between Johnson, Rayburn and Shivers?

Ma: Yes, sir, and then I was present in 1948. I might relate that to you; it might be worth relating. Mr. Bob Calvert, chief justice, I'm sure could give you a better picture of it.

If you remember the [State Democratic] Executive Committee-- well, let's go back further. The race was attempted to be contested by Governor Stevenson and Associate Justice [Hugo] Black had stopped that and had issued an injunction or a stay order to Judge Atwell in Dallas and effectively stopped any further going into that. Judge Calvert at that time was state Democratic chairman, and he appointed a subcommittee of the executive committee. [The State Democratic] Executive Committee of Texas was made up at that time, and I think it still is, of thirty-one women and thirty-one men. That's sixty-two people, each from a senatorial district. And he [Mr. Calvert] appointed a subcommittee at that time that Mr. Johnson thought was against him on that thing.

It proved out there was a woman from Beaumont who everyone assumed was a close friend of Mr. Stevenson but who had fallen out with Mr. Stevenson, and the result was she came over on Mr. Johnson's side about the matter.

Let me give you a little background on that: Mr. Stevenson and Bob Calvert, while they spoke to each other in public, had absolutely

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no use for each other at all. They had been candidates for two elections in the House of Representatives for the speakership and it was a very bitter fight between [Stevenson and] at that time Governor Jimmy Allred who was supporting Bob Calvert. So in the first race Bob Calvert lost and in the second race he won. There were always hard feelings between those two. So somehow, I never did figure this out, Mr. Johnson fell out with [Mr. Calvert]. He thought Mr. Calvert was doing him wrong and they appointed, he thought, a stacked subcommittee. But when the subcommittee came in to the committee--I can't recall exactly, I believe the convention was in Fort Worth in 1948--and the committee worked on it all night, they finally got around to hearing the thing on the next morning.

Mc: Now where do you fit into all this?

Ma: I was just a delegate, that was all. I was not a member. I don't know, I might have been a committeeman--no, I was just a delegate to the convention. But I was there.

I'm sure others have related this to you, but I want you to get my views--I mean, what I saw. So they finally got around to taking up this matter of the Johnson versus Stevenson fight, and they finally got around to calling the roll. They called the roll and Mr. Calvert, if I remember it correctly, cast his vote which I don't know if he had the power to do or not. Anyhow, it came up a tie; it was a tie vote. Mr. Calvert wouldn't announce the result and he kept hemming and hawing and everybody hollered, "What's the vote? What's the vote?" and screaming and going on. There was

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quite a bit of confusion. And one delegate or one committeeman from Amarillo--I don't know, I wouldn't charge him with bad faith--had been nipping the bottle a little bit early in the morning, a considerable amount, and he came wandering in the back of the hall just about the time all this took place. Finally someone went to yelling, "Here's the gentleman from Amarillo. You didn't get his vote from Potter County. Let's get his vote here. He didn't vote." There were several of them that didn't go to the meeting; in other words, they had agreed that they couldn't vote for the other man but they would make themselves absent, and there were several of them that at that time were charged with this. I don't know whether this man was or not, but anyhow he did show up after the vote was supposed to have been over with ten minutes. Well, he showed up and Mr. Calvert said, "Yes, I recognize him back there. How does the gentleman vote?" And he said "I vote for Lyndon Baines Johnson" and Mr. Calvert made it and said, "Well, it'll be--." I don't remember exactly what the vote was, but one vote more for Mr. Johnson than for Mr. Stevenson and he declared it and then adjourned the committee. Then the convention adopted that particular report. It was easier to adopt a majority report than it is a minority report on a thing like that. And Mr. Johnson was of course elected after he was certified.

Mc: That sounds as if Calvert was just waiting for that to happen.

Ma: Well, that's my opinion. I think that that's one thing that I hope some of these years will get worked out. I never did think that

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Mr. Calvert was anything but a friend of Mr. Johnson's and I know that there have been hard feelings between the two for a number of years. But I really don't [know why]. Mr. Calvert had every reason to be for Mr. Johnson. He never did care for Mr. Stevenson at all and I just feel like--well, I've talked to Mr. Calvert about the matter. He's always felt like this is one thing that was unjustified because Mr. Calvert had been mentioned many times for federal district judge when he was at Hillsboro and he was considered, but Mr. Johnson never did like the idea at all. So this went on for a long while. But that's about the 1948 [convention].

Now you asked me about the convention of 1956. Yes, I was a participant in that. Let me explain further for those that might not know it, I'm a brother-in-law of Mr. Bill Daniel of Liberty, Texas, and Mr. Bill Daniel is the only brother of Price Daniel. Price Daniel ran for governor that year in the primary and defeated Ralph Yarborough by, if I remember right, there was about five thousand votes difference between them. It was a very bitter campaign, very bitter campaign. And the result was that it was based on the proposition that Mr. Daniel did not lend any support to the Democratic ticket when Mr. Eisenhower was a candidate and Allan Shivers openly supported the Eisenhower ticket. I don't think Mr. Daniel openly supported it, but then he was supporting Mr. Eisenhower because Mr. Eisenhower said that he would sign the tidelands bill. At that time that was an issue in Texas and so he was not in real good shape

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with some of the old line Democrats in Texas, in particular what we generally refer to as liberal Democrats and some of the labor people.

