INTERVIEW XXVI

DATE: August 26, 1987

INTERVIEWEE: LAWRENCE F. O'BRIEN

INTERVIEWER: Michael L. Gillette

PLACE: Mr. O'Brien's office, New York City

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G: I wanted to ask you about President Johnson's role in the campaign.

O: There was an uneasy situation that I referred to earlier. It would percolate from time to time in discussions. People would suggest we see if we could get the President to travel, south, southwest; could we have the President make some individual spot appearances. There were memos that went to the White House, outlining ideas we had. He did, of course, make some appearances, some nationally-televised speeches.

But it was not a close working relationship. There was a time when Hubert [Humphrey] expressed concern, reflected in some of the minutes that Hubert should have more direct contact with the President. I assumed, and still assume, that Hubert's contact with the President was somewhat limited during the campaign. My contact with him was quite limited. I felt somewhat inhibited, frankly, because I felt the campaign chairman dealing with the President was not appropriate without direct agreements between Hubert and the President.

So it drifted. There was no indication that the President wasn't in support of Hubert. There was no media suggestion that the President was not in support of Humphrey. But the President's personal role in the campaign was limited. His role, however, became more active as the campaign closed. He played a key role, in my judgment, in the last days of the campaign, particularly as the campaign closed in Texas. That attracted a great deal of attention and was helpful.

G: What did he do in that regard?

O: Well, appearance with the candidate. I believe the record will show in the last few days of the campaign, the tour of Texas was widely acclaimed. The President's contribution to the events in Texas was an important factor in closing out the campaign with a high level of enthusiasm and confidence.

But, to summarize, the best I can recall is that there was some contact. There was some contact by memo and there was some direct contact, but very limited on my part. I'm not familiar with the degree of contact between Hubert and Lyndon Johnson during that period. Hubert, on at least two occasions, expressed concern to me about the President in the context that we probably should have more contact with him and more

involvement with him. And as I said, my feeling was that that had to be worked out between Hubert and Lyndon Johnson. The indications were that the President was going to devote time and attention to the campaign. It would be my responsibility to keep the President totally apprised and work out with him or his staff what his personal involvement would be. But it really never reached that level of activity, as far as my end was concerned.

G: Was it more of a situation that the problem of persuading the President to become involved when he was reluctant to do so or of the campaign not wanting him to become involved?

O: I think there was probably a little of both. There were people in the campaign who felt that a highly visible presidential role would not contribute to the campaign. I must say they were a minority and their views certainly didn't affect me. My feeling was that if the President was willing, political reality indicated that there were areas of the country and particular types of events the President could make an impact on.

To pursue it directly with him--I didn't feel it was seemly. Until Hubert Humphrey would say to me, "I have talked to the President and the President wants to do the following and he has several openings that he's reserving in his schedule. You be in touch and work out the details to maximize the effort that he's willing to expend."

But it seemed when Hubert would talk about the President to me, it was more a concern that the President might feel we were aloof, that we had not focused on this aspect of the campaign and steps should be taken to bring about greater presidential involvement. My response to Hubert was, "I think the appropriate procedure is for you to have a discussion with the President. And in general terms, you and he agree on what he's willing to do. Of course, having that opportunity to utilize him in the campaign, we will do everything to make sure that's properly handled."

But it sort of drifted. And there were, as I say, occasions when it would become a topic of discussion. I know that I sent a lengthy memo to the White House to the President outlining my thoughts on what activities he could engage in, carefully stating, of course, that it was entirely up to him but we would be most pleased if he could do some or all of these things. I don't recall any follow-up.

G: To what extent do you think his March 31 announcement that he was not going to, in effect, be involved in politics while he was trying to bring an end to the Vietnam conflict have on this political involvement in behalf of Humphrey?

O: I think you can't overlook some aspects as this evolved, going back to his announcement of non-candidacy and his statement of nonpolitical involvement. His sole concentration would be on the resolution of the war for the remainder of his presidency. I think that set the stage for non-involvement. But you have to also recall that at the convention in Chicago regarding the negotiations on the Vietnam issue, there was the clear indication at

the height of this negotiation on language that Hubert's attempt to clear it with the President or discuss it with the President, at least in my presence, failed. He was unable, although he was vice president of the United States, to communicate with the President at the Ranch. I remember there were three or four of us, perhaps, in the room when that occurred and it was a source of obvious embarrassment.

Then there was the other aspect, extending an invitation to the President to attend the convention. That was done and the President declined. There was the John Connally aspect saying, "The President is being mistreated and I'm so disturbed I'm about to put his name in nomination." Now, that was a threat he made for his own personal reasons. But that was the climate in Chicago.

Then the next major development was the Salt Lake speech of Hubert Humphrey. The President was advised in advance that the speech was going to be made--"in advance" probably meant just prior to the taping of it. Who called whom in the White House? I don't recall. I think George Ball had some involvement with it and Hubert directly. Throughout that night in the hotel in Salt Lake, Hubert, while he didn't articulate it or probably made only fleeting reference, was concerned about what the President's reaction would be.

Following that speech, there were probably a couple of occasions when Hubert expressed concern to me about the President's limited role in the campaign and that we should be probably more aggressive in trying to pursue him. And as I said, my response was, "Hubert, why don't you work it out with him? Take a few minutes and work it out with him and we'll implement it." I don't know how strongly the President reacted to Salt Lake but I have to assume he reacted negatively. And the President, being a solid Democrat in the final analysis, did restate his staunch support for Humphrey. That was in the climactic days in Texas. That basically was the role of Lyndon Johnson in the Hubert Humphrey campaign.

G: There was described in Humphrey's autobiography an occasion to which he was campaigning in Maryland and had an appointment with the President at the White House, came in and the appointment was canceled at the last minute. And Humphrey really vented his feelings, I guess, to Jim Jones. Do you recall that episode?

O: No, I don't.

G: There were a lot of assertions that LBJ was not helping Humphrey in other ways as well. He could have done more to advance a Humphrey candidacy. Was this just the case, do you think?

O: I think in the area of fund raising, for example, with the terrible difficulties we experienced he probably could have done more. I don't know whether anybody ever asked him. In that phase an incumbent president is in a position to be of some considerable help, taking the time to call long-time supporters and urge them to be more active and be of some

financial assistance. I'm not talking about speech making, public pronouncements, and the rest; I'm talking about inside campaigning. And I don't recall noting anything particularly in that area that you would attribute to the President.

G: Two areas in particular: one, there was a fund, I guess in the President's Club account, of approximately six hundred thousand dollars that had been collected, I think, from corporations in some sort of published volume, I think, back in 1964, 1965. I know that people in the Humphrey campaign wanted this money freed up for Humphrey's use. Do you recall the efforts to get that?

