INTERVIEWEE: RICHARD M. SCAMMON (Tape #1)

INTERVIEWER: STEVE GOODELL

March 3, 1969

G: This is an interview with Mr. Richard Montgomery Scammon, who is presently the Director of the Elections Research Center, Governmental Affairs Institute. Today's date is March 3, 1969.

By profession, I understand that you are a political scientist, that you attended the University of Minnesota; and in 1935 you got your B.A., and in 1938 you received a master of arts at the University of Michigan. May I ask you what those degrees were in?

S: Political science. Actually, the original baccalaureate degree was more general in the social sciences with a major in political science, and the master's degree at Michigan was specifically in political science.

G: I see. I have also that from 1939 to 1941 you were a research secretary at the radio office at the University of Chicago.

S: Yes.

G: Then in 1945 you were with the Department of the Military Government--or is that the military governor?

S: During my military service I was assigned to a military government unit. Then at the end of the war these people who were in military government working for the Army were transferred from military to civilian status. At the end of the war I was in a little kreis in northern Wurttemberg, in Bad Mergentheim, as a military officer. I was transferred down to Stuttgart with the state detachment as a military officer. Then I was, as they called it, civilianized--transferred over to the civilian component with the

military government zonal office up in Berlin on General Clay's staff.

G: And at the end of the war 1945-1946 you were with the political office--

S: In military government, yes.

G: Then from 1946 to 1948 you were with the Chief of Political Activities Bureau, the Civil Administration Division in the Office for Military Government for Germany. From 1948 to 1955 you were the Chief of the Division Research for Western Europe with the Department of State. Then from 1955 to 1961, and then in 1965 until the present, you were the Director of the Elections Research Center, Governmental Affairs Institute.

S: That's right.

G: From 1961 to 1965 you were the Director of the Bureau of the Census in the Department of Commerce. In 1963 you were the chairman of the President's Commission on Registration and Voting Participation.

S: Yes.

G: And then from 1966 to 1967 you were the chairman of the United States Select Committee on Western Hemisphere Imigration.

S: Select Commission on Western Hemisphere Immigration.

G: I'm sorry, my mistake. You are a member of various political science academies and associations, and you are a writer and a lecturer. If you would like to add anything to that, by all means please feel free.

S: No, I think that just about covers it.

G: I'd like to begin this interview if I can by focusing on your experiences from 1961 to 1965, serving both under President Johnson and President Kennedy. You were appointed the Director of the Bureau of the Census in 1961.

S: Yes.

G: This is a political appointment?

S: Yes, this is an appointment made by the President with the advice and

consent of the Senate. My appointment was, as I recall, announced in the winter and then confirmed by the Senate. I was onboard in the Bureau of the Census in the Commerce department just about four years--one tour of duty, so to speak--for the first years up until the assassination under President Kennedy, and then the last fifteen months under President Johnson.

G: This is an interview which is concentrating on the Johnson years that's going to the LBJ Library, but I wonder if you might like to discuss the circumstances of that appointment in 1961.

S: I think that they were interested in having someone who was a statistician, or at least had some statistical training, who had had some experience in government administration as I had with the State department. So I accepted this appointment, taking leave from my present work. I wasn't quite sure at the time how long I would stay over there, and I never talked to the President about it personally prior to the appointment.

G: Who contacted you?

S: I think Lou Harris. He had done, you know, the polling work for the Kennedy people in 1960. I knew Lou, and I think he was the one that talked to me about it first. Yes. Then I think one or two of the people who were handling personnel recruitment for President Kennedy --Dungan, I think, was taking care of some of the recruitment then. I'd have to look back. But I talked then with the Commerce people.

Of course, as you know, this kind of position--I can imagine this might be a little difficult because it's a Presidential appointment but in a department under another Presidential appointee. In this case the Secretary was Mr. Hodges, a very fine person and a man for whom I've always had the greatest respect--just really a perfect person to work with--not really in

connection with what you're doing, because my recollection is that Mr. Hodges left shortly after the change of Administration, did he not?

G: I think so.

S: January--

G: I think he stayed beyond the '64 elections, but within the year I think he resigned.

S: Yes. Then the gentleman who came on who was with the drug people--I don't remember all the details, but I know it was very pleasant working with him. As I say, we worked there.

Of course, one might say about the Census Bureau that though it is a political appointment, it has very few political overtones. I think this was true of my predecessor, Mr. Burgess, a Republican, and it certainly is true of my successor, Ross Eckler. There really isn't a great deal in the way of political work. It's sort of like several of those things over there in the Commerce department--the Weather Bureau, which is now I believe called the Environmental Sciences Administration; the Bureau of the Standards; several of these positions which are political in the sense that they're appointed by the President and approved by the Senate, but you wouldn't regard them, I think, as partisan offices.

G: What was your idea of what your duties would be when you were appointed to this post?

S: Primarily what they turned out to be--namely, managing the Bureau of the Census. It's a big organization, some 4500 or 5000 employees. Its primary task is managerial, and the relation of the Bureau to other work in the Department of Commerce and in the government-at-large, but primarily managerial. There are many programs going on over in the Bureau because of the dual function; that is, at one and the same time the sort of

benchmark keeper for the whole country in terms of the census work and also the statistical agency of the Commerce Department, dealing in such matters as building trades statistics, foreign commerce, domestic commerce, and so on. It has a dual function, and it has been carried on along these lines pretty generally in the past, and as far as I know in the last few years under Mr. Eckler the same way. But my work was primarily managerial.

G: Does the Census Bureau provide the statistical data which then might be used, say, for example, by the Department of Labor--Bureau of Labor Statistics--to compile things like unemployment?

S: Yes, the Bureau of the Census provides the basic data from which the monthly unemployment figures are later derived by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. And a great deal of the material on poverty and the rest has been done in Census. As a matter of fact, last year, as I recall it, there was a joint publication by BLS and the Bureau of the Census on the status of the Negro in terms of educational achievement, poverty, all the rest. So particularly in recent years, I think the social statistics of the Bureau have come into greater and greater use.

G: Correct me if I'm wrong, but I am under the impression that the 1960 census was by far one of the most accurate and one of the most comprehensive that had been done. Would that have been for the reason that it was in the year computers and the computer processing system was used for the first time?

S: No. There are always problems in census taking with respect to the people you don't get. Some of these have been highlighted by Mr. Moynihan, for example, particularly in the ghetto. No, I would say that the computer is of great assistance here, but primarily in terms of speed and scope. In other words, you can do so much more when you can computerize the operation.

Things that used to be done had to be done by adding machine or, if you take it back far enough, simply done by hand. And the Bureau has always been a pioneer in the work in computerization. As you may know, the old punch card system was invented in the Bureau by Hollerith when he was an employee of the Bureau--because it has been such a tremendous data handling mechanism.

The computerization has been very helpful, mainly though because while it is true there is a measure of accuracy involved here, there are built-in systems of checking and accuracy. The main thing though is the speed and the volume which you can process through computerization.

G: What kind of criteria is used in the compilation of a census? Is it simply a matter of contacting everybody and asking certain questions?

S: No, there are variegated levels. For example, there are certain basic questions that are asked of everybody--sort of name, rank, and serial number--your name, your relationship to head of household, and so on. Then there are some that are done on a 25 percent sample, and there are some that are done on even smaller samples than that. The desire, of course, is to get meaningful data at the small unit level, even down to the block if necessary, certainly the enumeration district which is a thousand, perhaps, people. And your sampling devices depend upon the degree of accuracy you want in your local unit data. So there are several levels at which this material is taken. The basic questions, however, remain very few. There's usually a good deal of discussion in each census year about asking a lot of questions--bathrooms for example, income, and so on--but these are usually done on a sample basis.

G: Has the issue of the invasion of privacy ever been raised?

S: Oh, yes. It was raised in 1960 in a small way. I think it's raised

probably in every census. And there's a balance here that I suppose one has to achieve.

On the one hand, the values of the data are incontrovertible. If you didn't have them, you'd have to get them some place else. In other words, you mentioned to me that you were working primarily in the poverty area. Well, if you didn't have data about poverty and housing and income and jobs, you would simply have to go out and get them somewhere. On the other hand, equally obviously it is not the business of government to harass the citizen up-hill-and-down-dale, asking millions of questions about his private life. Somewhere in-between the need of the society for the data on which to base its program, and on the other hand, not only the need, but the right of the citizen to privacy--somewhere there's a balance that you try to strike.

G: What kind of challenges are made on these grounds of invasion of privacy? Would it simply be a resentment against somebody coming and asking questions generally, or would there be more specific instances?

S: At the present time there is an effort I know on the part of some members of Congress to restrict the question-taking of the Census Bureau to what you might call these basic half-dozen items--your name, color, age, relationship to the head of household, and so on. And this could be done. The difficulty, of course, with this is that if it were done that way, and if the other questions which are asked were made voluntary, then it's quite possible that the data you've gotten on a voluntary basis would be invalid in the sense that you have no guarantee that the people who didn't answer the questions would fall in the same categories and percentages as those who did. If this happened to be the case, then each agency of government that was concerned with these problems and needed the data, like HUD, or HEW, and so on, would have to go out and commission their own

surveys--or the Congress would have to approach the expenditure of these billions of dollars in money, in ignorance. As a taxpayer, I wouldn't want them to approach these problems in ignorance.

At the same time, it would seem wasteful, and probably in the long run cost you more money, to have each agency of government going out and asking its own questions of the 200,000,000-plus Americans, plus the fact that some might say that the individual agency of government was asking the question loaded to its later appropriation advantage-- So as I say, it seems to me that what you really try to do here is to get some kind of balance between the need of the society for data on which to base its program work in improving the general level of life on the other hand, the undoubted right of the citizen to privacy. You try to reach a balance.

