INTERVIEW I

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PLACE: Mr. McCarthy's office, Washington, D.C.

Tape 1 of 1

G: Let's just start with essentially how you ended up working with the task force, when you came and . . .

M: I was over at the Defense Department in charge of the National Fallout Shelter Survey Program. Of course, Adam Yarmolinsky had gone over on the task force to work with [Sargent] Shriver. I had gone through rather an interesting job experience in the National Fallout Shelter Survey Program, and its intensity had dropped off and it became just a matter-of-fact program again. And of course all of the interest was in the start up of the War on Poverty. That's where I wanted to go, and I made arrangements to have a detail. I went over with the group that was over in that old building on Fifteenth Street across from the Madison Hotel.

G: Was this after the legislation had been submitted?

M: No, no, it was still in the process of putting the legislation together. You know, a lot of the original ideas had been put together by some previous task forces, but the legislation had not been completely put together. In fact, it was that summer, during that period of time, that the bill passed. I think it passed in the fall. Yes, it did. The bill passed in the fall of 1964.

G: August, I think.

M: Yes. Because I remember the bill had passed and the President had signed it, and of course we were all anxious to get started. The word was, "Don't move one false move because the President"--Lyndon Johnson at the time--"said that he didn't want to destroy the program by having them take any action prior to the election." "Because"--he said--"if you take any action now, they'll accuse me of using it for political purposes and those that are against it will use it later to beat it to death."

I remember, oh, it was along about October and the chairman of the House Public Works Committee was John Blatnik of Minnesota. During that period of time we had been looking for sites for Job Corps centers and we had two located in Blatnik's district up in Minnesota. John thought he was in a tough campaign up there and he wanted to know if there was a possibility of any Job Corps centers. So I would have been fired if anybody knew what I did. I got all the data together on the two Job Corps centers and I smuggled them up to John, and of course John made a big political announcement out in Minnesota. Of course the screams came from the White House, "Where did he get all that information?" Well, what is this, how many years later, I can say it. All the principals, John Blatnik is now a retired member of Congress and there's just a few of us left on the payroll. But that was my first introduction to OEO.

G: Do you recall what month you joined the task force?

M: Yes, I believe it was in June or the first of July. I'm positive it was June.

G: Well now, this was after the President's message.

M: Yes, it was after the message.

G: What aspect of the task force work did you engage in, do you recall?

M: During those days I was with the Job Corps portion, and in fact prepared the original Job Corps budget and presented it to then BOB, Bureau of the Budget in those days, and went over and defended it. In fact, what was the name of the guy, he later worked at OEO, [who] was the budget examiner? John Forbes [?] Yes, John Forbes was the budget examiner at BOB.

G: How was the task force organized when you were there?

M: Well, they had it broken down into Job Corps, Community Action, I guess they had a VISTA, and I believe that was it.

G: Was Yarmolinsky more or less the operating head?

M: Yes, but you know I didn't see Adam when I came over that much, because as I say, I was working in the Job Corps portion and there was--God, I can't even remember--the guy who headed up that task force. It was a colonel from the Pentagon and I can't remember his name.

G: Was Vernon Alden still working then?

M: Yes, Vernon Alden was, that's right, Vernon Alden was. He left just shortly after I came and Wade Robinson came in then I think. Who else? Wade Robinson--I can't . . .

G: What about John Rubel?

M: That don't ring a bell.

G: From Litton I think he was.

M: Oh, we had some contractors in that were giving some advice on what we called the large centers. There were the conservation centers and the training centers.

G: How was the Job Corps organized? How was it planned?

M: Well, the basis for the Job Corps was first of all the old CCCs [Civilian Conservation Corps] from the New Deal days. We had people from Interior and Agriculture. Then they put the other component part together of the vocational school aspect. This was the part of the program that was oriented toward the urban sector, larger-type residential training program with a 100 per cent dedication towards education and vocational training, whereas the conservation centers were 50 per cent education-vocation and 50 per cent contribution to the natural and national resources. You know, during that period of time we brought various so-called experts together that were experts in educational training for the disadvantaged, vocational training, and applications of how you would do all of the logistics in putting the program together, from the recruiting, the training of the instructors in the camps, to how you would recruit the enrollees. Then they had to put together a training course. So there was a hell of a lot of work going into it. There was a whole group of people that passed through that had the expertise in the various component parts of the program.

G: Had any private industries been engaged in this sort of training?

M: Oh, yes. You've had it all starting from the CCC days on through World War II when they had training courses for training some of the women workers that came into industry during World War II. Then of course there was the experience of some of the large defense contractors that built some of the communications systems in Alaska and whatnot, where they had to train workers. So all of this was all cranked into the design of the program that they ultimately came up with.

G: Did you feel like you were going to get cooperation from the Department of Labor and the Agriculture Department?

M: Yes, I guess there was a feeling in those days that--and there was a genuine cooperation, at least I felt there was. I know there was some griping that I think goes in the normal course of events of bureaucrats working with bureaucrats. But the spirit was there, the desire to want to do something was there, and I think it pervaded the atmosphere so deeply it infected everybody. Everybody wanted to do the impossible.

G: Did the Labor Department want to run the Manpower Program itself though?

