INTERVIEW I

DATE: August 20, 1980

INTERVIEWEE: SARGENT SHRIVER

INTERVIEWER: MICHAEL L. GILLETTE

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

Tape 1 of 3

G: Feel free to deviate from this outline. This is primarily designed to trigger memories and to amplify things that you may think of.

S: Yes.

G: I wanted to start with your own commitment to alleviating poverty and what you feel the roots of that are.

S: Yes. First of all, it's rather personal. To be most helpful to you, I ought to tell you something about that. The first interest that I took in it came about really because of the Depression. My family was fairly well-to-do, and in the Depression--by that I mean the period 1929 to 1933, that period--my father suffered very severe financial setbacks. Since I had an extraordinary affection for and respect for, admiration even for my father, I felt that it was absolutely certain that something was the matter with a system which would permit a person of his rectitude and ability and competence, *et cetera*, to be mishandled in this manner. And I saw the effect that it had on him and on my mother. Not that they were overcome by it, but it was an experience somewhat I suppose like being a victim of a natural catastrophe, which left a very strong impression on me. At that time I was fourteen, fifteen, sixteen years of age.

As a result of that I took an interest in persons like Dorothy Day and an organization called the Catholic Worker Movement. It still exists; it's very small. That movement is dedicated to acceptance of a life of poverty by the members of it; secondly,

to working with poor people, you might say almost exclusively; third, to pacifism. I used to work from time to time in the office of the *Catholic Worker*, which was down in the Greenwich Village area of New York City. So that as a kid, a youngster--well, I wasn't really a youngster, I was a teenager--I saw face up, you might say, the kind of poverty that affected people who were really poor, the people who were living in the Bowery, the misfits or the drunks, the homeless men and women, the outcasts of our society. Soup kitchens, they used to call them; I worked at soup kitchens down there. So my interest in poverty goes back to those days.

After World War II, I was one of the people involved in the organization of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, in New York City. It was called into existence in part because of the philosophic conceptions that were behind it, some of which came from Europe. It was like the Christian Democratic movement in Europe. There was a big Christian Democratic Party in Italy and another one in France and another one in Germany. Konrad Adenauer was head of the one in Germany. A man named [Alcide] De Gasperi was the head of the one in Italy, and people like Georges Bidault, Maurice Schumann and so on were in the Christian Democratic Party in France.

I was very much attracted to that approach toward the solution of contemporary social problems involving social justice. So we started the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists in New York, and had a rather exciting and successful struggle against the communists who were trying to take over the trade unions, and particularly the American Newspaper Guild, of which I was a member. I was working for *Newsweek* magazine. It was a very interesting experience because these meetings were all held down at 14th Street in New York, in a walk-up tenement, and it was us versus the communists, who were trying to, as I said, take over the newspaper guild, which was in fact the guild that controlled the labor-relations end of the *New York Herald Tribune* in those days, and the *New York Times*, *Newsweek*, and other magazines and newspapers.

So once again I was, from the point of view of trade unionism you might say, exposed to problems of poor people. I also took a deep interest in the writings and work of St. Francis of Assisi and his followers, the Franciscans. I was a member of the Third Order, they call it, of St. Francis.

So this is a very personal, albeit shortened, glimpse into my personal life, as I said it would be; but when someone says how did my commitment to fighting poverty evolve, it would be extremely superficial as well as inaccurate to omit the fact that my interest in poverty evolved from significant early experiences and activities.

Actually, when I went to Chicago I followed a somewhat similar pattern. I was a member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. That's a group of lay people in the Catholic Church which takes a special interest in the problems of poor people. The Society is based within a parish, and the members meet usually once a week. They take special responsibility for the poor people in the particular geographical area of the parish. So once a week I would be out visiting the poor people on the near North Side of Chicago. I've been in all those stinking tenements, seen all the old people, and the pitiful children. The poverty there, however, was not unique. There's worse poverty to be seen in other parts of the world and even in other parts of Chicago. But as compared to the life on the Gold Coast, which is where actually I lived, the life of the poor only six blocks away was a real eye opener to me. I worked as a member of that Society for eight years or so when I lived in Chicago.

My experience with the St. Vincent de Paul Society was one of the reasons why I went onto the Board of Education of Chicago. I went onto that board because I felt that unless something serious was done to improve education of the poor, it would be fruitless for me and my wife, living on the Gold Coast, to try to bring up children who could do something useful in society and for their fellow man, if in fact the fellow man, so to speak, or woman--if those people were both uneducated and turned off on the society. In

other words, that old classic phrase of Lincoln's, that a society can't exist half slave and half free seemed to me to be particularly applicable to the urban centers of America. You couldn't have urban centers where half the population or more was uneducated, unemployed, addicted to narcotics or alcohol, whatever--and an elite group, highly educated, very sophisticated, well traveled and all that, trying to live together in comity in that kind of an environment. I just was certain that wouldn't work over the long haul. So I went on the Board of Education to commit myself, at least part-time, to trying to improve education in the city of Chicago. And we did a considerable amount.

I also was interested in the interracial movement. I was president of the Catholic Interracial Council in Chicago for five or six years during that period. Of course, if you're interested in the interracial movement and in city education, you're smack up against the minority problem, whether it's the Hispanics or the blacks, in a major metropolitan center. So I was in "the urban problem" up to my eyeballs, you might say. I was also a businessman and a lawyer. So I thought that there must be some way in which the initiative and intelligence and entrepreneurial spirit and capacity of the American businessman could be mobilized to deal with the social problems of the big cities, as well as with the problem of merchandising soap or cereal.

So I had a foot, you might say, in a number of worlds. I had one foot in the super-deluxe, rich, highly-educated elite of Chicago, with the Chicago Opera and the Chicago Symphony and the Chicago Museum, the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, all of which I was associated with, and another foot, one might say, in the bottom of Chicago with the poor people through the St. Vincent de Paul Society and through the Board of Education. Therefore when Kennedy started the Peace Corps it wasn't surprising--to me--that he would ask somebody like me to take an interest in it.

G: Sure. The material about you also mentions your working with juvenile delinquency, largely through your father-in-law back in the late 1940s.

S: That's true. I should have mentioned that earlier. When I was in Chicago my wife, to whom I was *not* married at that time, received an appointment to be executive secretary of the Continuing Committee of the National Conference for the Prevention and Control of Juvenile Delinquency. It had that long title. This was an outgrowth of a national conference which had been held here in Washington under White House auspices. The Department of Justice was given the job by the President of the United States--Truman at that time--to carry through in the implementation of the recommendations made by the National Conference on the Prevention and Control of Juvenile Delinquency. That conference issued about eighteen different reports on different parts of the juvenile delinquency problem, such as education, housing, *et cetera*--food. My wife's job was to try to bring some kind of a cohesion to these fifteen or eighteen different reports and to plan a program for the federal government through which the Department of Justice and other agencies would attempt to carry out the recommendations in these reports. There were hundreds of recommendations. So I came down here to try to help her organize in some intelligent way the effort to follow up on that national conference.

Once again, we were mucking around with poor people, because a lot of the people we were concerned about were actually prisoners. They were juvenile delinquents in juvenile detention homes, and in the process we got into prisons in general. My wife worked for a time--this is before we were married--in the Federal Penitentiary [Reformatory] for Women down in Alderson, West Virginia. I found myself visiting the Stateville penitentiary in Illinois and [the] Leavenworth penitentiary and various other penitentiaries, including detention homes for the juveniles. Well, it really is only a short distance from being a juvenile in a detention home, arrested, [to] being a juvenile standing on a street corner in central Chicago or central Washington. It's, I think, purely haphazard as to whether a youngster who is out of work and out of school and uneducated and with no guidance--it's purely a chance whether he ends up in jail or out of jail. I'm

sorry to say that, but I don't think there's any intelligent explanation, any rhyme or reason as to who's caught and imprisoned versus who remains free. So we were up to our eyeballs in juvenile delinquency.

Poverty, of course, is a very significant factor in juvenile delinquency. So when I was asked to run the War on Poverty--as you know, I didn't want to run it. But leaving that aside for a minute and retrospectively now, not prospectively but retrospectively, I'm sure that I had no psychological, or for that matter, logical difficulty in accepting the program's purposes; secondly, in trying to execute it intelligently; third, in having a considerable dedication to its purposes over and above the business of being a federal government administrator.

G: As we go into the evolution of the program, I hope that you will reflect back on these observations and determine if there were any aspects of your early involvement here in Chicago and New York that influenced the formulation of the program.

S: I can give you one, right now, example: the Job Corps. That was completely a creature of my period as a president of the Board of Education in Chicago, and the reason is very simple. I used to be in the slums visiting schools in Chicago, and you can do it today as well as I did then: Drive through the slums of any big city and you will find on any corner, and sometimes between the corners, coteries of four, five, six, eight, ten kids running anywhere from fourteen years of age to twenty, just standing around doing nothing. I used to say to myself then and I say to myself now, and I say to my children, that if I had been on a corner standing around like those kids I really think I would have turned out worse than they do. I would have been much more enraged than most of them are.

At that time in Chicago we ran big vocational schools, and we still do of course in the big cities. But when we try to teach youngsters like these in a vocational school or a regular high school, the teachers are up against a terrific problem, because the kids

frequently come to school without adequate nourishment, they come without adequate home background, they come without adequate motivation, they don't see any connection between what they're doing in school and, quote, "life," *et cetera*. So I tried to get the Board of Education of Chicago to establish boarding schools. In Chicago there are public lands which are known as the Forest Preserve. It was a great idea some fellow had out there a long time ago, that in the metropolitan Chicago area--in the city itself--there should be great tracts of land designated to stay as they are. They're like Roosevelt Island over here in this Potomac River. There are huge tracts, hundreds and hundreds of acres of forest, in the city of Chicago, and it's called a Forest Preserve. The Forest Preserve is just what it is, a place where people who live in the city can go out and walk through the forest. It sounds incredible in terms of foresight, but those forests are there in Chicago today.

So I wanted to make a deal with the Forest Preserve that would let us put boarding schools, at least one, to try it, in a Forest Preserve, and therefore take these youngsters out of the environment where they were living in the city of Chicago, put them in a controlled environment and work on them twenty-four hours a day for four years. I used to remember and quote the fact that the army and the navy say that it takes four years at Annapolis or West Point to turn out a naval or army officer. They bring in youngsters, freshmen, who were well motivated, let's say, healthy and intelligent, but to actually make them into an officer takes four years. And I think they still say that.