G: Did you ever encounter any problems in '61 - '65, when you were Director, about the sampling techniques themselves? Is this a perfected technique?

S: I wouldn't say perfected in the sense that if you use perfected as perfect, I don't think anyone who is engaged in the sampling work would ever really feel they had a perfect sample in the sense that you probably never have an absolutely round ball, you know. You get it pretty close, but not perfect. It doesn't have the mathematical accuracy of two plus two equals four.

But I think that the samplers and those who handled the sampling and survey techniques at the Bureau were pretty confident that they had reached a high degree of sound approach in their sample drawing. They were always trying to improve, and they had the great advantage of scholarship in the sense that they understood that they were not perfect. This is, of course, one of the prime needs. If you ever think you're perfect, then you've got

problems. Under Maury Hansen, who was the Assistant Director for Research and Development while I was there, and a number of others who are working in the field, I think they were constantly striving to always hone up this technique. I think they were pretty good.

G: As a non-statistician and one somewhat mystified by the whole process, I'm continually confounded by the results--or so-called results of things like the Nielsen rating in television. One wants to question this kind of judgment which is made on the basis of these--

S: All surveys are imprecise. Some are more imprecise than others, and I wouldn't want to pass a judgment because in the case, for example, of the Nielsen ratings that you cite, I just don't know enough about the sampling techniques of the Nielsen people.

One problem obviously is that the more perfect your sampling, the more it costs--just as the larger the sample, the more it costs. And here again, is another kind of balance between how accurate you want to be and how much you want to invest. If you could get the accurate responses of every television watcher in America, then you'd have a pretty good survey. But this would be so enormously expensive nobody would do it. I just don't know enough about their techniques to make any judgment.

I had a feeling when I was at the Bureau, and I think this was borne out by people in the survey field all over the country and even in other countries as well, that the Bureau's program was as good as could be devised--allowing always for the imprecision of the instrument, allowing always for the fact that this is a human undertaking performed by human beings.

G: Could the Bureau of the Census do special surveys by request?

S: Oh, yes, it does a great many, as a matter of fact. For example, the city of Rochester or Monroe County--a number of local jurisdictions around the

country ask the Bureau from time to time to make special censuses at the expense of the local community--largely because in certain states allocations of state money--tax revenues--are based on headcount. If you take a newly incorporated community in California, for example, that may have gone up from 5,000 people at the time of the census to 50,000 people five years later, if they can get a capitation arrangement on rebate of money from the state with a new figure, of course they want to take it. I think it's fair to say that this tends to increase as you get further and further away from the specific date of the census. Now obviously, if you've lost population, you're not interested in doing this, but areas that have gained have done it.

The Bureau does some on its own, mainly for testing devices, you know, for improving its technique and methods, particularly prior to a census like the 1970 one which is coming up.

G: This is the ten-year census.

S: The decennial census that's coming up, yes. I know my former colleagues have been taking special censuses for the last few years in various places. Usually they try to go in for test censuses in the difficult places because there's no point in them taking a census in a sort of upper middle class suburban circumstance. Then the fact that they may be moving in this next census to a mail census means that they've had to test this out in a number of places. We were doing a good deal of this while I was there and more since I left.

G: What are the limitations of the kinds of questions that would be asked in a census? In other words, what is it that you're taying to find simply beyond numbers, ow what could be?

S: That's really all you're trying to find. You certainly are not asking people's opinions or attitudes about anything. You're just really asking

them such questions as ethnic origins, where was your mother and father born, how many years of school did you complete, did you walk to work, did you drive to work, did you take public transportation to work. This is about it. There really aren't questions asked of the census which are not capable of fairly specific factual answers.

Now, there are some judgment questions, for example, housing. You will get a question of dilapidated versus deteriorating versus sound housing condition which is a judgment that must be made by the enumerator. But mostly you're not asking people for opinions or viewpoints. You're just asking really fact situations, some of which may have to be fact in the sense of interpretation by the interviewer as to what the condition of the house may be--something of that sort.

G: What prompts that question is a more general kind of question which I think would involve more than simply the Bureau of the Census, but would have to involve agencies like the Council of Economic Advisers, the Bureau of Labor Statistics and so on; and that is, for example, in the compilation of the poverty line, I would assume that the way that is arrived at would involve not only your Bureau, but other criteria--

S: I would suppose so. I'm not really privy enough to the technique here, but I would presume that if you were saying, what is poverty--if someone were to ask for a definition--I am sure that the census people would be consulted but, after all, this is as much a social judgment as it is a matter of fact. Someone has pointed out the poverty line for a young intern in a hospital who is making relatively little money but presumptively will go into orbit financially as soon as he gets his shingle, you know, is one thing. Or the same thing is true, for example, for an unmarried twenty-year old PFC in the Army. I mean, his cash income in terms of what you pay him may not be

very much, but I would not say he was at the poverty level. On the other hand, you might find a large family in an urban area where a fairly large income would be needed to even maintain it at the poverty level. But these kind of questions, you're quite right, would really not be determined by the Census Bureau.

G: And they are judgmental questions. As I say, what prompts this is an article by Arthur Ross which you may have seen in the Washington Monthly a couple of months ago. I think it was the January issue. As a former statistician in the Department of Labor in the Bureau of Labor Statistics, he does get at this problem of judgment, not only in terms of the way the data is used, but the construction of questions. Sometimes the question itself has a built-in bias which will then color the kinds of response.

S: Let me put it this way. It shouldn't have. If the question is capable of being biased, that bias ought to be offset, and I think most people would agree with this. But, as you suggest, I think this would be a question which would have to be determined by other agencies than the Census Bureau.

G: The census really doesn't get involved in this sort of thing.

S: It might be asked for its judgment. When I was there, we had--and he's still there--Herman Miller, who is a great and highly regarded statistician of poverty. I'm sure his judgment would be asked on some of these matters. But the real judgment as to what constitutes poverty would not primarily be in the hands of the statisticians. It ought to be in the hands of the social scientists.

G: I have asked you about special censuses. While you were there, did the President or the White House, either under Kennedy or Johnson, ever ask for any special kinds of census-taking?

S: No, not that I can recall. We'd get inquiries occasionally from members of Congress, although usually that had to do with other matters. For example, members would frequently call with respect to getting an estimate of population in their district, because under the rules of the House of Representatives, if a member was certified as having over half a million people in his district, he was entitled to another clerk. This was also true in the Senate, though I've forgotten the exact formula in the Senate. You can imagine the members both in the House and Senate were interested in getting that extra clerk. They would call from time to time. I think one or two members probably called about certain kinds of statistics in foreign trade if their constituents were involved. I know there was one question involving our classification of towns and urban areas in New England because of the special kind of arrangement used as to what's urban, and what isn't urban, in a situation in which the New England town system is more or less like the European--the gemeinde in Germany of the commune in France. But I don't recall anything from the White House or the Administration generally asking for any kind of special censuses or special counts of anything. We'd get calls occasionally asking what is the population of so-and-so. Somebody down the line in the White House might be writing a speech or something--that sort of thing.

G: Was there any relationship with private polling companies like Harris or Gallup? Were they able to use your data?

S: Let's put it this way. We had no relationship with any of them, either private or academic, except through personal acquaintance. Now, many of the people who did survey work in the Bureau know personally many of the people in the NORC and ORC and Audits and Surveys and so on, because they're all engaged in the same profession of survey research. And I'm

sure obviously the basic census data forms the base for a number of the sample drawing exercises of private survey market research type people--how many people have you got, how many are colored, how many are white, age patterns, and so on, But other than that, no.

G: I'm not quite sure how I should phrase this, but you did meet the Presidents respectively, Kennedy and Johnson, while you were Director?

S: Occasionally, not very often. I was out there in Suitland and I met Mr. Kennedy two or three times, I suppose, and Mr. Johnson maybe three or four times.

G: What were the circumstances of those meetings?

S: I'm just trying to remember. Let's see. One, of course,that I remember particularly with Mr. Kennedy was just before he was killed. It was a political meeting and had nothing to do with the Census Bureau--when they were planning the organization of the campaign in 1964--just ten days before he was killed.

G: I'd kind of like to get into that a little later on.

S: Yes. But this had nothing to do with the Census. Really it was more personal judgments.

G: You hadn't met President Kennedy before he became President?

S: Not in a personal sense. I had been in reception lines and that sort of thing. I remember once he was making a speech years ago at I think it was one of the local women's clubs here in Washington. I was up at the front table because I was making some little comment about the book I was just bringing about. That was about all. But I would not say that I knew him, no. He might have known my name, but he could easily have passed me in the hall and never recognized me--that sort of thing.

G: Why don't I withhold that? What I would like to get into towards the end

of this interview is some personal impressions that you might have, and you might offer them for both Presidents.

I'd like to turn if I can to your experience as chairman of the Select Commission on Western Hemisphere Immigration. Would you first of all tell me what that is simply?

S: It's out of existence now. This was a commission that was set up by the public law of 1965 which changed the basic immigration law in this country. It was set up to be composed of five members of the House, five members of the Senate, and five public members. It was to consider new policies with respect to immigration in the western hemisphere as opposed to immigration to the rest of the world. You see, the western hemisphere had been exempt from immigration controls until the 1965 law was passed, and then the ceiling was put on it, but in one of the compromises connected with the passage of the legislation, the House and the Senate agreed that they would set up a commission to study this. This was set up. There were five Senators, five Congressmen, and five public members, of which I was chairman. I must say, though, we never had any contact with the President on any of these. In fact, we never even met with the President.

G: How did you happen to go from the Bureau of the Census to this commission?

S: This was after I had left the Bureau of the Census. You see, I left the Bureau of the Census in the winter of '65, January-February of '65. If I remember correctly, this appointment was in the summer of '66.

