INTERVIEWEE: WHITNEY SHOEMAKER

INTERVIEWER: DOROTHY PIERCE

November 25, 1968

P: Today is Monday, November 25, 1968. It's nearly three p.m. in the afternoon. This interview will be with Whitney Shoemaker, Assistant to the President. We are in his offices in EOB, the Executive Office Building.

Mr. Shoemaker, you came on the White House staff in May, 1966 as a Presidential Assistant first in Message Operations and presently in Public Correspondence. Prior to that time during John Kennedy's administration you had covered the White House for Associated Press. Is this background information correct and complete?

S: That is correct except from May of '63 until the late summer of '64 I was with the Motion Picture Association of America as assistant to the President, then Eric Johnston. Then from that point in '64 until '66 when I came to the White House I was with the Department of Commerce in the Office of Public Affairs.

P: How did you happen to come to receive this appointment from the White House?

S: While at the Commerce Department, I became quite friendly with James Moyers, Bill Moyers' [Assistant to the President] brother, who spent six weeks or two months in the Department, and he had recognized my name from my newspaper experience because he had been with newspapers himself a few years prior thereto. Then he left Washington, went to New York, and in a while came back at his brother's and the President behest to take over the Presidential Message Operation. In a short time he asked if I would be interested in coming over, too,

and through James and Bill Moyers I did arrive here in May of '66.

P: And this was in the capacity of Message Operations?

S: Yes, with Message Operation.

P: Would you briefly describe for me the White House message operations and the responsibilities of public correspondence? That's kind of a big question but just to clarify what this assignment is.

S: Surely. The presidential message center of office has no table of organization title. It does not concern, first, messages to Congress, that type message. It does involve messages to organizations and individuals to whom the President sends greetings and usually a brief message of some substance directed toward whatever he feels can be said on the occasion, or directed to the organization--commenting and usually commending what its purpose it? We are speaking of the American Legion or the AFL-CIO, B'nai B'rith, literally hundreds of organizations, and also individuals, again generally commendations or recognitions of a particular achievement--the Nobel Prize winner or a citizen of a community in the Midwest or wherever it may be who has done something for the good of that community. In other words, it is particular messages to particular groups or individuals.

Public correspondence entails the--

P: May I stop you here and just ask--this message operation has completely outgoing material, not incoming material?

S: It is in by far the most cases response to a request. Now, of course, the President on many occasions, and this is particular true for individuals, wishes to write sometimes a group, generally an individual, a friend or someone he knows or he has seen who has done something outstanding in public life or in private life. But for much of the

most part it's in response to a request from the group. "We're having a convention in August. Would the President please send a message as he has in the past?"

P: I was thinking in terms also of the President's wide associations, and these very frequent greetings to people who probably are not in the realm of close personal friends but whom he has met and whom he remembers over the many years of his career. Would this come in the realm of messages to individuals or is it more along the area of a celebrity?

S: Some sort of celebrity, but we are speaking of celebrity in the broadest possible sense, no one whose name is known generally, but someone who has done something, who has achieved something for the community or nationally. Those whom the President has known with some degree of personal association or friendship, why they frequently fall in the area of direct presidential correspondence rather than a message.

P: And what about the responsibility of the public correspondence?

S: The public correspondence entails about, presently, a million and a half pieces of correspondence a year. This includes letters, telegrams, and postcards, petitions. Not too many as far as the total number goes in relation to total volume are form letters that are sent to the President for a cause. These are, through our--I'll explain in a little bit the machinery, the procedures--all incoming mail is examined and that which the President might wish personally to see is channelled one way so that it reaches his office. If he wishes to respond personally that is done separately by in large, although every member of the writing staff does help the President

with his own personal responses. Otherwise, we are speaking about the mail that is answered by someone else on behalf of the President, the great bulk of it.

P: Do you often work or confer directly with the President or Mrs. Johnson or their daughters?

S: No, very infrequently.

P: How would you describe your working relationship with the President?

S: Generally in the form of--well, for one thing, a weekly report. I send in a weekly report on the incoming mail. Other than that, through brief memos suggesting attention or response to a particular communication; personal meetings have been very infrequent. They haven't been necessary in the performance of this job, and he has not found it so, and I say, fortunately, only in the extent that he has exhibited that much confidence in me and in the operation that we have been conducting. But most of my meetings with the President have been with others in group meetings.

P: Are there any particular occasions that stand out in your mind?

S: No, not really. A year and a half ago, or so, there was formed, I believe at his suggestion, a group of younger staff members which travelled under the label of bright young men. I was one of the older, and we had a couple of interesting meetings with him which were very encouraging meetings. This type of thing was always very encouraging to members of the staff because he can bring out the best in you.

P: What were these meetings for?

S: Just discussions of what the younger members of the staff might do. Generally, now, we are speaking of 1967, in the first part. The group

gradually disbanded so that it had no permanency, but it was a good idea, and it enabled the President to see a number of members of the staff at once. We organized but never really did much. The fruits of it were really in the meeting.

P: From your contact and your working relations with the President, how would you characterize him?

S: Well, he is a remarkable man for his knowledge and his interest not only in the broadest of programs, but the broadest of objectives for the world and for the nation, for the people. I'm a thorough going admirer of everything that he has done. He's also most remarkable for the knowledge he retains of the smallest things. He is more conversant with what goes on and who's doing it in his staff and in the government than I would dare say any of his predecessors. On occasion--I can recall an instance or two when in connection with messages--in which he has perhaps signed his name or put his initial on a telegram and then Xed it out. He's looked at it and initialed it or signed it automatically and then seen exactly what it was and something has come to his mind--this guy is bad or something like that from the past. Or his knowledge is knowledge that the members of the staff who help him on these things should know and didn't.

P: Have you talked with Mrs. Johnson at all?

S: No, not at all. I have dealt with Liz Carpenter [Press Secretary and Staff Director for First Lady] and Christine Stugard [Staff Assistant for Social Correspondence], when she was in charge of the social correspondence, and now with [Elizabeth L.] Beth Tilson [Correspondence Assistant] and others in their offices in connection with correspondence

that may have a bearing on responses by the First Lady as well as the President. We have counseled together in that area, but there has been really no occasion for any direct dealing with Mrs. Johnson.

P: On the procedure for things like public correspondence and even the message operation, is there a traditional procedure that continues from administration to administration, or does each President change the system to make his own?