O: Yes, I recall a good deal. I recall Bob Short and others being very exercised about it in their attempts to get the money released. I recall a lot of negative comments concerning the failure to act. That did create a great deal of disturbance among the Humphrey people. Obviously, a great disturbance to Short and others that were involved in the financial side. I don't recall I had any involvement in attempting to negotiate that.

G: Why wasn't the money released?

O: I really don't know. I think it probably is an indication of foot-dragging, a little reminiscent of experiences I had personally in politics. The principals are not engaged in activities or failure to act in a negative or derogatory sense. But people who are close to the principals sometimes have a tendency to over-react. There's a far greater tendency on their part to make negative comments or carping criticisms. I think the six hundred thousand dollar fund would be an example of that.

I don't recall Hubert Humphrey exploding regarding it. I don't recall that I had any in-depth discussions with anyone regarding the fund. I was aware of its existence. I was aware of our dire need for the money and I was aware of the efforts that were being expended to release it. But I was not directly engaged in any negotiations.

G: Were there any legal obstacles to using the fund for that purpose?

O: I don't recall that there were. If there was some technicality that people were presenting, suggesting, "We'd be happy to do this, but--" I don't think on the Humphrey side there would be any acceptance of that argument.

G: There was also the question of the Humphrey campaign getting access to the membership list to the President's Club, so that the campaign could solicit directly these wealthy contributors. Do you recall any negotiations to get that list?

O: I don't recall specific negotiations but I do recall there was considerable concern expressed by all of us on what we construed to be undue delay and lack of cooperation in that area. It follows the same pattern as the six hundred thousand dollars. As far as many of us were concerned, there were clear indications that the "Johnson people" were most reluctant to be cooperative and were not forthcoming. That would be an example of what we

construed to be a lack of cooperation.

G: Was this primarily Arthur Krim?

O: Arthur Krim was involved. I believe Duane Andreas became a participant in discussions. Of course, our treasurer, a long-time Humphrey supporter, Bob Short, was an aggressive fellow who had a great burden on his shoulders. He made tremendous sacrifices on Hubert's behalf in the campaign and was not kindly disposed to delaying tactics or failure to cooperate.

I have never been a fund raiser. I rarely got even indirectly involved in that aspect. My concern would be, which I would express to Short, obviously almost daily, we had this program that had to be financially supported. It was up to him and Fred Gates and others who were close to Humphrey. There was this fellow Paolucci. There were wealthy people. Duane Andreas is another good example. There were a half a dozen people who were dedicated to Hubert, who had made tremendous personal contributions. They, in turn, were trying to solicit additional funding. Bob Short was the center of that, in terms of his full-time responsibility in this area.

G: Well, let me go back to a question that I asked earlier, with regard to the source of the problem. Was it that LBJ simply was unwilling to jump in on Humphrey's behalf? Or was it a question of him not being sufficiently asked to do so? If you were writing this yourself and coming down on one side or the other, in retrospect, what was the problem? Why wasn't the money freed up? Why didn't Johnson do more? Why didn't the list become available? Was it, do you think, a question of LBJ simply not being approached directly and asked? Or was it a question of him just not being willing to--?

O: I think there's fault on both sides. Johnson's people were not as forthcoming as they could have been. Whether that was under direct orders or from the feeling Humphrey somehow had deserted Johnson in Salt Lake, I don't know. That's one side. The other side is a little more clear to me. I don't think the effort was expended by the Vice President directly to push the issue with Johnson. As you point out, the climate was not very pleasant. If the vice president has an appointment with the president and he arrives and his appointment is canceled, that's an indication that something has gone awry.

Now, how did it all start? I think Salt Lake had a real impact on Lyndon Johnson. And I think it probably dried up some potential funding. It certainly had resulted in some foot-dragging on the part of people who could have been more helpful. They were known to be close Lyndon Johnson associates. And Hubert Humphrey, with concern about his relationship with the President, would from time to time try to focus on it.

Clearly over a period of time, there was not the relationship between the White House and the Humphrey campaign that should have existed. I think all of us chose not to overplay that or give it undue attention. We probably all had the attitude--the President is on the record supporting Hubert; we see indications he could be doing more, his people

could be doing more and that's disturbing to us, but this has not created visible strife that would attract media attention. Humphrey was concerned or nervous about it. That was the uneasy situation that existed.

G: Yes.

O: And as this campaign in the last two weeks became a true contest, the end result was expressions of interest and enthusiasm. Support began to flow and it fed on itself. There was a major change in the last two weeks. The statistics, of course, support that. With that, you had a president, out of the White House, helping his party's candidate. Then, of course, you had the action on Vietnam that occurred just days before the election, which was widely considered to be an effort on the part of Lyndon Johnson to be helpful to Humphrey.

G: Was it?

O: Who can tell? But, certainly, with rising expectations, that was most welcome from our position. We embraced it with enthusiasm, feeling that it certainly would have some contributing aspects to it. It was considered a plus. Some pundits and observers felt that it might have been an overt attempt on the part of Lyndon Johnson to help Hubert Humphrey. There might have been an element of that in it.

G: Nixon certainly felt that that was the case.

O: I can understand that. Actually, the timing would indicate the President, rather than making some routine comment--"You know I support Hubert Humphrey. I hope Hubert Humphrey wins"--that really isn't very newsworthy--took an action that became a dominant story to inure to the benefit of the Democratic candidate. It happened prior to the election and it had a positive impact on the campaign.

G: The critics charged that Johnson was, in fact, playing politics with the war because this was the very move that he six months earlier said would endanger American lives.And suddenly the week before the election, he decided it wouldn't endanger American lives.

O: I know. But the fact is that the thrust of Johnson's efforts from March on was to resolve that war. Certainly he was entitled to change his view on the impact of that action. That may have political overtones and I'm not dismissing that. But the fact is that of its own weight, it holds up. I would certainly not fault any president to have a change of view as he tries to achieve the goal that is most difficult with a limited time frame.

G: Within that context, did Johnson feel that Humphrey was eroding his position in terms of trying to get the North Vietnamese to make concessions to--?

O: I can't speak for the President. We have been discussing campaign strategy, campaign policy, campaign activity, and total support was not there among the Johnson people.

There's no indication you could place that at Johnson's doorstep because certainly the record shows he consistently supported Humphrey.

But did he feel that Humphrey and his political maneuvering to achieve the presidency had caused additional problems in terms of what he was attempting to do regarding Vietnam? Clearly, the President didn't feel that the Salt Lake speech added a positive dimension to his efforts. How negatively he looked at it, obviously, I don't know.