Let me go back, though, and explain how labor has figured in this thing which is unusual. Most historians probably overlook the fact. In my humble opinion, the issue that carried the counties in my part of Texas, and I know it was bound to have been in other parts of Texas, for Mr. Johnson over Mr. Stevenson was the right-to-work law. The right-to-work law had been proclaimed by The Dallas Morning News and was picked up and eventually was incorporated partially into the Taft-Hartley Act. But Mr. Johnson immediately took a real firm stand for that particular law. He thought it was a good principle. Later on he seemed to change his mind about it somewhat, but at that time he was very strong for it. Mr. Stevenson was under the impression that he would receive the vote of the laboring people in Texas which in a close race made some difference for many, many years. In Texas, labor, ordinarily, well that is, regularly, lost on a contested race. They just didn't amount to anything because they couldn't muster their people together. But on this particular issue which was a highly emotional issue, it really made the difference in the race, in my opinion. I think Mr. Stevenson would have whipped him pretty bad if Mr. Stevenson had at that time carried the conservative part of the vote in Texas and Mr. Johnson of course was actually taking part of his vote which he did, and he got it in that particular manner. I'll never know why Mr. Stevenson never did

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come out against it, but he never would take a stand. So this hurt him.

But, anyhow, let's go back to 1956. In 1957, we came up to the convention and again it was in Fort Worth, if I remember correctly. Texas has the convention system completely and we had what they called at that time the unit rule. So you started out in a precinct and the fellow that won the precinct conventions really won the state convention and the precinct convention was the main event. So Mr. Johnson and Mr. Rayburn undertook to lead the delegation to the convention and take over the party or at least the leadership of the Democratic Party in Texas. Of course this was difficult to do because it had generally been known for many years in Texas that if a man were elected or nominated governor, he was more or less head of the Democratic Party and was entitled to proceed to have it. In rural areas especially, it was always the custom in my part of the country that whichever candidates won the Democratic primary, his supporters were the ones who went to the convention and the other supporters always just respectfully declined to be a delegate. This was just a standing rule at that time. It worked very effectively because usually with the unit rule you'd have no trouble; fact of the business is that the county would send a delegate that would be either all for Johnson-Rayburn or for Mr. Daniel.

I was a delegate at that convention and of course being from Hill County and, while I'm no relative of Mr. Daniel's, being of some

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close connection, our group was supporting Mr. Daniel. I was chairman of the resolution committee that year and was in on a good part of the proceedings. It was a pretty rough fight and eventually wound up of course for the Johnson and Rayburn group through the efforts, in my opinion, of mostly John Connally. John Connally was the one who was sent down here to do the work because Mr. Johnson and Mr. Rayburn were busy in Washington and they weren't down there. But Mr. John Connally came down, and he worked awfully hard in organizing it. He, I think, did an effective job. Of course results show he did an effective job and so when the convention came off, of course they controlled the convention. That was in 1956.

Mc: Now what advantage is there to them in doing that?

Ma: Well, it proved nothing except they did have some [plans]; if I remember it correctly, Mr. Johnson wanted to make a run for the presidency or the vice presidency that year--now this is just my idea, because I never asked him, but I think that he had it in his mind--and he thought that if Mr. Daniel led the delegation to the convention the first thing that everybody would say was, "He's a defector, he's an Eisenhower man," and, "We just don't think that we can do business with your candidate; your candidate smacks too much of the other party," or something of that sort.

Let me also clear up though--it might give the wrong impression--Mr. Daniel and Mr. Johnson for four years were colleagues in the United States Senate. Mr. Daniel prior to his election for governor was a United States senator for four years, and he

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and Mr. Johnson were always close friends. This is misjudged sometimes by people who don't know. They always felt like that Johnson and Daniel were at odds. They never were at odds. They were at odds over the convention up there, but as far as personal friends, they were always personal friends. History shows that soon after he [Daniel] left the governor's office, he [Johnson] called him to Washington and Daniel was charged with the Office of Emergency [Planning] administration up there, was on the National Security Council and was one of the advisors to Mr. Johnson during the last three years of his term of office in the presidency. I want to clear that up because some people might think that it wasn't [that way].

Also I'm pretty well convinced that Mr. Johnson did not send John Connally down here to Texas to run for governor. All the evidence I have points otherwise because Mr. Johnson was doing the best he could to keep Mr. Connally from coming down here to run.

Mc: That was Connally's own idea then?

Ma: That was Connally's idea and was not [Johnson's]. Then most of the contemporary writers of that time just assumed Mr. Johnson had sent him down here. Because Daniel and Johnson were close friends and Daniel was on the telephone quite a few times each week talking to Johnson, and Johnson was assuring him that he was not promoting a man to run against him for this office. Mr. Daniel of course had had three terms and was running for his fourth term. No one in Texas ever held a fourth term. But I want to clear that up because I don't think that that's true at all.

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Now let me say, so that you won't get the wrong impression there: Mr. Johnson's people were the main supporters of Mr. Connally when he ran, but they were not necessarily Mr. Johnson's people. They were Mr. Connally's people just as much as they were Mr. Johnson's because all the races that Mr. Johnson ran, John Connally was his campaign manager and actually in a great majority of them, so far as personal contact is concerned, they had more contact with Mr. Connally than they did with Mr. Johnson.

Mc: So they are as much Connally people as they are Johnson people then?

Ma: That's right. That had nothing to do with it; in other words, I wanted you to know that there was no personal hard feelings at that time. There was personal hard feelings between Allan Shivers and Johnson and to some extent Rayburn. Rayburn really, more or less, never did get an adversary type feeling. That was one thing about Mr. Rayburn, he was able to sort of be above that type of thing. He never did get into that, so there were no hard feelings as far as I know about.