S: Each President changes the system. He takes a whole look at all the internal workings of the White House and will structure it as he finds best. The message operation between the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations grew and became more closely looked at and handled more discriminately shall we say, I believe. I can't say directly from personal knowledge of the operation under President Eisenhower. I know of one interesting memo, the author of whom excapes me. Will Sparks [Presidential Speech Writer] had the memo and it may still be here. He would know of it anyway. But it suggested that the same type of treatment were being accorded requests for presidential messages, in that time as has existed with President Johnson [as to] how they were handled I believe. However they may have been handled more diffused, the handling may have been more diffused among members of the staff rather than one office for the purpose. I can't say for sure, but I believe that was the case.

Now that is certainly the case with public correspondence. When President Johnson became President, Douglass Cater [Special Assistant to the President] for awhile had sort of, I gather, the primary responsibility for correspondence, but again it was diffused and it wasn't until 1965 I believe that the job I now hold was established,

and it was my predecessor, Paul Popple was a foreign service officer who had been in the White House for a few years prior.

P: Who is that?

S: Paul Popple. He is now counsul general in Milan [Italy]. He had been at the White House for a couple of years, and he was the first to hold this office. It was created because of the need to coordinate and bring the whole thing together. Bill Hopkins [Executive Assistant to the President] once described it to me as paralleling somewhat and the first somewhat parallel, since the Truman Administration when [William] Bill Hassett who was then the Assistant Press Secretary or Deputy Press Secretary, was generally in charge of public correspondence. But again under President Eisenhower I cannot say for sure, but I know of course that it was much more diffused. This is more organized now and lends to much more prompt and substantive and effective handling of mail from the country.

P: This is sort of a broad question, but what role does public correspondence play in the White House operation?

S: Well, let's first maybe--this is not a direct answer, but I'll--

P: If you can go into it, I have a further question along in terms of procedures and--what types and how is it sorted and determined whether it is public correspondence or social correspondence. You can kind of go into all that a little bit.

S: If we turn the questions around in order, it might lead to a more illuminating answer. The mail, when it is received, is screened for security purposes first with flouroscopes and other gadgets provided by the Secret Service and designed for this particular purpose. Every piece of mail that comes in, letter mail and packages,

is examined for that purpose. Then it flows to the mail section at which point it is first opened, and I mention that obviously it is first opened unless it is addressed to a member of the staff. If it is addressed to the President, then it is opened. If it is addressed to a member of the staff, it is not opened, it is sent directly to that member of that staff. It is then analyzed. There is a crew of mail analysts who read the incoming letter, and I'll distinguish this from telegrams, for content and send it to the appropriate place. Now, the appropriate place means in the case of mail from VIP's or from persons who are known to have an association, and it may not be a friend of the President's, but some association with him (or mail in other words in which he may personally have in interest) is routed to his office through Bill Hopkins' office. Bill will look it over again to winnow out the mail that should not be there. Either then from Bill's office or on return from the President's office, mail that the President has not personally responded to follows the course that the great bulk of the mail has followed when it has been received and analyzed in the mail room. And that means it goes to the staff member in charge of a particular program which may be the subject of the letter. For instance, rebuilding the cities, just to pull an example out of the air, is a Joe Califano [Special Assistant to the President] operation, it might go to him. The mail is channeled that way to members of the staff. A good deal of it, a large part of it, is dispatched immediately from the mail section to the department or agency concerned. We are speaking now of anywhere from a parent who seeks an emergency leave for his or her boy in Viet Nam because the husband or the father or the mother

is deathly ill, that type of situation. We are speaking of comments, criticisms or endorsement of foreign policy. The first instance that would have gone directly to the Defense Department. A good deal of the general run of mail concerning foreign policy will go directly to the State Department. Then we are also speaking of personal problems: "Can you help me find a job?"--to the Labor Department. "I didn't get my social security check" or, "We need more social security, the benefits aren't enough"--to [Health, Education and Welfare Department] HEW. In some cases depending upon the content of the letter it will be acknowledged here, quite possibly over my signature, and then in this case just more or less of an acknowledgement without saying any more than it's being brought to the attention of the appropriate official. It will at the same time be going out to the department concerned.

P: What makes the determination of this--either sending it directly to the department or acknowledging it first?

S: Generally, if there is a personal comment in the mail, something other than the direct request for help or the direct request for assistance in solving a problem. If, for example, like last April after the President's March 31 [1968] announcement, we would find a number of people would write and express their deep regret as to his decision not to run again, and then go into their personal problem. So it would be acknowledged here to the extent--to the point of his announcement, expressing appreciation for their feelings and their good will. And then it was sent to the appropriate department for action. A good deal of political mail, and that's mail that expresses support or criticism for any one candidate or the other, that needs

that type of acknowledgement as well as the direct action. Now, if it is a particular pressing case, particularly one that appears to the analyst--a good deal of stock has to go into the mail analyst because they make a number of decisions. It's too much of a job for anyone else to do. It just can't be done with a million and a half pieces of mail. And if it is a particularly poignant case or one that strikes them, it will also be acknowledged here expressing the President's understanding and recognition of the problem. Now, I also should point out at this very point, that the President by this course I previously described sees a good deal of mail. He also will receive mail from me or from other members of the staff which we think he ought to see or would be interested in seeing, (not that he ought to see, he's the one who knows that), but would be interested in seeing and responding to personally. A good many of his personal responses, although as I've said, anyone who is involved in the writing or I think it's better described as editorial staff, will help draft suggested replies for the President, those that he doesn't dictate himself. Most of those are done by Charles Maguire [Staff Assistant to the President] or distributed from him to other members of the writing staff. I do quite a few myself, but my main responsibility is this great bulk of the rest of the mail.

Now, what role does this play in the White House, I think it's a--well, in one category, the personal problem mail is attended to very promptly. The President has a 48-hour rule which applies to all of the departments too. Any mail that is received should be acknowledged within 48 hours. This is often honored in the breach and obviously it must be. But that is the guide for us, and it is

the guide for every department and agency. When there is a personal problem that is going to take a study of records, a social security case, a workman's compensation case, the department concerned is suppose to, and in most cases has been very good about sending an interim acknowledgement saying that your case is being inquired into. And then as soon as possible this is answered subsequently. That is supposed to be answered in five days. Frequently and usually that is possible, but frequently it isn't.