G: Had you come back to the Governmental--?

S: Oh, yes. You see, I was only on leave from the GAI. I really regard myself basically as a political scientist working in the field of elections here and have been for these past fourteen years, simply being on leave as head

of the Census the way one would be on leave from an academic appointment.

G: In other words, whoever it was came to see you to ask you if you'd do this--

S: As a matter of fact as I recall one of the people around the White House, and I can't tell you who it was because I don't remember, called me to ask me for some names of people who would be useful in this work. Of course I said, "I don't know much about immigration." I gave him a couple of public types like Leo Cherne of the Research Institute of America, who I felt might be helpful to them.

And then a few months later they called me--as a matter of fact, they called me down in Santo Domingo, I remember I was down there with the OAS, and asked me if I would take the chairmanship of it. I said yes. They never did say why, but I think actually what happened, quite frankly, is that they set up the five Congressmen and the five Senators, all of whom were people who had specialized in immigration questions, and probably all of whom had strong views. They wanted to get someone as chairman, first of all, who was a public person not in the government, but who knew enough about how the House and Senate worked and about how Washington worked so that he wouldn't stumble all over his feet and somebody who really didn't have any strong views about immigration, which certainly was me--I didn't have any strong views one way or the other--who had not been identified controversially with being big-immigration, little-immigration, pro-European, pro-Asiatic, pro-Latin American, whatever it might be. So I said, "All right," and we worked at it for two years. We brought out a report which unfortunately the Congress didn't act on. It didn't do anything about it. I don't know why I say unfortunately. Maybe they were right--who knows! But anyway, they didn't do anything about it.

G: Was that a public report?

S: Oh yes, that's published. As a matter of fact, we're just bringing out a

couple of volumes of hearings now--late of course--because we held the hearings in the last months of the life of the Commission and didn't have a chance to get them edited and printed until now. But an interesting assignment, an interesting group of people.

G: Could you name some of the members?

S: On the House side, Celler; Arch Moore, who is now Governor of West Virginia.

G: Of course, Celler has been involved 'way back.

S: Oh yes, from the very beginning. Pete Rodino; McCulloch of Ohio; Feighan, who is from Ohio, who is also a man long working in the field. On the Senate side, Hruska of Nebraska; Dirksen; Teddy Kennedy; Eastland, I believe--he never came around although one of his staff people came around to sort of listen and report. Who was the fifth senator--oh, Phil Hart of Michigan. And then the public members, let's see, there was the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Manpower, Stan Ruttenberg; the Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America which was Linc Gordon at the beginning, who then became president of Johns Hopkins, and in the latter months of the life of the Commission it was Covey Oliver, Assistant Secretary for Latin America; Ray Farrell, who was the head of the Immigration and Naturalization Service; and then Leo Cherne, whom they did put on the commission; and myself. Fifteen, yes.

G: By the terms of the act you were to hold hearings.

S: No, not necessarily. By the terms of the act we were simply to study the problems of western hemisphere immigration and make a report. We didn't hold any hearings on immigration as such. I think we covered the waterfront on it fairly well, established the problem, at least to our satisfaction.

What we held hearings on was the problem of the commuter on the Mexican and Canadian borders. The reason we did this was that this was a

very special problem which affected only Mexico and Canada. We felt that we would do this sort of along with the general report, but we didn't want to do them simultaneously because we did not want to really have the tail wag the dog--we didn't want to have the whole question of immigration sort of overlain by the problem of commuters on the Mexican and Canadian borders. So we didn't hold these hearings until the very end of the life of the Commission. Those are the ones that we're publishing now.

G: What were your recommendations?

S: The major recommendation was that the whole thing be postponed for a year, that the coming into force of the ceiling be postponed until we had another year to study the effects of labor certification, the requirement of having a job in this country which could not be filled by Americans.

G: What was that--1968 was supposed to be the year of its effect.

S: It went into effect July 1, 1968, and our recommendation was that the effective date of the limitation be postponed until July 1, 1969 to give us another year to study the effect of labor certification. Then we made some contingent recommendations, that if this was not deemed wise, then we recommended that certain things be done with respect to counting or not counting Cuban refugees in the quota; establishing individual country limitations, and so on.

But I think the Congress didn't want to postpone the effective date of this. The House voted to postpone it, but the Senate did not. So it sort of died for lack of action in the two houses. My own view was that it would have been wise to postpone it. I don't think we would have lost anything. The Republic would have survived. But after all, it was up to the Congress to decide whether or not they wanted to take the recommendations, and they did not. They did not opt to take the recommendations.

But that was the basic purpose of the Commission. It was set up to

study problems of the western hemisphere immigration and made recommendations about them with respect to the legislation which the Congress had passed. And that's what we did. There was a majority and minority report. The minority comprised those who did not want to see the effective date of the limitation of 120,000 put into effect, and their position was maintained more by inaction on the part of the Senate than by anything else. But that's a pretty effective way of doing it.

G: I'd like to ask you a speculative question. You came from the Bureau of the Census which is an apolitical position as you describe it, and I think you were sort of plunged--it seems to me anyway, and you can correct me if I'm wrong--but in this whole question of immigration it had very serious political over or undertones--at least it has to my knowledge--back as far as 1945, and then reached a climax in 1950 and 1952, and then in 1963 and '65. I wonder if you could answer this question. What do you think has been the nature of the reasons for the opposition to the liberalization of the immigration laws? I've seen them clothed or described as anti-Semitism, an anti-Catholic bias, sort of ingrained zenophobic attitude on the part of Southern Democrats and so on and so on. Would you care to speculate on--?

S: I don't think it's that specific. If it were that, you wouldn't have had this last legislation passed which had the effect, at least, of allowing, for example, a considerable increase in the Italian migration. I would say, first of all, that most of the questions you refer to, refer to immigration from Europe. There hasn't really been much question raised about immigration from Latin America, because it was free in the sense of not being under quota until 1968. So many of these questions which might otherwise have plagued us if the Commission were considering the total picture of immigration, were really outside our ken because we were concerned only with immigration from Latin America as such. But it is

certainly true that migration from Europe would be a question which has been involved considerably in political questions.

I think overall though it isn't so much the individual political thing as it is the general feeling that you ought to cut down immigration, broadly speaking. In other words, it's really a feeling--and I think this is shared by many people--that there really may not be enough to go around, and let's just sort of cut back on immigration. This was the feeling I know when the first laws were passed nearly fifty years ago at the end of the war, and I think this general feeling underlies much of this. I think this one underlay the 120,000 limitation on Latin America--just a feeling that, well, we've got our problems, and let's just not open up the door. You can argue this pro or con, of course, endlessly, but I think that is really the basic thought pattern that underlies most of the legislation about immigration.

G: To your knowledge, do the applications exceed the quota in Latin American countries other than Cuban refugees?

S: I don't know what the picture is now. My guess would be that this would depend on how you interpret the word applications. You see, you may not take applications after a certain number, so in a sense you never get applications because there aren't any slots available.

G: Well, are the lines outside the Consul's--

S: Oh, there are lines, yes. I just remember offhand, for example, in Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic and in Mexico there are always lines waiting to do it. I would presume, and assume, that there are more people in Latin America that would like to come and live in the United States than there are people who come and live in the United States. I think that would be a fair statement. But this gets so involved

in the mechanics of it that I just couldn't answer your question specifically.

G: Again, this is pure speculation on your part, but I had this question constructed before I asked you how intimately you knew either Kennedy or Johnson. Both Kennedy and Johnson voted to override Truman's veto on the McCarren-Walter Act in '52; yet, they were the ones who were instrumental in the revised law which was finally enacted in 1965. I was just wondering if you could comment on what you think the reasons for that were.

S: I never talked--of course, I had no reason to talk to President Kennedy about this because I was not involved in this immigration picture at all until '66--and I never talked to President Johnson about it either. I just don't know what his own view would be. I never even talked to him about the commuter problem which you'd think he might have a greater personal concern in, being a Texan, but never talked to him about it at all. Whether he's liberal or conservative or what, I just don't know.

G: Did the committee ever get outside of Washington, let's say into areas in Texas or California and so on?

S: In this last month or two when we were holding hearings with respect to the commuters, we went down into Brownsville, El Paso, San Diego, and up to Detroit-Windsor for these hearings. And then the staff of the committee went down into, particularly, Central American and into Canada. We did not go into deep Latin America because the immigration flow from deep Latin America has been relative limited. Latin American immigration has really come from the Carribean, Mexico, Canada. New World immigration--I shouldn't call it Latin.

We were in London briefly to talk with the British and get their judgment as to what their view was on West Indian immigration, because this of course has been a major question of controversy, as you know, in the UK.

And we wanted to get a judgment from both parliamentary and governmental people about this question so we could get a feeling as to what the pressure might be with respect to the United States. I must say we got a very specific judgment, namely, that the whole trend there would be minus because if anything, they might get repatriation rather than enlarged opportunities. You see, if there were totally free movement from the former British territories of the West Indies into Britain, this would probably open up--on the 120,000 particularly--a number of slots into which Jamaicans and Trinidadians, particularly, Barbadians and others, might fit here. But the very strong feeling we got was that there would be almost no immigration from these newly independent, formerly British commonwealth--or presently commonwealth, but formerly British colonial possessions in the West Indies, none at all. So that was a part of some of our feeling about postponing this thing until we could see how this work certification thing was going to work.

G: This would be on the record, I'm sure--the hearings--but to satisfy my own curiosity, what kinds of people did you have come before the Commission?

S: We tried to get a very, very broad group. We got eighty or ninety witnesses, and we got everybody. We got trade unionists, both Anglo and Mexican-American.

G: Did you talk to Cesar Chavez?