M: Well, Labor, because of its long history of training and all of the programs they had, what do you call [it], the apprentice training programs, really wanted a bigger role in OEO *per se*. In other words, I don't think Labor or any of the old-line agencies liked the invasion of their turf by a new agency. And again, it was the old-line bureaucrats that felt that way, plus some of the politically-appointed heads that felt their territory was being invaded. But outside of that, the rest of the department I think cooperated 100 per cent.

Now Labor of course was given a major role like in the operation of the Neighborhood Youth Corps, which was a huge component program within the total complex of OEO.

G: That was a delegated program.

M: That was a delegated program.

G: Now the Employment Service was designated as the primary recruitment agency [by the] nature of their job.

M: They came about that through the osmosis of going through the study of how to put the

whole Job Corps program together. I don't think the contracts that brought them into the program were signed by Otis Singletary. This was after the program actually was started and was being implemented throughout the country, that the contracts were signed with them, that they would take care of the recruitment aspects. And it took [time]. The recruiting, just that one phase alone went through many crisis stages on how they would select the enrollees. In the early days the program damn near sank it, because you were putting a program together that was a very difficult program. If you went out and took all of the real, real hard cases and threw them into these very difficult programs with new staff, with untested training and untested courses, and put that whole ingredient together in that particular phase, you could have destroyed the program. And in a few places that kind of a conflict did take place and caused some real problems in the early stages of the program.

G: Can you recall any particular one?

M: Oh, yes. The miss-mix--and I've got to talk about it in generalities--but they were taking enrollees from large urban areas and putting them into isolated rural areas where their natural backgrounds were completely alien, and taking them from anything that would make them feel like they're at home and putting them in an atmosphere that was very difficult for them. So they later developed some criteria on how they would assign enrollees. They were taking enrollees in and not properly screening them for where they would put them into the training program, what level they would put them in, what their reading levels were, what their arithmetic or math levels were.

G: Did these recruiting agencies, like the Employment Service, use the Job Corps as a

dumping ground for the people that they didn't want?

M: Well, this was a part of this. When it first [began], and I'm sort of [hazy]--see, it's a number of years ago--but it appears to me, if I remember rightly, that some of the problems we experienced in the early days and criteria finally had to be developed by OEO, by Job Corps, as to what were the requirements, what were the various requirements that that enrollee had to meet in order to be accepted into the Job Corps. And in fact, OEO or Job Corps finally put some of their own people working with the Labor Department as screeners to make sure that those criteria in the selection of enrollees were met.

G: Was there an arrangement worked out with the conservation interests in Congress to include so many conservation camps among the Job Corps training centers?

M: Well, the conservation camp thing right from the start was planned as a part of the total Job Corps, as I remember it, and was really the basis upon which the Job Corps program passed in the Congress, because people could associate the Job Corps with what CCC did. That was really the basis upon which Job Corps was accepted by the Congress.

G: Initially there were no women's Job Corps camps allocated.

M: Well, they weren't allocated, but as they moved forward they realized that there had to be some training for the disadvantaged women as much as it was [needed]. That's when they put together [the women's Job Corps], and it was right in the early [days].

G: Were you around then?

M: Oh, yes. Bennetta Washington was working on the task force and later became the director of the women's Job Corps center.

G: Was it Edith Green who suggested the inclusion of this?

M: Yes. I don't know whether it was Edith that suggested it. I'll have to say when the Job Corps center was put together it was always envisioned that there would be a training program for women. Edith wanted and did put it in the legislation that there would be so many slots for women, as compared to how many there would be for men, and in fact, even wanted to increase the number. But as I remember, there never was any intention of not including them in the program.

G: Do you think that there was too much of a rush to get the program off the ground, to start it?

M: No, I don't think there was too much of a rush to get the program off the ground. Because remember I told you the ground rules were we couldn't start until after election, and everybody was biting at the bits to get started. I know there was criticism that the program probably was started in haste and there was a lot of waste, but the fact of the matter, that's not true. Again, to go back, after the election of 1964 we really didn't start implementing any of the programs, so that would have been January of 1965, they had that conference on poverty I remember down in Tucson, Arizona. I remember attending it. We started then with Job Corps, Community Action programs, VISTA programs. When was it? About February of 1965, or March of 1965, they started the first congressional investigation of the War on Poverty.

G: It didn't take long.

M: If they rushed the implementation of OEO, then they rushed the implementation of the investigation, because they both went forward simultaneously.

G: Did Shriver have a preconceived notion that the head of the Job Corps ought to be a college professor?

M: I don't know where that came from. Sarge looked for excellence in all of his associates, and in many ways Sarge equated president of a college being a comparable position with being director of Job Corps.

G: There have been a lot of criticisms of the way Job Corps was set up at the time.

M: In what regard?

G: Well, one, that there was inadequate logistical support for these sites, the camps, and that the recruitees would arrive and the materials wouldn't be there.

M: Oh, yes, but that's like World War II or anything else. I don't care what you design, there's going to be criticisms. Generally speaking, I think it was amazing that putting that group together, the logistics, which we talked about earlier, which was difficult, but it really wasn't that difficult. They had less problem I believe in the conservation centers than they had in the training centers.

G: Why was this?