Now, the letters bearing on issues from riots in the streets to the war in Viet Nam, it plays this role, I believe. The weekly report that I submit to the President is a tabulated report of anywhere from six to eight or ten--that's about the most--of the major categories of interest that have occupied the public mind during that preceding week. It is just a report that will indicate--for instance, one category is Viet Nam-U.S. policy-General: so many pro, (so many persons have written in support of our policy), con, comment, (and comment is just the people who comment on it but can't be classified one way or the other). This also includes telegrams that have been received. Now there are several categories within categories: favor of stepped up war, additional moves toward peace--the Viet Nam war may be broken down into those subheadings. But it is not analyzed within the numerical count. On occasion--well, for instance, after the October 31, [1968] announcement of a bombing halt in North Viet Nam, the first batch of telegrams and some letters were analyzed for content by Walt Rostow's [Special Assistant to the President] office for the President's information. That has been done on other occasions, too, so that he has a full

knowledge of immediate reaction and the content of it to important events. He also receives himself and looks at, examines personally, much of the first on-rush of mail. Now after his March 31 [1968] announcement he saw an awful lot. I think we got a total response of 30,000, I believe. I will have to verify that figure. And he saw a good deal of it and personally answered a good deal of it. On any occasion when something of significance occurs, he does see and personally examines this mail, or generally speaking it's telegrams. He otherwise through one course or another, just through the natural course of the operation will see a sampling of every type of mail. I understand that he has paid more personal attention to more mail than any of his predecessors, but I can't say that of direct knowledge. I can say with assurance that since he has received more mail, why he has certainly seen more mail, and I am just sure from my knowledge of him and his conduct of the office that he has paid a much more personal attention.

P: I'd like to go back to this role that it plays. You've, in part, answered it, I think, by this sort of immediate exposure to content of what the people are thinking. This must be one area I'd like you to continue on with what you think the role of public correspondence is.

S: Do you mean does it affect any decision?

P: Yes. What part does it play in being received--the quantities and the content of it?

S: It's, I think, a matter of interest, and it's also informative. Now, as the President is aware of the extent of public reaction to a question, to an issue. It can help him to set limits on what may

be achieved or to realize limits on what may be achieved. His decisions must be made in his own way and with the best advice that he can receive. Mail is a reaction, but as an indication of public sentiment, (and that needs to be defined, and I'll do it in a moment), I think its primary value is, as I said, to indicate how far he may go, may be able to go, how much he really may be able to see in the case of gun control legislation. It does not, although I think gun control mail this year was very heavy was wound up about evenly divided between pro and con, pro-registration or con-registration or pro-controls at all or con-control. It did not, of course, sway him from his own determination to pursue to the hilt strong gun controls, but it was--well, now, we get into the definition of public sentiment. In a case like that, a good deal of it was inspired by the National Rifle Association, directly and indirectly. Newspapers would pick up National Rifle Association material and print it and somebody else would pick it up, a reader, and then write a letter. Most of those people write to members of Congress, but the President got an awful lot of mail on it, too. Now, to what degree is this an expression or indication of public sentiment. Well, that's quite questionable because only a certain number of people in this country would even think of sitting at a typewriter or taking up a pen or pencil and writing the President. To most people the thought never occurs because nobody ever thinks, "Me, write to the President--what would I do that for?" But there are a substantial number of people who do, obviously, with the volume that the President receives.

P: Is consideration given to the fact--I don't know quite how to express this--but they say that when a person is moved strongly enough to

write about it, then it is probably a stronger indication of something than just a verbal announcement or decision that the person might communicate with another person.

S: Yes. Well, to most people who write the President, that is so. There are, in contrast to those whom the thought never occurs to write the President, a sizeable number of people--I wouldn't guess how many, but we know that there are a substantial number of people who think that that's what they are on earth for--to write their President. But of the people who do write, they are generally moved to do so, as you say; they have within them an emotional motivation for sitting down and writing.

P: Has more weight been attached to this, do you think, or more significance been given to the fact that in writing about it they are indicating pretty strong motivations?

S: Do you mean in the decision making process?

P: Yes, or just the time taken to become aware of it or informed of it. Does Mr. Johnson place a significance on what the public is saying about some things due to the fact that a person has gone as far as writing a letter about it?

S: Yes, he has always been very much interested in mail and in prompt and substantive handling of mail.

P: Is he the one that instituted the 48-hour reply?

S: Yes, as set down on paper. Our referral form to the departments and agencies notes that mail should be acknowledged within 48 hours, and that has been put on paper for members of the staff, too. I think other Presidents--as a matter of fact, many business executives or executives in many fields have the same thought toward mail. But

I don't know that he is--to my knowledge--the only one, within the government, within the public area, a set down the rule. But he has always felt this way since he entered public life in the thirties. Consequently, he does attach importance to what the people are saying. And, of course, not to the point of being led away from or being diverted or swayed from doing something that he feels must be done, [such as] rent supplements or whatever it may be. For any program, [it is] a measure of support and assurance and also an indication, one indication as to what the public is ready to accept. There are other means of determining this, too, through opinion samples, through polls, which does strike a much better cross-section of the country.

P: To what extent are form letters used?

S: Form letters as such are not used at all. Form language, standard language is used. An acknowledgement goes from--we have a visible index series here which is broken down into categories of: acknowledgements, turn downs, (people who want the President to lend his name to their personal project or write a nice thing about an article they have written, and that sort of thing), and substantive replies telling them why and where certain information is available, certain facts about the ranch, explaining that the problem they have is not one that involves the Federal jurisdiction at all but must be pursued locally because of the division of powers. Now, that language is applied by the correspondence section in answering a good deal of the mail.

P: Who originally determines or approves this language?

S: A good deal of it is inherited from the days before the President was President.

P: It is historical, sort of a traditional answer?

S: Yes. Now, that's only some of it. Of course, the President's mail differs a great deal from the mail the Vice President receives or a Senator receives or a member of the House. This series of paragraphs which can constitute full letters was really established in this form when this office was created. [That is] not to say that there wasn't standard language that has existed for years--it's revised from time to time.

P: What about format? Is that also sort of a traditional--?