Mc: Now where did this fight leave you in 1956?

Ma: Well, in 1956 I was just state senator.

Mc: Now your side had more or less lost, hadn't it?

Ma: Yes, that's right, but on the other hand, Mr. Daniel was governor and he took office in January 1957 and, well, we don't have any designation as such, but I was more or less his floor leader in the Senate then until he went out of office in January of 1963. I

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handled all the important bills that were passed during that particular time. I had actually during those years very little contact with Mr. Johnson or Mr. Connally either one.

I didn't get back in contact with either one of them until I went to work for Mr. [Connally]. Well, I worked in the [Connally for Governor] campaign. I ran for lieutenant governor in the first primary in 1962 and of course was defeated by the present Governor Preston Smith. He beat me. There were five of us in the race, and I didn't make the runoff. So then during that particular race that year, I met with Mr. Connally several times and I agreed to help if I did not go in the runoff. It was pretty doubtful that I would because I wasn't able to get "financing" enough to go. And for other reasons, I didn't really have too much idea [of winning]. Nearly everyone who's run a race in Texas has had to run one and lose one in order to be elected. Oh, I'd say three-fourths of those who achieve state office in Texas always had to run one and lose it before you get your name well enough known to go. So I ran that.

But anyhow when Mr. Connally went in as governor, I started having some contact with Mr. Johnson but mostly through Connally. Of course, Mr. Connally was in daily contact with Mr. Johnson over the telephone or otherwise.

Mc: Then did you have anything to do with Johnson's vice presidential campaign?

Ma: No. Let me say this: for some reason I wasn't asked to take any part in that. Now there were quite a few of my colleagues, Senator

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[Culp] Krueger, Senator [Charles] Herring, quite a few others who went to other states and worked. I presume it was a carry-over from the old Stevenson-Johnson fight. I wasn't asked to do anything in that campaign. I could have done some work, but I didn't have the expense money. It was not that I was against Mr. Johnson; I just didn't have the money. I was secretary of state and I was making about fourteen, fifteen thousand dollars a year and the main contribution I could have made was going to some of the more populous states and maybe securing some of the secretaries' of state support. In Texas of course secretary of state is appointive and it's a fairly weak office, but in New York, Illinois, California, it's a popularly elected office and has tremendous power. The fact of the business, in quite a few of the larger states that [office] had the highway patrol and the licensing function and carries quite a bit of political [weight]; it's pretty heavy politically. But I didn't take part. Not because I was against him; I was for him, but I wasn't called on, so I didn't do anything.

Mc: Did you happen to go to the national convention?

Ma: In California?

Mc: In 1960.

Ma: No, sir, I didn't go to that one. I was involved in some lawsuits in Hill County.. In other words, I was still a state senator at the time making a salary of four hundred dollars a month, so I had to practice law. My brother and I had quite a bit of cases. So I never did feel like, unless it was something that I could do out of

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the ordinary, that I should just take off and leave him holding that. It was a long drawn out procedure because most of our people went out there early and worked on it. I didn't go out there at all. I was not a delegate that year. I was offered to be a delegate, but I declined to be one.

Mc: In your appointment as secretary of state, does that constitute any kind of rapprochement with the Johnson people or does this flow out of your friendship with Connally or what?

Ma: No, Mr. Johnson had nothing to do with that. It was my friendship with Mr. Connally. I like to think and I'm vain enough to think that he appointed me for my ability to get legislation through the senate because, you see, I had been more or less majority leader of the senate for six years or during the time Mr. Daniel was there, and prior to that, I was on the top committees. In 1953 I was chairman of the finance committee and I started handling what they call local and contested committees and the finance of both. This gives you more power over the other members than any other two jobs in the state senate, and I handled those jobs up till I left the senate. So that was one of the reasons, I think, that he got me as secretary of state because he was needing help with the legislature since he was not familiar with most of the legislators at the time and he had never had any part in state government. He said many times that I was the main one he looked to when he needed to know about a certain situation in state government. State government, while it may not be as efficient as federal government, has just as many

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complexities to it as the federal government does; in some ways it has more. And if you don't know the situation, you usually make the wrong decision. Mr. Connally has got a tremendous memory and a quick judgment to him about it, based usually on what he gets from other people. And that's what I did. All the time I was his secretary of state, I was more or less in a position of being just advisor and met with him at various times to try to help push his legislation through the state senate and, to some degree, in the house. I had quite a few friends in the house and in the leadership of the house; the new members, of course, I didn't know them too well. But that was the main function I had. The secretary of state office, as it exists, is mostly routine type of work with very few decisions to make there. So that was my main function at that particular time.

Mc: Do you have any insight into the reasons why Kennedy and Johnson came to Texas in 1963 that ended in the assassination of Kennedy?

Ma: Well, yes, sir, I'll give you my part of that. I hadn't thought about that, to be honest with you. A whole lot of this you brought up, I hadn't thought about. But Mr. Connally and Mr. Johnson had been talking over the telephone quite a bit about that and I can look back now--I probably made a mistake not talking to Mr. Johnson on the phone myself. Mr. Connally several times asked me to do that and I just never did do it because I felt like he might think I was intruding or something. So he never did call me and I never did call him, but I was keeping up through Mr. Connally as to what was going on. Mr. Kennedy very definitely came down here to try to get

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us out of the rut we were in. In other words, there was a lot of hard feelings at that time.

Mc: You might be a little bit more explicit there. You mean hard feelings between Connally and Yarborough which is traditional--?