M: Well, fundamentally the conservation centers were being run by the conservation agencies, Agriculture and Interior, and they had staff people that worked in those agencies that were alumni of the old CCC camps that were used to putting programs together. In addition, the largest conservation center I think was about two hundred and twenty. The average was one hundred enrollees. Well, then you went to the training centers, which were primarily contract-operated, you know, your larger corporations were running them. They had a more difficult time, because they ranged from five

hundred to twenty-five hundred enrollees. You didn't have the same control as far as the government is concerned, or OEO, like dealing with Interior or Agriculture, you dealt with other federal employees and you had a little better opportunity to dictate terms on the training centers. There were contracts that were negotiated. I'm not in any way deprecating the people that ran those centers in any manner when I say that, but they had a more difficult time. Of course they had also people within their organization, even though they had a contract and they were supposed to carry out certain objectives, some of those individuals had different ideas on how to obtain those objectives and they didn't all operate the same way. So they ran into some difficulties.

G: Did the private industries as a rule do a better job of operating the centers than the universities did when they were operating them?

M: Yes, I'd have to [say so].

G: Why was that?

M: Well, again, I think it's part of just historical differences. Corporations and private entities are more the go-go, want to get the job done, whereas universities--again, without criticizing the universities--took a more relaxed approach in my judgment to the operation than the corporations did. Be that as it may, the most successful of all the training centers was the one in Texas.

G: The Gary Job Corps [Center]?

M: The Gary Job Corps Center, yes. I remember that--and that was run by the state of Texas. So that wasn't run by any university or private enterprise, that was Lyndon Johnson's and [John] Connally's.

G: But Connally was dissatisfied with that, wasn't he? Didn't he come to Washington?

M: Well, at first he said, "Damn it, if there's going to be a Job Corps center in Texas I'm going to run it." I remember at the time Otis was director, and Otis thought that he should run it. Connally disabused Otis of that pretty quickly. Otis was down in his office and he called Lyndon on the phone and he said, "Who the hell is going to run this Job Corps center?" And Connally was going to run it. But from the facts of the case, and those are the records--like old Al Smith used to say, "Go back and look at the record,"--Camp Gary had the lowest cost per enrollee, they had the highest percentage of completions, they had the greatest number of placements. All-around it was the best run Job Corps center in the United States.

G: Do you think in addition to Connally's influence that it may have been in part because LBJ was also from Texas?

M: Yes, but it was a whole combination again, and I think it was what I spoke of earlier, they were enthused. The President was enthused, Connally even in his mean, ornery way I think was enthused and wanted to be a part of LBJ's program. But where he succeeded and the others didn't, and I think the secret of his success is that Connally brought all of the leading business people of Texas in and told them that he wanted this program to succeed. He said, "I want these boys to have jobs, and you tell me how many each of you are going to hire." He put together a group that represented the private interests and the potential employers of these enrollees, and that's why he had such a successful program.

G: Was there too much advance publicity, do you think? Was the program oversold, the Job Corps program?

M: No, I don't think it was oversold. In fact, if anything it was undersold, and the proof is in the pudding. The proof is in the pudding. This is 1981, April. We've gone through Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Carter, now Reagan. Since 1968 when Nixon came in and he wanted to do away with the Great Society, he wanted to close the Job Corps centers and finally relented. This year, 1981, there is a greater number of slots for Job Corps enrollees than at any time since the Lyndon Johnson days. They're cutting federal programs all over. The great conservative from Utah, the Republican [Senator Orrin G.] Hatch, is the great defender of the Job Corps, said it's the greatest training program that's ever been developed. So no, I don't think it was oversold. If anything it was undersold.

G: Was it a problem to find jobs for recruitees after they'd completed their training?

M: Well again now, that's a part of the learning curve. That was a part of the components. You had the recruitment, you had the training, then you had to have the placement. Some of the centers did well, others of them didn't do as well. Even with the intensity from the national level of wanting to have high placement, a lot of times you had to depend upon, in the case of the urban centers, the idiosyncrasies of the various contractors to carry out the placement part of it.

G: Was Otis Singletary a competent [administrator]?

M: Otis Singletary was very competent. Maybe a lot of people criticized Otis, but again, Otis served during the most difficult time of Job Corps, during its early period when all of the shakedown was going on. He had to make the tough decisions and he made them. He's the one that made the decisions on the criteria for the enrollees, and he made the

tough decisions on canceling the contracts of certain contractors that weren't performing as they should perform in the operation of the training centers. He made a lot of hard, tough decisions. You know, he's now president of the University of Kentucky.

G: Yes. Well, there's an indication that some of these centers had to be canceled or closed because of climate. Because let's say it would require total air-conditioning because it was too hot, or because in winter a northerly point couldn't be heated properly or things like that?

M: I don't know. I don't recall any for that reason.

G: Were environmental factors considered?

M: Well, sure they were.

G: Or climatory?

M: Yes. Maybe somebody that comes from your part of the country wouldn't want a Job Corps center in a northern climate, but let me tell you, us people that came from the northern climes wanted Job Corps centers in the northern climes. I can remember when the centers were first going out. There was a co-equal resistance of having centers, plus the desire to have centers. I remember all of the criticisms. A center would be established and we had to get community relations and everybody raising hell because it was a Job Corps center. I also remember in 1968 when Nixon came in he wanted to shut them down. There were ten times the hue and cry when they wanted to close a Job Corps center.