S: Yes, yes. Most of this type of letter is done in our correspondence section on automatic typewriters, [with] tapes or rolls in which the language is there and it is just applied to automatic typewriters there. Each letter is individually--has an individual salutation, and is individually addressed on the face of the letter as well as on the envelope, naturally. So some people would call that a form letter. It's not because it is typed. It's not a mimeographed or printed letter; it's individually typed. The only time, I believe, in President Johnson's tenure that a printed letter was used with a printed facsimile signature and addressed Dear Friend--now this is a form letter and done on White House letterhead--was during the Middle East crisis of [June] of '67. There was something like 150,000 pieces of mail within a month or so, at the heat of the crisis. And there was no other way to handle it; it just had to be handled that way or it would have piled up and piled up with the ordinary flow of mail until it would never have been acknowledged. It included an enclosure of a copy of, first, a presidential statement,

then a letter to Senator Mansfield, I believe, and then a reprint of his speech to a foreign policy conference with educators at the State Department in which a major portion of it was devoted to the Middle East. It was during the time of the crisis. That was also the only time within anyone's memory that--and I mean anyone's memory, going back--we're multiplying memories now--"did you recall this while you were here"--and going back years and years--that a postage stamp was not used on the reply. Every letter that leaves the White House has a postage stamp on it, not a frank or it's not metered. But during this period we used, for the first time, the postage meter, just ran them through.

P: And that was determined by necessity?

S: By necessity, just the volume, it couldn't have been handled in any other way.

P: How much of the mail from your department does go for Mr. Johnson's signature?

S: He signs--it varies. I'll just pick two weeks at random here. Last week we had a category in the weekly report which goes back to him incidentally and sum it up for him. I might just read off the categories off to you. It might be of some interest. In last week's report, Viet Nam--first the boming halt, then Saigon's stand in balking at participating in the talks at Paris, then US Policy-General. Another category which has been--

P: Could you give me--while we are using that as an example, what the quantity was?

S: Yes, it wasn't great. Now, as a matter of fact, the total mail the week ended the 21st [November, 1968], that's the close of business

on last Thursday was 17,566 letters and 329 telegrams. Of those, 8,142 letters were addressed to the President alone. Now that omits mail addressed to the President and Mrs. Johnson or mail addressed to the girls and mail addressed directly to members of the staff. Also there were 173 cards; and of those telegrams, 204 were addressed directly to the President, 70 to the Secretariat--that means the staff, 11 to the First Lady, and 44 to the President and First Lady. During the corresponding week of '67, the total--this corresponds to the 17,566, was 21,445; in '66, 37,000-some; '65, 23,000-some; '64, 29,000--almost 30,000; and in '63, 161,000. Of course, that [November, 1963] that was in the period just following President Kennedy's assassination. Generally, the trend has been in the last year or so it has been down.

P: Why is this?

S: Well, the reason at the moment is clear because there is a President-elect now, and he's getting an awful lot of suggestions and advice from people who three weeks ago had been sending them to the President. During the fall and summer, the candidates were--emotions were spent on the candidates rather than the President.

P: I didn't want to interrupt you from those categories. Did you want to continue telling me what they were?

S: Oh, yes. So the number is not heavy here at all. For instance, Viet Nam and the bombing halt, there were letters: 78 favoring it and 54 opposing it, and 15 offering comments on it. On Saigon's stand: only 11 backed Saigon, 58 were critical of Saigon and the Thieu government, 29 comments. And on the US policy in general: 14 pro, 35 con, and 36 comment. That's just the letters, not the telegrams.

Now, in contrast, appreciation for the President's service, people who are writing him now at the end of his term and expressing their commendation and appreciation, 555. We still get some reaction to the election results--4 people approved of the way the election went, 50 people didn't, and 41 commented. The 41 comments were, as I believe, generally those who approved the President's indication of a very orderly transition and we should all get together behind whoever is President. Now in contrast--oh, I might also mention at this particular moment, the biggest issue is aid to the Biafrans [Nigeria]. It's 90 percent inspired. I don't mean to be critical when I say inspired, but actually form letters or cards or petitions--753 letters and 120 cards, 15 telegrams last week. But let's go back--

P: It seems to me from your reading you can almost anticipate when there is going to be a massive increase in volume due to events that occur.

S: You certainly can. As a matter of fact, on the occasion of a presidential speech that obviously had an impact or an event, a development, frequently I will sit down and prepare a reply in anticipation of what is going to come rather than waiting for it to come. It depends on how busy I am as to whether I can do it before or after they start to come in. But it is possible to anticipate a good deal of it.

I'm just pulling a page here. The week ended February 22 [1968] there was three times as much--well, a good deal of mail in connection with the seizure of the Pueblo. The Viet Nam mail--whereas it totaled about 200 before, totaled then on policy: pro 190, con 839, comment 239, bombing of the North--escalate the war this is really, 211 pro,

366 con, 4 comment. Use of nuclear weapons, 33 people wanted to "nue" them out, 169 against, and 7 comments. Increased efforts for peace--214 pro, 5 con, 13 comments, which is--you ask why it has declined, and the main reason is now, of course, there is a President-elect and that there were candidates. And on--let's see--

P: Well, you have, of course, gotten a minimum amount of solution to some of the real crucial issues.

S: Yes, yes, that's true. Yes, and I'm trying to think, it may have been gun control, there was one issue that--this year--in the latter part of the year, it may have been gun control in which the mail just stopped all of a sudden practically, in volume I'm speaking, in which there appeared to be a realization that the President's position was firm, his mind was made up, and there was no point in beseeching him any more.

P: How much response does occur when ads are taken out in the newspaper or someone says write the President in a massive communication situation?

S: Quite a bit. The Biafran mail is a good deal of that. A good deal of the Pueblo mail is that. There are a couple of groups that are still--in fact, I think there is a paper in San Diego that was for awhile running a little box, not an ad, but a little box: "It is now 90 days since the Pueblo was seized"--that's all. And they would cut it out and send it or provoke someone to write a letter to the President. Yes, there is a good deal of that. There was--when Paul O'Dwyer (sp) won the Democratic nomination for the Senate in New York, I was naturally as surprised as a lot of people, but was well aware that he was a candidate because quite a few people--I'm not now speaking of thousands at all--but a couple of hundred, at

least enough to notice, sent in his ads or ads endorsing him in his four foreign policy points that ran in the [New York] Times and in other New York state newspapers.

P: We were speaking about the mail that carries Mr. Johnson's signature. Certainly there must be a tremendous amount of that. The President can't sign it all. How is that approached?