Ma: Yes, sir, very, very hard feelings. They never did particularly care for each other, and I don't guess they care for each other today, but at that time there was pretty bad feeling there between the two. Mr. Yarborough had sort of felt like he was . . . Well, let's go back a little further, Mr. Daniel was not a very outgoing type of leader in the Democratic Party and Mr. Yarborough exercised pretty good power through various and sundry methods they had of trying to-- he used Mr. Rayburn quite a bit and Mr. Johnson to some extent. I'm not saying anybody ever used Mr. Johnson, but there were some of these appointments of these judges that had to be made and so forth and so on. And of course he deeply resented Mr. John Connally for taking over the reins of the Democratic Party of Texas and more or less cutting him out.

The truth about the matter Mr. Connally carried a lot of the boxes, particularly among the Latin American boxes in Texas that traditionally had been strictly Ralph Yarborough territory. This is what really put him in the runoff. There's no doubt about that. The thing that put him in the runoff was that he acquired a lot of the vote, a good percentage of the vote, that traditionally had gone to Don Yarborough and to Ralph Yarborough. There is no connection between the two, I mean no kinship, but the same people who were

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supporting Ralph were supporting Don. And John Connally had come in there and had taken this away from them and had exercised a degree of leadership that we hadn't had in the state in a long time.

The fact of the business is that at the time Mr. Connally made up his mind that he did not want to seek another term as governor. In polls that I saw, the Belden poll and the Louis Harris poll both showed him up; one showed him around 78 per cent and the other showed him 79 per cent approval which, after six years, is almost unheard of. So this, I think, Mr. Yarborough was deeply resentful of and, oh, there's no use in going into details, there was a lot of byplay on who gets credit for what and so forth and so on. So this had gotten pretty deep-seated and it was going to cause a lot of trouble in the thing. So this trip had been arranged.

I did not go to Dallas. The reason I wasn't in Dallas that day with Mr. Connally was that I was delegated to take charge of the reception that was going to be held at the Governor's Mansion. We had borrowed some undertakers' tents and put them up. I was to take Mr. Kennedy around and introduce him to the legislators. That was my main function. I was to circulate around through the crowd and I was to go with him and say, "This is Senator Jones," and so forth. So that was my function. I was down here working on that at the time that I received the news of the assassination in Dallas and the wounding of Governor Connally. That's about all I can tell you about that. I of course went to Dallas immediately, but I had nothing to do with Mr. Johnson during those times; he went on

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to Washington immediately after the assassination. But the feeling was running pretty heavy here in the state.

The only thing that I think I could put a little light on that maybe Mr. Connally wouldn't want to tell about would be the fact that when Mr. Yarborough ran for re-election, Mr. Johnson was determined that he did not want Mr. Yarborough to have an opponent. I want to be very specific about this: it was no love that Mr. Johnson had for Mr. Yarborough; the reverse was true. He didn't particularly care for Mr. Yarborough and Mr. Yarborough had poked him a number of times and had done lots of ugly things to him up there. It seemed like he was by nature the type of fellow that creates that type of feeling among some of his associates. It's unfortunate but that's the way it ran. Mr. Johnson didn't like him personally I don't think, but anyhow he thought that he ought not to have a fight in the Democratic primary that year because it would be embarrassing to him.

Mc: Is that embarrassing to Johnson?

Ma: It was embarrassing to Johnson and it would effect the Democrats carrying the state in that fall.

Mc: So it's a party question?

Ma: It was a party question. Mr. Johnson let it be known that he didn't want anybody getting in there in the race with Mr. Yarborough. It was mentioned one time Mr. Connally might quit the governor's race and get in the Senate race himself. Let me say this: I've known

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Mr. Connally very closely for all these years and Mr. Connally has never had any ambition to go to the United States Senate.

He came near being United States senator, very close--I'm getting off the track, but I want to relate this to you because it does fit in here. When Senator [William] Blakley was appointed, I happened to be in the Mansion at the time that Governor Daniel was making the decision of who he'd appoint to fill out the ninety days. They can hold it [the office] for ninety days and then they had to run for election; it's a special election in Texas. That's the law here. It was agreed that he would appoint John Connally to the United States Senate and that he was the best man. Now Mr. Daniel and Mr. Johnson both agreed that he was the best man that was available to be United States senator from Texas. Mr. Daniel then said--he was always a little bit this way, Price Daniel didn't like to hurt anybody's feelings--"Well, my old friend, Bill Blakley, I'm going to call him and offer it to him. I know he's going to turn it down because he's told me a half a dozen times that he just didn't want it, but I'm going to call him and offer it to him. And as soon as he declines it, I'm going to appoint John Connally." Because I was urging him to appoint John Connally at the time. I think John Connally eventually found that out, and that may have been one of the reasons why he was always my friend. I don't know, I never asked him. But anyhow I was urging Mr. Daniel to appoint Mr. Connally and he firmly made his mind up to appoint him. As it turned out Mr. Blakley said, "If you'll just give me until in the morning, I want

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to think about it." Well, this flabbergasted Daniel and I was pretty unhappy with him because I told him "Well, dad-burn you, you just tell him that you've got to know right now. You got your foot in it; now you better take your foot out." I said, "I think he'll say no, but I'm afraid in the morning, he sleeps about it, talks to his wife, he's going to want to be senator." And sure enough, he wanted to be senator. So that's the reason why Mr. Connally got to be governor instead of United States senator. Otherwise he would have been our United States senator today, in my opinion. I don't know. That's a little known fact that maybe most people didn't know.