My theory is that if it takes four years to take a youngster and make an army officer out of him at West Point, think how long it probably will take to take a kid who is not healthy and who has had a bad upbringing or background and no chances, and turn him into a responsible, law-abiding, regular citizen of the United States, capable of fitting into this highly industrialized society. The idea that you can produce such a result by giving a kid a job in the summertime or that you can succeed by merely opening up job

opportunities was, and is, ridiculous. The poor people are not prepared for the jobs this society can produce.

G: What happened to this endeavor?

S: I could never get it done in Chicago.

G: Where was the opposition?

S: Well, there is no such thing as a public boarding school in the United States.

G: Was it the school board or the Forest--?

S: I can't really itemize with any degree of accuracy, but first of all, it's a revolutionary concept. Secondly, it costs a lot of money. Third, it's never been done. Fourth, there are other priorities involving, quote, "regular kids."

G: You don't recall any particular hurdle, though, that was crucial?

S: The biggest hurdle is strictly the old-fashioned one, bureaucratic inertia. If the bureaucracy really doesn't want to do something they can pretty well put it deep six, as we used to say in the navy.

G: When scholars are writing about the Job Corps and the history of it, they're going to come upon the Department of Labor's program, the Youth Conservation Corps, I think, which had been bouncing around on Capitol Hill for a couple of years during the Kennedy Administration. Did you have an input here, or how did this fit into your planning of the Job Corps?

S: It didn't fit in, or only indirectly. The Youth Conservation Corps in the 1960s was a contemporary effort to develop a program just like the CCC [Civilian Conservation Corps] camps had been, which I don't object to at all now and did not object to then. So when the Job Corps got underway we subsumed that conservation effort in the Job Corps by having what we called rural Job Corps centers as well as urban Job Corps centers. I have nothing against that. I don't think rural, CCC-type camps can begin to answer the problem in its totality today for a number of reasons. First of all, most of the people in

our society are not going to find jobs in the rural areas. So if I take a youngster seventeen years of age and put him into a forestry camp in Utah or Montana, it will be good for him and he will learn a lot, but he will not probably be able to use those skills immediately in the industrialized, contemporary, twentieth-century America. The work that he will do is beneficial in preserving the forests and preserving the agricultural lands of the United States. There's no question about it being useful. But in my judgment it wasn't going to prepare many of the youngsters adequately for our society. I wasn't opposed to it. But it was much more applicable when Roosevelt did it in the thirties than it was when Johnson came along in the sixties. First, because the entire productive process of the United States had changed significantly. But secondly, because people who went in the CCC camps were people like Lyndon Johnson or me. If you go back and look at pictures of the CCC camp people, they were all young, middle-class men. And most of them were white. We had then in the sixties, and we have today, a totally different clientele that's unemployed now as compared to those who were unemployed then.

G: You're talking about a cultural poverty as well as an economic poverty.

S: Oh, yes, of course. That's what you see in the idea of preparing a big job program, which was what Bill Wirtz wanted all the time. As the secretary of labor, he wanted a huge job program. Well, I was not against a huge job program, but a huge job program in a sense put the cart before the horse, the reason being that the people who were unemployed in the sixties couldn't hold the jobs that the job program would produce. So having more and more and more jobs that one couldn't fill because the applicants were unqualified didn't do any good in terms of overcoming poverty. We have that same problem today. It hasn't been solved, I'm sorry to say.

You have to remember, too, that in the sixties [when] Bill Wirtz was talking about a huge job program, unemployment in the United States might have been 3 per cent, maybe 4 per cent. I don't know what the specific figure was, but it wasn't large. Now

we've got 7 and 8 and 9 per cent; and the people who are unemployed, the vast majority of them, are still what we used to call "the structurally unemployed," i.e., they're unemployable. Many people just blame them. They say they're lazy, they want to take narcotics, they'd rather rob, they'd rather play the numbers racket, they've got a cultural hang-up especially if they're [from the] Appalachians. It's the easiest thing in the world to slough onto the poor responsibility for the fact they're not working. But it's much harder to say--I know it's much harder to say--"Look, it's *our* fault that *our* society is producing these people." We used to say that such-and-such a youngster quit school, when in fact most of the time we were and are throwing these youngsters out. We're throwing them out because the system is not flexible enough to provide them with learning experiences and education suited to their needs. Hence they are unprepared for this society. And the reasons for that are legion.

G: Let's talk about your Peace Corps experience and anything in that that was applicable or critical in formulation of the War on Poverty. Say, community action ideas or anything.

S: That's a huge question. There were many, many things in the Peace Corps which were applicable to the War on Poverty, and you put your finger right on one of them right away. That was the approach which we in the Peace Corps called community development. Now in fact, doing community development in Ecuador is, philosophically and substantially, no different than doing the same thing in some West Virginia hollow. Now I'm not trying to say West Virginia hollows are like Ecuador, but the concept of going into Ecuador to try to help people decide their own problems, and to energize them, motivate them, assist them to be able to handle their own problems themselves, is no different than the psychology you take into West Virginia or to the South Bronx. In the Peace Corps one called this process community development; in the war against poverty, we called it Community Action.

To me--this is a parenthesis--it's always ironic that Democrats, in recent history at least, are interested in trying to help people to become independent of government handouts. The War on Poverty was designed to take a person who is dependent and turn him into an independent person by health, by education, by training, by discipline, by community action, *et cetera*, anything we could think of. Yet when Nixon came into office one saw in this country the largest increase of expenditure for antipoverty work in history; but it was all handouts! It was all Medicare and things like that, which do *not* make people independent. The Republicans *say* that they're against handouts; but like the old-time, eighteenth-century capitalists, they actually *practice* handouts. John D. Rockefeller used to go around--Senior--giving out dimes to people, or a big plutocrat in England used to establish a home for foundlings. It's the rich giving something to people, giving them something of their excess. Do you understand what I'm trying to say? The Democrats on the other hand say, "That's OK, that is worthy. There's nothing unworthy about a person giving away money. But it's ineffective. Because the person to whom you give a handout remains in the handout condition."

So the Job Corps, just as an example, and all the other programs we had, VISTA or Peace Corps, had the philosophy of trying to develop people so that they could take care of themselves. That's much harder, of course, and it's much longer term. Therefore, people will argue it's too expensive. But it's a lot cheaper than handouts. The irony of it all is that the budget right now, the federal budget, is colossal, swollen with handouts, yet it is minuscule by comparison in the help it gives to programs which enable people to get out of poverty and stay out of it because they have been changed, and their community itself has been developed.

G: How about the precedent of establishing the Peace Corps as an independent agency?

S: That Peace Corps history, too, was relevant to the War on Poverty, not just because of me but because of Lyndon Johnson. You see, Lyndon Johnson was a product of the

Roosevelt era. He saw all those New Deal agencies started and he saw many of them succeed. Secondly, he was a man who had more experience in Washington than anybody who ever sat in the White House in this century. He knew what made Washington work and what didn't work. He knew that if you put something like the War on Poverty or the Peace Corps into an existing bureaucracy, you killed it. In fact, Lyndon Johnson is the man responsible for the Peace Corps being independent.

G: How so?

S: The answer is very simple. We, the people in the Peace Corps, at the formative period wanted it to be independent so that we could control what the volunteers did, where they did it, who supervised them and all that type [of] thing. At the same time there was a very high-level reorganization being planned by the Kennedy Administration for revamping all foreign assistance. At that time it was known as ICA, the International Cooperation Administration. There was a huge amount of sophisticated work done to transform ICA into AID, the Agency for International Development. That transformation was masterminded by Kermit Gordon, John Kenneth Galbraith, Henry Labouisse and other experts in economic development.

They had the conception--which I'm not arguing about at all--that a plan should be developed, let's say in Ethiopia, for Ethiopia. The plan should be developed by very intelligent, experienced Americans working with the best people in Ethiopia. That plan would contain everything that ought to be done for the development of Ethiopia. According to the country plan, as it was called, the Ethiopians might need food. So George McGovern--now a very well-known man--who had the job of running Food for Peace, would be told to send specific amounts of food in accordance with the country plan. I was given the job of running the Peace Corps. Because, just as George McGovern supplied food, I was supposed to supply volunteers in accordance with this country plan. Another man, who's a very distinguished judge now--his name is Frank Coffin; he's on

the circuit court of New England--was given the job of supplying the low-interest-rate money.

They used to refer to us like a bank; there would be three bank windows. So that if you were Ethiopia or you were--I don't care, any foreign country; Thailand--you came into the Agency for International Development, which was like going into the Chase Bank, and the Agency for International Development would have worked out with you, the people from Thailand, an economic development program for Thailand. The foreigners--Thais, Ethiopians, *et cetera*--would come to the Agency for International Development and they'd say, "Okay, according to the country plan you ought to get four hundred thousand bushels of wheat. Now go over to window number twenty-two and George McGovern will give you the wheat. You need so much money at 2 per cent interest. Go see Frank Coffin and he'll give you the money. You need fifty volunteers. So see Sargent Shriver and he'll give you fifty volunteers."

The Peace Corps under that idea would have been a place that selected, trained, and dispatched volunteers, period. Well, we didn't like that idea at the Peace Corps, but it was accepted by President Kennedy. I was in India when I got a message from the Peace Corps that we had lost the fight and that the Peace Corps was going to be put into AID. I can remember sitting on the bed out there, dripping with sweat--it was hotter than Hades; it was July in India--and saying to myself, "Oh, boy, that's the end."

The question then arose: What could we do? So I called back to the United States, or sent a message back to the United States, telling the guys in the Peace Corps to get hold of Bill Moyers and have Bill Moyers go to Lyndon Johnson, and get Lyndon Johnson to go to the President and see whether Lyndon Johnson couldn't get us out of that AID bureaucracy. Our guys did exactly that, went to Lyndon Johnson, explained the situation to Lyndon Johnson. I then got back to Washington and the President called Lyndon Johnson and me into the Oval Office. He said, "Listen, you two. Why do you

want the Peace Corps separate from AID? It's a real pain in the neck as far as I'm concerned, because all of my experts have said, 'Put it in AID,' and you two recalcitrants are arguing that it shouldn't be in there. And that's just the kind of headache the President doesn't want to have caused by his Vice President and his brother-in-law." But since it was the Vice President and his brother-in-law, the President was willing to give us five minutes.