G: Then we move to the Nixon campaign and the White House information that Nixon was perhaps causing the South Vietnamese government to drag its feet, in terms of coming to the peace table. To what extent were you and Humphrey aware that this was going on?

O: I wasn't to any extent, other than some discussions would lead to questioning Nixon's role. But I was not privy to clear evidence of direct contact which would prove the case.

G: Give me an example of how it would come up.

O: There were a small number of Humphrey advisers who were quite suspicious of the Nixon role. They would focus on it in general discussions fairly often. And if there were activities of this nature, we had no evidence to support it. I would be apt to dismiss it, say, "That's wishful thinking." So, the pursuit of Nixon in this area, from the campaign level, was certainly minimal.

G: Did Humphrey ever talk about this element in retrospect at the time of the election?

O: Some of this type of discussion took place in his presence.

G: You don't think he ever felt or expressed the sentiment to you that he should have used this information against Nixon?

O: Actually, when this information finally developed into something assumed meaningful with the Anna Chennault situation, it was very late in the campaign. It was not brought to my attention. This is not general conversation or wishful thinking. This is something at least potentially significant. Should you go or not go? You don't have documentation, but it's beyond the point of thinking wishfully or being suspicious. There's something clearly there. We were convinced of that. But I didn't focus on that until, I'll have to say, probably forty-eight, seventy-two hours before the election.

What happened was I went to California. I had close-out meetings with our California people, trying to utilize my time over those last couple of days as effectively as I could--not at some rally in Texas, or being with the candidate.

All of us fanned out across the country. You'll note we closed out the meetings around the twenty-fifth of October or something like that, expressly to have everybody fan out into the grass-roots.

Humphrey came into Los Angeles very upbeat. I'll have to say I was upbeat because the reports I received on the Texas venture were upbeat. Humphrey was the old Humphrey, with all his enthusiasm. Actually, it was evident in Los Angeles in his touring of the city. This campaign was coming to a great upbeat climax.

Now, in that atmosphere, there was a brief discussion with Hubert on this matter. I recall it was hasty. He's going somewhere; I'm going somewhere. It probably didn't last more than a few minutes, and I must say my focus wasn't total. But it did penetrate enough for me to realize that Humphrey had sufficient evidence of Nixon involvement to consider going public. But it was also clear that he really didn't want to discuss it in detail with me. Not that he was keeping me out of the circle, but he was wavering and leaning towards leaving it alone.

G: Did he seem shocked by the information or did he seem to think that it was scandalous? What did he say to you?

O: He expressed deep concern, made a couple of references to Nixon personally, "What kind of a guy could engage in something like this?" He was, I guess you'd have to say, shocked.

But now, in the context of what knowledge he had, I think what came across to me was his concern about utilizing it--whether it was justified, whether there was enough evidence so he could hold his head high and not be accused of playing cheap politics at the end in a desperation effort to win an election. But the fact is he did not indicate he was prepared to discuss it in detail with me. He let it hang there.

If he'd discussed this in detail with me and I'd really focused on it, I would have pressed him hard to go. I think he knew that and he wasn't prepared. We went through the glorious Los Angeles events into the close on Monday night late, and onto an airplane to Minneapolis where the subject wasn't discussed.

G: Earlier in the campaign, there were a series of Humphrey statements, almost anticipating what he wanted the administration to do, troop withdrawals. He made a statement in Houston which was contradicted by the President at the American Legion Convention in New Orleans.

O: Yes.

G: Do you recall these I guess you would call them his misstatements of--?

O: Yes, and I'm sure aggravated the White House. Whether you're discussing Vietnam or any other subject with Hubert Humphrey, his greatest admirers, his closest friends, were constantly trying to turn him off. You saw references in our discussions and our committee activities--have him just stay with the statement, no off-the-cuff comments.

After Salt Lake, there was concern on our part because he seemed to be taking a variety of positions on Vietnam that didn't relate as he bounced around the country. In every instance, it would be offhand comments that he would make, not prepared text. We were urging him to let people interpret what he said in any way they want to because they are now anxious to interpret what he said in a favorable context.

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O: Even the peaceniks wanted to say, "Hubert is a changed Hubert," because they wanted to support him.

Finally it did settle down.

(Interruption)

G: [Do you have any] particular recollections of the White House reaction to that statement in Houston that--?

O: No, I don't.

G: Let me ask you about some other issues in the campaign. One that Humphrey describes in his memoirs tied to funding was a group of oil men visiting him in Waverly and apparently offering to contribute money to his campaign if he would support maintaining the depletion allowance at the current level, which he refused to do. Do you recall that?

O: I recall his refusal. I was not at the meeting or privy to it.

G: You think that was a significant loss of money, of financing, for his campaign?

O: Yes.

G: Do you?

O: That happened in a couple of other areas. I don't remember the details. My admiration for Hubert probably was further enhanced, even though you said, "Oh, my gosh." (Laughter) "The empty pot now has a hole in it."

G: Was this the textile manufacturers that--?

O: I believe so. I recall there was an offer that was pretty crass. All he had to do was formalize a position and their pockets would be open. There would not be specific figures, but this would open the door. Hubert had a tendency to react from the gut and dismiss from his mind the fact that we're broke, which was admirable.

The aspect of the fund raising I referred to that took place at the Waldorf late in

the campaign for media over the last two or three weeks was, no one present at that meeting was asking for anything.

G: No strings attached?

O: These were fellows who had a great admiration for Hubert. When they were loaning money that day, I don't think there was a man in the room who had a real expectation he'd ever see that money again.

This was aboveboard. They had the resources and you'd make the plea on that basis. You could not make the plea, "Hand me two hundred and fifty thousand dollars." That was not the right approach so there was in the context, "Would you loan me two hundred and fifty thousand dollars?" Or loan the campaign. It was on a loan basis and after the fact, there was one participant who seriously came forward and reminded us that we owed him the money and that it should be repaid. I'm sure it wasn't, but the rest I never heard from.

G: Really?

O: I don't think Hubert did.

G: Yes. Was there a formula for resolving the campaign debt or as much of it as possible, a percentage of it?

O: The problem with the campaign debt is that you lost. If we had prevailed, everyone would have had their loans repaid and every debt would have been paid off. But we were left with the devastating situation of having lost and leaving behind, with the Democratic National Committee, a significant debt. We had been able to scurry around to pay current obligations, the ones that you had to pay. That was primarily media. But as far as the other debt, travel, airlines, telephone, all of that added up to several million dollars--it was a Democratic National Committee problem. We'd have to leave that to others in the future, which is not unusual in a campaign. What was probably unusual was the extent of the debt.

G: Was there an attempt to settle those debts for, say, twenty cents on the dollar or something like that?

O: Yes, there were efforts. There were some settlements in the brief remaining period that I was involved. Bob Short was a committed fellow.