S: No, I think we invited him, but we got people from his organization. And [we] got some good agitator types, and we got businessmen, lawyers. We got a representation of a fairly substantial number of Mexican-American organizations. We particularly wanted--well, I won't say particularly wanted their view, we wanted everybody's view, farm views; worker views; employer views--and very decided differences of opinion, I must say. In fact, I must say that sometimes you wouldn't even recognize the same town when you'd get two people talking about it. According to one, it was heaven

on the earth, and according to the other one it was hell on wheels. These will all be published. They're being published now, and I hope they'll be useful because this is a controversial question and nobody yet has really taken this wide a compass of testimony. Some people have taken limited hearings--Tunney did one for a day out in El Centro, and Teddy Kennedy did one for part of a day here with the labor leaders. But we tried to get everybody, and we tried to get them all on the border from Brownsville to San Diego.

And we tried also to include the Canadian side, because, you know, people talk about commuters--they usually mean commuters coming over from Mexico. But there are some thousands a day that come in from Windsor into Detroit--a few others along the border, but Windsor is really the big commuting town. Now, there's really no problem up there because nobody says this, but really, the reason of course is that the wage scale is not different--or not that much different.

G: The wage scale.

S: Yes. So nobody really worries.

G: There's not an ethnic reason, do you think?

S: There's not enough difference between the wages paid in Windsor and the wages paid in Detroit; whereas there's a great deal of difference between the normal wage scales, say, in El Paso and the wage scale across the river in Mexico. But all this is in the testimony. You might want to read it if you're interested in the subject.

G: Right. Okay, now I'd like to turn, if we can, to your present job as Director of the Elections Research Center. I'd like to go back to 1963 where you were the chairman of the President's Commission on Registration.

S: And Voting and Participation.

G: Right. It's my interpretation, again, correct me if I'm wrong, but it

appears that you might have been involved in the kind of preliminary research which would provide data for such legislation as the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Is that so?

S: Not so much the Voting Rights Act as such, because the Voting Rights Act really was directed to one primary problem, that is, the denial of the right to vote of Southern Negroes. That was a particular question excised from the competence of our voting commission. In the executive order which set up the voting commission, I think the President was anxious not to have it just get so involved in the question of voting rights of Southern Negroes that it lost sight of everything else. He was more concerned, I gather, for the general picture of non-voting, leaving to the Civil Rights Commission and to other agencies the question of civil rights in the sense of voting by Negroes themselves. The Civil Rights Act of '65, insofar as it dealt with voting, as I recall, dealt more with this specific problem.

G: I guess I should have said the '64 Civil Rights Act.

S: Either one still dealt primarily with this. The only legislation really which would affect the kind of work we did would be legislation such as the abolition of the poll tax. Most of the recommendations we made in that commission report in '63 were legislative recommendations which would have been carried through by States, not by the federal government. Now, presumably they could have been carried through by the federal government, if the federal government had wanted to undertake general supervision of federal elections in more detail than they are now supervised. But our feeling, I know, at the time was that most of the legislative changes we had in mind would properly be undertaken either by the States or in some cases by the local authorities--like increasing the facilities for

registration, for example. As I recall, most of the recommendations we made in that report would have been recommendations of concern and of moment to the state authorities rather than to the federal government.

G: President Kennedy appointed you to this commission.

S: Yes.

G: What was the date of that appointment? Do you recall?

S: Oh my, that must have been in the late winter of '63 because we operated that commission for about seven or eight months. Yes, I think it was in March of '63. The commission finished its work during the summer and early fall, and was due to report to President Kennedy just after he came back from Dallas. Then it did report finally to President Johnson just before Christmas of '63--had a meeting with President Johnson in the White House.

G: Was that the first time you had met President Johnson?

S: I think so. Again, except for a reception line, something of that sort. I may be wrong in this, but this sticks in my mind as being the first time that I had met him in other than just a casual 450-people-at-a-reception sort of thing, yes.

G: And you had a meeting with the President, and you presented to him your report.

S: We presented the report. The usual pictures were taken, and he made a few comments for the television cameras.

G: It wasn't a private meeting then?

S: No. It was simply to present our report to him, and he chatted a bit with several members. I know he chatted with Reuther and then with me and with Mrs. Phillips, one of the women members of the commission. I suppose the whole meeting lasted half-an-hour, including the picture-taking.

G: Can you recall what he said to you at the time?

S: No, I don't really. Usual pleasantries. Nothing world-shaking certainly. How had we found the work--you know, interesting--and did we have useful recommendations to make and so on. But again, you see, we--I think it's fair to say--in contrast to the commission on immigration, the whole thrust of the material with respect to voting was at the state level. Very little of it really was at the federal level. It was really to the States we were addressing ourselves rather than to the federal.

G: Can I ask you if you were ever involved in Democratic party politics in terms of the kind of work that you--this kind of data processing and analysis of voting patterns and so on?

S: No, not in the formal sense, no. Personally I know many of the Democrats. Humphrey, for example, was a classmate of mine in college and I've known him for many years. I've known people like Paul Douglas, George Smathers, McGovern, McCarthy, on a personal basis. From time to time, we still hear, and have since '55--we get telephone calls from somebody who will ask, "Well, how did such-and-such a Congressional district vote," and so on. But the only thing that I was really involved with was in 1964 when Sorensen, particularly, in the White House was working on--this was actually before '64; this was when Mr. Kennedy was President. They were involved in trying to get together some population and voting statistics in order to make the call for the Democratic National Convention, and they asked for some help there. What are the voting statistics that they should use and so on, and I was able to lend a hand there for a bit. But that was actually before Johnson became President.

G: Were you impressed with the Kennedy people--you know the story is that in 1960 and '61 they ran a pretty efficient machine. Were you impressed with

the operation?

S: The ones I know certainly were topnotch. People like Larry O'Brien whom I knew personally, Ted Sorensen himself, Ralph Dungan, Walter Jenkins. He was not with the Kennedy people, of course; he was with Lyndon Johnson. The trouble, you know, here is getting them sorted out as to who was which, just as Joe Califano, whom I know personally, came in later. I tell you, I have found in both administrations--and I'm sure this would have been true in the Eisenhower Administration, and I'm sure it was true in the present one--the demands of the White House are so exacting that if you can't cut the mustard, you're out of there awful fast. And the people I know in there--for example, with Mr. Johnson, Doug Cater, Ben Wattenberg, who was a collaborator of mine on a book.

G: That wasn't <u>This U.S.A.</u>?

S: Yes, <u>This U.S.A.</u> And I'm sure this is equally true with the people who are there now with Mr. Nixon. You know, the White House is always a pressure cooker, and the telephone is ringing and people are demanding answers yesterday, and if you go out to lunch, you got a stack of phone slips on your desk when you come back in. If you can't measure up to the very exacting demands--and these are not just demands placed on you by Mr. Johnson as a person, these are demands placed on you by the work. After all, all the threads come together. The impression I have of the people I've known who've been there under four administrations, including the present one, is that they're pretty topnotch people. No administration really can afford a slothful person or an unimaginative person or a time-server. Life's too short there.

G: Curiously, I'm sure you've read this in some of the national media, the comment was made that Mr. Humphrey lacked the kind of professional adviser,

at least in terms of their competence and ability to analyze trends and so on, to be topnotch. You say you're known Mr.--

S: Yes, I've known him well through the years. I don't know that that would be entirely true. I think it is fair to say that Hubert was and is a man of great compassion. I think it's very difficult for him to fire anybody, you know. I think he always looks for the good side in everybody. This is not a trait that is necessarily bad. Given a humanist and an unhumanist, I might choose the humanist. But many people have said that his staff didn't serve him well. People I knew on his staff--Bill Connell, John Stewart, or the people who were close to him otherwise like Max Kampelman--I thought they did pretty well. Of course, again, you know, the old thing: I haven't worn my brother's shoes and walked a mile in them--so I don't know what their problems were. I wouldn't even want to make a judgment. Maybe I just didn't happen to know the incompetent ones, there or elsewhere. The ones I knew, it seemed to me, were pretty good, or maybe I'm just being generous--you never can tell.

G: You started to say that you were involved in 1963, that apparently they had approached you and they were making projections for the '64 election.

S: No. This was on the statistics that they needed in order to draw up the call for the 1964 Democratic convention, you see. Now, the convention normally is organized on the basis of a call that's issued by the Democratic National Committee, or the Republican National Committee, in January of the year in which the election is held. They were changing the nature of the call. They were rearranging the apportionment of delegates. And they needed some population and voting statistics which I was glad to provide for them. I worked a bit with Sorenson and later, after the President's death, with Cliff Carter on these. But that was about all. Then during

the campaign in '64, I did one briefing, I know. I did one briefing on public opinion polls for the governors. They came over to the White House just before they went up to Atlantic City, and the President's office asked me to come over and discuss the meaning of the polls. So I did that.

G: With whom did you discuss this?

S: Do you mean who did I give the briefing to?

G: Yes.

S: To the Democratic governors in the White House. I think the President just wanted to have them sort of brought up to date on what the polls were saying. Anybody could have done it. I don't know why particularly they asked me, but they did, so I did.

G: In light of the results of that election, in retrospect, how accurate were you in your--or did you make any--?

S: I didn't make any judgment. I just tried to round up for the governors the present standing of the candidates for the Presidency--that would have been about in August--and just sort of--. "This is the way they stand." I think perhaps the President wanted to have somebody outside the immediate entourage, you know, of the White House do this for them, and I was glad to do it. It worked out very nicely.

G: Were you ever asked to do a similar kind of thing later, say, in the '66 Congressional elections?

S: No, once I left the Consus Bureau--well, for example, I was not asked to participate at all in the drawing of the call for the '68 Democratic convention, to give you the comparable one. I see they used the same

formula, maybe they just figured they didn't want--you know, it had worked out once, it was all right--no, I never did any additional.