So Lyndon gave his big speech. He said, "I can tell you something. I've seen it for forty years in Washington. You put this Peace Corps of yours into that foreign aid agency, and with the best of intentions, it will disappear. Nobody will know it ever existed. It's one of the best things you've proposed. It will be obliterated. Sticking it into an old-line bureaucracy will kill it. They never do anything. Roosevelt"--and the Vice President gave one of his speeches describing how FDR always put new ideas into new hands, in new bureaucracies, to give them freedom, running room, a chance to be creative.

Jack turned to me and said, "Well, what do you think?" I said, "The truth of the matter is I agree with the Vice President. You're not going to have an identifiable, high-spirited, high-risk but potentially great thing for yourself or for the country if you bury it in a bureaucracy. The fellows who have prepared AID are terrific guys; they were all good friends of mine. I've got nothing against them. But they don't have the concept of volunteers doing these things as compared, let's say, to the army or to the marines doing it." President Kennedy looked at me and he said, "Well, all right."

G: So he made the decision on the spot.

S: Right on [the spot]. He said, "Okay, if that's what you guys want, go ahead. I'll cut it out of AID." Needless to say, once we had the decision we got out of the Oval Office as fast as we could. Why? Because he didn't like it; Kennedy didn't like the decision. He didn't like the decision for a lot of reasons. First of all, it was untidy, you might say,

bureaucratically and administratively speaking. Secondly, it meant that with respect to all the guys who had worked on creating the AID concept, he was changing something they had worked on very hard, and they asked what justification was there for it? And third, it was going to be another piece of legislation that had to go up to Congress. It was going to be another piece of legislation that Larry O'Brien and his White House people had to worry about, in addition to all the other pieces of new legislation. And there probably were other reasons which I'm not aware of, to explain why the President didn't really like the idea of a separate Peace Corps.

Well, having gone through that Peace Corps experience three years prior to the start of the war against poverty, I don't think anybody ever dreamed that the War on Poverty under Lyndon Johnson should be put into an agency already existing. Lyndon Johnson wouldn't have stood still for that for thirty seconds, because of what I told you about his opinion with respect to new programs, namely that they shouldn't be put into existing bureaucracies.

G: The War on Poverty, at least the concept of it, originated during the Kennedy Administration. Did President Kennedy ever talk to you about what he planned to do in this respect?

S: No, he didn't. But I might just add there that there's no question about the fact that the books of people like Michael Harrington and Ken Galbraith and another man who wrote an essay in the *New Yorker* on this subject--I think his name was Dwight Macdonald, I can't remember for sure--did have an influence on Kennedy. That was one of the really great things about Kennedy; when he was president somehow or other he found the time to read a thoughtful book by Michael Harrington, or "a take-out essay" in the *New Yorker* magazine; and then having read it, he had the ability to recognize that these guys were really talking about something serious, and new, and challenging. I think it's true that it was after reading books and articles like those the President got hold of [Walter] Heller,

who was head of the Council of Economic Advisers, and said, "Look, these guys said that there's a big poverty problem"--needless to say, if it's poverty you think of economics--"I want you to investigate this and make some recommendations to me. If this situation exists as they say it does, we have a significant social problem in our country, then perhaps we at the federal government ought to do something about it. It doesn't mean that we have to do it all; maybe the states should do it, maybe private enterprise should do it, but something should be done about it. So make me some recommendations." And that was the start of the War on Poverty. It came right out of Kennedy's head. He had that genius. He could see a fresh idea, recognize it, and he had the guts to do something about it, take some action with respect to it, right away. He never had to hesitate, to call in sixty-five advisers to tell him whether he was right or wrong. He just said, "Do it!"

G: What was Lyndon Johnson's perception of the War on Poverty?

S: I think his perception was complicated. He was a very complicated human being. But to try to epitomize it, I think that it involved an attempt to do in [the 1960s] some of the things that had proved to be successful in the thirties, and perhaps some new things. Fundamentally he thought, I believe, that people should be given a chance, that there was a lot of inequality in our country, that there was a lot of people who didn't get a fair shake, and they deserved to get a fair shake or a break. One way to give them a break was to have programs like the Job Corps, like the CCC camps. He pointed out that he, Lyndon Johnson himself, John Connally, who was then governor of Texas, and Jake Pickle, who was a congressman from the district where Johnson lived, and I, Sargent Shriver, all four of us had gotten grants from the National Youth Administration in the thirties. Johnson, Connally, Pickle and Shriver never would have gone to college if we hadn't been the beneficiaries of a 1930s version of the War on Poverty. Lyndon Johnson knew that about us and about himself.

Johnson was overwhelmingly interested in people, and he wanted to help people, and he wanted to do that before he was ever in government. I've been down to that town in Texas called Cotulla, where as a very young man--I think he was only twenty-one or twenty-two years old--Lyndon Johnson went there to teach school in an area where most of the school children were Mexican-Americans, Chicanos. He could have gone anywhere in Texas to teach school, but he chose to teach school in a place where the kids were Mexican-American. You know, Mexican-Americans, in the minds of many existing, living-right-now Texans, are not the cream of the universe! And it was even more unusual when Johnson as a young man--for a young white man to want to go out and teach Mexican-Americans. But he had that motivation, Johnson did, from his earliest manhood, to do something about people who were not getting a fair shake.

As I say, he was a complicated human being, but one of the great dominating ideas of his life was to help people. And as president of the United States he wanted to help them as only a president could help them, by using the engine of government, using the resources of government, using the total power of which we all partake, namely the national community of our country, to help people who were unfortunate. So I think that's how he saw the War on Poverty.

G: I gather he met with you on January 31, right after your return from the trip around the world.

S: Yes.

G: Do you recall the details of that meeting?

S: I couldn't really say I recall the details. I can tell you what I do recall. I recall that I went to the White House to meet him, because customarily when I went overseas for the Peace Corps I always came back at the end of the trip and talked to the President, just to give him a personal report. I did that with Kennedy, and now in 1964 when Johnson was president, I did the same thing.

He received me over there either in the Cabinet Room or in his office, I don't remember which, and then he got up right away and walked out of the office into the Rose Garden. We walked from the Rose Garden around the White House driveway. Then we walked back the same way into the Rose Garden and into his office. During that stroll I suppose I talked to him maybe three or four minutes about the trip I had just finished, which was and is a story by itself. It was a remarkable trip, and he had given me a lot of letters to present to various heads of state, and so I did have something to tell him. But when it was all over he said, "Well, that's very nice, Sarge. Thank you very much," and immediately changed the subject. He never responded in any manner to my report about the Peace Corps. Now he said, "You know we're getting this war against poverty started. I'd like you to think about that, because I'd like you to run that program for us."

Then he started to tell me about his ideas about the War on Poverty, most of which had been worked out and announced in the State of the Union Message while I was overseas. I was totally unfamiliar with the whole project, having been in Asia when he announced the proposal. All I knew was a little item I read in a Bangkok newspaper, that Johnson had in his State of the Union message indicated that he was going to mount a war against poverty. Then my friend Bill Moyers, who was of course working in the White House then, told me that Johnson had some ideas about that war against poverty which involved me.

G: He didn't elaborate on what they were, though?

S: Oh, no, no. No. Moyers is too smart to do that; that wasn't his job. He was more or less alerting me to the fact that Johnson might say something to me about it, but he never even made a statement that would have committed Johnson to saying something to me about it. So that's all I knew, when President Johnson spoke to me at the White House and said he'd like me to think about the program and think about running it.

I tell you the truth of the matter: I didn't think about it very much. It's not a very laudatory thing for me to say that about myself, but it's a fact. I had been overseas; Jack Kennedy had just been killed; I was in a very unusual psychological and emotional situation. I was home for the first time in months. I was, so to speak, remeeting my family. My wife was still under the influence, the aftermath, of the President's assassination. And my meeting with the President was within three or four days of when I came home. I was also working my head off at the Peace Corps, trying to catch up. When I'd go home at night, my business was, so to speak, to get myself reorganized or reestablished and get things going again at home. Not that something was wrong, I don't mean that, even by implication. Nothing was wrong. But to get back into a pattern of living with my family, and with the new reality that Jack Kennedy was dead. He'd only been killed sixty days before, and there was huge tension about that in the United States and especially, obviously, within the members of the Kennedy family. And at the Peace Corps. Consequently I don't believe I really thought about the war against poverty, what President Johnson had told me to think about. It was really a dereliction on my part, but I didn't really think about the new program.

So I think it was a Saturday; I was at home. The President called up, and if my memory serves me right, I was out playing with my children. He was on the other end of the phone, and he said, "Sarge, what do you think about that war against poverty? What have you thought about that?" I said, "Mr. President, I'm very embarrassed to tell you, I haven't really thought about it at all. I'm sorry, I guess I should have, but I didn't realize that you were that concerned about it in terms of time." Then I told him what I just got through telling you, more briefly than I told it to you, but nevertheless, explaining to him my need to get on top of things at the Peace Corps, my need to concentrate on things at home, *et cetera*.

He said, "Well, Sarge, I'd like to have a press conference today at noon, and I'd like to announce you as the head of my new program." Then I really got concerned. I said, "Well, Mr. President, if you don't mind, I think it would be better to postpone that announcement. I don't know anything about poverty. If you make an announcement like that the press is sure going to ask me something about it, for my opinions, *et cetera*. I don't know what to say, anything about it. There's nobody in the Peace Corps that knows anything about it. I've just come from a trip around the world. The Peace Corps people will wonder, why haven't they been alerted to it? I think it's much too precipitous. Why don't we wait? I'll be happy to talk to you about it and think about it and discuss it with people this coming week. And we've got plenty of time." He said, "Well, no. I really want to do it at twelve o'clock. You think about it and we'll talk again."

