INTERVIEW I

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INTERVIEWEE: JOHN L. MONAHAN

INTERVIEWER: THOMAS H. BAKER

PLACE: "Board of Education" Office, Washington, D.C.

Tape 1 of 1

B: Mr. Monahan, let me summarize your background here, subject to your corrections. Born in 1933, your home is Newton, Massachusetts, Boston College graduate 1959, B.A. in government, military service 1955 to 1957, and since 1960 you've been here in the House, first as secretary to Majority Leader McCormack and then secretary to Speaker McCormack. Is that about the size of it?

M: That's correct.

B: Incidentally, how do you get a job like that?

M: Well, my father was a very close personal friend of Mr. McCormack's and when I was about to be graduated from Boston College I met the then-Majority Leader. He asked me what I was doing, and I said I was a senior at Boston College. He asked me what I was going to do after I was graduated, and I said I thought I would come down to Washington to look for a job. He said that if I did, he would give me a part-time job in his office and do everything he could to help me secure a job that I was qualified for in Washington.

So I worked in his office for about six months and he called me in one day and asked me if I had found anything. I said I hadn't because if seventy-five hours a week was part-time I wasn't sure I could afford a full-time job. At that time he seemed pleased with me and asked me if I would go on as a permanent staff member. I, of course, gratefully and readily accepted.

B: Do you have political ambitions yourself?

M: Not in the slightest.

B: Is it possible to describe fairly briefly what your job involves?

M: I finally came up with an answer to that a few years ago. I do everything he tells me faster than most. There's no set procedure in an office that is as public as the office of Mr. McCormack as speaker of the House--or I would imagine as any speaker of the House. It's like being in the in the crisis department sometimes. I handle all the people and his appointments, his legislative programming, represent him at certain meetings and functions and affairs and pretty much take care of any problems that come up during the legislative day in the office of the Speaker.

B: Does a job like that give you any time or inclination to participate in presidential campaigns in 1960, 1964, 1968?

M: No, it has not. I did have an opportunity in 1964 and again a smaller opportunity in 1968, but I declined both times because it would have taken me away from my own duties. I felt that that would not have been fair to the Speaker.

B: Your first year both Mr. Rayburn and Mr. Johnson were still in Congress. Did you see anything of them?

M: I saw Mr. Johnson only after the convention. I had never talked with him in person, but after the nominating conventions, and Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Johnson were nominated for president and vice president, they did come over to the office two or three times to see Mr. McCormack when he was majority leader. I, of course, met both of them when they came in. I didn't have any substantial dealings with them at that time. This was before the election.

B: Was Mr. Rayburn already ill and inactive when you came?

M: There were a lot of rumors to the effect that he was not in the best of health, and that he had failed. I never saw him at any close range to compare with the last year of his life when I saw him, so I can't say whether he had in fact failed. He was still quite active as far as I could see. He was always very fine to our office and to me. I wouldn't have noticed anything as I had never seen him before that.

B: The main thing I wanted to ask you about was the relationship between the White House staff and your function in the Speaker's office, starting with the years of the Kennedy presidency. Which of the Kennedy aides did you find yourself dealing with mostly?

M: I dealt primarily through both administrations of Mr. Johnson and Mr. Kennedy with Larry O'Brien. Almost anything I would say would be colored by the fact that as far as Mr. O'Brien went I don't know of any man that has done a better job in <u>any</u> capacity than Larry O'Brien. I think he was the best possible man for the job. He is a fellow that had not only the respect of all the top leadership in the house, but of all the members of the House and all their staffs. He was the best man for the job that I've ever seen. I didn't get along so well with some of the people that worked for him, in both administrations, especially when they were relatively new. That may have been because when I was new I made my mistakes and when they were new they made their mistakes. But I found that my observations of relationships between the individual members of the Democratic side of the aisle were better, considerably better, and on a higher plane when the men who worked for Larry O'Brien under President Johnson were there. I felt there was less animosity between the staff members and the members of the House towards the Johnson people, led also by Mr. O'Brien, than there was towards the Kennedy people led by Mr. O'Brien. Part of this came down

from above because, quite frankly, President Johnson treated the members of the House a little better, quite a bit better than did President Kennedy. This may have been because of the fact that Mr. Johnson knew the total power of the Congress, having been in the leadership when he was in the Senate as majority leader or minority leader. Also when he was in the House of Representatives he was a very close confidant of the late Speaker Rayburn, and he was in on all the leadership meetings that took place--many of them in this room we're now sitting in.