But anyhow, to get back to the situation, I believe you asked me about the feeling here. It got into the springtime and close to the announcement date for United States Senate. Of course Mr. Yarborough had announced and had been doing like he's doing at the present time: running around all over everywhere making speeches at the Rotary Clubs or to the University kids or anybody else that would listen to him. He was just making speeches everywhere and putting out four or five press releases a day and things like that. He was really going. But it got around, and it was about at that time that the polls were showing and we were getting polls constantly showing that there was about a third of the people--

(Interruption)

Ma: To go back to Mr. Yarborough, he was really cranked up and ready to go but there was at least a third--it ran between a third and forty per cent--of the people who were constitutionally opposed to

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him. They'd vote for anybody against him which left only about ten per cent of the vote that you had to get in order to defeat Mr. Yarborough. And this situation of course was pretty clear. Mr. Johnson knew this too; everybody knew it that messed with politics because even though some people deny it, the polls do have a real factor among politicians. They place quite a bit of faith in them. And that was the situation. So finally Mr. Yarborough had caused some troubles up in Washington and they had sort of an agreement, too, that Don Yarborough would not oppose John Connally.

In other words, if they weren't going to have a fight in the primary, they weren't going to have a fight in the primary, and it applied to the Governor's Office as well as the [United States] Senate. That's the way Mr. Connally felt about it, very strongly about it. It wasn't right just to say, "We're not going to have a Senate fight, but we're going to let Don Yarborough just eat me [Connally] up on the thing." Of course, the sad part about it, the polls showed that Don Yarborough had absolutely no chance to beat Mr. Connally. It was just nuisance value and it would stir up a lot of animosity in the Democratic Party. It finally got to be pretty apparent that Mr. Yarborough was trying to encourage Don Yarborough to get in the governor's race. As a result, the signals were called off on Thursday before the deadline on Monday and, as a result, some of those that were interested, mainly Mr. Joe Kilgore decided that he would run and he came to Austin, got here on Saturday afternoon. I talked to him, Mr. Connally talked

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to him--separately, we weren't together at that particular time. It was early in the afternoon, and I suggested that he go over there while the signals were off and immediately make his announcement to the press. At that time the press corps was located in temporary quarters in the west wing of the Capitol. I said, "You go over there and just make your announcement and hit those Sunday morning papers." And then I said, "You got it going, boy. And nobody can say anything against you because the signals are all off." So it wound up, he didn't do it. He wanted to wait and talk to some more people and see if he could get his money up and this and that and everything.

So in the meantime, Mr. Johnson changed his mind. We were all at the Governor's Mansion then on I can't remember exactly, I'm nearly sure it was Sunday night: John Connally and myself, Merrill Connally, his brother, Joe Kilgore and all of the wives and George Christian and myself. The question was whether or not Mr. Connally would support Mr. Joe Kilgore. The main question of course was whether or not he'd run, but then Connally finally told him, "If you want to run, I'll back you one hundred per cent. I'll go all out." Well, Mr. Kilgore went off to the telephone and I heard just one end of the conversation. But the end of the conversation I got was that there would be no go, that not only would he not be supporting him but he would be fighting him tooth and toenail which would make it impossible. The President of the United States can effectively cut off practically all corporate money or big money in a race like

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that. So that was [that]. Mr. Joe Kilgore came back and they had quite a long discussion, pacing up and down the floors and finally Joe said, "Well, it's not going to go." So George Christian went up and wrote the press release and Joe Kilgore announced that he was not going to run, so that cleared that up. But there was a lot of hard feelings over that particular thing in the Democratic circles because Mr. Yarborough got a free ride and Mr. Connally got an opponent. Of course, as you know, the opponent didn't amount to anything. I don't know what he got--I think he got twenty some odd per cent of the vote, maybe thirty per cent, something like that.

Maybe you have some other questions?

Mc: Yes. This raises a point about the importance of a United States senator or president like Johnson was, and his interference or aid in state politics. Now this is one example of how he touches upon, say, a governor's race or a senatorial race. Is this sort of thing common? Did Johnson often [do this]?

Ma: No, sir, Johnson was not a manipulator of state politics. I think he feels more inclined right now to be active in state politics behind the scenes than any time that he was in the federal government. For one thing, Mr. Johnson always had a sort of a disdain for state government; he sort of looked down on it. He never participated in state government, never had anything to do with it. He more or less considered it ineffectual and just more or less by-the-way type of situation. Now I'm not talking about the control of

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the party; I'm just talking about the offices that he didn't have too much to do with.

Mc: Then he would not be concerned about state legislation?

Ma: No, no, he never was. The only thing that he ever had at all that I know of was what was called the Johnson Bill, and that was changing the primary from, at that time it was July and August, the first and second primary to May and June which it is at the present time. That's called the Johnson Bill.

Mc: Why is that?

Ma: It was passed in order that Lyndon Johnson could be nominated for the United States Senate prior to his going to the convention in California.

Mc: This is in 1960.

Ma: Yes, sir. This was passed; it was a pretty close vote, but mostly [due] to the efforts of Dorsey Hardeman and Ben Ramsey who was lieutenant governor at the time, they passed that. That's one of the things that, well, I don't know if there was any hard feelings over it, but anyhow there was pretty hot discussion because some of the Republicans were dead set against it. And our primary's still set up that way now. Let me say this: I voted for that bill but not just for the one reason of Mr. Johnson. I voted because I think primaries make better sense in the spring than they do in the middle of the hot summertime. It's difficult to campaign when it's 105 degrees in the shade.