It was about ten o'clock in the morning, and I went out and talked to my wife and I said, "You know, I don't really want to run this thing." Frankly, I was somewhat tired, and I was very happy with the Peace Corps. It took a long time to get the Peace Corps and a lot of work to get the Peace Corps where it was in 1963, early 1964. It was really running well. And it was, quote, "a success;" everybody rather liked it. It had taken a lot of effort to get it to that point and I was just as happy to stay with that.

So then the phone rang again.

G: What did your wife say when you talked to her about the poverty program?

S: She said, "It's a terrific compliment that Johnson would ask you to do that," that it was a question for me to decide myself, that she thought that he was right, that I would be good at it because of some of the things I mentioned at the beginning of this conversation. On the other hand, she thought I ought to just tell him what I thought. So either I called him back or he called me, I don't really know which it was. I said, "Look, Mr. President, I have talked to Eunice about it"--that's my wife--"and I have thought about it, and I honestly think that it would be better to postpone this decision or this announcement and

let's us think about it this coming week. There's got to be people in the United States that can do this better than I can. Moreover, you've got a new administration, you're the new president. It would be useful to bring in some celebrated person--this is a big job--and give that new person this important new job. You want to build up your own situation, you know, by bringing in really good people into your administration. You know I'm very happy where I am. You don't have to give me any job. I'm not concerned about anything. Why don't we just take it easy? We've got all this next week. If next Saturday you want to do it, we can still do it next Saturday." He said, "No, Sarge. I really want to do it now." Well, then it was about eleven o'clock. I said, "Please, Mr. President, really, I would much prefer it if you don't do it." He said, "I really think that it's important to do it," and so on. I said, "Well, I understand that you do," and then I repeated my litany of things. He said, "Well, you think about it."

Then about, I guess, a half hour later there he was on the phone again. And he said to me in a very subdued voice, low tone of voice, as if he was very confidential, "Sarge." I said, "Yes." "This is your president speaking. I've interrupted a meeting going on right now in the Cabinet Room. I shouldn't be interrupting it. But I thought about what we discussed. You'll just have to take my word for it. There's nobody that can see the whole picture like the president can. I need you to do this job, the country needs you to do this job, and I'm going to announce you as the director of the war against poverty at the news conference at twelve o'clock." Bang! Down went the phone.

So then I called up the Peace Corps headquarters. There was a fellow there who was my right-hand man, a wonderful person named Warren Wiggins. I said, "Warren, you won't believe this, but here's what happened." He sort of listened and said, "Sshu. . . ," something like that. I said, "We've got to get ready. It sounds to me as if he's really going to do it. I don't seem to be able to stop him. We ought to compose a cable that we will send to everybody, all of the directors of Peace Corps operations in the fifty

countries"--forty countries, whatever number we were in--"telling them what's going to happen and telling them I'm not going to leave the Peace Corps, telling them that it's merely a study group, working group, telling them that I'm not quitting the Peace Corps." Because at that time I, toward many of those guys, really symbolized the Peace Corps. I had hired them all. They all--not all of them but most of them I guess--had a rather close feeling of a personal relationship with me. I surely had with them. I didn't want them to suddenly pick up the USIA [United States Information Agency] wire service or something and get this story all mixed up. He and I agreed on a text. I said, "Let's just listen to the radio and see what happens. If he announces it, send the telegram. If he doesn't announce it, tear it up." Johnson went on the radio and made the announcement.

G: In your discussions with him up to this point, was it assumed that you would stay on as Peace Corps director, and how was this decision reached?

S: Well, no, it wasn't assumed by me. In fact, I was screaming my bloody head off that I shouldn't run the War on Poverty but should stay with the Peace Corps.

G: Did he want you to give up the Peace Corps?

S: No! He said to me, "Listen, Sarge, you're not half the man I think you are if you can't run both those jobs very easily." I remember it just as if it happened twenty minutes ago.

G: He had taken Bill Moyers, your deputy.

S: That's right. That's right. So that was his attitude. He didn't want me to give up the Peace Corps. He wanted me to run both of them. I said, "You can't do that. It's illegal!" He said, "Well, we'll get around that; we'll take care of that." Somewhere around here I have a funny letter--I don't know whether it's in this office now or where it is--from him to me, saying that in accordance with title such-and-such, statute such-and-such, *et cetera*, "your compensation will be zero." (Laughter) Not many people have that. Because it is illegal to pay a federal officeholder for two jobs at the same time. In fact, I wasn't getting

paid for either, because I was a dollar-a-year man for the Peace Corps. That's all I needed; a dollar-a-year man for two jobs at the same time.

G: A real bargain.

S: Yes, that's right. That was probably the reason why I got that job. (Laughter) Oh, God.

G: In his discussions with you, was he hiring you not only to head the task force, but to head the program as well after the recommendations came in and the legislation was passed?

S: The truth of the matter is, you'd really have to ask him that question. My position was that I would not head it up. My position was that I would do what he asked me to do and get it organized. It's kind of funny that that's happened to me three times in this city. First of all, my father-in-law, Joe Kennedy--Mr. Kennedy asked me to come down here and help his daughter Eunice to organize that campaign against juvenile delinquency. He said, "Oh, it will take you two or three weeks," and I spent eighteen months down here on that project. Then Jack Kennedy asked me to come down to organize the Peace Corps. I was then president of the Board of Education in Chicago. I really liked it out there; I was having a terrific time. So finally I said, again, "I don't know a damn thing about the Peace Corps." He said, "Well, you come down and organize it." So I came down here for a month and it was, so to speak, organized. I gave him three or four people to run the Peace Corps, because I was planning to go back. In fact, even after the Peace Corps got started I still planned to go back. I never moved my family to Washington until August of 1961, and I lived in the Mayflower Hotel. I didn't have any intention of staying in Washington and running the Peace Corps. But then Kennedy wouldn't let me get out of the job. And when Johnson [asked me], I said, "Look, President Johnson"--I actually gave him a document with four people recommended.

G: Who were they, do you recall?

S: Yes, I do remember some of them, Sol Linowitz was one of them. Another one was a former governor of Florida, LeRoy Collins. A third was the head of Dupont; his name

was [Crawford H.] Greenewalt, something like that, who was a man with a terrific reputation and had done a lot of excellent work. And somebody else. The truth is, I can't remember precisely. That paper I gave the President must be around someplace.

I proposed these names to President Johnson because I thought again that it would be useful to Johnson's new administration to bring in some luminaries who would be his own appointees. These men also were extremely experienced, either business executives or political executives, like the governor of Florida, LeRoy Collins. And I knew that Johnson thought well of Collins.

G: Did you present this in one of your meetings with him before the press conference or was this after this, during the task force period?

S: What do you mean, before the press conference?

G: Before he announced your name as director, head of the War on Poverty.

S: Oh, you mean that first announcement?

G: Right.

S: Oh, well, he just announced me as the guy who was going to organize it. No, he never announced--

G: No, he did say in that press conference that you were not only going to head the thing but that you would administer the program, I think.

S: Well, I don't know exactly what he said, but he was a bit given, from time to time, to hyperbole. Let me assure you that there was no agreement on my part, that is, no agreement that I would administer the program.

G: That's what I wanted to know.

S: None whatsoever. In fact, I was strongly opposed to running it.

G: So it was after he had the press conference that you gave him the list of names of four people?

S: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. I may have given him some names verbally of people to even organize it instead of me. I'm not certain that I did, but I may well have done that. But I subsequently gave him names in writing, and in doing it I said, "Look, President Johnson. It's not that I'm behaving with respect to you differently than I would have behaved with President Kennedy." Because you have to understand at that time there was a certain amount of animosity, especially from Bobby Kennedy, about Lyndon Johnson. I didn't want him to feel that I was, so to speak, doing less for him as a president than I was willing to do for Kennedy as a president. My theory was terribly simple, and that was that I came down to Washington to work for the president of the United States. I was not opposed to Lyndon Johnson; it wasn't his fault that he became president as a result of my brother-in-law's death. So I felt that I had the same responsibility to be helpful and loyal to him as I would have to some other president. If I hadn't felt that way I should have just quit altogether; but if I was going to stay on with the Peace Corps, and if I were willing to establish the War on Poverty, then I was going to be as open and aboveboard, as clean, as uncompromised, you might say, as [if] working for Kennedy.

I wanted him to know that because, first of all, he was a very suspicious man. Secondly, I didn't want him to have something negative about me running around the back of his mind or have some other person poisoning him with respect to me. So I said to him, "Look, I didn't want to run the Peace Corps, and I gave President Kennedy names of people to head up that program. I'm going to do the same thing with you because I don't want to run the War on Poverty." As a matter of fact I was, for different reasons, very much opposed to coming to Washington to run the Peace Corps. But I was equally opposed to running the War on Poverty.

G: On this next question, let me ask you to be as detached as you can, and let me ask you why you think he chose you to head the War on Poverty?

S: I think I know why. It may be because he told me--or maybe Moyers told me--but Johnson believed, rightly or wrongly, that it was going to be very hard to get that program through Congress. That's number one. Number two, I had developed an extremely good rapport with Congress. That came about for a lot of reasons I won't bore you with right now, but it's a fact that I got along very well with the Congress, both the House and the Senate, but particularly the House. One of the reasons is I happen to like the Congress. I like congressmen; they are the kind of people I like. Most of them are extroverts and happy personalities and I enjoy the atmosphere over there. I also respect them, which I find, to my disappointment, not everybody does. But I do literally respect them. I got along very well with them, and Johnson knew that. He knew that better than anybody, because Congress was a subject that he was the master of.

I think he gave me the job, or forced the job on me, because he thought it was going to be difficult to get it through Congress and he thought I could help get it through. He as much as told me that when I suggested men like Sol Linowitz or LeRoy Collins. He said to me, "Sarge, look, those men are excellent. But let me tell you something: It will take them a year to get their feet on the ground in Washington. It isn't a question of them being incompetent, but it's a question of just getting accustomed to what's going on down here and how to operate in Washington. We don't have a year. This thing has to work. And it has to a) get through Congress, and then b) it has to work right away. It's going to get a lot of opposition; people are going to attack it. And we cannot afford to have it run by somebody who's inexperienced in Washington. You can get it through, and you can succeed in this very initial stage with it." So I don't think there's much question--truthfully there is little question in my mind--that that was the crucial reason.

G: There's some indication that Abe Fortas was considered to head the poverty program, too. Did you ever get any indication of this, that other people on the White House staff were proposing Abe Fortas?