S: He signs it. He signs--well, this happens to be the week ended June 27. At that time there were 714 letters and cards and 27 telegrams within the category, Presidential signature mail dispatched. That included photographs and signature cards. He signs-- He signs a good deal of mail. He personally responds to a good deal of mail. However, it would be implausible for any large portion of mail that he receives, mail that the White House receives, to be answered by him or over his signature would be obviously impossible or the President wouldn't be doing his job. It is physically and mentally and by the limit of 24 hours within one day it would be impossible, but most of it is answered on his behalf. This includes the mail that is referred to the departments and agencies, and mail that is answered directly by members of the staff. A good deal of mail is answered by Juanita Roberts, this includes children's mail, and mail of a personal nature since she is the personal secretary to the President. And I respond to an awful lot of mail over my signature. The mail that comes to this office for handling here, and there is a lot of it, is political mail and problem mail--mail that no one else knows what to do with. Now, I'll answer it directly myself or will have an idea as to who might best handle it, either within the

staff or elsewhere in the government. This covers again from Viet Nam to a veteran in need.

P: When the mail is referred to either a department or an agency or a member of the staff, is it still statistically recorded as having already come in and under what category?

S: Yes, it is tallied by the mail analyst who keeps a tally.

P: And what about this mail? Is it returned? Now, a lot of this mail is kept on file as an indication, isn't it?

S: Everything is kept on file. If it is referred down to a department, a copy of the incoming letter is made and put in a file here. So that nothing is thrown away.

P: Now you've mentioned, in connection with explaining the volume or content of the mail or the types of letters, you've mentioned several issues, like the Middle East or arms control. What major problems have arisen that really stand out very strongly in your mind that have evoked a tremendous response?

S: Well, Viet Nam has been the continuing issue obviously. The Middle East crisis was the biggest surge of mail--(I'm trying to think and decide if I can answer beyond the Johnson Administration, I guess I had better not)--but certainly the biggest surge of mail over any single situation in President Johnson's time. This was all the 150,000 or whatever it was that was within a space of a month or five weeks.

P: Was there a particular side that was strongly emphasized?

S: Oh, 98 percent pro-Israel. The President's press conference of last November 17 or 19 [1967], a year ago, the morning news conference in which he didn't stand behind the podium but walked about and

gestured and carried the little lapel mike--again I don't have the figures off hand--but it was well into the thousands. And it was, I believe, it was certainly the largest response and reaction to any of President Johnson's press conference.

P: Was it primarily on his style?

S: Yes, on his style and what he said. People were affected. He got across, really got across. And I think and I asked at the time, because of my interest, other people who had been here longer, through other administration, and as far as I could determine this was the largest single response to any news conference ever by any President. Then, of course, his announcement on March 31, [1968]. Right on the heels of that came, within a week, the assassination of Martin Luther King and the riots in Washington. Then the Poor Peoples' March. Then, of course, the assassination of Senator Kennedy.

P: You must have had a continuous high volume of mail in the period.

S: A terrific volume of mail, yes. It got up into the 30,000s and more. A couple of weeks exceeded 40,000 a week. Then gun control was a source of a good deal of mail. The elections and the conventions and the aftermath--quite a bit of mail, the campaign quite a bit of mail. During this period, this was the first transition period, the transition period from public communication with the candidates as well as the President. Why the mail has fallen off over years I can't say. They used to run in the 50-60,000s a week a few years ago. Then in 1964, I think--in 1964, the volume was two and a half million. Last year, [1967] close to one and a half, and this year it will be at least that or more. In '65, '66, '67 it went down a little bit each year, and the only reason I can give is purely

speculative: in the case of Viet Nam, for instance, a number of people who might have written decided well, the President's mind is made up, I'm not going to influence him. There may not have been as many issues directly affecting the individual emotionally or in his reasoning. There certainly was no loss of faith in him, I'm sure, in either the President or the presidency itself. There is also possibly one reason, the fact that the assassination of President Kennedy focused attention not only on the office but on the man who succeeded President Kennedy. And President Johnson was immensely popular as the successor to President Kennedy, and just more people were prompted, motivated to share their thoughts with the President, and then that feeling, largely emotional, just subsided.

P: You spoke of the category of the ones that were particularly poignant or very interesting, (this is in categorizing the mail). And I have been thinking--over the past few years and there have been several occasions where Mr. Johnson has used a letter in a speech or a press conference. How did these come about?

S: He will see a letter on occasion and just stick it in his pocket, and that's the letter that may not be answered, certainly isn't going to be answered in 48 hours. But he is impressed by it, and keeps it in his pocket and will use it, not only in speeches but show it to people as an illustration of a tender or sometimes a critical reaction to something, something that has impressed him. Otherwise, in the preparation of a speech, he might suggest or the speechwriter may feel now here's a good time--it would be good to back up a statement with a Viet Nam [letter]. One point in

Fort Benning last year or a year ago the President waved around a cardboard portion of a rations box with a message on it from three soldiers in Viet Nam. I had noticed that and sent it over to [Charles] Maguire because at that time he was doing some coordination in the speechwriting efforts, and the President used it. It turned out that one of the three on there was an eight-ball and had a lot of court-martial trouble. But the President didn't use their names. And then the last use I can recall was when General Westmoreland received his last decoration a month or so ago. A letter was found from a soldier who spoke glowingly of General Westmoreland and it fit perfectly into the pattern of the President's remarks. But they are illustrative.

P: There was an occasion where a little girl wrote the President about something, and I remember publicity regarding it. It seems to me---

S: Well, I can think of two. One when the first railroad strike settlement was reached, a little Virginia or Catherine or somebody wanted to visit her grandmother--now she was going to be able to make the trip. That was current mail, and that was before I was doing that in this office. To do it, I have been, as anyone should be in this case, alert to possible uses as illustrative and perfectly proper and appropriate uses of public mail. There was considerable publicity. This indicates what action can be produced.

A little girl from Tennessee, I believe, or Alabama wrote a year ago. She had done well in high school but had absolutely no money to go to college . . . "Would the President please help me get to college?" So it came in--I didn't even see it. This was directly sent from the mail room to HEW. And the Office of Education, one

branch within the Office of Education, saw it and went to work on it immediately, and within a week she had resources to go to college through public and private [funds] but largely private. This was a foundation program that they linked up the girl with the resources, and she got to college. That did receive considerable publicity and also precipitated a little bit of mail from other people who wanted to go to college.

P: I bet these do have follow-ups. Along with follow-ups, how about repeaters? Do you have a category for those people who . . .

S: We surely do. They are called blue-card cases because their names are put on blue cards. They are repeaters. Some people write every day.