G: Or when they closed the one in Oregon I guess it was, Fort Benoit, Wayne Morse's.

M: Wayne Morse's, yes. In fact, there was somebody coming up for an appointment, and he

held up their confirmation--

G: Harding.

M: Yes, Bert Harding. So it had its [difficulties]. You know, people didn't want it, but when they started to take it away from them that's when it showed they were really acceptable.

G: Let's talk about local opposition in St. Petersburg, I guess.

M: Yes. In St. Petersburg we had a women's Job Corps center down there and there was a lot of opposition. And a lot of that--of course I never personally was there, but I guess I was close to the conversations and the results of it. But if I remember rightly, they put that women's Job Corps center in a hotel in downtown St. Petersburg and faced the fact that those girls that enrolled in the center, most of them were minorities. It was a concentration of minority girls in a particular area, and that alone raised a red flag to a lot of people. It was at that time when that particular issue was a hot issue in certain parts of the country. That same issue was not only in St. Petersburg. There was some place in the Midwest, too, [where] we had the same kind of problems with the women's Job Corps center. So again, I think it was just a part of the times.

G: Do you recall the controversy over the one in Yorktown, Virginia, too? Here was another question of local opposition. Do you recall?

M: No, I don't remember that one specifically, but I knew there were a couple of others where--and again, this was a part of the learning curve--Job Corps centers went in without the acceptance by the community ahead of time, without the community asking. In other words, it's very difficult to put a program that the community doesn't want, and that happened in a few instances. So they removed them. I remember specifically out in

Montana in I think it was the one up out of Hamilton. Was that Trapper Peak [?] I think it was Trapper Peak. It was a hotbed of Birchites in there, and they really raised hell about it--I mean really crude--they called it Lyndon Johnson's black angus ranches. And it was a very difficult problem, because I remember [Mike] Mansfield even talking with me about it and Lee Metcalf, because it was raising a lot of political problems for them. But again, in 1968 they were going to close that camp, and the community was just 99 per cent against them shutting the camp down.

G: What considerations were given when sites for Job Corps camps were being considered, do you recall?

M: Oh, first of all, they looked for government surplus facilities where you could utilize existing inventory to keep down the costs. In the case of the conservation centers, there were recommendations brought in by the various agencies in both Agriculture and Interior. There was a division within Job Corps that reviewed [sites], and there was an engineering section that would go out and investigate the suitability of the proposed center. When they first started they did not do the community survey; they did that later when they found out through some of those difficult public relations problems they had of a community not supporting some of the centers. They afterwards made sure that they didn't put a center in without doing a proper community attitudinal survey.

G: The story, which may be apocryphal, that has gone around was that the first year when Shriver sent to the White House a list of the locations under consideration to see if the White House had any feeling about any particular location, then the White House just released the list, saying these are going to be the Job Corps camps. Do you recall that or

even . . .

M: No, I didn't. Oh, criminy sakes, there must have been five or six different lists, and there were five or six different cuts at it. I can remember sending over recommendations. So you sent it to the White House for them to look at it before they approved it. But for someone to say that they sent the list and they released it would be wrong, because if I remember rightly, we had four to five to six times more locations than there were centers. In other words, there were recommendations of four to five times as many sites as you had funds available for building. So I don't remember them releasing the whole list. I remember doing it in segments.

G: Do you recall the circumstances of Adam Yarmolinsky's being ruled out as deputy director?

M: Oh, that was during the legislation. I remember it very clearly. He was attacked upon the Senate floor and the House floor for supposedly some of his earlier [actions], and a lot of it had to do with really implementation of some of the Defense policies rather than Adam's early--in other words, you've got to remember, when [Robert] McNamara came in he made a lot of changes in Defense policies under the Kennedy Administration. He stepped on a lot of toes up on Capitol Hill. Don't you remember when he made those early announcements about closing down certain military facilities to save money? Those first ones were not cleared with the powers to be on Capitol Hill, and a lot of them blamed Yarmolinsky for that. I think what Adam really took was a beating for many of the things they didn't like going on over at the Defense Department, and because Adam had a funny sounding name, and he was a little guy, but a very able guy. I liked Adam.

G: The critics of Job Corps would charge that it would take more to educate a--

M: --boy at Harvard, which was a crockful--or it would take more to educate a kid in Job Corps than it would in Harvard. But you know, they didn't take the capitalization, they just took the tuition costs of sending the kid to Harvard. They didn't amortize the costs, like you had to in the early days. The Job Corps has been in existence now since 1965. It's been fifteen, sixteen years now. You take those costs and amortize them today and put it back in. But what they were doing then was taking all the capital costs. They were taking the costs of all of the upgrading of the buildings, all of the initial [costs], and they were trying to put all of that into the cost. When you took it and annualized it and amortized costs out, there was no comparison, and I remember doing many of them. The only real comparison, and they were very comparable and in many cases less, Job Corps was costing about the same as it was for keeping someone in a penal institution.

G: How about the cost comparisons of Job Corps and Neighborhood Youth Corps?