S: I'm trying to remember. Right now, offhand, I don't remember that idea, but there's a damn good suggestion. Abe Fortas would have been very good at it. I was hesitating for a minute hoping that maybe he was one of the names I had put down to recommend to Johnson myself. But Abe Fortas would have been terrific.

G: Bill Moyers wanted to take over as Peace Corps director. Do you recall any discussions with LBJ about that?

S: The truth is, I don't recall any; quickly, here and now, I don't recall any. But Moyers suffered a little bit--excuse me, he suffered more from what I was describing to you about myself than anybody. Johnson knew exactly how valuable Moyers was to him and he had no more intention of letting Moyers out of the White House to do anything, including running the Peace Corps, than he did of jumping into the Potomac River.

Moyers did want to run the Peace Corps; that was his one really big ambition. And Johnson didn't understand it when Moyers left the vice president's office to come to work in the Peace Corps. I can tell you that, over a period of four years, let's say 1961 to 1965, there must have been at least three or four occasions when Johnson would say something to me, or say it to a third person with me standing there, to the effect that, "This is the guy that took Moyers away." It was a thing that stuck in President Johnson's craw, that Moyers had left him when he was vice president to go to work at the Peace Corps. In a kind of funny way I think that one of the reasons that Johnson had a lot of respect for me, even to the point of making me head of the War on Poverty, was because for some reason or other which he couldn't altogether understand, Moyers had been willing to leave him to go to work with me. Obviously, he was vice president of the United States, the [former] majority leader of the Senate; I was a new kid on the block and didn't have one-eighth of the experience Johnson had. Here was this young man who was the apple of Johnson's eye, quitting to go to work for me. Well, the truth is Moyers didn't quit to go to work for me; he quit to go to work for the Peace Corps. The idea of

the Peace Corps was what attracted Moyers. In fact, Moyers and I hit it off very well, but that was an accident of fate. He didn't know me personally when he came to work for the Peace Corps. He didn't come to work for the Peace Corps because of Sargent Shriver. He came to work for the Peace Corps because the Peace Corps was a conception, it was an ideal that he believed in.

G: There was also the suggestion with regard to your appointment that it was brought about to resolve a jurisdictional conflict among the established departments: Where would the War on Poverty go? Would it go in HEW? Would the Labor Department have this? So LBJ brought you in from the outside to settle this whole thing, so it wouldn't end up with the cabinet departments fighting among each other. Did he ever talk to you about this consideration at the time he was appointing you?

S: Well, he might have mentioned that to me.

G: But you think the primary factor was the necessity of selling the program on the Hill and getting it started, and needing someone with the expertise to clear all the hurdles that were involved?

S: I think that, yes; but it's also true that this element that you've just mentioned could have been a factor. Although again I say, I don't remember him ever mentioning that to me. But it's the kind of consideration which would have appealed to Johnson. He never said it to me. But you could corroborate it maybe with Valenti or Moyers, and it would be a perfectly normal, Johnsonian way to resolve a problem, i.e., if he put it into HEW, Labor would be angry; if we put it into Labor, HEW would be angry. If he put it anyplace in an existing structure somebody would be irritated.

Now I can tell you one other thing. It didn't come up at that time, but one other thing which was relevant, at least later on, and may have been relevant right at the beginning and in his head at the beginning, was this: He believed that the War on Poverty was going to be subjected to a huge amount of criticism and that putting it in the

Executive Office of the President, making it *his* program, the President's program, putting it right next to him, would minimize attacks from congressmen. Because--and he told me this--if they attacked the War on Poverty they would believe that they were in fact attacking Johnson. So he put the new program right next to himself in order to protect it. Now that's a fact; I know that's a fact. It isn't relevant to what you asked me; it isn't an answer to the question you asked me, but it is an indication of the way Johnson thought. And secondly, I think it's a terrific indication of his willingness to expose himself to the political heat I'm talking about, the political criticism, for having inaugurated this antipoverty program.

G: It also says that he did anticipate controversy.

S: Oh, yes. No question about it. He was a very smart man. Johnson was a genius at politics.

G: There is a school of thought that has it that Lyndon Johnson by no means anticipated the controversy that the War on Poverty and particularly the Community Action Program generated.

S: I don't think he anticipated all of it. However, nobody else did. This is no criticism of Johnson. But he knew full well that there would be a lot of criticism, and he knew it because he knew that we would be working with Chicanos and he had gone through criticism for working with Chicanos himself. He knew also that rich people would not like to see their money, quote, "wasted" on poor people. He knew that. He knew that black people would be involved in this program, and the segregation-integration issue was hot, even hotter then by far than it is today. So he was well aware of the fact that there would be criticism. In fact, he told me personally exactly what I got through telling you, that the only way to protect this program was to keep it in the Executive Office of the President. You know, he had to make that explanation because from a point of view of public administration--a Ph.D. in public administration would tell you that you should

never put an operational agency in the Executive Office of the President. The Executive Office of the President is a staff operation. It is not an operational operation. And the Bureau of the Budget, of course, was telling that to Johnson.

Secondly, every president likes to keep the number of people who work for the president to a small number, because it's easy to attack a president politically by saying he has got thousands of people working for him. So no president wants to build up the Executive Office. On the other hand, putting the War on Poverty in the Executive Office immediately increased the number of people in the Executive Office of the President by, let's say, five, six, seven hundred people. That was bad politics. Johnson was conscious of all of that. He put the War on Poverty in the White House on purpose, and for the reasons I've tried to describe. I think it was very farsighted and extremely courageous of him, politically courageous of him, to do it.

G: Did he want something that would be engaged rapidly and that could produce quick results?

S: Yes, he did. I had some friends of mine who were involved in the War on Poverty over for a luncheon session to refresh my memory on it, and one of them said, "Yes, the President surely did. He not only wanted results quickly, he wanted them yesterday." I made a written note of that precise point.

G: Was the 1964 election a factor at all in developing the program? Did he think in these terms?

S: Well, I tell you, no, quite the contrary. One of my friends yesterday pointed an important fact out to me--Bill Kelly--that we were embargoed from spending any money before the election.

G: It was held up.

S: That's right. On October 8 the appropriations bill passed the House and Senate and we actually for the first time had money. We had been working on getting ready projects to

finance, so truthfully on, let's say the tenth, eleventh or twelfth we could have expended money. But we got explicit orders from the White House that we were not to spend any money until after the election. So from October 8 until November 6, 7, 8 or whenever the election was, we were stopped from spending any money.

G: Was he familiar with any of the antecedents of the War on Poverty, such as the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime?

S: I don't know that he was, but I assume he was, simply because he knew everything that was going on. He just made it his business to know what everybody was doing all the time.

G: Did you see these programs, particularly the Juvenile Delinquency Committee, as something to build upon or sort of a pilot program that you would adapt to your own needs?

S: The truth of the matter is, I didn't. I knew that it was going on. In part I knew that it was going on because when Robert Kennedy became attorney general he was looking about for interesting new things that the Justice Department could do. My wife told him about the National Committee for the Prevention and Control of Juvenile Delinquency, which was in the Justice Department under Tom Clark. That committee developed the idea of comprehensive programs to attack juvenile delinquency. That's where the idea came from. You may recall, earlier in this conversation I pointed out that the original National Committee for the Prevention and Control of Juvenile Delinquency had issued some eighteen reports. I concluded, and my wife concluded, that it was impossible to deal with all eighteen reports *seriatim*, or one by one. So we said the only way to deal effectively with juvenile delinquency, let's say in Harlem, is by getting at all the causes, somehow getting at them together. So we developed what was called a comprehensive attack on juvenile delinquency.

When Bobby Kennedy became attorney general he talked with my wife, and he in fact adopted that approach of a comprehensive effort to attack juvenile delinquency in all of its facets. Now, his committee under his leadership started with that comprehensive approach. With the experience the Ford Foundation had also added, they decided that the way to deal with juvenile delinquency was to deal with it in a comprehensive way. So [there was] the Ford program--what they called "the grey areas." Grey areas were those parts of the city which were in change. The grey area of New Haven was an area where things were not in good shape. They'd make one of these studies and find out the incidence of divorce and crime, *et cetera*, and that would be designated as a grey area. So into that grey area came the Ford Foundation with its programs, and the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency with its comprehensive effort to minimize juvenile delinquency.

I didn't concentrate on that, truthfully, very much. I'll tell you why: I thought I knew about that. In fact, I did know about it. That's what we had been doing back in 1948, 1949 and 1950. That approach stopped pretty much, I believe, when my wife left the Department of Justice. Bobby Kennedy reinstituted it. Therefore for me it wasn't some startling new idea like the splitting of the atom, or the untangling of the genetic code, or something of that kind. You know what I mean?

G: Sure. The day after this press conference you had your first meeting on the War on Poverty. The facts are not clear on this. Was the meeting at your home in Rockville, do you recall, or was it at your Peace Corps office?

S: I see. Yes. Well, you know, I didn't remember that.

G: It was on a Sunday, I think.

S: I don't really remember that. All I do know is that Adam came over, Adam Yarmolinsky, and talked to me yesterday, and he pointed out that he had written about that meeting in his chapter in a book that Jim Sundquist published. Whatever Adam wrote would surely

be accurate. Frankly, I can't tell you precisely all the people who attended the meeting, but I can tell you what the criterion would have been.

Whenever I was confronted with trying to organize a new venture, I would get the smartest people I could find from my own acquaintanceship who theoretically might know something about it; or if they didn't know a hell of a lot about it themselves, they could be imaginative in figuring out who to get that could help. So I went and I got the guys I always got; I got Adam Yarmolinsky, who's very, very bright, and I got Harris Wofford, who was very, very bright, and I got Frank Mankiewicz, who was very, very bright, and the fellows who had worked in the Peace Corps who were good. I just collected them. Exactly who they were at this moment I cannot recall, but the group surely would have included people like that. Then what I would say to them is exactly what I said to the first such meeting we had for the Peace Corps. I said, "Look, here's the problem. We're supposed to organize a war against poverty. What do you think we ought to do?"