P: Oh, really.

S: Yes. Some people write every day and they share their loneliness with the man in the loneliness job in the world, I guess. But that's one thing. And then people are eccentric.

P: Do you respond to these?

S: No, no. There is absolutely no point in responding to them. Occasionally a letter will come in from one of these habitual writers who isn't spotted by one of the analysts, and a letter--maybe I'll reply to it or a letter goes out over my name. So then they get back again.

P: Are there very many of these?

S: It's in the hundreds.

P: Every day or all together?

S: No, just the blue-card cases--the habitual writers, it's well into the hundreds. And I don't believe I have a figure on that. That

can be ascertained very easily.

P: Along this area--what is the problem associated with crank mail? How much is there of that? Or, well, along with this, I'm speaking really of critical and abusive mail?

S: Yes, well, there is some mail that is abusive, not much. It's mail you have to expect--anybody in public position does--that is abusive and too abusive to reply to. The rule is, and there are a number of exceptions to the rule of prompt and total response, but generally speaking the category of new and regular Secret Service cases. That's what I believe you refer to, as crank mail.

Last year, there were 12,431 letters. Now, that doesn't mean that there were 12,431 people who wrote threatening the life of the President. But people who wrote and there was something in the letter that aroused somebody's suspicion and everybody's suspicions are alerted to be aroused: "I'm not sure when I'll next be in Washington, but I certainly do want to see you, fellow . . ", or something like that. Maybe even less. It's sent to the Secret Service intelligence division for a look. They will keep some, run an immediate check, or a check, not immediate but depending on the priority they place on it from their experience. And quite a bit of this mail they just keep and don't return. There is no response at all, because it's a matter really for investigation. A good deal of it they look at and will send back. They looked at it or checked it, depending upon their attitude toward it and their judgment or what they have determined, and then it will go back into regular channels and perhaps be responded to.

P: Then it's just criticism of a program?

S: Yes, and that suspicion that was aroused was not really justified. Now, how many direct threatening letters there are, there are not nearly that many, because well anybody serious about it wouldn't write and those who are a bit off their rocker and write, still may be very dangerous to people. They are checked out, of course, anyway. But most of those 12,400-some are just suspicious, might be something fishy.

P: In the area from criticism to really threatening letters, what is--is there a main subject or is it the person of the President? Is there an issue or is it a personality?

S: Generally an issue.

P: Is it generally Viet Nam?

S: Oh, it can be anything from Viet Nam to--I'm just trying to think of an actual case--.

P: Have they been in one category more than another?

S: No, I don't believe so. Actually, since those--I send a number myself to Secret Service for check, but they are letters that I've decided, after somebody in the mail analysis process didn't, so the actual more serious threats would never have gotten this far anyway. They would have gone immediately over, and I think the Secret Service would be the best source on that. I really couldn't say, except that the provocation generally--it can be on almost anything.

P: What, since your tenure here, has been the most unusual correspondence either in subject matter or form or shape or anything else or from the person? Not just one, if there have been several.

S: You mean types of letters or individual letters?

P: What do you--what has struck you as being something rather unusual?

S: Well, there are a lot of laughs here, too, as well. Well, one letter I've kept out and preparing something for the President's use later but--. This is a letter that always struck me as being one of the most amusing that the President has received. Last February a lady in Richmond, Virginia, "Dear Mr. President, This is to inform you that as of today I am no longer a Democrat. My father was a Democrat, my grandfather, and his father before him, for heaven knows how far back. For twenty-three years since birth, I too have been a staunch member of that illustrious party--no longer. My babysitter didn't show up, my husband's roofing business has gone to pot, the baby is teething, and I can't save $25 to take a writing course with. The pipe under the bathtub is broken, the motor on the truck blew up, no one wants a typist with no experience and three kids, and we don't have enough money to file bankruptcy with. You think you've got problems with Fulbright and a measly war? You should meet my mother-in-law. I know it's risky counting on the Republicans to change my luck, but I'm desperate enough to try anything. Sorry to ditch you at a time like this, but I'm sure you understand. Perhaps a few Republicans had lousy enough luck to change parties in hopes of breaking the jinx. Thanks for the shoulder. Maybe I can listen to your problems some time." She had problems. There are things like that and there are a number of suprisingly blue-card cases among telegram senders.

P: Oh, really?

S: Yes. I guess it's the mark of an affluent society because there is one gentleman up in Long Island who as often as not addresses his telegrams to me as to the President because I have acknowledged one

way back sometime. On one Saturday afternoon several months ago he sent three telegrams within the space of two hours. He sends telegrams about once a week on all sorts of subjects. One Saturday afternoon he complained about the potato surplus in one telegram on Long Island and on another one, suggested we had better adopt the metric system for measurement. His field is unbounded.

P: You did talk about one coming in on a ration carton. Do you get many like this?

S: Just a few. We've had a couple. We get these from Viet Nam. The material used varies from wrapping paper to very proper and engraved letter heads. And also on the back of something they received--oh, a solicitation letter, let's say, from the Republican National Committee or from a Congressman, a newsletter maybe. They are angry about it, and just scrawl their denunciation on that piece of mail that they received and send it to the President.

P: Do you look at a piece of mail in terms of how it appears--for instance, if it is typed neatly or handwritten or if it is scrawled or unintelligent or illiterate?

S: Not from the standpoint of whether or not it will be answered, no. [From] the way it comes in, generally, you can tell whether someone is going to be writing of substance--a thought out expression of an opinion on an issue, on Viet Nam or on the tax increase, whatever it may be. You know that it is much more likely, than one terribly scrawled letter on wrapping paper, on tablet paper, is much more likely to require a response, if not from the President, from a cabinet officer or the Council of Economic Advisors. It will be so handled when it is received by the office to which it is referred,

but that should not be considered a discrimination in any sense. You know, just from the looks of a miserably scrawled letter that it's going to be more than likely personal problems* or a comment on an issue, and is not sufficiently pertinent or reasoned to required much more than an acknowledgement--a thank you for letting the President know of your position, your views on this or that. Again, this is not to say that there may not be something very much of substance.

P: Can you say whether you get more typed or more handwritten letters?

S: Oh, more handwritten letters.

P: Has the President ever received or has a letter ever been addressed to the President that is one of these mile-long letters or some of those?

S: Oh, yes, eight and ten-page letters with manuscripts attached for his opinion and also they may be critical or they may be just seeking his advice and opinion.