B: For the record, this is the room that you still call the Board of Education room?

M: Yes.

B: It used to be Mr. Rayburn's room, and we're sitting under the seal of the great state of Texas here.

M: But Mr. Johnson--before I forget it I'd like to add--had at least five or six receptions at the White House for staff members of congressmen. The two top aides and anyone else that wanted to go they invited and this really brightened up our lives considerably.

B: This kind of thing was not done by the Kennedys?

M: Never, no it was not. I myself have been invited down to a black tie reception with my wife. After you go a couple of times it doesn't matter so much to you, but if you can take your wife it means a great deal to you.

B: It makes those long hours sit a little easier.

M: It certainly does. It makes you want to work a little harder, I'll tell you quite frankly. I know of at least four or five bill signings and three, four, five other occasions that I was invited down, twice with my wife, as I said. This established a nice, easy working relationship between the liaison people under Mr. O'Brien for President Johnson because you'd

see them there. You felt a little beholden to them that they thought enough of you to put your name on the list. And it made you want to cooperate--not that you didn't cooperate with the other administration. It just made it a little bit easier to do. There was a social friendship there that was not really existent in the Kennedy Administration on the staff level.

B: These people that were working with Mr. O'Brien in the Kennedy years, people like Mike Manatos, Wilson, Feldman, White, are these the people--?

M: I didn't know Mike too well. He worked the Senate mainly, but Henry Hall Wilson and I were good friends, and Henry did a fine job too. There were isolated incidences when things would not seem to go right, and certain members would take off after one or two of them for something that they didn't think had gone right. There just wasn't the social rapport between the top staff members up here and the top White House congressional relations people that there was in the Johnson Administration.

B: Is this a matter of comparative age and experience?

M: Experience may have a lot to do with it, but I personally think it may have come from above. When President Kennedy was elected, he was elected by a very narrow margin. They were extremely conscious of his personal appeal to the country and he had a difficult time getting his legislative program going because--well, for many, many reasons. The slimness of the margin, the very close vote on the enlarging of the Rules Committee to fifteen members when Mr. Rayburn had to use all his prestige and Mr. McCormack as leader all his prestige, and they only won by three or four votes. They were difficult times and I think when Mr. Johnson became president after the terrible tragedy in Dallas, there was a feeling of great empathy towards the new president and a thankful feeling among all of us that we had a

strong man in there to lead us.

This feeling of cooperation didn't just apply to people on the street, it applied to all the people who worked for congressmen and senators and it may have been that it was easier. But again on the social things, I remember the Foreign Aid Appropriations Bill of 1963. I believe we voted in the early hours of the morning on the 23rd of December, two days before Christmas, or the 22nd maybe--and after the vote, Mr. Albert announced on the floor that the President had invited all the members and their wives down to the White House. Well, there was considerable complaining about being held in this close to the Christmas holidays. That took a lot of the bluntness and the bleakness away because here was one of the first times that members were able to take their wives down. In my opinion it's more important to a lot of people to have their wives go than to go themselves, because they can really go down there anytime on business, but to go down with somebody that means a great deal to you and have the President say a nice word to your wife about you, that makes you walk a little higher and a little straighter, and you feel that it's nice to be recognized. It's nice to be noticed by anyone, but to be noticed by the President of the United States is heady wine indeed.

B: How does this liaison function work anyway? When the push is out on a certain bill of the administration, do the people from the White House staff first get in touch with administrative assistants like that or do they deal directly with the member?

M: Certain pieces of legislation you have to change your tactics on because of the nature of the legislation. But normally what would happen, if a controversial measure was ready to be reported out of committee and programmed on the floor of the House, the Speaker would have the Democratic Majority

Whip have a poll taken of all the Democratic members. The results of that poll on any controversial matter would be kept only for the leadership of the House and perhaps for top personnel of the White House congressional relations. A meeting would be held in the office of the Speaker at which the Speaker, the Majority Leader, the Majority Whip, and the--well Larry O'Brien usually would be there and Henry Hall Wilson would be there and Chuck Daily in the early Kennedy years, and then with Johnson there would be Jake Jacobsen, and Barefoot Sanders by the way, who was one of the very most popular and did a grand job--Barefoot did.