The analogy between the Peace Corps and the War on Poverty is striking, to me at least, because when I came down here to organize the Peace Corps, by way of instructions we had maybe three sentences in a speech that Kennedy had given. If you go back and look at the speech you'll find all it said was that "I promise to organize people to go abroad to help people to help themselves." That was it. And the War on Poverty was similarly grandiose but unspecific: "We're going to have a war to eliminate, to eradicate poverty." I mean, who knew what that meant, or how to do it?

Tape 2 of 3

G: We were talking about that first meeting, the February 2 meeting.

S: Oh, yes, who was there.

G: You had discussed the criterion that you used. Do you recall any decisions that were reached at that meeting?

S: No. No, I don't. I'm sorry.

G: I gather there was a much larger meeting that was held on February 4, two days later. On this list of material you have there is a list of people that we believe were involved with the task force at one time or another.

S: You want to know who was at that meeting? (Laughter) You're asking the wrong guy. I wouldn't have the slightest idea. I can tell you some people who weren't there. You take somebody like Paul Ylvisaker wasn't there, Andy Brimmer wasn't there, Ronny Goldfarb wasn't there, Dave Hackett wasn't there, Wilbur Cohen wasn't there, *et cetera*. You know what I mean? Tex Thornton wasn't there, Don Petrie wasn't there, Bill Wirtz wasn't there. Who was there, that's a more difficult question. I don't know.

G: Other people have written that Wirtz was there at that February 4 meeting.

S: Well, then he must have been there, if they remember.

G: But you don't recall his being there?

S: No. I don't, no. In fact, my problem is that my memory is not very good and I didn't keep notes on these things. I should have, I suppose, but I didn't.

G: The point that some writers about this meeting have made is that the concept of the Community Action Program as being the sole feature of the War on Poverty was pretty much abandoned at this meeting. It was decided to have a multifaceted war that would include Job Corps and all these others. Do you remember this sort of debate at all?

S: Well, I don't remember this specific debate, but I can tell you how that decision was made. Let me explain to you. When Johnson asked me to run the War on Poverty, he told me that he had five hundred million dollars in the budget for this effort and that I was to organize a program spending the five hundred million to eradicate poverty. Well, first of all, five hundred million dollars in 1964 was a lot more than five hundred million dollars today. So far as I was concerned it was a colossal sum of money. I didn't know how to spend five hundred million dollars intelligently to eradicate poverty. Therefore,

when it was proposed to me by, let's say, Walter Heller and Kermit Gordon that the entire War on Poverty should be that one effort, and Ken Galbraith supported that idea and Ken Galbraith had written a draft presidential statement--if you don't have that statement it might be useful for you to try to get it--which I read. I just wasn't of the opinion that the U.S. Government could spend five hundred million dollars intelligently in one year in that way or according to that formula. But I wasn't sure.

So I called up Dick Lee, who was the mayor of New Haven. You can say, why did you call him? Let me tell you why. I'd known Dick Lee since 1936-1937. When I was in college I was the editor of the Yale newspaper, the undergraduate newspaper, and Dick Lee worked with us on the paper. Dick Lee used to sell advertising in the Yale *News* when I was the editor of it in 1937. That's how long ago I knew him. And he used to be in and out of the office all the time. Twenty years later he had graduated from selling advertising; he was mayor of New Haven. But I knew him intimately. I called him because New Haven had been one of the cities selected by the Ford Foundation and by the juvenile delinquency operation for a Community Action program. You might ask him to corroborate this as a matter of fact.

I said, "Hey, Dick, you've been running this program, this grey areas program up there in New Haven, for a couple of years now. Is that right?" He said, "Yes." I said, "Well, how much are you spending on it?" I think he told me it was something like three and a half million dollars. So I said to him, "Dick, you've got a city of a hundred and fifty thousand people. Tell me, how much money could you spend in New Haven, if there were no restriction whatsoever, to combat poverty and you could do whatever you think is necessary?" My memory is that he said, "Well, we could probably spend nine or ten million dollars."

I talked to him about other matters and hung up the phone. [I] went back, and I put down the cities of the United States where there was more than a hundred and fifty

thousand people. Then I extrapolated from that list of cities--most of which would have to start a Community Action program from scratch, not like New Haven which had been in business doing this for a number of years--how much money it was physically possible to project, with any degree of intelligence, as being capable of being expended in that year. The figure came out--instead of five hundred million--that if you just took the rubber band off the bankroll, spread the money around like snowflakes, you couldn't efficiently spend maybe more than three hundred million at a maximum on Community Action. Now, the exact figure I can't remember, but that's somewhere in the record. So I said to myself, this one program cannot be the whole five hundred million-dollar War on Poverty.

So in all the meetings I had, I kept probing businessmen, economists, labor leaders, *et cetera*, to get their ideas of what could be done that would be effective. In the back of my mind I always was saying to myself, "I've got maybe two hundred million dollars that I can spend here on things that have nothing to do with Community Action."

The truth of the matter is that I don't know the details of what happened at that February 4 meeting. But at no time, almost from the day it was handed to me . . . I can remember very well when it was handed to me: Ken Galbraith; I talked to him about it. I knew damn well that Community Action could not be the sole thing in the War on Poverty. That had nothing to do, however, with the conceptualization of Community Action, which I favored from the beginning. In fact, community action, which the people in Community Action thought was so revolutionary, was something that we had been running in the Peace Corps for four years before it ever got into the War on Poverty; so I thought community action was absolutely sort of normal. To me it was routine; to them it was a giant revolution. Many of them had been struggling to get community action accepted more widely in the United States. So they had what you might almost call an *idée fixe*, or fixation, about how important it was and how it was necessary to have a lot

of money spent on it; and from that it was easy for them to say that it was the only thing. But having run the Peace Corps and having been on the Board of Education in Chicago, I knew well that it wasn't the only approach to poverty. It was both the money, and I honestly think, a much broader experience that I had had as compared to the people who were in the community action effort.

G: I gather during this period you also talked to Michael Harrington about spending in the War on Poverty, how much would be needed. Or perhaps this was even later after your budget was kicked up to about a billion.

S: Well, the truth is, I don't know.

G: You don't recall that?

S: I'm sure I did speak to him; but I don't recall the specific conversation you refer to. Michael Harrington I'd known for some time and I liked him. He would be exactly the kind of person who would have been called in by the group working with me then: Mankiewicz, Yarmolinsky, Wofford; [the] type of guy [they] would automatically reach out and grab and bring in, people like that. They would bring in people like Mike.

G: On February 6 you went to New York for the Joseph Kennedy Foundation Awards--and I believe you returned with LBJ on that--at the Carlyle Hotel in New York. You were just getting started. Do you recall any discussion that took place during this?

S: I'm sorry. It's terrible. I don't remember. You know, Walter Heller is the kind of person you should be interviewing. Walter Heller, as soon as he has a conversation with you, goes out and writes down the whole thing. He's got the most voluminous records of everything he ever said, like say to Jack Kennedy or Lyndon Johnson. But you're talking to a totally different kind of a character in me, because I'm sorry to say, unlike a lot of people in government, I made a fetish out of not having any files. I was convinced that one thing I didn't want to do was to have a lot of paper around because I wasn't in government to try to write a book. I was in there to try to get something done for people,

and I didn't want to have to be taking time to write memos for my files. It's not right for me. My wife used to criticize me all the time; she said, "You should be keeping a diary." She's right, I should have been keeping a diary. But I never did.

G: One question that's not on here, but it fits in chronologically. You were being discussed in the press and elsewhere as being a vice-presidential possibility during this period. Did it ever enter into LBJ's discussions with you during this task force period?

S: No.

G: Did he ever talk to you about it?

S: No. You're probably right, because you've been immersed in this, but the first time I ever remember there being any discussion about me as a vice-presidential candidate was later than this. Exactly when it was I don't know, but it would be easy to find out. The *Washington Post* published an Evans and Novak column on page 1, which as you well know is extremely unusual, with a headline to the effect that Johnson was considering me as a vice-presidential candidate. My belief is that that was as late as, oh, July or August, rather than at the time we are discussing right now.

G: There were some early ones even related to your around-the-world trip, that LBJ was using this to line you up for the vice-presidential nomination, that he was showing his favoritism toward you by giving you these letters to deliver to heads of state, things like that. Of course, it was just speculation.

S: Yes. The truth is, I can't even remember that. But I do remember very vividly the Evans and Novak thing because that was the first time that it seemed to have any serious validity, you might say, and I therefore made it my business to find out how that column came into existence and why the *Washington Post* played it on page 1, which was extraordinary for them. I subsequently found out, I don't know exactly when, that in fact Evans and Novak had been down there, to Johnson's ranch, and either Johnson told all of this to them or they were permitted to hear him telling it to somebody else. He did not in

any sense interdict them from publishing it. So they took the position--and again, you can check this with Rowland Evans--that Johnson wanted it to be published. I think they probably told that to Ben Bradlee over there at the *Post*.

G: But Johnson never talked to you about the vice presidency?

S: Not then. When there were objections to it? That's another story I won't bore you with right now, but when there were objections to it, he mentioned something to me about it, but not at this time.

G: There has been speculation that it was the Kennedy family that felt if a Kennedy was going to be the vice-presidential nominee that it ought to be Robert Kennedy. Do you recall anything here?

S: Well, I won't say the Kennedy family thought that, because I don't know enough to say that, but I think that definitely was an opinion expressed to Johnson.

G: Do you know who expressed it?

S: I'm guessing, but I would have thought maybe that, let's say, Kenny O'Donnell or Larry O'Brien or somebody told that to Bill Moyers who then told it to Johnson. Or perhaps others, you know. There were people who could easily have done that; persons, for example, in the Justice Department could easily have conveyed that message. I don't think there's any question about that being a fact. I think that maybe Bobby--I'm not certain because nobody ever said this to me, but surely some people who were working for Bobby or close to Bobby believed that Johnson's friendliness to me--in fact, I think they believed that his giving me this antipoverty job to do was an effort on his part to build a bridge, you might say, to the Kennedy faction of the Democratic Party. Or, to make it more positive, to capitalize upon my relationship as an in-law to obviate or to bypass Bobby Kennedy. So that any overture or any indication of friendship from him to me, particularly of a political nature, was looked upon with the highest degree of

suspicion by people who were committed to Bobby's future and to his succession, and by people who were incensed by the fact that Johnson was president of the United States.