M: Well, two different programs. Job Corps was a residential training program. Neighborhood Youth Corps was an in-school or out-of-school program that had no--it was comparing apples and oranges. It wasn't a fair comparison.

G: The Labor Department seemed to feel that the NYC, the Neighborhood Youth Corps, tended to have more positive results at lower costs than the Job Corps.

M: Well, of course. But not all problems could be handled in that manner. There are children who can stay home with their parents, that are in a stable home environment, that were victims of poverty, that could take advantage of the Neighborhood Youth Corps Program. But the enrollees that were going into the Job Corps were from broken

families; they had no home life; they had no residence they could remain in. So it was an entirely different problem. It would be just like comparing a student in med school today, saying that they'd make better nurses than some of them in a vocational nurses training program. No comparison.

G: Was there a considerable time lag usually between notification of acceptance to the Job Corps and the time your actual training began?

M: Oh, there might have been in the early days. Again, while they were getting the logistics down they would go out and they would recruit an enrollee and they'd have some zealous recruiters. Maybe there wouldn't be a vacancy right away in a Job Corps center. Or maybe there wouldn't be a vacancy where they wanted to put that particular student. It took some time before they were able to get the right mix of the number of students recruited and when they would go into the program. But that again was a part of the early learning [curve].

G: Let's talk about members of Congress and how they influenced or supported or opposed particularly the Job Corps legislation. How about Adam Clayton Powell? He was chairman of the committee.

M: Yes, of course Adam was a hard one to fathom because you didn't really know where he was coming from. I think generally he was supportive of the program and would use his influence in House Education and Labor Committee. But on the same token, Adam was looking for, as most congressmen do, specifically what was in the best interests of his constituents, namely Harlem. So he had that.

G: How about Carl Perkins?

M: Carl Perkins, I guess you'd have to call him the real champion of not only Job Corps but OEO and humanity in general.

G: Was he useful in getting southern votes?

M: Carl Perkins, who is just a tremendously able guy, I think equally not only southerners but liberals and conservatives respected him.

G: Sure. How about Phil Landrum?

M: Phil Landrum was a key [vote]. Phil was very difficult to get to. I remember when Bill [Phillips] was with us, he was considered one of the keys whether or not we were going to be able to continue the whole OEO. Phil Landrum finally came around, I think not by any specific lobbying, but by he himself seeing the results of the program. And maybe something we don't know, I think LBJ may have done something with Phil.

G: Oh, really? Do you think so?

M: Yes, I really do.

G: Do you have any idea what?

M: No, but he was a great one. You'd probably know that, being in this oral history at the LBJ [Library]. But I always felt in the back of my mind that he called him some night from the White House. I know Shriver visited with Landrum, and I remember many times Shriver missing a connection with Landrum and we were always concerned about that connection. And all of a sudden the Landrum problem disappeared.

G: How about the Republican side?

M: Well, of course we had [Charles] Goodell. You're talking about the House?

G: Yes.

M: We had Goodell of New York and we had [Albert] Quie and we had what's his name of Ohio [who's] since been defeated [William Ayres?]. It was Quie and what's his name of New York that were the key actors on the Republican side.

G: Were they supportive at all?

M: No, they played politics with it. Quie I think was more the . . . But it was strictly a political gut-cutting fight with them.

G: On the Senate side you had I guess Senator [Pat] McNamara as one of the original sponsors.

M: Yes, McNamara of Michigan was one of the original sponsors. Of course you know he died shortly thereafter, and [Joseph] Clark took over chairmanship of the committee.

G: Was he sympathetic?

M: Yes, Clark was a patrician, you know. He was sympathetic as a part of his duty. Can I describe it that way?

G: Who else on the Senate side?

M: Oh, God, the Senate was generally supportive except some of the real strong southern conservatives. But generally speaking we had an easier time in the Senate. I was close with Senator [Mike] Mansfield during those years. He was majority leader, and I used to work out of his office, or out of his Majority Leader's Office, where Stan Kimmitt worked, secretary for the majority's office. Where we had difficulties it was easy for me to get around and visit with the senators who had specific problems, and they all had certain problems and I'd go around and try to solve them. But generally speaking the Senate was pretty easy.

G: You had a problem in that almost as soon as you got your appropriation you had to start working on the budget and submission for 1965. Do you recall that? I think in November or something the appropriation passed.

M: That's the way it is in every government program.

G: But here you haven't really had a chance to set up and see what's--

M: Well, I told you, we got an overall appropriation when we first started in 1965, and then we had to go in to BOB and back to Congress for appropriations for Job Corps, for Community Action, for VISTA, for all of the component parts. The first time around we didn't have that. You got a lump sum, generally speaking. It was easy. They prepared a budget and just went in and had very simple hearings. The second time around you had to go in, you had to justify, you had to justify a per enrollee cost, you had to justify it broken down into all its component parts, from the food to the clothing to the electricity, to the cost of recruitment, the cost of training. It all had to be broke down, and the same way was true in each of the other parts of the program. There wasn't any mystery about it; that's the way federal programs are. Each year you just get one appropriation and you're just starting to spend it, and twelve months before the new appropriation you're back in trying to approve what you should get for next time around. And in those days we didn't have enough experience to give the kind of detail that OMB wanted and that the appropriations committees wanted. It was a game. You build up figures, you justified them. I don't think it was any mystery in anybody's mind what you were doing.