Mc: There was good sense in the bill beyond the other--

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Ma: Well, that's the way I felt about it. In May, people are getting out some and in June, they're getting out some. It's just a better time of year to hold a primary in my opinion. There's some opinion now in the legislature trying to change it.

Mc: Now what about the state party structure: does the fact that Texas has a president of the United States affect the state party structure?

Ma: Oh, I don't think there's any doubt about that. I think it affected the party structure as long as he was president of the United States, because he had an overriding view there. This was sort of a galling thing to a lot of the liberal element in Texas because Mr. Johnson maintained his friendship with Mr. Connally during those years and there was a lot of effort made to try to control the state politics from the federal level or from Washington. And it was ineffective because of the friendship that he had and let me say this not only for Mr. Connally, Mr. Johnson maintained the friendship of some of the more affluent conservative Democrats in Texas and most of the larger papers, that's your Houston Chronicle and the Dallas Morning News and the Fort Worth Star Telegram and most of the big papers. He always maintained that close friendship with them and this is sort of disconcerting to some of these people. But as a whole if Mr. Johnson wanted anything at the party level, well, it was always done, there was no doubt, as long as he was there. Of course Mr. Connally had complete control of the Democratic Party because the unit rule was still in effect when he was governor,

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and his [State Democratic] Executive Committee was one hundred per cent for him. I was a member of the executive committee during part of that time and, to be honest with you, we were never consulted about anything; we just gave him a blank check to do what he wanted to do. So any wish, I'm sure, that Mr. Johnson had that didn't interfere with anything Connally wanted, well, it was done. So, yes, there was quite a bit of the thing. That's one question of course in American politics that's never been completely determined and that is: is the Democratic Party being controlled by the national organization or is it being controlled by the state organization. And that's a very lively question at the present time and it'll eventually be decided one way or the other because at the present time the national Democratic Party is putting certain rules and regulations which never heretofore had been put on how to run the state business. But that was not the question at that time as long as Johnson was there.

Mc: Yes, in the days that Johnson was in Washington and Connally was in the state house, then they pretty well controlled the Texas Democratic Party.

Ma: Oh, there was no doubt about that. And particularly, as long as Mr. Rayburn was alive, it was no problem at all. At least I don't recall any problem that they had at all, because the Democratic Party was in the complete hands of Mr. Connally.

Mc: I've always heard that Johnson did not have any sort of a political machine as such. Is that true or false? Can you clarify this?

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Ma: Well, I'd say that that is, to some extent, true.

Mc: This means on the state level.

Ma: That's right, yes. If there's any machinery to it, it was more or less John Connally; John Connally is a machinery type man. He differs from Mr. Johnson in that he has a type of organizational ability that he gets people and gets them to agree to go along and things like that. And while Mr. Johnson had a loose knit organization during the time that he was a United States senator and vice president and president, as far as that goes, he never undertook to have a machine like Mr. Daley has in Chicago or the Byrds had in Virginia or any of those things. That was completely foreign to Mr. Johnson's way of doing business. He just never did do that. He never did try to control anything at the local level. Now he did some. Sometimes he wanted a little particular this or that, and he usually accomplished it, but as far as just running the deal, you never had to go see Mr. Johnson to get something done in Texas. That just wasn't done.

Mc: Did you get involved in the 1964 campaign?

Ma: Yes, sir, I was in that 1964 campaign. I went to the national convention and I made some speeches here in Texas and tried to help the party as I could. I didn't go out of the state; I did do a lot of telephoning to some of my friends that were secretaries of State in the other states that were Democrats. I did some work in that campaign, but I was not a full-time worker at all.

Mc: Were you surprised when Johnson announced that he would not run again in 1968?

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Ma: Yes, sir, I was sitting right here in this living room, my wife and myself, and I heard his speech and was sitting here watching this television right here. I walked over yonder to get me a Coca-Cola, and I didn't hear what he said. And Margaret went to hollering and going on and I said, "What's wrong?" She said, "Did you hear what he said?" I said, "No, I didn't hear what he said," because his speech up to that point didn't indicate any idea at all. There are a lot of people in Texas that declare that they knew this, but I don't think anybody but Mr. John Connally knew it. That's my opinion about the matter. Mr. John Connally had hinted it to me several times; the fact of the business is he wasn't sure about it because I think one of the reasons he did not run for a fourth term was the fact that his position was getting very difficult and would have been real difficult in the election that was coming up, in which Mr. Nixon was elected, on account of the Vietnam War and Mr. Johnson's stand on that particular thing. In my opinion that's one of the main reasons Mr. Connally did not seek re-election, the fact of the business, the main reason he didn't do it because it put him in an embarrassing situation. He just didn't care to do that. It was just distasteful to him. He told me he'd had all the honor there was to being governor; he'd been governor six years. And he thought he would do something else.

I think this: it never was out of Mr. Connally's mind that he did want to be a cabinet officer, he's always wanted to be one of those. He's never desired to be a United States senator, but he

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always wanted to be either secretary of state or secretary of defense, or secretary of treasury, those three jobs I think he's always had in mind. It probably had nothing to do with Mr. Johnson, but Mr. Nixon and Mr. Connally were in constant communication with each other for at least a year prior to his appointment. They talked over the telephone numerous times, and they were pretty good friends. Of course, that's all been catalogued by people in Washington at the present time, but it wasn't known generally at that time in public. Mr. Connally is a Democrat and will remain a Democrat, in my opinion, without any doubt. It had nothing to do with his feelings. He just undertook this particular job and I think will make a pretty good mark if his judgment proves to be correct on the economic situation.