Now, from time to time, I would talk to personal friends of mine who happened to be in the White House, particularly Wattenberg, who was there as a speech writer; Doug Cater; and Joe Califano; and others who were there Cliff Carter was there in the White House--Marvin Watson. But I don't think I met with President Johnson. Once I was over talking to Cater at lunch and he got a call, and the President asked him what was he doing--"having lunch with Dick Scammon."

"Well, come on up." So we went on up and just chatted with him for about twenty minutes.

G: When was this?

S: This must have been '67, perhaps, yes. I never saw him in the White House except on perhaps two or three occasions. That briefing was one.

G: Do you recall that chat you had when--

S: No, it was just sort of general. As a matter of fact, he was more talking <u>at us</u> about Viet Nam which I was no expert on. I went over on that team that he sent over for the Viet Nam elections in '67, and the team met with him when they came back. But I did not, because I had gone the other way. They came back by Hawaii and came on back to Washington. I went on around the world because I wanted to stop off in Gibraltar for another election, and I did not meet with the President then.

Then I met with him again in January of '68, the last time I met with him, when he called me over and just chatted for a moment and asked me if I would be interested in joining his staff.

G: I hadn't had that recorded that you were on that team in 1967. Would you like to elaborate a little on that?

S: Just went over. This was a big group, you know, twenty or twenty-five--a whole planeload. We were all in South Viet Nam, split up into smaller teams, went around the country, watched the election, tried to get some general judgments about it insofar as we could in the limited time we were there. The team itself them came back. It was under the chairmanship of Ambassador Lodge.

G: Was Kissinger along with that?

S: No, he was not. Let's see, in the Senatorial, Murphy was on; Muskie; Governor Hughes of New Jersey; Governor Guy of North Dakota; Hickenlooper was there; there were some private citizens as well.

G: What were your general impressions?

S: I think it's fair to say our general impressions were that the election was held under great difficulties, of course, being in the midst of war, but that given this problem, it was probably as well conducted as could be expected under wartime conditions; with the one exception of course that the eligibility to the candidacy, which is the problem--who do you let run under these circumstances. We didn't have Jeff Davis on the ballot in the North in 1864, and they didn't have any Communists on the ballot. In that sense it was--

G: Or neutralists, for that matter.

S: That's right. In that sense, it was not a mirror-like reproduction of public attitudes--perfectly correct. On the other hand, I don't know what you'd do in a situation like this. Canadians banned the Communist party during the war; the Swiss banned the Communists and the Fascists during the war; the British threw at least one member of Parliament in jail during the war. I don't know what you do in a democracy in wartime. It's hard to say. As I say, Jeff Davis wasn't on the ballot in '64, and

I don't know who would have been on the ballot in '44 if the German-American Bund had wanted to try to run somebody.

G: I'd like to interrupt if I can. I'm not going to argue. It's not the purpose of these tapes to engage in argumentation, but let me just ask you this question. You said that you wouldn't know what a democracy does in a war. I am under the impression that one of the reasons that this group of people was sent, yourself included, was to show to the American people that indeed it was a democracy.

S: There were certainly no limitations on it. I mean, some of the members may have talked with the President before they went. I doubt it. I know I did not. And I know of none who did.

G: Given its limitations--you say you had freedom of movement and you went and you observed and so on, but given its limitations do you think that it was a valid kind of enterprise, a worthwhile trip?

S: You mean the election or the mission?

G: The mission.

S: That is a hard question to answer. I am sure that the President had in mind the value not only here, but around the world, of this kind of mission. On the other hand, there were many other foreign observers there, too, who were sent by their governments to witness the election--and a very large representation of course of the press corps. There were also a couple of members there from Congress, privately. McCarthy, for example, was there from Buffalo; and one other man, I think also from New York whose name I've forgotten. I must say it must have been one of the best observed elections in history. And some of my impressions are also drawn from some of my newspaper friends who were there like Kraft, for example.

G: Joseph Kraft?

S: Yes. The general impression that I got from the election and from the atmosphere around it was one of a fairly competent, administrative structure with an election conducted in secrecy, with a fairly reasonable right to campaign--but admittedly, an election in which because of the nature of the combat situation, there were certain elements of undoubted public support that were not represented on the ballot.

Now, one can make a judgment as to how much these people should have been kept off. For example, in some states in this country you can't get on the ballot unless you sign an anti-Communist or non-Communist affidavit. Now, does this mean that our elections are undemocratic? It's a nice question. I'd say that the same thing would apply, as I say, in any democracy that tries to hold elections in wartime. How far can you go in maintaining the structure of dissent without sort of cutting your throat? I'd leave this to the philosophers. It just gets beyond my ken as a political scientist.

G: This probably will be answered in the negative from what you've said, but again I'm following my prepared questions. Perhaps I can alter the question once you've said no. Did you have anything at all to do with the selection of Johnson in 1960?

S: Oh, no. I had never been in Democratic party politics in that sense. I've never been a delegate; I've never been an active partisan. My own personal political viewpoints, I would call sort of independent Democratic. But I'm a registered Democrat in Maryland.

G: Let me then ask you this. In talking to the people of the White House--and you have had, it seems to me, a good deal of contact with people who were either intimate with Kennedy or Johnson. Perhaps you may have picked up just in conversation and chatting with these people--do you know whether

or not this decision was made on the basis of the voter appeal that he would have? This is the conventional kind of explanation.

S: Oh, I tell you, there are a hundred stories on this. I just don't know. One must never forget that Jack Kennedy was essentially a very smart politician. Partly because he was the leader of the liberals and partly because of the tragedy of his death, many people ascribed to Kennedy a whole framework of attitudes and patterns of behavior which simply weren't there. Kennedy was really not the great emotionalist that some people think he was. He was a pretty hardheaded guy. He was also political right down to his fingertips. I think he recognized that in a tight fight, as a Roman Catholic, he needed all the help he could get and that Johnson in a sense epitomized the viewpoint of a group in the Democratic Party and in the country at large. One can always argue that he could have picked somebody else and done as well or better or worse. Who'll ever know? There are, as I say, a hundred stories about who talked to whom on what telephone at what hour or what night. You know, you can almost pick your choice there. With his death we'll never know what went through his mind, and I would say that even Mr. Johnson would not really be able to tell us what went thorugh Kennedy's mind because how can he tell, how can he know?

G: The stories are that apprently towards the end of Jack Kennedy's life when they were projecting to the 1964 elections, they were thinking about canning Johnson.

S: No, I don't believe that.

G: You don't believe that?

S: No, I don't. They--as our French friends say, "On"--who is they? Some of the intellectuals certainly--they didn't like Johnson

then; they never did like him; they don't like him now. I can see that some of the intellectuals who regarded Johnson as a sort of a quache belly-scratching peasant, and besides being conservative from their viewpoint, might very well have been spinning their dreams. But I quite honestly--and this is just a personal judgment, I may be all wrong--I just can't imagine Jack Kennedy as President of the United States and leader of the Democratic Party in the winter of '63-'64 being in any serious way concerned with this kind of undertaking. Some of the people in the White House perhaps; some of the people particularly in the fringe of the White House quite possibly; but not really the people that counted politically. As I say, this is not based on my qualifications as a statistician, this is just a personal estimate. But I would be very, very dubious. I think a lot of it, quite frankly, was just the talk and the writing of columnists who had to fill in three columns a week and didn't know what to write for Friday, you know. It was always good for something to write about.

G: It's like getting Vince Lombardi[football] and Ted Williams on the baseball teams of Washington; it gives the sports writers good copy in the winter time.

S: Exactly. A lot of this stuff is just written to fill up the column. You've got to write something. You're under contract to produce so many pieces a week, and this is always a good one to write about--dump Johnson. Really, I have never come across anything that I would regard as hard evidence of any real determination in that period, we'll say, over the last six months of President Kennedy's tenure that would indicate to me any serious thinking on his part of "dumping" Johnson.

Now, what would have happened in '68, if there had not been the tragedy in Dallas? Let's assume that Kennedy and Johnson had been reelected in '64. What would have happened in '68 when presumably Johnson

would have tried for it on his own? Whether Kennedy would have campaigned for Johnson or abstained or what, of course, who knows! That would have been five other years that we never would have known--you could never tell what would have happened under those circumstances. But at that time--the summer of '63, fall of '63--I had seen nothing which would lead me to believe that men of political power as opposed to the periphery, particularly the social periphery, had this in mind.

G: Could you describe in a general way the enterprise that is undertaken by a politician--say, President Johnson in '64, for example--as to how you go about running an election and a campaign from the point of view of you as a statistician? What kinds of analyses does he make?

S: This is almost impossible to say because it depends so much on the individual. Many people have criticized President Johnson on the grounds that he never really was a national politician; that he never really escaped the limitations of a parliamentary person, and there's some truth in this. I don't know. I really think in a thing like this you'd have to go somebody like Larry O'Brien--Larry would probably be the best of the lot--or Marvin Watson, some of the people that worked closely with the President in his campaign situation in '64.

G: How about Moyers? Would he be--

S: Bill Moyers would be good, yes, he'd be excellent. Bill's a very knowledgeable person and has great perspective and good judgment. Yes, he'd be good. But any one of these people could give you a better view, because so much of it is oriented to the individual; so little of it is related to what you might call a common body of doctrine in these matters.

G: I was just wondering--you had absolutely no kind of involvement in these kinds of things?

S: No.

G: In terms of the same topic, I'd like to move to 1967 and 1968. I have heard it ascribed to you, and again you can correct me if I'm wrong, that you were the one who coined the phrase that this election would be won by the un-young, the un-poor, and--

S: The un-black. Yes, that's right.