They would go over the list state by state, individual by individual. If there was anyone in the room that could particularly--for instance, if you had a reluctant member in Oklahoma, naturally it would be the Majority Leader who would call him as opposed to the Speaker because they're colleagues from the same state. If it was a bill, for instance, that was out of the Ways and Means Committee, you'd have Mr. Mills there and Congressman King. Of course Mr. Boggs, the majority whip, was also a ranking member on Ways and Means. If it was a bill out of Armed Services you'd have Mr. Rivers of South Carolina there and if it was a southern Democrat who was giving you trouble, instead of having the Speaker call him or the Leader call him, Mr. Rivers probably would call him. You'd keep a running tabulation right up until the time the bill went to the floor.

Also, Mr. McCormack, by virtue of his popularity among the members, always had a few lines out to the minority members. He'd call one or two of his friends and just lay it on them and say, "How many votes are we going to get from your side?" Sometimes you'd need as many as fifty votes and say you were only going to get twenty-five, and you probably

would win with forty, but it would be close. Sometimes all you needed was eight or nine. If it was going to be a policy matter, it was damned difficult to get four or five Republican votes sometimes. But these meetings would go on right up until the bill came to the floor.

There were times, infrequently, that it looked so bleak that the bills were put off and put over until another week because you might have had some of your members sick or out of town that couldn't be there. Especially in the early Kennedy years the votes were awfully close, awfully--three, four and five votes.

B: I guess the secret really is being able to count, being able to know how--

M: The secret of success is being able to know not only how to count, but when to program a particular piece of legislation.

B: You mean to arrange its various stages through committees?

M: No. Sometimes if there's a hue and cry from the public and letters are coming in by the droves to--gun legislation was a particularly interesting thing. There was a tremendous outcry from the public about gun legislation, both pro and con, but the leadership decided to let it wait a little bit and let the fever of the people calm down a little bit--and the bill would have been defeated. It was certainly not a perfect bill the way it went into law, but it would have been rather handily defeated if it was called up ten days prior to when it was called up. As it was it got through in pretty good shape and got through the other body in pretty good shape, but it was primarily because it wasn't called up when it could have been. The leadership decided to hold it off a week or ten days, when members weren't under such tremendous pressure from the newspapers and from the letters from their own constituents.

B: Back when John Kennedy was president was there any sort of, oh I don't know

what word to use--animosity is probably too strong--but was there any kind of animosity or bitterness among the Kennedy people and the McCormack people left over from some pretty hot battles in Massachusetts?

M: I think I would have seen it, and I can positively guarantee that on the top level there was no such thing between the President and the Speaker. There was not the slightest bit of animosity and this is not trying to beat a dead horse or anything, but primarily they both had the same kind of legislative minds. They wanted the same type of legislation, and they were both political realists to know that if they didn't cooperative one with the other then it would have been borderline catastrophe in the legislative field of government. There was never anything but the highest mutual respect and regard between the two principals. On the lower level there may have been a general feeling--I don't think it was an animosity or anything--but I think that some of the people may have come into the White House with the late President, may have looked upon our kind of politics a little as politics of a bygone era, because quite frankly, even though both were dealing in national politics, the House is an older type body. The politics of face-to-face confrontation are the only way to success here. I mean, you do have to go to a man and say, "How are you going to vote here?" On the national level you're worried about whole states and millions of votes and they were a very modernized outfit and may have, I thought, sometimes thought we were a little bit of smaller potatoes than they were. But this had nothing whatsoever to do with the late President, whom I think all of us really adored. There's no question about that.

But we didn't hit it off too well with some of the young men around him and this may have been jealousy on our part, or animosity on their part. I don't know. But I'm as quick to anger as anyone else and a

couple of times there were little disagreements in policy, the ways to go about things. One of my jobs of course is to protect the prerogatives of the House of Representatives, especially the office of Speaker. Once in awhile I had to remind them that they were in Mr. McCormack's office and not in their own office. But that may have been zealousness on my part. There was never any trouble on the policy level. There may have been a few personality clashes here and there on the lower level that had no bearing whatsoever; that probably would have happened if we'd both met in a bar in South Boston or if we went to a football game and one was rooting for Holy Cross and the other for Boston College or Harvard, Yale, or Duke or South Carolina. It probably would have happened. But on the main we got along pretty well considering that, even though you're after the same object, you still try and get the full credit for your own fellow you work for.