If you had a twelve hundred dollar debt with some little printer and you had twelve hundred dollars, he got the twelve hundred. When you got to airlines, telephone, you weren't in a position to pay it off, then you were into negotiations of so much on the dollar. Every candidate for president has engaged in that. I remember Senator [Hugh] Scott of Pennsylvania proposed that a political party had to pay its debt a hundred cents

on the dollar. Clearly it was aimed at us. Republicans have always been in a position to pay debt. They have a surplus while Democrats invariably, even in good times when you do prevail, spend a good portion of time trying to pay off debt while in incumbency. When you're out of office and have a debt, you're left pretty much naked.

G: Well, it was in effect a way to get de facto financing in the campaign from, say, corporations if you simply didn't repay the loans.

O: It was debt legitimately owed. There was no reluctance on the part of the airline to give you credit or the telephone company. That doesn't mean that you shouldn't pay the debt, but there is some give and take.

But that doesn't apply to some printer. Those people are entitled to have a priority. That's the way I looked at it. If you had a hundred thousand dollars Bob Short would say, "Let's look at the list. Let's start at the low numbers." Those are the people who in most instances are not in a position to absorb any debt. So you'd clear those up and as you move up the list, then you're to negotiating.

G: Let's look at some other issues. The Nixon campaign pressed hard on law and order and attempted to give the impression that Humphrey was soft on crime.

O: That's right and Humphrey took a strong position on law and order. We had controversy regarding this position. That's reflected in the material. I firmly believed that, regardless of the Nixon posture, the climate of America was such that the average American would look carefully at a candidate in this area and would expect him to take a strong and, indeed, tough position. I felt that way personally. There were those who felt Humphrey was going too far, that he had placed too much focus on this issue and justice should be emphasized to a greater extent. Many of his liberal friends expressed concern. But we did take what I thought was a strong, solid position and a consistent one in that area.

G: How about nuclear proliferation and the whole movement late in the administration to have a Soviet summit to restrict the proliferation of nuclear arms? Was this a genuine difference between parties and the two candidates?

O: There was a clear difference. That was a comfortable issues position. It was consistent and it did point out a void between the two parties.

G: What was the significance of the Fortas nomination here?

O: Political significance?

G: Yes.

O: That played both ways. Our feeling on the Fortas nomination was that this is a key nomination in terms of social progress, assurance of a liberal bent on the Court. I don't

recall we had any particular trouble with it. There was a strong position on Fortas. The Jewish community had a particular interest. That was about the extent of it.

I don't recall the Abe Fortas nomination becoming a pre-eminent issue. From our polls and I believe reflected in Gallup and Harris, there seemed to be two overriding issues: Vietnam and law and order. Some law and order aspects were brought into focus to some extent because of George Wallace's candidacy. There were other issues that impacted on single-issue groups. But the broad-based issues of that campaign were Vietnam and law and order.

Interestingly enough, on economic issues I recall suggestions he made that, "You can't go before the American people and advocate raising taxes. But you can go before the American people advocating reducing taxes and it's probably not a good posture to go before the American people in neutral." There were those among us who felt Hubert should have been more aggressive in tax reduction. Jim Rowe mentioned at one point he never knew of a candidate who didn't advocate reducing taxes. Well, since then we've known of a candidate advocating raising taxes, and it was a disaster.

G: Nixon wrote in his memoirs that had Wallace not been in the race, he would have won in a landslide comparable to Eisenhower's in 1952.

O: I don't know whether he would have won that big. We carried Texas, but it would have been extremely difficult in a two-man race. The Wallace vote was significant, although Wallace dropped considerably in the polls as the campaign progressed. The fact remains you could identify the Wallace vote as traditional Democratic.

G: But the question is, would the vote have otherwise gone to Nixon or would it have gone to Humphrey in this particular [campaign]?

O: That is the question. You could put a number on it. You could split it. What you had was blue-collar support for Wallace with heavy law and order. It was traditionally pretty much Democratic. Wallace isn't on the ballot and it's Nixon and Humphrey. For Nixon to play the numbers game, saying it would have been a landslide comparable to Eisenhower is a gross exaggeration.

G: Would it be accurate to suggest that Wallace hurt Nixon more in the South and Humphrey more in the industrial states?

O: That would be accurate. I think the Texas situation is a good example. It would be hard for me to contend we would have carried Texas if it had not been a three-man race. On the other hand, I would conclude that we would have carried New Jersey if it were a two-man race. Wallace hurt Humphrey greatly in the industrial North and Northeast. And he had an impact adverse to Nixon in the South and Southwest.

G: With this regional differentiation in mind, did the Humphrey campaign ever advance

Wallace's candidacy in places where they felt that it would impair Nixon?

O: We didn't attempt to advance his candidacy but we were less anti-Wallace in those areas. Our tendency was to let Wallace play his game. There wasn't any real impact we could make anyway. Try through labor primarily and through our own resources to blunt the Wallace negative impact on us in the North and Northeast. We were aggressively trying to do that.

G: Okay. Let's look at some of these. You've discussed New Jersey. Were you surprised by the outcome in New Jersey?

O: Yes. I focused on New Jersey on the basis of political history. Looking back over prior elections, a New Jersey win would have projected in my mind a close Humphrey victory. A New Jersey loss would indicate you were on the downside. I focused my attention on New Jersey in those early hours after the polls closed, by direct communication with Governor [Richard] Hughes and the state chairman.

I was reluctant to accept their initial report that was pessimistic. Hughes was very candid. He said, "It's going to be close but it doesn't look good." New Jersey, to me, is a significant early indication. Hughes called me back. I talked to Hughes again until it was all over in New Jersey. That was it. You just couldn't wishfully think any further.

I did not suggest to Hubert that he concede. In fact, I went with him to the ballroom where he stated, "It is early. It's premature to reach any conclusions." He remained optimistic and went back upstairs.

It turned out to be a sufficiently close election so that when I left Minneapolis, the next day I went directly to my office at the national committee to have people explore a recount in Illinois. I felt strongly, having lived through Illinois on the win side, that there could be hanky-panky in southern Illinois and it was conceivable that we could make an effort on recount. I remember talking to Danny Rostenkowski and others. As the hours went by, this went aglimmering. There was no effort on our part to do that.

I focused there because of my knowledge of that state. People talked about Dick Daley and Cook County, but if media had made an effort they could have looked at southern Illinois and have found a rip-off in the Republican strongholds of that state. But be that as it may, that wasn't pursued. If Illinois could have been turned around, that might create a gray area in the electoral college.

G: How helpful was Mayor Daley in that election?

O: Very much so.

G: Was he?

O: Yes, completely aboard.