G: It seems like some of the programs were more popular with Congress than others. Like they'd want to appropriate more for Head Start and less for Job Corps.

M: Oh, yes. But you have to remember, Head Start wasn't one of the original programs either. Head Start didn't start until February of 1966 I think it was. Which is true. Legal Services was after that. The most contentious program I think was Community Action. Foster Grandparent program was well accepted. Then under the Community Action Program we had the Indian and migrant portion of it. And of course like any other federal programs, certain ones are going to be more popular with Congress, or with certain members of Congress than others are because they did more for their constituents or it was easier to accept, the benefits were broader.

G: Someone had suggested in selecting centers to be closed that they used good objectivity but bad politics.

M: You mean in 1968, you're talking about?

G: Yes.

M: Well, I was an outsider then. I wasn't in the program. Or 1969 is when you're talking about. I think that's true.

G: Was it bad politics to close Fort Benoit in Senator Morse's state?

M: Yes, that sure was, because he was a supporter of the program. I guess that was in 1968, wasn't it? That's right. During those years they had to close some centers. It was because of the Vietnam War and we had some budget crunches. That's right. Those sites were selected, as you say, for maybe right program reasons but wrong political [reasons].

G: Was BOB sympathetic to Job Corps, do you think?

M: BOB? Oh, as sympathetic as they are to any program. That's not their job to be sympathetic.

G: Well, did they understand the purposes of Job Corps and did they seem to see the need for it?

M: Well, I think. Again, BOB's and OMB's job is never to be sympathetic to anything or to see the validity of anything. That's not what they're hired for.

G: There was also a question that there was poor discipline at some of the Job Corps camps.

M: Oh, yes, that was a charge and probably true in some instances. Again, that was due primarily to improper staff training, and it was another thing that they had to finally get straightened out.

G: If you were planning this program now, would you do it more with the rural conservation camps, the Forest Service personnel, rather than the [urban centers]?

M: Well, of course I am biased. I felt that way right from the start. I felt that there was a better payback. I used to express those views. So I'm not the proper one to ask that question.

G: But in doing this you were taking kids out of an urban environment, weren't you?

M: Well, that's what I said. They had some of those problems, but they changed some of that. Most of the urban kids, oh, a lot of them went to the conservation centers, but most of them went to the training centers, which were urban-type training centers. The rural [kids], they did the right screening, not keeping all of the urban ones out, but they mostly went to the rural conservation centers.

G: Let's talk about your work on the legislative side of the program, which you indicated you went in 1966 to work with--

M: Bill Phillips.

G: --Bill Phillips on the legislative side. This was the first year you really had problems I gather, is that right?

M: Well, we had problems all along, but I think this was a concerted effort on the part of the Republican Party to either attack what the administration had put together, and/or come up with some alternatives on how the country should be moving and the solution of some of these problems.

G: Powell seems to have been very unreliable by this point in terms of his support of the legislation.

M: Yes. He was erratic. I don't think there was any doubt about his supporting the program. Again, the only comment I would have there is that here he was chairman of the committee that had national implications, but Powell never lost his desire to achieve benefits for his congressional constituency, and that was a conflict that he had. But I don't think that diminished his overall support for the program generally.

G: He did stall, didn't he?

M: Oh, yes, but what was that stalling for?

G: He just wanted something for Harlem?

M: Yes, yes.

G: What?

M: Well, he used to call Shriver up and ask for certain favors. Of course, Sarge wouldn't do them. If they were legitimate, straightforward things, he would do [them]. He'd ask you to do some things that you couldn't do.

G: What about George Mahon on the Appropriations Committee?

M: George Mahon was tough, but George Mahon was fair. I remember going and visiting with Mahon, and I remember myself and Shriver very clearly--I forget whether it was in 1966--yes, it must have been 1966 we went and visited with him. And then we spent about an hour in his office, and it was rather an interesting session because he was a pretty wise guy. I remember very clearly talking about the expense of Vietnam and how he wanted to try to help Lyndon Johnson, but he wanted to help Lyndon Johnson by making sure that he didn't spend too much on the social side while committing all these resources to the war in Vietnam. "Otherwise," he said, "we're going to be facing a very national crisis on inflation and other results." And I remember him telling us that, "You're going to have a difficult time; you're going to have to draw your belts in. You're going to have to not want as much as you want. You're going to have to cut the program down a little." He was not enamored of the program, but in the same token, I think he was a loyal Texan, I think he was proud of Lyndon. He marched to his own tune, but I don't think he wanted to do anything that would totally embarrass the President.

G: Was there any White House pressure on him that you know of?

M: There could have been, but I don't know of any.

G: The Democrats that year also made some changes in the caucus in 1966, changes in the legislation. Do you recall that?

M: Yes, I sort of remember.

G: They wouldn't let you guys in.

M: No. You mean they wouldn't let us in the caucus?

G: Yes.

M: Oh, they would never leave an outsider in. That was at the start of that Congress you're talking about, when they caucused to--yes, maybe previously they left staff in. I think Bill might have been concerned about that at the time, but I don't think that was of any great moment. You know, what is a caucus of Democrats? (Laughter)

G: There was a requirement that at least one-third of the CAP boards be representatives of the poor.