B: Yes. I guess I might point out that you've already expressed a good deal of approval for Larry O'Brien, who was a Kennedy political boss.

M: I never met a finer man in my life than Larry O'Brien, never. I never met a finer man in my life.

B: Was Robert Kennedy active as a congressional liaison when his brother was president?

M: No. I never saw Robert Kennedy, when he was attorney general, in any of the meetings. Now, those are meetings that I can only testify to that were held up here. I did on occasion go down with the Speaker to the White House--I never went into any of their meetings, but I could see that Robert Kennedy as a cabinet member of course was in on certain meetings that the legislative branch was called into. But I never asked too much about the participation there because that's Mr. McCormack's affair.

B: Did Kenny O'Donnell have anything to do with congressional liaison?

M: Not to my knowledge, no, other than if there was a bill that the President would be particularly interested in, Kenny would call. But, on the main, Larry carried the whole ball as far as congressional work went.

B: Of course, Mr. O'Brien stayed on into the Johnson Administration in this same function, but he did leave eventually to become postmaster general. Who was your main contact after that?

M: Barefoot Sanders took over right after Larry.

B: He had been Larry's assistant?

M: He had been Larry's chief assistant, yes.

B: Did any others of the Johnson staff ever get involved with work with Congress? Joe Califano and Harry McPherson?

B: Oh yes, sure, Joe. By the way, I have a particularly high regard for him too. He wasn't in it in as close a day-to-day contact with our office as Barefoot, but if the President had a particular interest in a particular bill, Joe would follow it right down the wire and work hand and glove with Barefoot on it.

B: Does that apply too to the people who more or less worked for Mr. Califano? Larry Levinson, Jim Gaither, Matt Nimetz?

M: Pretty much so. But they would break it down into sections where you might not see them. You would see the man that had their results, which in most cases, nine out of ten times would be Barefoot or Larry O'Brien who would come up with their list to compare with our Whip list, our Whip call.

B: By sections, do you mean by geography?

M: By geographical sections, or in cases of large states, of very populous states, one man might have the state of New York, and another man might have, say, a whole mid-West area of five states.

B: The public at large and an outsider looking in knew about Larry O'Brien--it was well known that Larry O'Brien was the congressional relations man and handled it all pretty much himself, or at least was in charge of it. But Barefoot Sanders never really had that kind of public image. Was he as much in charge of it as O'Brien was?

M: As far as what I saw up here, I would say he had the full power. You see, by the time President Johnson became president, Larry was already a well-known figure. He was news. Barefoot, as an assistant attorney general, wasn't as well known. When you put the name Lawrence F. O'Brien in the papers, it's going to go further. The general impression of the people, I think, in this degree, may be a little bit mistaken. I think that Barefoot had the ear of the President and he had the full power of the office behind him. But, as I say, he wasn't as well-known and therefore he wasn't written up as frequently. I think he had the power, yes.

B: From the point of view here, when Barefoot Sanders spoke you knew that he was speaking for the President?

M: Yes.

B: Which is the key to it, I suppose.

M: Yes.

B: Did it make much of a difference after Mr. Johnson announced his withdrawal from the 1968 race?

M: What do you mean, much of a difference? In what way?

B: In legislation.

M: No.

B: With the presidential clout gone, was there a lame duck effect?

M: No, I don't think there really was, and I think one of the reasons for that is because the President--and I noted that he referred to it quite

often in some of his public statements, many of his public statements--[had the backing of] the leadership in the House of Representatives. If the President had problems--it's easy to say the President had problems with the Congress, but the fact of the matter was he had problems with one branch of the Congress. The leadership in the House of Representatives was always very, very pro-President Johnson, and so much so that there was no letdown when President Johnson made his announcement on the 31st of March, I believe it was, that he would not be a candidate. Quite frankly, in the five or so years that he was president, so much of it had become an accomplished fact and things that had been kicking around congressional committees for twenty years were on the statute books, and what was left had reached the point where it was ready to be considered.