G: Humphrey wrote in his memoirs that he had written off Illinois too soon, that if he had devoted more attention to it--

O: I think you could say that, with that extremely close margin in Illinois. I'm sure it's exactly what Nixon went through in 1960. You're bound to go to the next stage. We should have put more resources in Illinois, made a greater effort there. That serves no useful purpose. It's Monday morning quarterbacking.

G: The assumption is that the resources would have had to have been taken away from someplace else.

O: Sure. The statistical game is interesting, probably, but it is rather meaningless. You can take the popular vote and spread it around--a half a percentage point here or one vote in every thousand there. You could drive yourself mad.

G: In general, did you feel that your own polling accurately reflected where work was needed?

O: Yes. We had to lean on some of the other polling, state polling and local polling. Our polling was more limited than we would have liked and so we would evaluate polling available to us and make our decisions accordingly. We were closer to reality in our internal polling than the poll results that were nationally disseminated. I recalled some of our discussions on polling in the campaign. Some sources gave us earlier poll results than the press, a week later or five days later.

We were frustrated trying to sell the media on something that we were firmly convinced of. And I was totally frustrated. A pundit would say you're down twelve points when I was absolutely persuaded we were down eight. He's talking about eight points and I'm persuaded we were down four or five and he's talking about six points and I'm persuaded that this has developed into a horse race. In each instance I couldn't sell. Consequently, we were never able to generate timely public reaction--and it's there.

Polling is extremely important and poll results have an inordinate impact. The rapid movement of that campaign over the last three weeks and the polls weren't catching up. We were catching up, because we'd get the quickest and earliest results from our own polling and one of the national polling organizations. It's going to take four or five days before some pundit will say, "O'Brien has a point there." But he'd just laugh it off when I would talk to him. Now, you've lost another four or five days of movement. That was extremely frustrating. If you were playing a con game that would be one thing, but we were believers in those last three weeks. We knew something really dramatic had happened out there in the countryside.

I remember the reverse of that in 1960 when I flew to Hyannis on election day.

Despite the fact that Monday Gallup Poll showed but a three-point margin, I believe, I was convinced we had a very comfortable win. As that night unfolded it turned out otherwise. In the Humphrey-Nixon election, I was absolutely persuaded we were in a horse race. And we were. But the pundits weren't persuaded.

G: Let's talk about Ohio for a minute, another pivotal state that you lost.

O: It followed the basic Ohio pattern. We weren't able to overcome in Cuyahoga County in Cleveland the results coming from the rest of the state. I don't recall anything in terms of the campaign in Ohio that was significant. We were in another tough, close race. State by state you can see these close margins. There are people who have said it probably would have been just as well if Humphrey was soundly defeated in 1968 because from where he started and where he came from with all the problems, it was a terrible blow. To realize that with additional money or an additional week or two, it probably would have been different. You dwell on that. I still dwell on that. That was the most difficult result I was ever forced to accept.

G: If the bombing halt had come sooner, a week sooner, let's say, would that have made a significant difference?

O: Conceivably. If it had come earlier, perhaps it would have had a more significant effect. If it hadn't come at all, those election results might have been a little different. So you take what you can get and be thankful for it.

G: There was some discussion in your campaign policy committee minutes and in the press and elsewhere of what if the election were thrown into the House of Representatives.

O: Yes. There was discussion in media and internally with us. I never devoted a lot of time and attention to it. It was extremely remote as I saw it, no matter how you played the numbers. Why devote an inordinate amount of time during the middle of the campaign to this subject? That was titillating to students of government and the press.

(Interruption)

Our position was established early and I guess requires some clarification because of some offhand comments Hubert had made at some point.

There was discussion of deals, that Wallace and Nixon had worked out a deal. We simply stated there was no such thing as a deal. We had no interest in a deal. The closest we got to anything like that was Gene McCarthy's comment, "Why don't you support me in New York and California and I'll get the electoral votes and then we can discuss the matter." I'm sure he was being facetious.

G: Humphrey was, as you say, quizzed by the press with regards to whether or not he would support the candidate that attracted the most votes, the plurality.

O: Yes. I don't think he made a definitive response.

G: Yes.

O: Which was the appropriate position to take.

G: You mentioned being in Minneapolis on election eve, election night. Let me ask you to recall as much as you can of that occasion. You did say in your book that emotions were high that night.

O: We moved into Minneapolis with real enthusiasm. It had taken a long time, but we were upbeat and we fully anticipated a close election. We were confident that a close election could turn in our favor.

The long election day that everybody experiences was with some of the staff, Joe Napolitan. There were others, Ira [Kapenstein] in my suite, being sure they had the appropriate contacts to keep abreast of the results as they came in. The Humphreys were in a suite on the same floor down the hall with a handful of relatives and intimate friends.

As the results started to come in, the tenseness rose because the expectancy of a close election was being borne out and, obviously, your hopes rose accordingly. I don't think there were many, three or four weeks earlier or even two weeks earlier, who would anticipate an election night that would have the suspense that one did. I recall a movie actor who had staunchly supported Hubert drifted into my rooms. His name was Gene Barry. He had other movie-type people with him and were invited to sit down. They were enjoying themselves and quite relaxed while we were becoming more tense by the minute, to the point where Joe Napolitan erupted and ordered them out of the suite. I think it was just an indication of the tenseness that we didn't want laughter in the background. We needed concentration. I would go down the hall to the Humphreys' suite from time to time, visit there. It was relatively quiet. There were some early favorable results and real enthusiasm in the suite. That enthusiasm was not at the same level in my rooms because it was generated by watching television sets in Hubert's suite. His friends, who would not be as politically alert as we were, made some assumptions that were exaggerated off early returns.

I've mentioned New Jersey, but there were probably some other indications from Ira and Joe and others making contacts around the country that kept us reasonably optimistic. But as the hours wore on, optimism waned. New Jersey was a blow to the solar plexus. It was to me.

The time inevitably came when demands were made on Hubert to make a statement or make an appearance. He and I discussed that and by the time he made his appearance downstairs, we were not nearly as optimistic as we had been earlier. We were finding it more difficult as the minutes went on. So he agreed that he would go down,

take Muriel with him, and simply tell the press that it was too early to come to any definitive conclusions. And I remember saying, "I'll go down with you," because I felt that lonely vigil was beginning and I wanted to keep him company.We came back upstairs and as I mentioned earlier, Bryce Harlow wanted to talk to me and that call was never completed.

It drifted into the early hours of the morning to dawn. It was over. That's the way an election night plays out when you're on the wrong end.

Tape 2 of 2, Side 1

G: [You'd] not had a lot of experience with being on the wrong end of the column until this.