M: Of the poor, yes. That was an amendment that was--who the hell put that amendment in? I used to know. That was a specific amendment that was put in the law.

G: And a limitation on supergrades, too, I think.

M: Yes. That was later. A third being representative of the poor was modified later.

G: A third, a third and a third.

M: Yes. I guess that was the original, and then it was modified to the third, a third and a third.

G: Anything else on the critical votes that year on the legislation?

M: We had a difficult [fight]. Well, 1966 was a tough fight generally, but we did pretty well in 1966. It was a long, hard battle. I concentrated on the Senate in 1966. Bill concentrated on the House, because that's where he came from, and I had the best connections with the Senate. I remember the Senate went well that year. We had some problems in the House from Quie and Goodell of New York, and some of the other conservatives. But what really blew it, all we had--we really worked on the southern group that year, too, in the House. Joe Waggoner, who was the leader of the southern conservatives from Louisiana, we got along--we really worked to get along with Joe.

When the fight was on I'll never forget. The Republicans really thought they were going to--they had an opportunity, they thought, to radically change the legislation. They were beat down amendment after amendment. That was the fundamental thing, they wanted to spin off some of the programs. And you know, they would have been successful, because the real test hadn't quite come and they picked the ones that we were able to--for a lot of reasons--keep together. On one vote, and I forget, I knew the reason why--there was one vote came up and we got a tremendous vote from the South. Goodell got up and he made a speech about the boll weevils.

G: Bosses and boll weevils.

M: Bosses and boll weevils. Well criminy sakes, that destroyed them. Well, it was right after that, I think it was the Head Start program. Head Start could have gone to the Office of Education in the House side. Old Joe Waggoner said, "By God, they're not going to put that over in the Office of Education," and he made a speech. (Laughter) Shriver was mad as hell. I thought it was great. He kept all the southerners in line. He said, "When you've got a bunch of trash, do you take and throw it all over the countryside to stink up all the countryside, or do you keep it right in one barrel where you can watch it? All that trash of OEO, we want to keep in one barrel." He got all the southerners to vote.

In the Senate, that recalls, too, I remember in the Senate they were really working to spin off Head Start. I remember I went to--I got along with him pretty good--Senator [James] Eastland of Mississippi, and poor old Doc [Harold] Howe then was the head of the Office of Education. Doc Howe was a red flag to the southerners. So I went in, seen

old Eastland, and he had some problems that I got on his phone and took care of them, down in Mississippi. He said, "Is there anything else you want to talk to me about, George?" I said, "Yes, Senator, there's going to be an amendment coming up." He said, "An amendment on OEO! You know I can't help you on that OEO business. I can't support that program." I said, "I know that, Senator. I'm not asking you to vote for OEO. What I'm doing is asking you to stop a part of the program from being administered by Doc Howe." He said, "By who?" I said, "Well, they want to transfer a good portion of the program over to Howe's administration." "George, I wouldn't vote to give a red turd to Doc Howe. When is that amendment coming up?" I said, "I don't know whether it's going to be today or tomorrow." He said, "Well, I tell you what you do, George. You watch and when that amendment is coming up, you call me, because I want to be on the floor to vote against that amendment, and I'm going to get all my southern friends to vote with me."

G: Good story. Well now, it seems like by 1966 you had the problem in Mississippi with the--

M: Oh, yes, CDGM.

G: Yes. Child Development [Group of Mississippi].

M: Yes, Senator [John] Stennis.

G: That must have been a real thorn in their sides.

M: Oh, yes, it was, and you can understand. You see, it was a political problem with them, and it was an administration problem with OEO. Both sides were right and both sides were wrong. It was trying to find an accommodation. Criminy, that went backward and

forward. I considered Senator Stennis my friend, too, and I liked old--and I do today, I think he's one of the real old great gentlemen in the Senate. I can remember when he, during appropriation hearings, boy, he got us up there and it was like being in a court of law. We went down the CDGM thing, and he was asking questions. The only thing that saved us is that Senator [John] Pastore came over. He defended [OEO].

G: Really?

M: Yes. Otherwise I think that it could have blown up into a lot bigger issue than it was, and Senator Pastore was able to diffuse it and to more or less satisfy Senator Stennis in that there would be a further investigation, and if there were the alleged misappropriations or misapplications of spending of federal money, that it would be taken care of and would be corrected. Of course, it was all that civil rights problem and everything down there. You know, it reached another crisis point and that's when--what was it, the National Methodist Church came in and took the--

G: AME [African Methodist Episcopalian Church].

M: Well, not only that, they took the supervision of the program and they put up a bond. I think they put up something like a five million dollar bonding to indemnify and protect the federal expenditure, would guarantee any funds that were spent illegally. So CDGM was a difficult, difficult problem.

G: There was a rival group that was set up, Mississippi [Action for Progress].

M: Yes, and former spokesman for the secretary of state in the Carter Administration, Hodding Carter, was one of the groups down there. It was a part of the issue of those days, of the civil rights, the opening of the Democratic Party down there, and the old

conservative groups. It was a very difficult battle to be in.

G: Where did the White House stand on the CDGM question?

M: As far away from it as they could.

G: Really? You didn't get White House support on this?