Mc: On that point, you would say that Connally took the job because he always wanted the position?

Ma: Yes, sir, I think he wanted and desired that and he felt like he could do an effective job. I felt like he could. Now along that line he's got more ability than anybody nearly I've ever seen. I'm not belittling Mr. Johnson or taking away from him; his ability is in a different type of field. Mr. Connally has got a different way of doing things. I said a while ago that he's [Johnson's] a good administrator. Mr. Connally as just a day-to-day administrator is not a very good man, and I'll tell you why. Working with personnel, I'm talking about, he's too chicken-hearted, he's too kindhearted a fellow and he hates to fire anybody worse than anybody I ever saw. He talks awful heavy and he beats the table and everything, but

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when it gets down to it, he's just so kindhearted till he doesn't do that. But now in running a job like secretary of treasury in which he doesn't have to deal with personnel, he does a fine, effective job on that. I've never seen anybody any better at that type of job than Connally. He takes command of a committee meeting or any kind of meeting he goes to--well, he is in command, there's no two ways about that. That's one of his main trademarks. And he talks such, and the modulation of his voice, and the way he explains things, well, it's hard to disagree with the fellow. He makes you think that he's trying to be fair and making a real effort at it, and it makes you want to be fair. That's the sort of characteristic he has.

Mc: This raises another point: the Republicans in the state seemed to have gained strength during the years that Johnson was president or during the vice presidential years. John Tower became senator, for example. Why is this?

Ma: Well, I could say there are a lot of reasons. One of the main things I think was the fact that most of the conservative Democrats of Texas felt that after Mr. Johnson got to be president in his own right that he would probably steer a middle-of-the-road course and he more or less would revert back to, while not being a conservative Democrat, be some more or less like a Rayburn Democrat, and he would steer a pretty much of middle-of-the-road type of course, keep taxation down and try to run the thing on a level keel. Mr. Connally felt this way, real strongly. He told me this many times

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he thought that this was the way Mr. Johnson would do. Well, Mr. Johnson didn't do that. Mr. Johnson make a turn to the left after he got to be president in his own right, and he took the advice of people who were foreign to Texas, and the conservative Democrats became disillusioned and started to go on into the Republican Party. Of course they started that back in the time of Allan Shivers when they voted for Eisenhower. The stranglehold by the Democratic club was broken at the time that Eisenhower was elected. Prior to that time, nobody could get in the Republican Party unless you were born or you were married into it in Texas. It was a club and they had a very small group, an elite group, that operated it and they operated it for their own personal benefit. When it was broken at the convention in Mineral Wells, then that broke the Republican Party open where other people could belong and have a voice in it. And Mr. [Henry] Zwiefel and group went down and Jack--I can't think of his name right now--from Houston was head man at that time and he'd more or less--well, all these were former Democrats. Of course there are many other factors. Mr. Blakley was a very, very poor candidate. He's one of my close personal friends, I think one of the finest fellows I ever knew, but Mr. Tower was elected because Mr. Blakley refused to take any type of popular stand. In other words, he wanted to be one hundred per cent pure. I'll just give you an example: I went to Washington and talked to him about saying something kind about the old folks. At that time we had six hundred thousand people on the old age pension in Texas--well, it was three hundred thousand

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on old age pension and about three hundred thousand on social security. I had been heading the Committee on Aging in Texas for many years and had these people's confidence. I went up there and I said, "I'd like you, Senator Blakley, to just make a nice statement about these people--that you're for them and that you want to get their pension raised, just anything you want to say nice about it." And he declined to do it. He was a very poor candidate. So, as a result, he was defeated and Mr. Tower came in. I'm not taking away from Mr. Tower because he made a pretty good race against Waggoner Carr. But on the other hand, in my opinion, Mr. Tower has never met a first-class politician. You'll see how this election comes out this coming year. But he's never met first-class opposition. And I'm not saying Mr. Carr was not, but Mr. Carr just ran a very poor race, in my opinion. And Mr. Blakley, no doubt in my mind, ran a real poor race. So you say the Republican Party had gained. They've made some gains in some of the urban areas, but they're still a real small minority in Texas. They're pretty vocal though.

Mc: During the years that Johnson was president or vice president, did you have any contact with him? Did he ever call you? Did you ever go to Washington?

Ma: Well, let me say this: Yes, I was up there quite a few times, but I never had any contact with Mr. Johnson. It was mostly through Lady Bird; she invited my wife and myself up to the White House several times. We were up there to social functions, but I never had

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any political or business deals with Mr. Johnson at all during those years. That's the reason I say I am a very poor subject for you to interview here.

Mc: A few general questions that you may have some insight into about Lyndon Johnson's personality and his ability. You mentioned earlier that he is very good working in small groups. Can you explain that a little bit more?

Ma: Well, you can take ten or twelve people in this room and Mr. Johnson would be outstanding. He does a terrific job, and he's got a way of going along with them pretty fast and moving them and he gets them. They have a friendly feeling towards him and they are inclined to go along with him whatever he wants. He's very persuasive in his arguments and that sort of thing. But you put him up in front of a microphone or in front of a TV camera and he completely loses this. Now this is not unique with Mr. Johnson. I have a colleague named Mr. John L. Hill who's an attorney in Houston, and he can work with twelve people on a jury and he can con them into doing nearly anything he wants to. He ran for governor and he just completely fell flat. He gets in front of the tube and he just doesn't come across. There's a lot of difference between the two. That's one of the things that Mr. Johnson never was able to capture during the time that he was president.