O: No, actually it was a new experience. The only other experience remotely like that, but was infinitesimal in comparison, occurred the night that Bobby Kennedy lost the Oregon primary. It's not very pleasant to move through a losing election night, because at the presidential level, I've always considered election night somewhat comparable to the final game of the World Series, the NFL Super Bowl, and the NBA's final game all compressed in one event. It is overwhelming--the excitement and enthusiasm and joy that can emanate from election results when you're a winner and the depths of despair when you're a loser. You think about it as an event every four years that is really, truly an American event, the way we conduct campaigns. When you think of the effort that has been expanded, in some instances years of effort.

The culmination in victory is almost beyond your capacity to cope with. Your joy and enthusiasm reach a dimension that I've never experienced in anything else in lifeBy the same token, in loss, you reach a depth of despair that I probably haven't experienced in life. That night in Minneapolis has been burned into my memory.But of course the night in Hyannis is also burned in my memory in reverse.

G: Did this give you a desire to be out of politics for a while?

O: No, I had planned that in any event. I had faced up, as I recounted, to the need to direct my life more appropriately in terms of my responsibilities.While I had been on a roller coaster in terms of the private sector through those months, I have no doubt in my mind that I would have gone into the private sector if Hubert won. Even though I failed in some of the commitments I had made, the fact is, at that point in my life it was essential that I have some game plan for the future. You couldn't achieve any plan if you were to remain in the political arena.

So I didn't have a reaction that this is such a disastrous situation that I didn't want any part of politics anymore. I had made that decision early on. Within a couple of days I went to Ireland. I stayed in Ireland to try to unwind for a week or two. And I came back to face the realities of the future.

One of the most poignant moments in my Hubert Humphrey experience was the night before inauguration. Hubert had called me and suggested he and Muriel would like to drop by our house. And they did. It was emotional as far as I was concerned because the purpose, as it turned out, was to thank us. Muriel thanked us for what we had done and, as they saw it, the sacrifices that we had made in their behalf. And they regretted that it had turned out the way it had, but they wanted us to know then the deepness, the sincerity of their appreciation. I couldn't believe it because this man was destined the next morning to sit on the platform and see his opponent sworn in as the president of the United States. He'd have to be there as the outgoing vice president. I focused on that as we were chatting, that he could be as pleasant, as normal and natural as he was for the hour or so they spent with us that early evening, having to go through this heartbreaking situation the following morning. In personal terms, that made a great impact on me and on Elva. It certainly enhanced--there was no need of it but it enhanced--our high regard and affection for both the Humphreys. I never met finer people in my life and never had a more rewarding association.

G: That night in Minneapolis was Humphrey gracious in defeat?

O: Yes, he was.

G: He didn't blame the press?

O: No, he wasn't Nixon in defeat, I can tell you. There was nothing like that. He was very much the man I admired.

G: Let's move back to Lyndon Johnson for a moment. It has been argued that LBJ was not a good party leader, that he allowed the Democratic National Committee to wither away, that he placed the party machinery in a position that lost a lot of governorships this year, in addition to the White House. Was Johnson a negligent party leader in that respect?

O: He was basically in the same role as Jack Kennedy. I was in the White House with both. I, more than anyone in the White House other than the President, should have been sensitive to and concerned about the party structure. After all, I had been deeply involved in the party structure. But I found that my attention was directed elsewhere, that the state of the party was not a matter I focused any great attention on over those years. I say that only because I noted that presidents have a tendency to do the same, unfortunately. We had only fleeting involvement with the Democratic National Committee during the Kennedy years. The President's reaction to the national committee was that it is where a great debt lies that somehow I'm personally responsible for and it's necessary for me to defray that debt. There would be a desire to be helpful in defraying the debt. But I did not get the sense that the Presidents, Kennedy or Johnson, looked to the national committee for guidance or support, or indeed looked at it as a viable entity that was meaningful. It was neglect. It wasn't purposely done. Both Presidents showed a lack of party leadership, which is part of their role. The president of the United States is commander in chief and the leader of his party. With the third hat, attention wanes. We

looked to the national chairman, certainly in the Kennedy period particularly, as a fellow who could take the heat when things didn't go well in appointments or patronage. We did not consider that the chairman should be very much a part of White House activities and interests. By that, I mean being present. An occasional invitation to a social event to the chairman seemed to suffice.

That was much the same in both the Kennedy and Johnson periods from my White House perspective. I take some blame for that. I firmly believe, in retrospect, that I would have been listened to, at least by Kennedy; with Johnson, maybe not to that extent because I didn't have the long-time, close political relationship with him. But I think he would have listened if I had done more than express passing concerns from time to time. If I had formalized procedures, some activities that would directly relate the national chairman to the president and to the administration, it would have been helpful in terms of party organization across the country. By the time we arrived in the White House, we didn't feel any great sense of debt.

(Interruption)

The 1960 campaign was waged basically independent of the existing structure in the national committee. We took over the resources and the office space of the committee. We named a chairman, Scoop [Henry] Jackson, and then John Bailey became chairman after the election. But it was the Kennedy organization, as we saw it, across the country that had achieved the victory.

And the years drifted on. If presidents gave a thought to the national committee, it wasn't in the sense that, "The national committee can be awfully helpful, effective in promoting my program, in off-year elections and the upcoming national election." The role of the national committee in the election context wasn't really focused on. I don't remember any meaningful discussions with the Presidents in that area. As things unfolded, you became totally absorbed in your role as president, commander in chief. Lyndon Johnson had won in a landslide. He had become president through the assassination and then won on his own. The national committee was responsible for convention procedures and all that sort of thing, had some degree of involvement in the campaign--we've recounted that. But, again, was the national committee the focal point for the campaign effort? The answer would probably be no. You implemented and utilized it. It was a help, obviously.

So the accusation that Lyndon Johnson did not prove to be an effective party leader is an accusation that probably could be leveled at just about everyone, back to probably after the second term of Roosevelt. Jim Farley in the Roosevelt era was in a unique position. He was a cabinet officer and also party chairman. People didn't frown on that sort of thing in those days, didn't consider it unusual. Jim Farley was involved directly with President Roosevelt. He had been a long-time confidant and associate of his. They had a break later on and went their separate ways.

But after that, for example, when the party was out, Paul Butler made a major effort to activate the national committee and have an effective organization. He was turned back by the Democrats in Congress consistently with all the efforts he expended. I remember I was privy to some of this as an observer. And I remember feeling that Butler was mistreated by the Democratic Congress. And he was. He was dismissed out of hand.