And there will also be that type of person in our country who complains about government spending and will write a five-page letter asking enough questions which, if answered and sometimes they are by multiple referral or by me or someone else on the staff with more than a routine acknowledgement of its existence, has wasted an awful lot of that man's tax money and the time involved in answering his complaint about the expenditure of tax money. There are a number of people who recognize that the President is a busy man, he has a lot on his mind and don't expect even a reply from the President himself. There are others who write and are thoroughly indignant if he hasn't replied personally in substance and at length. There are citizens

*Intent: if a personal problem, it would be referred to the appropriate agency for investigation.

and tax-payers and he's only the President. They demand an answer. But the curious ones are the inconsistent ones who don't realize they are fighting their own complaint.

P: You mentioned earlier about the letters being investigated through machines--they are screened. Has anything ever been produced from this?

S: Nothing that I know of. Now, there may have been. Again, this would be something for the Secret Service to say for sure, but if it is, nobody--They don't say anything about it to anybody, and they don't have to say anything about it because anything subsequent from that person would be stopped immediately. I don't know of anything serious that has ever been found. This is done at the farthest point from the President that it can be done, in the northwest corner of the ground floor of the EOB in a room there, before it gets any further into the building and of course before it gets anywhere near the President's office. That screening is done. There will be, in Austin, in the Post Office Building which is across the court from the Federal Office Building where his offices are located, a screening process there, not as elaborate and will only apply to packages and big flat mail not to any letter mail. But there will still be a screening process there, too.

P: Does the Public Correspondence Department receive any of the gifts that come in, or is that another area?

S: That's another area. Frequently, we will--I'll be asked to acknowledge something that is half way in the nature--half-way between a gift and just something--a book that someone has sent the President because they think you ought to read it and learn a lot more about what goes

on, that type of thing. But the gifts are handled in Lucy Ferguson's [Head of the Gift Unit] office upstairs here [Executive Office Building], and the acknowledgements are generally, if it is a personal thing from someone the President knows or Mrs. Johnson, they will acknowledge personally, of course. But the ordinary gift from a well-wisher will be acknowledged by Juanita Roberts as the personal secretary. But the processing and the handling and the storing and all that, except those which do go to the President, the family, by Lucy Ferguson's office. So it is not a direct function of the correspondence, of our office here.

P: Thinking back on--well, the time you've been here, in your judgment what assessment can you make of the volume of the mail, the subject matter of the mail that has come through your department? Does it reflect something of either more intense interest in things or do you see the mail in that capacity?

S: I think it does. There is about twice--on the average--let me verify myself here now--yes, on the average about twice as much mail--the figures I have here that I cited before--two and a half million in 1964. Well, the highest figure in the fifties was one million in 1953--twice as much mail in the sixties as in the fifties, and it costs more to mail a letter now, and it cost more to send a telegram. These figures are letters, but the telegrams are in proportion--they are in ratio. It costs more to send a telegram. It is a mark of two things, I think--the fact that it is a more affluent society and also the population hasn't gone up that much. It's gone up, of course, but not that much--much less than the increase in mail. I think it indicates a greater sense of involvement and interest, concern about what's going on in the world

P: Does the man in the office evoke--?

S: Yes, and I think that accounts for the marked increase. Well, in 1960 the total letters was 655,798. In 1961, the first year of President Kennedy's administration was almost a million and a half, more than twice as much, considerably more than twice as much. Both President Kennedy and President Johnson were more active and more aggressive Presidents than was President Eisenhower. I think they stirred up feelings, and that's one gratification I think. A President or any man in public office who doesn't receive a lot of mail, he's not going to be in office a long time. He has not stirred many thoughts, many feelings, hasn't been active enough to prompt people to criticize as well as praise. I think it's definitely a sign of a reaction to the individual President.

P: Can you say whether more mail comes in of a critical nature than it does as sort of a congratulatory?

S: No, most of it, discounting--a guess a quarter to a third. And childrens' mail, there is a good deal of it prompted by schoolteachers. Last year almost 17 percent of the mail concerned Viet Nam, and the childrens' mail was the second biggest category, I think. Yes, 11.18--[percent] just about the second biggest category. This has always been true with other Presidents. They are acknowledged, now, here, in many cases, with a letter, a printed letter, enclosing a booklet, "The President Greets Young Americans", telling them about the White House and about the presidency. The second biggest category in letters, even though it was just one big rush primarily, was the Middle East last year. Children's was third.

P: What did you say the first last year?

S: Viet Nam.

P: Viet Nam, the Middle East, and then childrens' mail.

S: Yes.

P: How far down do you carry that? All the way?

S: All the way, yes. The categories in which it is--Viet Nam, Middle East, foreign affairs other than Viet Nam and Middle East, civil rights demonstrations, economy, the economy and taxes, strikes, labor situations, appointments and resignations--there are a lot of recommendations or comments on appointments made, conservation, beautification, general political mail, HEW and poverty programs, draft and selective service cases, postal service, on the President's speeches and remarks, veterans' affairs, legislation--comments on various bills, support and appreciation,--.

P: Do these pretty much descend as you are reading them there?

S: No, they don't. Back and forth. The other major categories last year were [under] Viet Nam and Middle East, civil rights and demonstrations, about 2 percent; the economy and taxes, over 5 percent; HEW and poverty programs, 3½ percent; support and appreciation, that includes greetings, the President gets a lot of birthday greetings and of course the family gets a great many Christmas greetings,--

P: Can you draw any interpretations from the content, the subject matter of these letters?

S: You mean whether it is unfavorable or favorable?

P: Well, I meant of the subjects that are covered.

S: Well, it's difficult to do without scientific or real expertise in analyzing them, it's difficult to look over all the categories of Viet Nam mail, let's say, and come up with any solid conclusion that

60 percent of these people are doves and 40 percent are hawks. It can't be done, and it would take more analysis than I think would be worth the time from an informational and enlightening standpoint because this is not necessarily a cross section of the population. If that information is sought, why it should be done professionally. But there will be people who oppose the President's policy in Viet Nam, who have. They are against the policy, but some will be against it because too much is being done, and others because too little is being done.

P: How much mail is foreign?

S: Foreign? Not a great number. Not enough even to separate in a category, in last year's report, I don't think.

P: Is it often sent in another language?