So there was a feeling, I'm sure, that I was getting these preferments, if you will, these opportunities or these jobs, because of what you just got through saying, because it was building me up and because then I could be a foil to Bobby Kennedy's desires or pretensions or ambitions. In other words, Johnson could get the benefits of the Kennedy connection without having to have Bobby. There's no doubt in my mind that that was a big factor in the thinking of some of the people both for and against me. Johnson never said that to me. In fact, nobody ever said that to me. But I'm as sure as I'm sitting in this chair that that was a significant point of view which undoubtedly was being expressed to Johnson.

I'm not sure, but I think at this point that a number of the people still working in the White House were Kennedy appointees. For example, Larry O'Brien was still in there, I think. Ted Sorensen stayed on for some time. I think Mike Feldman stayed on for some time, and others. I'm reasonably sure that one or more of those people either was told explicitly what I've just said, or asked to convey that message, or told to convey that message. In fact, have you ever done one of these tapes with Larry O'Brien?

G: No, not yet. He's on the list.

S: You ought to do one because he could tell you things which would either corroborate or contradict what I'm saying. There was a considerable amount of hostility to Larry O'Brien for staying on and running congressional relations for Lyndon Johnson.

G: You two, I think, were in the most difficult position because you were so close to each camp.

S: Yes. The idea was that it was disloyal for Larry O'Brien to stay on and work to put legislation through for Johnson. It was really kind of strange because the more the legislation that O'Brien was working on--the more it was legislation that Jack was really

interested in, the more they were irritated that the legislation was going through. Isn't it funny about life? Some people felt that Johnson was doing that trying to expropriate, you might say, the Kennedy program, that he was doing it because he wanted to take the credit for the Kennedy Administration's ideas.

Johnson, on the other hand, probably had some of that in him. He was a very, as I said earlier, terribly complicated and highly political animal. But on the other hand, I must say that if I had been Johnson, or I think if you had been, you'd be doing the same damn thing, trying to pass the Kennedy program through Congress. The truth of the matter was that the Kennedy cabinet, and the Kennedy appointees like Larry, were extremely competent people. If anyone had been made president at that moment and had come in and fired all those people and tried to put a new team into operation, between the twenty-second of November when Jack was killed and the next session of Congress, that person [would] have been a goddamned fool. Nobody but a maniac would have thought of doing that. Moreover, Johnson approved of the Kennedy program. It wasn't as if he was against it. It was just as if, let's say, Carter got shot tomorrow and Mondale started to run for president. You can be sure that Mondale is going to run, if he ran, to a great extent on the positions that Carter has taken. Look at Humphrey. Humphrey had that problem when he was running for president. He couldn't get out from under Johnson, and he had less excuse by far, in my judgment, for staying tied to Johnson's apron strings than Johnson had for staying close to what Kennedy had proposed, or for keeping the Kennedy cabinet intact.

So from Johnson's point of view the Kennedy proposals were damned good, the people that he had appointed to cabinet positions were excellent, and he saw no reason to change them. From the point of view of Bobby Kennedy, it wasn't because the program ideas were good or it wasn't because the people were good, it was because Johnson wanted to capitalize, take the credit for, arrogate to himself, accede to--I don't know what

the right verbs are--Kennedy's mantle. Well, obviously, he was the president of the United States. He would have been an awful charlatan to have been sitting around there opposed to what Kennedy was doing and never saying anything. In other words, if you were president and you died and I was vice president and I believed in what you were doing, why wouldn't I try to carry on what you had been proposing? And in fact, Johnson used to go around saying that all the time, that these programs were Kennedy's programs, that he was pushing them through. In fact, I think he believed that that gave a lot of validity to his effort, which it did. But Johnson's effort was perceived in a different way, and I got involved in that misunderstanding.

I remember one example of it which is kind of funny. When Johnson and Bobby Kennedy finally had their break, Johnson said that nobody who was serving in the cabinet of the President would be considered for the job of running for vice president. That was announced. Instantaneously almost, somebody over there, some press guy I guess, some newspaper fellow, said to Moyers, "Well, what about Shriver? He's not in the cabinet." So they rushed back and changed the statement. Then the statement came out saying that nobody who was a member of the cabinet, *or who meets regularly with the cabinet*, will be considered for vice president. That phrase was stuck in there specifically on account of me, that little phrase, "or who meets regularly with the cabinet." The reality was, I really didn't meet regularly with the cabinet. I met occasionally with the cabinet, and I was given the sort of honor of being looked upon as having cabinet status. I didn't really have it, but I mean that's the way President Johnson treated it or talked about it.

G: Should your position have carried cabinet status with it? I mean, would it have been more helpful to you if you had been a bona fide cabinet member?

S: I tell you what I always thought about that, and this is in the record. I always thought that the vice president should have been the head of this War on Poverty coordination. I'll tell you why. And I think today that the vice president ought to be given responsibilities that

the vice president is not given today. For example, I've recommended this, it's in writing, so it's nothing new. But we started something we called the domestic security, or domestic affairs system.

G: Domestic Council?

S: That's right, Domestic Council. My idea was very simple. Just as we have the National Security Council involved primarily with foreign affairs, we ought to have a council involved with the internal affairs of the United States. To handle that effectively I should have been brought out of where I was, in an office running OEO and in an office running the Peace Corps, and put into the White House. I should have been the kind of person like McGeorge Bundy or [Zbigniew] Brzezinski, a real inside manipulator, a super-staff man, you know what I mean. In fact, I'm not very good at that, I wouldn't be very happy in that kind of a role, because I'm much more interested in executive management than I am in fussing around with that staff infighting in the White House.

But my belief is, they either ought to get rid of the vice presidency or give the vice president the functions that in industry are accorded to, say, an executive vice president. Certain things are given to such a man to do. He's responsible for them, like business has chief executive officers and chief operating officers. If I were the president I'd make that bloody vice president go to work and I'd give him the job of coordinating the domestic programs of the government. Now, the only way that will work is if the president sticks with the decision, because everybody will try to go over top of that man, whether he's Sargent Shriver operating as a special assistant, or whether he's a cabinet official, or whether he's vice president. As long as the legal, constitutional power rests with the president, every Tom, Dick, and Harry in town will be trying to go over top of the coordinator, which is of course what they tried to do with me.

G: Willard Wirtz seems to have been particularly adamant about--

S: Oh, yes, but Bill Wirtz, I mean, he was a psychotic almost about it. I like him very much; he's a good friend of mine. In fact, he was from Chicago. In the business of the talent hunt which I ran, I was one of the principal people who recommended Bill Wirtz into those jobs. So I'm a buddy of his even now. But he was extraordinarily bureaucratic, extraordinarily rigid, extraordinarily protective of the--what do you call it?--the writ of the Labor Department. Somebody said about Secretary Celebrezze, Celebrezze didn't give a damn about protecting his turf, HEW's turf.

G: Really?

S: Well, excuse me. I suppose he did. I have no personal knowledge of that matter. That's unimportant. But he wasn't obsessed by his prerogatives or domain or turf, whatever the right word is, the way Bill Wirtz was. Bill Wirtz really resented the War on Poverty.

G: Were there any particular issues that the two of you went to Johnson on and had him resolve?

S: Wirtz?

G: Yes.

S: No. Wirtz went to Johnson quite a bit to complain about what was happening, but I never did complain to Johnson about Wirtz.

G: Did LBJ come down on your side or Wirtz' side on this?

S: I don't really think he decided. Perhaps I'm wrong. My guess is that LBJ said, "Listen, Sarge, Bill Wirtz is causing a hell of a lot of trouble. Now you go over and see him and get this thing worked out." President Johnson was too smart, I think, to so to speak come down on one guy's side versus another guy's side, because he's going to have to work with both guys.

I can remember making the deal, you might say, where Wirtz was upset that anything to do with jobs was going to be conducted outside the Labor Department. He had made a big effort, you have to understand, for a number of years to develop a division

in Labor called the Manpower Division. And he had a very good man from New York running it whose name keeps escaping my mind, a very nice fellow. He's a Jewish person, his name is something like Goldstein or Goldfarb or something like that [Seymour Wolfbein]. Anyhow, I liked him very much and he was very competent. He had charge of the whole employment service of the United States Government, the United States Employment Service offices.

So his [Wirtz'] concept of the functions of the Labor Department were focused very heavily on the question of jobs and the Manpower role. He had bills that Congress, the Senate, had passed, to give certain kinds of prerogatives and authorities and money to the Manpower Commission. From a point of view of clarity of public administration, he was right that having these other new things in the OEO administration did confuse the picture, administratively speaking. So we just cut a deal, because the program he was most interested in was what we called the Neighborhood Youth Corps. So I made a deal with him whereby we would take the idea to the Hill, get it through the Congress, the money would be appropriated to us, and I would turn it over to him for the management. But we would have an oversight function, you might say, or coordinating function. Because that was a very important issue, that the federal government as a whole was going to do much more about fighting poverty than simply what was going to be done by OEO, and the director of OEO was to have, well, coordinating or maybe oversight functions.

Now, Bill Wirtz didn't like that either. He didn't want to have the director of Manpower come and report to me even once a year about what they had done with the money appropriated by Congress and given to OEO. But the fact is, the man who did run that Neighborhood Youth Corps did come, and they did make reports to me as part of my coordinating responsibility. But they didn't like it. And the truth is, generally speaking, in government people don't like that.

G: Was this delegation a good thing? Was OEO able to--?

S: Run the Neighborhood Youth Corps?

G: Yes.

S: Well, we could have, yes. We could have. It would have been difficult. But it could have been done.

G: Would it have been better for OEO to run it than to try to oversee it with the Labor Department running it? Were you able to perform this oversight function at the same time that they were running the program?

S: Not well, no. That to a certain extent is a matter of personalities as much as it is of law. Legally we had the authority.

G: I gather there was a feeling that the Employment Service had simply not gone into the business of working with poor people.

S: That's right, they didn't!

G: Would Wirtz admit this in your discussions with him?

S: I can't remember that too well, but I knew exactly what he would have said. If that point came up he would have said, "Well, historically that may be true, but by God, we're going to make this thing work!" He would say, with justification, that after all we do have these state employment agencies all over America. Are you going to go out and open up a similar kind of an office next door?