So the strength didn't lie there. As the years unfolded, you have, and it's the case today, Senate and House Campaign Committees. They engage in major fund raising. Contributors across the country to the Democratic Party will contribute to individual members of Congress, Democrats, collectively. I found I did not relish the experience of sitting at the head table at a congressional fund-raising event that was probably raising a million dollars that night, as chairman to the Democratic Party with a nine million dollar debt when none of the proceeds would go to the Democratic National Committee. The Democratic National Committee, as an entity raising funds, has possibilities that improved over recent years.

Let's get back to the President; was he an effective party leader? I think in the climate of those years and the perception of the Democratic National Committee in those years, particularly when the party's in power, it was such that you can't fault presidents and say, "Well, he lost governorships and lost that election because he failed to be an effective party leader." I think there were too many other elements of this that have to be considered in that regard. Neither President I was associated with purposely wanted to diminish the role of the national committee or render it ineffective. It was just a matter of lack of focus on the party organization full time. I regretted it, having been in the national committee. I understood it. I was sensitive to it, but I did nothing about it.

G: To what extent was it a matter of personnel if a close ally of Lyndon Johnson had headed the national committee instead of John Bailey?

O: It would have had some effect in that President Johnson would have paid more attention to the national committee, have a sense of greater responsibility toward the committee. While John Bailey wasn't an intimate, close associate of Jack Kennedy's, they had known each other for a long time and Bailey had been one of the first supporters of his candidacy. So the relationship, on a personal basis, was a pleasant one--two fellows who had known each other a long time and Jack Kennedy liked John Bailey.

So, with Lyndon Johnson, if he had somebody intimate or close to him as national chairman, the fellow could have had access to the President. There just wasn't that kind of relationship or interest in the Oval Office. With President Johnson, I believe he was desirous of having his own man in place as national chairman, a person directly accountable to him and closely associated with him. But I don't think beyond that, if that were the case, he would be greatly involved. As I've discussed in earlier interviews, we were informal patronage dispensers in my office. When some member of Congress would be turned down, John Bailey might give him the bad news. We'd do that quite often. I'm not suggesting that was proper procedure. I firmly believe in a national party and a

national structure, but I'll have to say I haven't seen an effective national party that is ongoing, fully financed, in a position to carry out the programs you envision. That is a glaring weakness in the system.

Now, the Republicans never have financial problems. I'm not familiar with how they function as the out party. But you go back a long way to find a strong national chairman who had the kind of relationship I would envision with the President. And that goes back to Ray Bliss. At least by reputation, he was the Republican Jim Farley.

It's a vehicle that has utilization. But it does not play the role I envisioned and still envision. Maybe that is coming. The national chairman currently, Paul Kirk, as chairman of a party that's out, is working arduously at his task and I think is doing all the things that a chairman should do. With the advent of federal financing of national conventions, it's a different situation. You have some of the financial burden off your back. That has to be helpful in carrying out your responsibilities.

Back to Johnson and Kennedy, I didn't detect any particular difference in approach and attitude towards the national committee with either of them. There was the same sort of neglect, not purposely, but due to overriding circumstances. You just don't focus on some office downtown somewhere.

G: You mentioned several sessions ago how complimentary President Johnson was when you left the cabinet to join Robert Kennedy's campaign. I'm just wondering, in retrospect, when you were in the fall of 1968 managing Humphrey's campaign, did you sense any residual dissatisfaction that the President may have had with you for your earlier alliance with Robert Kennedy?

O: No. I didn't. I recall my conversation with him when I submitted my resignation. I recall his immediate public reaction, and he really extended himself to ensure that, as he said, all the accolades were there. His appreciation as expressed to me was total. I detected no reservations.

G: You never sensed through [James Rowe] or Humphrey or anyone else that he resented your working for Bobby?

O: No. It may have been there, but I never sensed it. I visited with the President shortly before he was leaving office and I was leaving office as national chairman. We had a long and very interesting conversation.

G: Tell me about it.

O: There was a good deal of reminiscing, reflecting on the good days, the legislative successes, the Great Society, all of that. He was departing and I was departing. We had shared a lot. He talked on at length. He was very warm and extremely pleasant. I remember that it was extensive because Jim Jones, on at least two occasions, interrupted

to remind him of his next appointment. He dismissed him saying, "I'll be with you later." And then on the second or third interruption saying, "I'll tell you when I'm ready. Larry and I haven't finished."

It was heartwarming to me because I had not had any meaningful contact with the President since I had departed, other than those references I made. He seemed to have all the time in the world to visit. He talked about his family's direct involvement with Vietnam, and so did I because my son was serving in Vietnam. Finally, I thought it was appropriate for me to close it out if I could. I told him he was way behind on his schedule and I really appreciated the opportunity to visit with him. We wished each other well.

He asked one question through all of that, "Who is Hubert going to name as national chairman?" As I recall the timetable, the decision had been made; it hadn't been announced. I had suggested Terry Sanford to Hubert. Hubert, for his own reasons, selected Fred Harris. He felt he owed him a debt. That was understandable. So I said to the President, "It's my understanding he's going to name Fred Harris." And the President shook his head negatively.

G: Really?

O: I don't recall a comment specifically, but clearly he didn't think that was the right decision. I don't know what to say other than that. But when two men put their arms around each other and say goodbye, if I had created any problems or any negative attitude going with Bobby or whatever, it wasn't apparent that night and it wasn't necessary for him to spend that amount of time with me as we both closed out our activities.

G: Did he indicate that there was anything in his presidency that he would have done differently?

O: I don't recall that he got into that specifically. He did reflect on the torment of Vietnam and the tremendous difficulties that it brought --and he did say that--that he had done the best he possibly could, that he had been dedicated to the resolution of Vietnam, that any failures in that regard throughout were not of the heart. His heart had been with it. He did not fault anyone for the escalation of the war, as I recall. I knew he felt strongly about the advice he had gotten from William Westmoreland and others and probably even the Defense Department.

But none of that came into this conversation. It was just a man, ready to pack up, feeling that despite the Vietnam disaster he had done the best he could and had dedicated himself to the job, and that he felt comfortable with the record.

G: Did he speculate any on the Nixon presidency to follow?

O: I don't think we got into that.

G: Rehash the Humphrey campaign?

O: No, we really didn't do that either. It was more a personal discussion. We had something to reminisce about. That was the legislative program, obviously. The only moment I would consider a little off the track was his inquiry regarding who the new national chairman would be. Other than that, we discussed our respective families, reviewed the era. We were really saying goodbye to each other. And, as I say, if there were any problems, I never sensed them.

G: Okay. I want to ask you about a couple of the assertions raised in the book that we've discussed before, ***Citizen Hughes***. One is the assertion that Hughes, of course, was trying to prevent nuclear testing and that he had commissioned [Robert] Maheu to offer LBJ a million dollars, perhaps for the Library, perhaps for the School of Public Affairs, something, to stop the proposed nuclear test. Were you aware of that and did you ever take this up with the President?