G: Is this true?

S: Yes.

G: Where did you say this and to whom and what circumstances?

S: As I recall, this came about a year ago in a press meeting up at the National Press Club when there were about twelve or fifteen newspaper correspondents I had lunch with. The phrase just sort of came to mind and was picked up by a number of them and used by them in stories in their various newspapers. What we really were talking about was the characteristics of the electorate in general.

G: This is you as Director of the--

S: The Elections Research Center, on, yes. This had nothing to do with--remember, by that time--a year ago, February, say, of '68--I had been three years out of government. Indeed the work of our commission was just then concluding. It was during the last month or two of the life of the commission. But in any event that commission, when I did the commission work, I was doing that as a private citizen--a public person. No, this came out of that, and they seemed to like it, and so I used it again in other lectures and meetings of various kinds, TV performances and so on. That's true. Later it got attacked some on the grounds that it was an inhumane way of putting it, but I never felt that. It was just accurate, you know. And you might not like it, but--

G: You could have said the old or middle-aged, the white, and the--

S: And the affluent. Yes, I don't know how I happened to hit on that un-un-un. It was certainly not worked out carefully. It just happened to strike me at the moment because it seemed to be the way to put it.

G: Would this be in line with what Joseph Kraft--I've forgotten the term that he used--

S: He developed a phrase later that he called "middle America."

G: "Middle America," and Eric Goldman's metro-America."

S: They're all related. Middle America and metro-America, I would think, are perhaps less biting than un-young, un-poor, and un-black. They may be better as descriptive phrases. But they all really aim at the same thing, the middle-middle and lower-middle class American who has really exploded out of what we used to think of as the working class into a new middle class.

G: Is this a recent phenomenon?

S: It's a phenomenon really of post-war years, yes, I would say so.

G: It seems to me that Nixon--I'm not sure, maybe Humphrey did also--but Nixon apparently was aiming at--

S: They both did. I think they both wanted it totally. Now, I don't claim any special knowledge. I mean, this is all there for anybody who wants to read it. The fact is after all that over 90-percent of the voters are white. The fact is the median voting age is in the middle 40's. And the fact is that we have moved on a point of view of income into--I don't know whether you'd call it affluent; this is a hard word to describe, because a man can have a hundred thousand dollars a year and still feel poor; and others can have ten thousand dollars a year income and still feel very well off. It's the old Pickwick thing, you know, twenty pounds income, outgo, and so on. But for one who like myself grew up in the depths of the

depression--I never forget seeing men selling apples for a nickel on the street corners--the present condition of American life is relatively affluent.

As a matter of fact, it's an intriguing thought that our real concern over poverty today is due to the fact that we can afford to be concerned about it. There are far, far fewer unemployed or poor now than there were a generation ago, but we are in a sense far more concerned about it. Under the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations, far more money has been appropriated to alleviate the condition of the poor. We can afford it. Just like we can afford mental health care now that fifty or a hundred years ago we never even would have thought possible. Lock them up in the attic, you know, like a 19th century English novel, that sort of thing. What was it--Wuthering Heights? Mr. Rochester. I'd have to go back to my earlier--.

But this phrase I think accurately describes the nature of the electorate, and some people dislike it. I think they dislike it more on a moral basis, and they sort of feel that this is denying something to the disadvantaged in the society, which of course it is not, because as I tried to point out, women suffrage was voted by men. The fact that the electorate is un-young, un-poor, and un-black doesn't mean that they aren't going to do something for the poor, the young, and the black. But it does mean that the people that are going to do it are the un-young and the un-poor and the un-black.

G: Were you ever called by the White House before March 31st of 1968 when it was generally assumed that Johnson would run?

S: No.

G: You never were asked to give counsel on this kind of--

S: No. Except for this one meeting in January where the President just asked

if I would be interested in working on the staff.

G: What did he say to you?

S: Just very short--I don't think I was in there more than five minutes. The question had been raised with me by, I think, Doug Cater, just in a conversation there.

G: What position did he offer you?

S: We never got into any kind of detail. The impression I got was that he just wanted to make sure this was my determination. He was very pleasant, as I always found him to be in the limited contact I had with him. He listened. Many people say that he was very abrasive to people around him, you know. I never heard it so, but then my contacts with him were very limited. I was never in his own personal establishment, so to speak. Even when I was Director of the Census, I was 'way out there in God's forgotten acre in Suitland, Maryland.

G: In Suitland, which is really God's forgotten acre.

S: Yes, it really is. It had its job to do, and it did the job. As long as the thing worked and the data kept grinding out, people were perfectly happy about it.

G: Did you have much contact with Hodges when he was Secretary of Commerce?

S: Not a great deal, no. He used to come out every year and make speeches --you know, just sort of making his tour, make an annual speech to the troops.

G: Like the reigning king going out to his--

S: Yes, he came out about once a year and we'd pile everybody down into the cafeteria--had to run them in shifts--and he'd come out and make a nice

little speech. And it was very decent of him to do it because a lot of people--you know, they liked to feel that somebody was paying attention to them. And I suppose I would meet with Hodges once or twice in a year on some personnel question or some problem of organization. But, by and large, the Commerce Department has many of these functions, you know, and I'm sure that Mr. Hodges had enough problems in Commerce proper so that as long as outfits like mine and the Bureau of Standards and the Patent office, as long as they went along and they're doing their job, he wasn't going to bother them, and they didn't bother him. It worked fine.

G: Again, I'm not sure whether you feel that you were that involved that you want to comment on this question that I'm going to ask you, but if you would, please do. Some politicos and commentators and so on have remarked that President Johnson contributed a great deal to the breakdown of party cohesion in his tenure as President, particularly at the local and the state levels. I can think back to late-1967 or early-1968. In fact, during 1968, just before the convention there was an Evans and Novak article coming about the breakdown in party--

S: He may have contributed some, but one of the breakdowns of cohesion of course came from the one-issue group--the Viet Nam people who were so bitter on the Viet Nam issue that this was the sine qua non as far as they were concerned. I don't know that there was really way that could have been avoided. In terms of what you might call the bureaucracy of the party in day-to-day workings, it may be that he could have done more, although the parties themselves were always really state parties.

The national party is not a European national party in this sense, and I don't really know that there was a great deal he could have done. The lines of cleavage, the things that really caused trouble to the party were

essentially ideological on Viet Nam. They were not resolveable within the limits of party operation as such.

After all, the same apparatus worked very well in '64, and I think all you can say is that there may have been, because Mr. Johnson was not in this sense a national political person, there may have been some of the things he could have done--probably were. I don't think he really had a high regard for the national committee work or operation. I don't think this was the controlling thing though.

G: You said that you were a personal friend of Mr. Humphrey.

S: Yes.

G: Do you know any of the circumstances of '64, his being slected as Vice-President?

S: No, I don't. This was a highly personal thing, and those of us who knew him personally would not ask him about it of course at the time. I remember being with him one evening out at his house in May or June, I suppose it was, of that year--just a social evening. He looked fine, and he just said, "Well, it's all in the hands of the President, you know--I'll just play it straight." This was his only comment on it. But the actual discussions that may have taken place in the White House, you'd have to get this from people much more privy to the President's counsel than I.

G: Were you in contact with Humphrey during the last campaign in '68?

S: No. As a matter of fact, I don't think I've even seen Humphrey for at least a year, perhaps more than. As I say, I am not really very much involved in these active political things. I try to watch and make whatever comment I can from the sidelines, but you have to really make a judgment here as to whether you're going to be actively involved in a partisan sense, or whether you are going to stand outside--and you can make a judgment either way. But you can't really sort of stand half-and-half, you

know. You can't really do that, so I have tended to stay pretty much outside the party struggle and by that, I mean the party struggle inside a political party or between political parties.

Now, of course, when I was head of the Census Bureau, we were responsive to requests from the White House. As a matter of fact, we were responsive, too, to the requests from the Republicans. I think sometimes the Republicans may have gotten better service out of the Census Bureau when I was there than they did perhaps under their own people because as a political scientist I might have been a little more attuned to what they were looking for, you know, when they'd call up. And as one who has great respect for the Congress, I'd be more attuned perhaps to what they were interested in. But that's just a personal judgment.

G: Do you call yourself a statistician or a political scientist?

S: Political scientist.

G: Is there any difference?

S: Yes, a statistician really is a person who specializes in the methodology of statistics, applicable to anything. I'm a political scientist who uses statistics as part of the tools of my trade, like a watch repairman will use a screwdriver, you know, various sizes, or spring devices and so on. I don't regard myself as primarily a screwdriver manufacturer.

G: As a political scientist, I wonder if you would comment--and we're getting into this last category with some very general questions, but as an observer, as a political scientist, as a man who has been involved in public affairs and has some knowledge of the inner-workings of Washington politics and so on, particularly Presidential affairs, I'd like to ask you if you think that the Great Society, which may only represent a certain portion of the entire Johnson years as President--I think some people will

argue that the Great Society was abandoned as early as 1966 or '67, or Johnson simply didn't use the phrase. But how do you regard the Great Society? Do you see it as an extension, for example, of the New Deal, Fair Deal, New Frontier symbolism in legislative substance, or do you see it in terms of something newer, larger? Is there a difference in scale--?

S: I'd say that the society tends to move forward in leaps rather than at a steady progress. Roosevelt made many leaps forward in the period from his inauguration in '33 probably through '36-'37. Kennedy tried it, but he really didn't have the legislative support, or perhaps the personal drive, to effectuate many of these things. And many of them were put in by Johnson. If you simply take the appropriation of money--and I suppose this is as good a way of measuring an Administration as any--and compare it to the appropriations of either the Kennedy Administration or the Eisenhower Administration before it--of course one would have to say that in the field of social progress, as far as money was concerned anyway, there were enormous moves forward under the Johnson Administration--welfare, housing, all these things.