He always sent up more than enough, and the only thing that would have stopped it would have been, as you say, a great letdown because the presidential clout had gone. But most of the legislation that was later enacted into law was pretty well formulated by that time and people in the Congress had come to the conclusion that they would either vote for or against a particular piece of legislation. There was no sudden slackening of legislative drive. We of course knew that there would be two conventions and that the month of August would be pretty much shot, and the leadership had geared itself that way. There was no noticeable slackening of legislative progress that would not have occurred in a presidential nominating year. There was still plenty hanging around.

B: I've read that one of the things that O'Brien did that was particularly effective was to coordinate the congressional liaison in the departments and the agencies and, for that matter, the private lobbyist types. Is that correct?

M: By virtue of his immense popularity, and [it was] really well deserved, and because he was very accessible to people who had a legitimate interest in legislation, people frequently would contact Larry. So, in effect, he may have known more about how members that would be reluctant to tell somebody else how they would vote--might through some other registered lobbyist know how a particular member would vote on a given issue, how he would lean, and they might impart this knowledge to Larry. I know myself that some members of the House that I knew--I'd be in there frequently when they'd be going over the list--if they got to a member that was a friend of mine and they hadn't had him recorded, the next day I might see him, might have a cup of coffee with him. I would say, "We don't have you down on the poll. If you don't want to tell me, fine, I will just forget that I saw you." And quite often they'd say, "No, I'm going to be all right," or "I can't see my way clear to do it." This was always treated as privileged information and given only to the Speaker and I would also tell Larry if he came in that day.

Again, it was because of the immense popularity of Larry. He is one of the most enjoyable people you'll ever meet. He's a grand fellow and he's sincere. Pomposity is totally opposed to him. I know that after the assassination the members that I knew were all very, very thrilled and many of them had indicated to President Johnson that it would be in the best interests of the Democratic Party to keep Larry on because he did that good a job. The President is naturally to be commended for keeping him on, but he wasn't the only one that saw what a great job that Larry did. The members were very pleased with him. It was easier for him to get people

to open up because of his basic loyalties to the Office of the President, regardless of who occupied it. I think this may be one of the reasons why he was as successful under Mr. Johnson as he was under Mr. Kennedy. It's a tough switch.

B: This may not apply so much to Larry O'Brien himself, but many of the people on the White House staff, both in the case of President Kennedy and President Johnson, are young men and very impressive men. Here on the Hill they're dealing with men who are much older, literally old enough to be their fathers, and who have been around for some time. Did that ever cause difficulties?

M: It's a problem that bothered me to the point I asked a very senior member one day if President Kennedy knew what some of these fellows who were my age were doing to his legislative program because of this easy familiarity, and he said to me, "Johnny, just forget about it, that's the President's way of doing it, and he's the President. But he does know." I've never been able to draw a valid conclusion from it. But I did one time see--after a close vote, myself and one other fellow were invited to a little get together in the Capitol in one of the offices here. In the office there was the Speaker, the Majority Leader, the Majority Whip, two Democratic state delegations--and the other fellow and myself were the only non-members in there--and the White House people all came in. They stayed a little while and everyone was having a drink--everyone except the Speaker. Finally it got time for one of them to leave, and he was a young fellow about my own age. He walked across the room and he walked up to one of the leaders and he slapped him on the back, like they were fraternity brothers of the same class, and said to him, "You did a bang-up job today," and he called him by his first name. I looked around the room just as he did it, and

there was a look of disbelief on the faces of some of the members that this fellow, who was 32 or so, would take that liberty with one of the leaders of the legislative branch of government. I asked my friend afterwards if he had noticed the same thing, and he said he was appalled, too. And after that I heard a couple of the members of Congress come up to me and say, "Gee, did you see that." This is two or three days later.

I think the eagerness of easy familiarity sometimes may have made people like some of the individuals, especially in the Kennedy years, a little bit less. I say this with a good deal of hesitation because there are many members of the House that are my age that are quite insistent about me calling them by their first names. It's something that I don't ever do unless it's just the two of us sitting and talking. I'll do it then. But whenever there are other people around I think men who are elected to the House of Representatives or any office that august should have all the dignity conferred upon them that the office calls for. And sometimes there was an easy familiarity that, just in my own personal opinion, I don't think the members liked. Now I don't say they disliked it to the point of changing a vote, but I don't think it made for the easy camaraderie that was existent in the Johnson Administration. There was a little bit of over-eagerness on the part of the Kennedy young men that wasn't brashness, but it was aggressiveness, that tended to put the members on their guard, that was not existent in the Johnson Administration.