S: Yes. Oh, there is foreign mail every week, but not in significant numbers. This is sent generally to the State Department for translation. And then if it comes back here, if State itself cannot handle the acknowledgement. Frequently, it is of the nature that the State Department just can't handle it. Otherwise, they send it back to this office and I'll handle it here or send it to the President or generally to what other office is concerned.

P: What is your personal reaction to this job?

S: Well, it has been very interesting. It's a new thing for me, and I don't know that there are any qualifications for anybody for this job. You just have to learn if you can do it effectively or not and if you are looking for a successor, I looked for some help for myself earlier this year and there is no place to go. You don't go to a writer. I spent most of my life in the newspaper business and in

writing. It has to be a man with some writing talent, but there are other sensitivities, political sensitivities and a knowledge of what the government is doing and who should be doing it, that there is no particular person or source for anyone to do it.

P: Has any aspect of the job surprised you?

S: Well, I was going to say, so I came into this pretty blindly in June of '67 and by January of '69 when I'm finished it will be enough for me. It's an awful tedious job in many respects. It's the kind of thing I think someone should do for about a year and a half and then a fresh face or a fresh mind should do it. I've learned something of the government--of all that the government does from it, although I did know a good deal of it before--I'm not boasting, just from the fact of my experience. I've learned a little bit more about what provokes people and what excites them, but I think actually anyone who has been in or close to public life, most of it is to be anticipated.

P: You've seen the White House, Mr. Shoemaker, from both the inside and outside as an AP [Associated Press] reporter. How has this affected your outlook and understanding of the White House operation and administration?

S: It's instructed me that when I spent two years as a regular AP correspondent covering the White House, I learned that I didn't know nearly as much about what went on within the White House as I thought I did--even though I was not here inside in the Kennedy Administration. I knew enough about its workings and certainly about the staff operation within the White House; that I also know that there is no one on the press now, even among the regulars,

who know exactly how things work in the back of the House, shall we say--who is responsible for what, and how it gets done, and it's just something, and I think that's good, really. I think there should be only one occupant of the White House, and that's the President. Anonymity on everyone else's part is to be desired. It does lead to some confusion sometime within the press which may inadvertantly take a story off center--ones written without the full understanding of the reasons for delay, the reasons for consideration. I'm being vague because it's hard to single out any one situation or any one office.

I do know--well, for instance, that when it became known that Bob Hardesty, it appeared in print a couple of times, that Bob Hardesty and Harry Middleton were going to Texas with the President, Bob's name was fairly well known because he had been in town for quite a while and had been at the Post Office Department with [John] Gronouski [Post Master General] and knew quite a few people in the press, although he was always very careful to remain as anonymous as possible as a speechwriter. But no one had ever heard of Harry Middleton; yet Harry Middleton was the main composer of messages to Congress this year. It was a name that nobody knew. There were others more prominently mentioned. The matter of speechwriting came up, for instance, and who is actually responsible for what--that responsibility shifts every once in a while within the staff, and it is not followed outside.

P: And the lack of awareness, say, on the outside probably is misleading sometimes?

S: Sometimes it can be, yes, because they don't know the source and will

try to contact the wrong people.

P: How do you think history will rate Mr. Johnson?

S: Highly. I couldn't begin to number one, two, or three. I think no one can do that. But very high, I believe.

P: We've covered a lot of areas in this public correspondence. Is there anything we've left out, do you think, or any other comments I should get from you?

S: I don't think so. I could give you more of a breakdown on the categories of mail, but I've just listed them off. This is from last year, and it doesn't include telegrams although telegrams would follow the same general categories.

Public correspondence is not a precise gage of public opinion because it does not represent a cross section. The volume indicates public interest but the content is of greater significance and could possibly signal trends.

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE

Gift of Personal Statement

By Whitney Shoemaker

to the

Lyndon Baines Johnson Library

In accordance with Sec. 507 of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, as amended (44 U.S.C. 397) and regulations issued thereunder (41 CFR 101-10), I, Whitney Shoemaker hereinafter referred to as the donor, hereby give, donate, and convey to the United States of America for eventual deposit in the proposed Lyndon Baines Johnson Library, and for administration therein by the authorities thereof, a tape and transcript of a personal statement approved by me and prepared for the purpose of deposit in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library. The gift of this material is made subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Title to the material transferred hereunder, ~~and all literary property rights,~~ (substitute: F①) will pass to the United States as of the date of the delivery of this material into the physical custody of the Archivist of the United States.

2. It is the donor's wish to make the material donated to the United States of America by terms of this instrument available for research as soon as it has been deposited in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

3. A revision of this stipulation governing access to the material for research may be entered into between the donor and the Archivist of the United States, or his designee, if it appears desirable.

4. The material donated to the United States pursuant to the foregoing shall be kept intact permanently in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

Signed Whitney Shoemaker

Date December 3, 1971

Accepted Harry J. Middleton - for
Archivist of the United States

Date April 11, 1975

Preparation of "Gift of Personal Statement"

A. If you do not wish to impose restrictions on the use of your tape and transcript and if you do not feel the need to retain literary property rights upon the material, please sign the enclosed statement and return it to the Oral History Project.

B. If you wish to restrict the use of your transcript for a period of time beyond the date of the opening of the Johnson Library, a new statement will be prepared (either by you or by us) deleting paragraph 2 and substituting the following, with one of the alternatives:

It is the donor's wish to make the material donated to the United States of America by the terms of the instrument available for research in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library. At the same time, it is his wish to guard against the possibility of its contents being used to embarrass, damage, injure, or harass anyone. Therefore, in pursuance of this objective, and in accordance with the provisions of Sec. 507 (f) (3) of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, as amended (44 U.S.C. 397) this material shall not,

for a period of _____ years

or

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or

for a period of _____ years or until _____ years after the death of the donor, whichever occurs later

be available for examination by anyone except persons who have received my express written authorization to examine it.

C. If you wish to have the restriction imposed above apply to employees of the National Archives and Records Service engaged in performing normal archival work processes, the following sentence will be added to paragraph 2:

This restriction shall apply to and include employees and officers of the General Services Administration (including the National Archives and Records Service and the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library) engaged in performing normal archival work processes.

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This restriction shall not apply to employees and officers of the General Services Administration (including the National Archives and Records Service and the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library) engaged in performing normal archival work processes.

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(1) The donor retains to himself for a period of 15 years all literary property rights in the material donated to the United States of America by the terms of the instrument. After the expiration of this 15 year period, the aforesaid literary property rights will pass to the United States of America.

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