O: No. I never had any discussions with the President regarding Hughes on any matter. I believe that book indicated, if it didn't state, that I arranged for the meeting. I not only didn't arrange the meeting, I was not even in the White House. I had long left the White House before that supposed meeting. It did take place because Bob Maheu talked to me about it since the book you referred to. I have no knowledge of what conversation Maheu had with Johnson at the Ranch. I was not privy to the meeting and I certainly had nothing to do with arranging the meeting.

But in the conversation I had with Maheu since the book, he was chuckling telling me about the instructions from Hughes. Apparently, he got instructions up to and almost moments before he went into the meeting that he dismissed out of hand. It's a story that you ought to get from Maheu. I don't recall the details, but there were several humorous elements to it.

When the book came out, at some point I had a conversation with Jimmy Jones. He had no recollection, as the appointment secretary, of ever having any discussion with me about any meeting. In fact, he took the occasion to verify that in the records.

So I was at a total loss. That wasn't the only item in that book that threw me. I finally learned what you can be subjected to--the libel and slander--without recourse if you're a public figure. The book was replete with misstatements and outright lies to achieve the writer's objective. I unfortunately agreed to meet with this character for an interview. I refused to meet further when I learned about his despicable background. He was in possession of stolen documents; he had been indicted with Abbie Hoffman for drug sales to underground cops. Hoffman was convicted but this fellow wormed his way before another grand jury and claimed he was present as a press observer, which was laughable. In addition, he had fled California to avoid testifying in the criminal case involving the stolen documents. That was the type of contemptible character he was.

Like so many others, I simply had to endure it. There is really no recourse under the law if you're deemed a public figure. I was invited on some TV program with this fellow, but there was no way I would lower myself to the level of association with a man of this stripe under any circumstances.

G: A couple of his assertions concerned the 1968 campaign, one suggesting that Maheu's friendship with [Edmund] Muskie was partially responsible for Muskie's selection as vice president.

O: That is as far from reality as you can get. Maheu had no more to do with Muskie's selection than Khaddafy. It's ridiculous.

G: Another point that he makes is the suggestion that Hughes contributed significantly to Humphrey's campaign.

O: I just don't know. The only time Maheu's name came into conversation between Humphrey and me was when I had the long discussion with him in Chicago that night. And I had made a commitment to the Hughes people. They were becoming clients of mine, along with the networks. I mentioned Maheu specifically. He talked to Maheu in my presence as he was one of those he called to ask for a postponement of an agreement. It was a brief conversation and his request was readily acceded to. He also talked to [Frank] Stanton of CBS and to the publisher I was dealing with on a book. He made no reference to how well, if at all, he knew Maheu. I never conceived that he knew him. He was just a name along with Stanton and the publisher. The calls were made back to back and that was it. I had no knowledge of any relationship or whether he received contributions or didn't.

G: In one particular case, the author asserts that you received twenty-five thousand dollars for Robert Kennedy's campaign after Kennedy's assassination and turned it over to Steve Smith.

O: That's accurate. I had made public comment on that years earlier. Maheu, in a visit to Washington, told me--this is after Bobby's death, of course--that he had made a commitment early on to Pierre Salinger, to make a contribution to Bobby Kennedy's campaign. He said that he felt conscience-stricken because he did not fulfill the commitment and could I arrange for the money to be forwarded to Steve Smith. I said sure and he gave me an envelope. I never saw how much was in it, but I believe he mentioned twenty-five thousand. I did not open the envelope. That was in the evening. The next morning I called Steve Smith in New York and I told him that I had this envelope that Maheu wanted to get to him, and Steve said, "Fine." He sent a fellow to Washington on the shuttle. I turned the envelope over to my secretary, Phyllis Maddock, and the fellow came to the office and picked up the envelope from Phyllis Maddock. Maheu had said he considered it a contribution that still was valid because he knew there was a campaign deficit and this could be applied to the deficit and it fulfilled the commitment he had made to Pierre during the course of the campaign.

I was not aware, obviously, of the commitment. It was a matter of sending the envelope to New York. Maheu wasn't going to New York and would I get it to Smith.

Tape 2 of 2, Side 2

G: [Could I get you] to elaborate on your trip to Ireland in November of 1968, after the election?

O: I felt the dire need for a change of scenery. Over there, I was contacted by Irish television and the Irish press. The election was still fresh in their minds. So I went through a couple of interviews. Then a television show with a live audience and four panelists invited me for an hour. This was a program that had achieved prominence in the country. I agreed to go on it. One of the panelists was a daughter of John Huston, but the one that I wound up in some controversy with was a professor at Trinity College, who apparently was well known in the country. He proceeded to discuss the campaign and the election in the United States in rather negative terms.

G: What did he say?

O: Well, he started to ridicule. "All you people do is have rallies and have balloons and bands and you don't have any serious substantive discussions." I took affront. I rather enjoyed it, as a matter of fact. He and I entered into an extensive discussion of American politics. I was rather sharp with him and he with me. It relaxed me.

In any event, this was my first night in Ireland. Then as I traveled the country, to my amazement, at every stop, people were recognizing me from that program. Most complimented me on what I had done to the professor. Apparently, they had been waiting to have somebody take him on. But that was just the side bar of the Irish trip. I stayed in Ireland ten days, and then back to reality.

End of Tape 2 of 2 and Interview XXVI

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Legal Agreement Pertaining to the Oral History Interview of Lawrence F. O'Brien

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 21 of Title 44, United States Code, and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth, I, Lawrence F. O'Brien of New York, New York, do hereby give, donate and convey to the United States of America all my rights, title and interest in the tape recordings and transcripts of the personal interviews conducted on September 18, October 29, October 30, December 4, December 5, 1985; February 11, February 12, April 8, April 9, June 25, July 24, July 25, September 10, September 11, November 20, November 21, December 17, December 18, 1986; April 22, April 23, June 18, June 19, July 21, July 22, August 25, August 26, September 23, September 24, November 3, November 4, December 10, December 11, 1987 at New York, New York and Cotuit, Massachusetts and prepared for deposit jointly in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library

This assignment is subject to the following terms and conditions:

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(2) The tape recordings to which the transcripts relate shall be in the possession of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and shall not be available for use or review of or by any source during my lifetime and for a period of time thereafter ending with the 10th year anniversary of the date of my death. At such time, access to the tape recordings by researchers shall be permitted but only for the limited purpose of background use, and researchers may not cite, paraphrase, or quote therefrom under any circumstances.

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Signed by Lawrence F. O'Brien on April 5, 1990.

Accepted by Donald Wilson, Archivist of the United States, April 25, 1990.

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