B: Did O'Brien know about that kind of thing?

M: I don't know. He was in the room when it happened. Whether he saw it or not, that particular occasion, I don't know. I think that they probably knew about it but I don't think there was anything--you can't always change things because you find them out. I'm sure that not everybody likes 100

percent of the staff. I'm sure that not 100 percent of the people like me. But [because] a person may make a mistake in one area doesn't mean he loses value in other areas. They were very brilliant and especially with the younger members, they did a bang-up job. It was just with some of the chairmen of committees and things like that. They don't like to be kept waiting and they like to have their phone calls returned, a thing that any citizen likes.

I heard something one time about a key member on the White House staff not returning some calls from a key member of the House of Representatives. It just so happened that my wife was at that time working for a Joint Committee in the Capitol and she was over in a senator's office taking some dictation. I told her about it when I heard it and she said, "Oh, you must have misunderstood," I said, "Okay, Jeanie, I misunderstood." What I had told her was this chairman had said to his secretary that from now on when he wanted to call the White House, if he used a particular fellow's name, the secretary was to say, "Mr. Chairman, you told me not to call him any more, we should call Larry O'Brien direct." And my wife was over in the office of a United States senator taking dictation and the same thing happened in her presence. The senator said, "From now on when I call the White House, remind me not to call so-and-so, remind me to call Larry O'Brien." She laughed out loud, and the senator said, "Mrs. Monahan, why do you laugh at that?" And she said, "Because my husband told me the same story about a week or so ago and I didn't believe him."

B: This was in the Kennedy years?

M: And there was an awful lot of that. That's not news to anyone.

B: Again, I'm not sure an outsider like myself fully understands it, but the House of Representatives and the Senate, I suppose, have a certain code in

their behavior about which the members are sensitive and which a congressional liaison man just has to go along with.

M: Well, I think it's wise that he would go along with it. I think that it certainly is a simple enough thing. Every part of life, as we understand it, has a certain amount of protocol that is observed. It's a tool as well as anything else, so if it breaks down you ruffle feathers. Not everyone gets up on the right side of bed on a given day and a few ruffled feathers--people get talking and one member says, "Gee, so-and-so did this to me." He may be talking at the table with ten members there and maybe three of them will say, "Well, gee, if he did that to my friend here," you know--it's 435 members. It's a pretty closed group. They don't like to be talked down to. They don't mind being talked down to by the President of the United States. That's his prerogative. But they don't like being talked down to by somebody that works for the President.

B: Did Mr. Johnson often do this kind of thing himself on the phone--get on the phone and call members?

M: Yes. More so than President Kennedy.

B: Have you had enough of the Nixon Administration to be able to see any kind of pattern in it?

M: No, because primarily they haven't sent up--necessarily so, we wouldn't expect it. You may have expected it if there had been a continuing Democratic administration, that legislative proposals would have been up sooner than this, but they would have been proposals that had been under consideration in the last Congress. Up until the 20th of January we had a steady flow of legislation that came up and on the 20th it stopped. Now the Executive Branch is being rearmed or refurbished and slowly the legislation will be checked down there, and they'll go over the legislation very carefully--

legislation that they want enacted into law. It will start coming out, but until it comes up, until you see what's coming up from HEW and Transportation and Housing, especially Housing, you don't have any idea--I don't think anyone does at this time, without talking directly to the President of what he has in mind. It will be another two or three months before you can get a drift of what type of legislation they're going to want.

B: Yes. I'd better mention here in case anyone using this forgets to look at the date on it, it's mid-February. There just haven't been any legislative proposals.

M: If I'm an authority on anything, I'm an authority on what comes up because everytime a legislative proposal is sent up from the Executive Branch of the government to the Legislative Branch, the original and a copy are sent to the Speaker of the House and to the President of the Senate, and I see them all. I see every legislative proposal that comes up. They're just not coming up because they're gearing up their own administration, and it'll start flowing up in a few months. But as of right now there's just not anything coming up.

B: I have a question I'd like to ask you that's really in the realm of general political science type stuff. You're a man of Congress, of the Legislative Branch. Do people associated with the Legislative Branch ever get a kind of feeling of resentment that the administration does all the proposing, leaving Congress in what essentially is an almost negative kind of function? Nothing left to do except change, approve, or disapprove?