However, my own guess would be that if we were looking back from the vantage point of a hundred years from now, as one looks back and says what did the administration of Millard Fillmore do for the United States, or Chester A. Arthur. And if you were trying to think--if you were required to think--I would say that Kennedy would probably be remembered more than Johnson because he's a more glamorous figure. This may be a McLuhan-ite interpretation. But Jack Kennedy and Camelot, the Roman Catholic, the great charm--I can see an opera written around Kennedy. I can't see an opera written around Johnson. This has nothing to do with the quality of the man.

G: What about Prometheus?

S: That's always a possibility. But by and large, even about all of them, it will be simply an extension of Roosevelt. I think history, as it makes its judgment, will simply judge that this was a progressive era in American politics. Beginning with the election of '32 when the people turned from a depression which they associated with Hoover and the Republicans, whether rightly or wrongly, they turned to Roosevelt and the Democrats under Roosevelt, Truman, Kennedy, and Johnson were in power for a generation, minus the eight years of Eisenhower that many people might have regarded as simply an interlude, because really, in six of those eight years the Democrats had control of the Congress. And Eisenhower himself will never be identified as a partisan, you know. His was more a period of tranquility, if you will, in an otherwise Democratic history.

It's always hard to guess what history will say, but I would think history would look upon this as as period from Roosevelt through Johnson. And it's intriguing of course--most intriguing really--that Johnson, who ended the period, was really much more of a Rooseveltian than Kennedy who immediately preceded him because Johnson knew Roosevelt and had worked with Roosevelt. And this really encompassed thirty-five years of American history--a third of a century.

Now, what will come in the future nobody knows--with Nixon. Maybe this end-period will not be correct. Maybe things will move in a different direction, I don't know. But I think if one has to make a guess as to what history will say, which is an unprofitable thing to do, that's what I think it would do.

G: Why don't we just let this tape run and we'll start another one. I have about half a dozen more questions.

S: Fine.

INTERVIEWEE: RICHARD M. SCAMMON (Tape #2)

INTERVIEWER: STEVE GOODELL

March 3, 1969

G: How would you assess Johnson as a President? Before you answer that, let me ask another question. Have you read Eric Goldman's book, The Tragedy of Lyndon Johnson?

S: No, I've read reviews of it, but I haven't read the book.

G: Let me just give you some information and then you can respond to these either point-by-point or generally.

Commentator's and writer's books are now starting to fill shelves, and if you look back over the past four or five years, you'll find the comments that have been made about the President to be sometimes very highly charged and very emotional. And I think he has been variously reviled or adulated, depending upon who the writer is. But if I can turn to that negative part of Johnson, I'd like you, if you could, to comment either from your perspective of having known him as briefly as you have or just in terms of having been associated with his Administration, knowing the people around him and so on. He has been described as secretive, as given to deception, somewhat paranoid, politically amoral, pathological, ambitious, an egomaniac, intolerant, and the list just goes on and on and on. I wonder if you'd like to just respond to that.

S: You'd have to know Mr. Johnson a lot better than I have to make any kind of judgment on these. As I said, from my own personal very limited experience with him I wouldn't have come to these conclusions, but then my experience was so very, very limited that I just wouldn't be a judge.

By and large, I think you just have to wait for history to make a judgment, because the judgments of the moment, like the judgments about George Washington or Abe Lincoln--both of whom probably could have been found to have been described in just those words or even words of greater venom.

G: Again, as a political scientist--let me ask you, have you had occasion to study his Administration?

S: No. My work has been almost entirely in the field of elections, electoral behavior, election studies; and I've made no effort to study the administrative pluses or minuese, the legislative pluses or minuses--this sort of thing.

G: Okay. Well, then this prompts the question, what are the most recent elections that you have had occasion to examine?

S: '68.

G: Fine. Could you offer an explanation for the unpopularity of Lyndon Baines Johnson in 1968--if that's an accurate description of his status at that time?

S: I'll tell you. I don't think you could say this. You'd have to say here, "compared to what?" Could I offer an explanation of Hubert Humphrey's unpopularity, or Dick Nixon's unpopularity? These two gentlemen ran for President of the United States, got less than half the votes. Would Johnson have done better, or worse--I don't know!

G: I was just thinking, if you wanted to compare, a good comparison might be with 1964.

S: I would put it this way. Most of the loss between '64 and '68--or much of the loss, I'd say--was simply due to the return of the natives. The fact is that many Republicans who deserted the Republican party in 1964 because of Goldwater would have returned to vote for the Republican nominee in 1968, come what may. I think it has been fair to say that any election which

would involve Johnson and "X", the Republican, would have been much closer than '64, just as it was closer in '60. But I think this was simply because of the abnormalities of 1964.

I would see no reason to believe that, no matter who the nominees of the two parties--let's suppose, for example, that Mr. Johnson has been assassinated in 1965. It wouldn't have made any difference who the Democrats nominated. I would have assumed that the spread in 1968 would have been less than the spread in 1964 because much of the spread in 1964 was caused by ideological problems within the Republican party; had nothing really to do with the Democrats or Johnson or Humphrey or anybody else.

G: It's curious. I think historians have a tendency to explain Roosevelt's victory in 1932 as a vote not for Roosevelt, but as a vote against Hoover.

S: I think there's a lot of truth in that.

G: And by the same token, would you say that a vote for Johnson in '64 was a vote against Goldwater?

S: To a certain extent, although one again must point out that even in that landslide, the great majority of the people were voting as they had done in the previous four years--in '60. In other words, you don't get that much change. The Democrats went up eleven points from fifty to sixty-one. The change was more than that, because that's a net. Let's say the change might have been fifteen points one way and four points the other way, so a net of eleven. But still, the great majority of Americans were voting in '64 as they had voted in '60 in terms of their party label loyalty. This was true in '68, too, for that matter. It's the swingers that make the difference. And I think the Republicans were the swingers in '64. Many of them, I am sure, would have turned back to their normal Republican loyalty in '68, no matter who the nominee had been--assuming,that is, that

it wasn't Goldwater, or someone comparable to Goldwater.

G: If the election in '68 was won by the un-black, un-young, un-poor, does this indicate that there's a growing body of independent voters. I'm not sure there's a correlation there. Why don't I just ask the question. Is there a growing independent political force in this country which will have the effect--

S: I wouldn't call it independent as much as I would uncommitted.

G: Undeclared?

S: Possibly undeclared, yes. I think what you've got here is a circumstance in which, particularly in the South, you have a larger number of people willing to vote ways they have not voted in the past. By and large, you can go into the slum or working class areas or any big city and they're solidly Democratic and have been from the year one, in this case being 1932 with Roosevelt.

What we really talk about here is not winning these for a Republican candidate; we talk about cutting the margin. Instead of losing a district like the 14th ward in Milwaukee--Polish-American, working class area--instead of losing it six to one, maybe you only lose it two to one, in which case you've got a great victory if you're a Republican. Or wealthy suburbs. You take wealthy suburbs, again, for the Democratic candidate--instead of losing it four to one, you only lose it two to one; then you've made a great gain. So this is really the nature of much of this thing.

Now, when you talk about independent voters, I would say that there probably are an increasing number of Americans who are willing to move around, switch back and forth. Part of this may be due to television--the fact that many more are involved, at least by watching the TV, than have been involved before when they got their news only from the newspaper, and

the great, great majority of them would never have seen the candidate. Now you can't avoid seeing him. This is part of it.

Label loyalties are still fairly strong. They're certainly breaking down in the South. This is the place where the great change has taken place in, say, my lifetime.

It's hard to say what the future will bring in this connection, just as it would have been hard to say what '68 would have been like if the candidates had been different--if Rockefeller had been, say on the Republican side, or if Bobby Kennedy or someone else had been nominated on--or Lyndon Johnson even--had been nominated on the Democratic side. You never know.

G: Again, in connection with this shifting constituency, if there is a discernible pattern--again as a political scientist, I wonder if you'd comment on this very curious phenomenon, and I'll construct it in the framework of a charge? Some people have made the charge that politicians--and we can just talk about Presidential candidates--look at what the issues will be and then address themselves to those issues rather than taking the initiative and raising issues that they think are important.

S: I think that's much too simplistic. I think it works both ways. I think the politicians raise issues that they're concerned about, but I think politicians tend to be concerned about issues that they think people will be interested in, too.

G: But I'm thinking of capitalizing--for example, the business of law and order, which as a symbol does nothing, it seems to me. It's used as rhetoric. And too often politicians may not really say--you know, they don't offer solutions; they don't offer practical--

S: Let me put it this way. Let's take Viet Nam, for example. If anybody

had offered a real solution on Viet Nam, the first one to steal it would have been Lyndon Johnson. In other words, when you talk about practical solutions, you're implying that there is a practical solution. Now, the difficulty is not that there are not practical solutions--there are a thousand problems to which there are practical solutions, and they are being practically solved every day. In other words, even in government somebody comes up with an idea, "Well, that's fine, let's do it that way," and they do it that way--take care of it. The Eastern shuttle is a practical solution to the problem of air travel to New York. It works fine.

What you get to, however, are some problems to which there are no practical solutions. I just came back, for example, from about a week in Belfast in Northern Ireland--an election. I don't know what the solution is to the problem of the Catholics and Protestants in Ireland. Maybe there isn't any. I'm certainly sure that on Viet Nam there was no political solution which would have gotten half the people in the United States to buy it, except one that was phrased in such general conditions that would have in fact raised the very objection that you are raising. The same thing may well be true on law and order, law and order <u>but</u> law and order with justice.