Mc: Why can't they come across?

Ma: Because there is an interaction between the receiver and the sender and when he's right there like I'm talking to you, you're responding

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to what I say. I know about how much more to put on and how much to take off and things like that. Mr. Johnson's excellent at that. He'll never push a fellow too far, but he always knows just about how far to go. But you put him in front of the tube, he hasn't got anything like that. I always thought the present thing that Mr. Nixon's doing, that is, having these interviews with radio people, Mr. Johnson probably would have done better with that than any other media he had.

The other thing I felt like in his heart that he had that he never was able to put over to the general public was the fact that he really cared more for his country than he did himself or his political party. He never was able to persuade the great bulk of people on that which I think was a shame, but that's just one of those things that he wasn't able to do. He could do that in the United States Senate, but he just couldn't do it when he got in front of a camera projecting himself to fifty million people. It just didn't work somehow.

Mc: In judging him as a politician--and you've been in politics most of your life, so you know how to judge politicians--how do you judge Lyndon Johnson?

Ma: Oh, I don't think he had any peer. He was superior in politics. The thing that beat him in my opinion in 1960 was the fact that Mr. Johnson had no feeling at all for the state house politics. I think he learned his lesson in that. But Mr. Kennedy beat the whey out of him when he went out to Los Angeles because he didn't have

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them; he relied on United States senators and congressmen and people like that. There may have been a time in American politics that this would have worked, but at the present time the congressmen are so far divorced from the local situation in the state house that they don't have the control of the votes and don't have the feel of the pulse of the public and that's the way, in my opinion, Mr. Kennedy was able to overcome that because he went and worked in each state and worked with the local people, the mayors, the governors, the state senators, and people like that, and got them strong for him, and was able to move with them, even though he didn't have United States senators maybe matched up. You asked me, as a politician, and this is one of the reasons I analyzed that he had difficulty in 1960.

Mc: How about his political ideas? Were they successful?

Ma: I think that he was fairly successful with his political ideas. He was not as good as putting across political ideas to the general public as other candidates. This is one thing about Mr. Johnson-- he seemed to do the right things at the right time, but it just never did give him a real good ring somehow. He did real well, I think, at the presidency doing the right things at the right time for a while. Then all of a sudden it seemed to sort of break off. He tried to be issue-oriented, but he never did exactly accomplish that. Now what I'm saying--I'm not taking [away from him]. I like Mr. Johnson, he's my friend, but you asked questions of me, and I'm trying to be frank with you about it. That's truth about the matter

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that he tried to be issue-oriented but it finally got back to personality-oriented. I don't know how to explain it except he just never could get that [across]. The War on Poverty should have been a real popular thing and it never did get him too much honor. And a lot of other programs he had just never did do it.

Well, let me say this, I lived during the time of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal had a strong ring to it. It was taken up by the people and they really felt it, but the Great Society, in my opinion, never did capture the popular imagination of the people like the New Deal or the Fair Deal or all the other kinds of deals we've had through history.

Mc: Why not?

Ma: I really don't know, I can't tell you. I can't answer that, I don't know exactly why, it's just one of those things. Some things will work with some people and some things won't work. In other words, in every campaign, I don't think you can take a pattern and run it. There are a lot of people who write books and say, "If you just follow this pattern, you'll get elected to office." I don't believe that at all. Every man has got his own way of doing his own business and if he goes and gets out of character, the public recognizes it immediately. He's just got to be himself.

Mc: Have you had any contact with Johnson since he retired from the presidency?

Ma: Oh yes, I see him quite often. He's very nice to me, very cordial. You know, I had a recent illness and he kept in touch with me and

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wished me well. We've been out to the Ranch a few times. And he's been a very strong supporter of the Democratic office-holders in Texas since he's been retired.

Mc: In retirement then, is he still active in politics behind the scenes?

Ma: Oh, yes, sir, I'd say so.

Mc: That's on a state level?

Ma: Yes, sir. This is not for publication in the newspaper, but that's true. Yes, sir.

Now he's not trying to manipulate things. Now I think he has only one thing in his mind--that is that he'd like to see the Democratic Party in Texas be the prevailing party and survive, as it's been [in the past]. In his opinion, I think he feels now that it's had good state government since the 1870s. It's been a single party state and he doesn't see any reason to change it. He thinks the Democrats have done a good job here.

Mc: What I'm probing is: here's a man that's had his whole life dedicated to politics. All of a sudden he's out of office. What does he do?

Ma: Well, that's one of those things about Johnson that is amazing and that is that he could suddenly just like a faucet turn it off and he's done quite a bit of that. But now I didn't say that he hasn't got a lively interest in the state politics and in the national politics, but I don't look to see him ever doing anything except behind the scenes.

Mc: Is he a man that is still consulted by the party?

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Ma: Oh, there's no doubt about that. Yes, sir. And there are people that'd like to get his support, because if Johnson wanted to, I don't think he could elect anybody by coming out publicly for him, I wouldn't say that, but I'd say this: that anybody he didn't like, he could sure beat the whey out of them, because he's got enough contacts in Texas and the metropolitan newspapers still are his friends. And in the statewide politics, the newspapers and the TV station, particularly the newspapers, have got quite a bit of influence. If they editorialize against somebody every day, it'd be pretty hard to overcome that.

Mc: Now I've exhausted my questions for you. Is there anything else that we should add to this?

Ma: No, sir, I don't have anything to add.

Mc: We can call it to an end then.

Ma: Thank you very much.

[End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview I]

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