M: I think this is a very interesting question, especially now, because it's not going to be that way for the next few years. There's going to be much more originating done in the House of Representatives by the majority party, the Democratic party. This will necessitate changes up

here, but it's a different ball game now than when the majority has the Executive Branch of government. They work in conjunction. The next few years, while there's a Republican president and a Democratic majority in the Congress, a good deal of the initiating legislation will start here. A good deal of it. The House will not be dependent upon the Executive Branch. The Democratic majorities in the House, and I'm sure in the Senate, won't be dependent upon the Executive Branch for the main thrust of the legislation. We'll initiate a good deal more legislation up here now than we ever have in the eight years prior to today.

B: Is this a conscious decision on the part of the leadership?

M: Yes, it is. We will enlarge our staff committees and take some of the legislative specialists and technicians--many of whom I'm sure had served in previous administrations--that are experts in the field of legislation. It's an easy thing to put a bill in the hopper and hope that it becomes law, but there are a lot of questions about constitutionality and so forth that have to be resolved before the bill could be considered on the floor of the House. The Democratic staffs in the House, at least, will have to be increased to cover this further burden.

B: You'll have to do the kind of thing that in a Democratic Administration the president's staff and department heads--

M: Would frequently be handled by the different cabinet posts.

B: Is that going to be coordinated with the Senate, too?

M: I would think there would be a large degree of coordination but not in the initial stages. There has to be coordination, no matter what the legislation is, because after the bill is passed in both Houses, if it's not identical, it gets tied up on conferences. So there'll have to be more coordination than there has been. But there always has been coordination.

B: Mr. Monahan, this has been fine. Is there anything else you think ought to be added on this kind of record? I've run out of specific questions.

M: One of the overriding things to me, having lived a little bit of it, is that I think that the social aspects of having the chief executive of our country do some things that are relatively simple, can make his job a good deal easier. And I go back to the thing--the thrill it is to have the president of the United States invite people down to the White House. I remember the first time I went there. I stood in the corner and President Johnson was standing on a chair in the middle of the East Room talking to everyone. I looked at him and I said, "Well, if I drop dead on the way home, at least I'll have had this."

B: Do wives have something to do with that? The wives of the presidents?

M: No, I think in this particular case that it was President Johnson. You see, here again, President Johnson, as the majority leader of the Senate, was constantly in the White House and he knew what it did to your spirits, where Mr. Kennedy was never a member of the leadership in either branch of Congress. He said after he was president that he wished he had known how powerful Congress was. But it's just as easy to keep them happy as it is to keep them mad. President Johnson had better relations and one of the big reasons was because of the two or three times that he had the secretaries down there. He always went out of his way on bill signings. If somebody from Pennsylvania was deeply interested in the bill and it was about to become law, quite often the President or one of his secretaries would call that member, and say, "Is there anyone that you would like to have come to the bill signing?" And gee, he might have a constituent, the president of a high school or college--the college would be affected by this, a bill to do with higher education. He calls the president of the university or

college and he says, "The President is going to sign HR so-and-so into law at 10:00 o'clock on such-and-such a day, and he'd like very much to have you come." Well, this is a big feather in the congressman's cap, to be recognized by the administration as having been the driving force behind the legislation. It means a great deal to him.

B: The congressman himself will not only be invited, but he would be allowed to invite--

M: Not always, but quite often. There never was any hesitancy on the part of the members to ask if they could. I never had any problem any time I wanted to go to a bill signing and if somebody was in town that was a good friend of mine, I would call Larry's secretary and ask if I couldn't be put on the list with Joe Smith. It was always done and there was never any problem. And this made the long hours and the Saturdays not seem to hurt so much.

I think President Kennedy would have come more into this. But I was talking with two members from the Massachusetts delegation one day, and there was a picture in the Washington Post of the President having members of the Philadelphia Philharmonic Orchestra down there. They played for a while and then they had a nice social evening. The two members from Massachusetts, both Democrats, were saying, "What the hell is this now! He's got the Philadelphia Philharmonic Orchestra down there and we're a part of Massachusetts Democrats and our wives hadn't been invited down there." They were mad! They were mad.

B: It's an easy thing to do.

M: It's as easy to have a good relationship as it is to have a bad one.

B: Thanks a lot, Mr. Monahan. I surely appreciate it.

M: My pleasure.

[End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview I]

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