It is true that none of these things are specific, but you know, once you're running for the Presidency, you're trying to get half the American people to vote for you. And this is 30-35-40 million people. The more specific you are, the more likely you are to lose your shirt.

Some of Bobby Kennedy's rapid shiftings back and forth are interesting in this connection. Jack Kennedy was an expert at this. I think Teddy Kennedy may well be, too. I'm not sure. Nixon certainly is.

The fact is that there are not in many of these very--take inflation, for example. Well, what do you do! Sure, you can increase unemployment, cut down the purchasing power of the people and reduce inflation. Now is this what you want to do! It's like the public opinion poll that says, "Are you in favor of clearing up the slums?"

"Oh, absolutely."

"Are you in favor of doubling your income tax to clear up the slums?"

"Well, now, wait a minute, you know."

It's hard to put forward a series of very specific answers to these problems without reducing your popular support to 3 percent.

G: I was thinking not so much from that this person--McCarthy, for example, offered a practical solution, but he seemed to embody the kind of dissatisfaction, the discontent, the frustrations, and so on, of people which seemed to me fooled the pollsters, particularly in New Hampshire.

S: Oh, well, I think in New Hampshire that nobody really polled deeply or long enough. Unless the polls were just totally wrong, if they had polled right up to the last day and had really polled accurately, they should have reflected this--and a good poll would.

G: I don't think there was one poll that came within thirteen or fourteen--

S: I don't think they were in late enough. You see, there's no incentive really in there. There wasn't that much interest in it until the very end. And of course you can't plan at the very end. I would have said myself that in all of these things.

The polling industry is a very interesting one, because you can get almost any kind of answer you want on this thing by framing the questions appropriately. This is why the pollsters themselves are so careful when they make up the questions to make them just as neutral as

they can, so that you won't get this kind of thing--where people say they're all in favor of solution A, but not if it takes B to get A.

G: No, but the question you've just raised I think became a fairly controversial one a very serious one in this last primary campaign. In fact, I remember listening to a radio program, WBZ in Boston, where this issue was discussed in a forum where one of the charges was made that the pollsters would come in; they were hired by, let's say, Democrats; and so they would come up with what Democrats wanted in terms of the answers.

S: No, that would not be true of any reputable poll. Oh, there may be some fly-by-nights, you know. You may hire some doctor to tell you there's nothing wrong with you when you're dying. If that makes you happy, maybe it's useful. But the fact of the matter is that no reputable pollster would cook up his figures.

G: This became an issue even in terms of national politics. You know, do we run government by the polls. What is your opinion about this question? How frequently should polls be taken? How close attention--

S: I have no particular judgment. I think it's useful in a democracy for the establishment to know the public mind. I'll give you a case in point, which I think is illustrative of this.

Some years ago there was a big campaign in this country by the far right to get the U.S. out of the U.N. and the U.N. out of the U.S. And there was a lot of steam behind this. But then Gallup published some polls showing that 85 percent of the American people were in favor of the U.N., and it just deflated the thing overnight. Now if you did not have the poll, you never can tell what effect that campaign might have had.

The poll is really in a sense the last refuge of the little man, assuming that it's accurately taken. Obviously, if it's phony, it's no

more value than the advice of a quack doctor--just a quack, if he isn't a doctor. But assuming that it is a valid inquiry. I think, for example, one of the most interesting inquiries and one that certainly shocked many people, was the fact that so many Americans supported the police in Chicago.

I think this is very useful to know. It puts a dimension on what you're doing that is different than the dimension you might get if you simply read the New York Times. And I would say that in many ways the polls really represent a democratic innovation as important as the direct primary because there are many issues here in which the premise of public opinion is not the public opinion of the people--it's the public opinion of the media, the commentators, the laundry exchanger, the columnists, and so on. And I think it's important.

One poll came out just recently--a few months ago--a great majority of the American people were opposed to any guaranteed annual income, but a great majority were also in favor of guaranteeing a job. Now, there's a very nice distinction here. Again, I repeat, we're speaking now of polls that--

G: You mean, the distinction is a negative income tax as against a PWA or a WPA--

S: Or some kind of employment, yes, as opposed presumably just to paying them, as you say, just to loaf. We're speaking now of the competent reputable polls. I think they have a real service to perform. If you will, they're an exercise in humility for the leadership, because the leadership isn't that smart--nobody is--and their view of what the people want and what the people are afraid of and what the people are concerned about may be far, far away from the fact. And they get isolated. Now,you can't have

elections every month, but you can have polls.

G: Do you think that it was a useful and healthy thing that Johnson used to do--you know, he would pull the latest poll--

S: Oh, well, when you're dealing with an individual like President Johnson or anybody else in this business, of course, they tend to get--I'll tell you, it's like one of the cartoons that appear on television about the cat that's out there on the outside and somebody puts the baking pie on the window and the aromas carries the cat along, and the cat is wafted away with it. This is what you get. Many politicians--I don't say this just of Mr. Johnson--many politicians, when they get a poll, zip right out, "How am I standing! Oh, boy, look at that! It's terrific. This is a wonderful poll," or, "This is a lousy poll." But I think a judicious and prudent use of anything which can measure the public mind is very useful. This doesn't mean the politician has to follow the public mind.

G: You can also show areas of need and--

S: And they can show areas of interest. For example, people may be very much concerned about Medicare, and a politician may not even know this. And people are concerned about it--"Well, I'd better find out something about it." Now, it doesn't mean he's for or against, but it means that he wants to learn something about it. Or if people are all in favor of a guaranteed job, maybe you'd better find out some ways of guaranteeing jobs--or on the UN case that I cite. So I would say that the poll, assuming it's a competent and reputable and responsible one, has a real role to play. Now, what the role will be depends on the individual political leader and his own prejudices, of course.

G: You mentioned earlier that Johnson was a parliamentarian--

S: Many have said so.

G: Yes, many have said so. The other phrase that I've heard is that he saw the world through a Congressional aperture. Do you think this in any way limited his understanding of the dimensions of Presidential power and what it meant?

S: Oh, I don't know. This gets to be such a personal judgment. Maybe they were limited--or expanded--by being a Texan. Maybe they were limited or expanded by a hundred factors that we never know. I think Johnson actually probably understood as well as any who have been in that office what the potentials and the limits of the power of the presidency were. He had been very close to it. He'd been close to it for thirty years, as a Congressman, as a Senator--not really close to it, but he'd certainly seen it when Roosevelt was there and Truman. He was very close to it after all when Eisenhower was there and Kennedy when he was Vice President then. I think this is a man who knew as well as any one else from his own experience the nature of the power processes of Washington, both legislative and Presidential.

I think the question some have raised is how much he was really aware of the deeper political processes in the general public. Some people will point to his failures in '56 and '60 in the Democratic National Convention, when he did, I think, tend to rely overly on his senatorial colleagues and on his legislative situation to the disadvantage of his own interests.

But that's another story. If you really are speaking of his knowledge of the American system of government, in a sense as opposed to the American system of politics, I think you'd have to go a long way to find anybody who knew more about it than Lyndon Johnson.

G: I think we can end this by--I can give you a quotation by Eric Goldman just

along these lines and you might like to finish this interview off with a comment on that. Goldman made the assertion--in fact it's on the jacket cover of his book--that President Johnson "lacked--and I'm quoting Goldman--the political instinct to sense the changing mood of the country, and that he was the wrong man from the wrong place at the wrong time under the wrong circumstances."

S: I'd put it a little differently. The title of Mr. Goldman's book is The Tragedy of Lyndon Johnson. Why tragedy? A man is President of the United States, and he leaves that office in a general atmosphere of calumny. But this is not tragedy. I would think that Mr. Johnson had his shot at the rings that went around on the carrousel.

What history will say about him, I don't know. Probably history will say about him, as it does of most Presidents, that their image diminishes over the years simply because people get further away from it. I mean, what do we really know about either of the Harrisons? What do we really know--you and I as individuals, not the historian, but just as ordinary folk--what do we know about Polk or, if you will, Rutherford B. Hayes! And I'm sure all these men were controversial, much beloved, and much hated in their time. So is Johnson!

So if you look at it away from the strictures of the moment, I'd say "tragedy" of Lyndon Johnson. No, I wouldn't call it a tragedy. He did better than most Americans. He got there.

This reminds me of a story that I used once in a speech when somebody asked me, "How was Hubert Humphrey when you knew him in college?"

I said in response to that question, "I never thought he'd get very far because he was so damned gabby." Then I thought for a moment and said, "But on the other hand, you see, he's Vice President of the United

States, and I'm here talking to you." So who can say. A man that is President of the United States--I wouldn't call this tragedy. Eric Goldman didn't make it.

I'd let history make its own judgment, and the judgment that history makes may be far different than anything any of us think now. It may entirely agree with Mr. Goldman, or it may disagree. More likely, it probably won't make much of any judgment in the sense that, as I see it, at least, if you look at it from the point of view of the centuries. If you're writing history in two hundred years time, Johnson, probably misspelling his name, you know, with a "e", will simply be thought of as a period in the middle of the 20th Century marked by a reform movement in American life led by Roosevelt, Truman--probably also misspelled--the romantic Kennedy, and Johnson. Who can say that history will make a tighter judgment than this? Maybe none of us are that important in history's view.

G: Do you have anything to add to this interview?

S: No, I think this is very fine.

G: Thank you very, very much,Mr. Scammon.

S: I don't know how much it has added. Certainly we talked about a lot of things besides Mr. Johnson.

G: It's the life and times of Mr. Johnson.

S: Yes, and in that sense, I see the value of it. But the actual detail, as I say, I'm only sorry that I couldn't add more to. But my connection with him was, I say, unfortunately limited--I would liked to have known him better, but we'll see.

G: Thank you again.

[End of Tape]

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