M: Maybe somebody said we did, but I think they had nothing to gain and everything to lose.

G: Did they put heat on you not to fund that program?

M: No, they didn't. No, they didn't.

G: Because surely they must have heard from Stennis and Eastland.

M: Oh, sure they did. I think their stock answer was, "How are you going to handle those crazies over there?" I think that's what they said to some of their friends on the Hill. "You know, that's where we keep all the crazies of this administration."

G: What about SWAFCA [Southwest Alabama Farmers Cooperative Association]? Was this also a problem? You know, the Alabama rural farm workers.

M: Oh, yes, that rural farm co-op. It wasn't as big a one as CDGM. It didn't raise the statewide thing. I remember Bill Nichols, who's still in Congress, was one of the vocal [critics]. It had more private protestations than political protestations. It was a big issue for the particular part of Alabama, but you know, we had them all around us. Unless you were deeply involved or from that part of the country, they sort of rolled off your back.

G: Mayor [Richard] Daley was a big supporter of OEO that year.

M: Yes, yes.

G: He must have had his own requirements for the program in Chicago.

M: Yes, and he was treated well up there. Of course, there was a personal relationship

between he and Shriver. I think Daley was playing the part of the loyal political stalwart.

G: You were able to recruit the support of a lot of mayors around the country.

M; That's right. In fact, I can remember, I put together a group. I called the mayor of Providence, Rhode Island, Joe Doorley at the time, and Joe on his own came down and rented a hotel room here and stayed here for about ten days and called mayors all over the United States. We brought certain [mayors] in, invited certain mayors in, and this is when the legislation was up in 1967. When we were having a particularly difficult time with a member of Congress from that particular city and that mayor was a strong supporter of OEO, why, we brought him in to talk to his congressman.

G: Was it often a situation that congressmen would express opposition to OEO in private and then vote for it on the Hill? Did they feel like it was causing pressure on them or trouble for them in their districts?

M: Yes, but it went both ways. There were a lot of them that would put pressure on you in private, but would vote for it in public, and I think there was more of that than there was the--

G: They'd want projects, but they wouldn't want to--

M: Well no, they would protest how the projects were being run, whether it was Head Start or CAP, but publicly would vote for the program, but would get you in and just ream you from one side to the other about what a lousy program it was and what it was doing and how it was destroying their district or how it was being implemented wrongly.

G: Can you recall any particular congressman or senator that did that to you?

M: Oh, I wouldn't want to name them. I will just tell one story, and it was strictly for

political, without any connotations of what I said previous. I told you about the two conservatives that voted for the program in 1967 that the White House said would never vote for them. Well, one of them was Jim Battin of Montana, who is a personal friend of mine because I was from Montana. But Jim's constituency was anti-OEO. What the White House didn't know is that Jim and I were personal friends. Jim said he had to vote for it to keep McCarthy in a job, and he's now a federal judge in Montana.

The other one was [Donald] Lukens, I think he was president of the young Republicans, Republican congressman from Ohio. He had called me early, and I think it was even along in 1966 when he first went to the Congress. He had some problems with some Head Start programs and we took care of them right away for him. Then later on he used to call me and tip me off about some problems that would be coming up in a CAP program or Head Start and we'd take care of them right away. So unbeknownst to the Republicans, here he came out and voted for OEO. One of the most conservative members of Congress that year.

So it worked both ways. In many ways in what they're talking about today that they want to make government to the least denominator, well, that's what OEO did really. It moved the government to the citizen out on the street, took it out of the hands of some of the local politicians.

G: Of course it was changed to give local politicians more control.

M: That's right. That was an amendment that passed in 1967. Let's see, who was it? I think it was Joe Waggoner. I think it was Joe that introduced that amendment that allowed for a political subdivision to become the operator of a CAP program. And this was to

satisfy--see, there was a tremendous amount of local political outcry. My friends would say I wasn't too supportive, but I felt the same way myself at the time, that we weren't supposed to be creating a program that would destroy the very basis of our Democratic system, which was the local political system. You had instances where, criminy, they were putting in a CAP agency and they were trying to overthrow the city, the mayor, the councilmen, or overthrow the county commissioners. Just set up a confrontation that nobody was going to win under.

G: There is an indication that there was a meeting early in 1967 with Republicans, say Goodell and Quie, with Shriver and Harding or several others. They decided what the price would be for continuing the program, and it was basically spinning off some of the stuff. Do you recall that?

M: Oh, there was an attempt, shall we say, made to try to, but Shriver didn't go into that meeting with that idea in mind. There wasn't any pre-cut deal with anybody.

G: Did you feel like the program was not going to pass in 1967 when you first started off?

M: No, I never ever thought that. I know everybody else did, but I never thought it, not for once.

G: There is an indication that the White House was getting less and less supportive of OEO as time went on.

M: Well, there was a feeling of that. I think there was a certain group over there that were less than star-struck by OEO. The President's attention was diverted to the Vietnam conflict. He couldn't spend the time that he wanted to on the program. I don't think there was any diminution on his part of his original support for the program.

G: Did he understand the program, do you think, and did he support the--?

M: He understood the merits of the program. But to say did he understand all of the nuts and bolts of it, what president could?

[End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview I]

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