G: Another point of contention seems to have been the use of deactivated military camps, army camps, for youth. There was a cry from liberals at the time that this had too much of a military atmosphere to it, the use of military in training and that sort of thing. I gather Wirtz opposed you on this and the whole concept was toned down. Do you remember that?

S: Yes. Well, you're quite right. That's exactly what happened.

G: How did it evolve? Was the President brought into this at all?

S: No.

G: Really?

S: But my theory on being an administrator--or whatever it is, a Washington bureaucrat--is to keep as many problems off the president's desk as possible because he's got too many there to begin with. They hire you to keep the problems off the president's desk, not to put them on there.

G: But when a cabinet officer and head of the War on Poverty disagree--

S: What happens?

G: Yes. Who settles it?

S: You either cut a deal or you go to the president; so with respect to Neighborhood Youth Corps and the Job Corps and so on, those problems, I just agreed. I agreed. "Okay," I said, "Bill, you go ahead, you run the Neighborhood Youth Corps, and we will keep and run the Job Corps." That didn't upset him quite so much as you might expect it would have, because he was interested in creating jobs. The Neighborhood Youth Corps was going to create four hundred thousand jobs, or whatever the precise number was. They were only summer jobs at the beginning. But the Labor Department was going to create a lot of jobs. The Job Corps wasn't going to create that many jobs.

In other words, the Job Corps at its maximum never envisioned to have more than a hundred thousand people in it and never got that big. So in terms of the magnitude of creating jobs, the Job Corps was insignificant to Wirtz as compared to the Neighborhood Youth Corps. Just the opposite was true for me. Even though the numbers were smaller in the Job Corps, I thought the program was more significant because I thought preparing people for jobs was more important to the people we were trying to help than providing jobs. So I didn't have to go through a presidential debate on that. I just made the agreement with Wirtz.

G: Did the President get involved with the task force at any point? Was he apprised of--?

S: What's happening?

G: Yes.

S: Directly, no. But the people who worked for him were.

G: Who specifically?

S: Well, the people who would normally have been involved would have been people like Moyers and Larry O'Brien and Wilson McCarthy. There was a young fellow who worked for Moyers, who's now running for the Congress. He's the Democratic state chairman of Maine.

G: Oh, Hal Pachios.

S: Hal Pachios. There was a young woman in there who's still in Washington. She's not any longer so young, as none of us are. Isn't that funny, the name's out of my mind.

So we kept the White House informed and they, you might say, made it their business to be informed. But I'm going to repeat what I have as a cardinal principle of operating in the government, at least when I was there, and that was that it was my responsibility to try to keep every problem off of the president's desk. I just don't think that the president ought to be served by people who are incapable of solving problems without involving him in them all the time.

G: I have a note here that you met with Secretary Wirtz over the weekend.

S: Oh, yes, I saw this.

G: Do you recall that particular meeting or does that involve the things that you just discussed?

S: Well, I put down here "no," that I didn't remember it, but maybe Adam Yarmolinsky did. Now the other person who might remember it would be Pat Moynihan. Pat Moynihan was a special assistant to Wirtz at that time. Yarmolinsky was saying yesterday that Bill Wirtz got so concerned about a lot of these things that were happening, particularly during the summer months, that he issued an order that Moynihan couldn't come to the

meetings anymore. You probably know about that. You seem to be smiling as if you knew about that. I had forgotten that, and I guess also Adam said yesterday that Moynihan finally decided to go to Europe. Moynihan decided to go to Europe and inspect job creation programs in Europe in order to be out of town. You look back on it, it's something to be sort of amused by; but I didn't realize that Bill was that much upset.

G: I think there was the notion that Moynihan had come to the task force to represent the Labor Department and had ended up joining your position and selling out the Department of Labor.

S: That's what Bill Wirtz thought, you mean?

G: Yes. Of course, Moynihan later took the position that jobs should have been stressed, of course, that the War on Poverty, particularly the Community Action Program, missed the mark. You've already discussed why you felt the Community Action Program was important. Is there anything else you want to add to that?

S: I just want to add, since you brought it up, that I think Moynihan was wrong then. I think he's wrong now. I think his idea of how to effect change for this group of people is just wrong, period.

G: Was he at the time a spokesman for the jobs position? When he was on the task force did he argue--?

S: I'm not too sure about that, but I think he probably was. The reason I say that was that that was Bill Wirtz' idea. The big idea that Bill Wirtz had was that the reason people are poor is that they don't have a job, and therefore the way to solve their poverty is to give them a job. That's a very straightforward, understandable position and certainly during the thirties that was true. And from the point of view of labor unions that is still true--some labor unions, excuse me.

But from the point of view of the poverty population of America today or in the sixties, it's not true. It's not true for the reasons that I tried to describe earlier in this

conversation. We, in fact, got the proof of the fact that it was not true when we opened up the Job Corps centers. The people who came there were incapable in a variety of different ways of holding a job, any job. Many of them couldn't tell what time it is on a clock. I was just as much astonished as anybody else because theoretically, you might say, intuitively I had believed that no one in America could be so much out of touch with our industrial, organized society. So when I actually saw the people face to face I couldn't believe it.

In the Job Corps we finally got educational experts to develop all-new materials. I don't know whether you know this or not, but we did. The reading materials would start off with the book which just said, "One." It didn't mean first grade; it just said, "One." And the next one was "Two," "Three," "Four," "Five," "Six." We took subjects such as motorcycle repair and we would write that in such a way that the young men would be interested and could understand it, because the youngsters in the Job Corps were interested in repairing motorcycles. They were not interested at all in some reader that you get in school, you know, "Watch Jane run. Look at Dick jump," or something like that, you understand. Some of them were fathers; they had children, and they couldn't read. They were illiterate. I couldn't believe it when the people came into the Job Corps. They were not functionally illiterate; they were illiterate, they could not read and they could not write. I've seen them sit there, write man, M-A-N, the first time they ever wrote the word in their life. And the psychological effect on them--I used to tell these stories. Some kid [would] go in there and write, "I am a man." Well, the expression on his whole face altered.

The kind of poverty which this country is faced with even today, to a significant extent, remains the poverty of people like that, the people who cannot read, they cannot write, they've never known a person in their whole life who went to a job every day. If you really stop and think about it, it's very boring to come down to an office every day

and arrive here at nine o'clock and stay until five. That's boring as hell as compared to having a good time like Huckleberry Finn, just enjoying yourself, or sort of snatching your living off of the street. So the kind of society we have where people have to be regular, where they have to be punctual, where they have to keep appointments, is a very arbitrary, boring society. We had to face this, for example, in the health centers which we started. A mother would be given an appointment for herself and her two children Thursday morning at ten o'clock. Well, she had never had an appointment with anybody ever, ever, in her whole life; she didn't know what it was to have an appointment. (Interruption)

Here is a woman who had always gone to a hospital and sat in the outpatient ward, or sat in the charity section there, and just sat there until somebody took care of her. If she felt sick, she'd go there at nine o'clock in the morning and maybe they'd take care of her at three o'clock in the afternoon. But the idea that a doctor was going to be available at ten o'clock if she came there, what the hell, that was like you being out in outer space!

So those problems that the poor people had in the sixties, and which I think frankly they still have today, are not problems you can solve by creating a hundred billion jobs in the United States or a hundred million jobs. I don't give a damn how many jobs there are. The hardest thing is not only to have the job and to train a person so that they can tell the time and get to the job, but there's also a huge problem of motivation. When you get into that you're really beginning to get into some of the complicated things to face in an industrial society. But those things were all just brushed aside as if that didn't make any difference.

You can go back to that West Point analogy. When the army says it takes them four years to turn out an army officer, it doesn't mean that it takes them four years to teach a guy how to shoot a gun. But what it does take is four years to get a man to the point where he is sufficiently disciplined, dedicated and motivated to do exactly what he is told

in a precise way at a precise time, even if he's going to get killed. So a second lieutenant or a captain or a first lieutenant has to be trained to the point where if the colonel says, "Charge!" he leads the charge, despite the fact he knows he's going to get killed or [there's] a great danger of getting killed. You cannot do that in twenty minutes or in a summertime. I went through being trained to do that and I know damn well you can't! You cannot learn to do those things that you have to do almost by rote, you cannot learn them in three months, any more than Doug DeCinces can learn how to play third base in six months. When athletes make those unbelievable plays that they make in baseball or football, it only comes from having done it so damn many tines and having been there so often, the job becomes instinctive.

Well, the instinct of the poor people is such that they're instinctively unable to hold the kind of jobs that society can offer. Now, if you took them all and put them in Somalia, they'd do just as well as anybody else in Somalia because it's a rural, agricultural, nomadic existence. Therefore you can survive there. You can't survive in New York or Chicago--and you sure as hell can't get out of an Appalachian hollow. You're just stuck there.

And it's not [just] some problem of the United States. You go to China; the Chinese peasant today is the closest approach to a feudal serf existing on the face of the earth. It's exactly like a medieval manor life, where you live in a certain town, you've got a certain job. You never leave that town, you never leave that job. If you're, let's say the blacksmith, just for a second, in a commune in China today, the possibility of you ever being anything more or different than a blacksmith in that commune is minuscule. You don't travel. You don't read. You get propagandized. But you're almost the equivalent of a medieval serf in western society. So if you went over there and put down a gigantic computer factory tomorrow afternoon, the people wouldn't be there to run the computers. They wouldn't know what it's all about. So when people would say, "Let's create jobs.

We'll give inducements to American industry to go locate their plants in the slums"--well, I originated that idea so I'm not against it. But it doesn't answer the question altogether, because the company that goes into the slum, opens up the plant, still has got the job of training the people to be able to work in the plant.

It's interesting anyhow, at least it is to me. Look, we didn't get very far, did we? I'm sorry I talk too much.

G: How are we doing on your time? I don't want to infringe on your lunch or other appointments.

S: I've got to go to lunch now, but let's see here.

(Interruption)

G: Let's start with the operation of the task force. How did it function?

S: Let me go back just a step and say this. Why was there a task force? The reason there was a task force was that nobody really knew how to fight poverty. That's the fundamental reason for having such a thing. That's number one. Number two, we never called anything like that a task force. When we started the Peace Corps we went through the same process--I tried to describe that to you earlier--but we never called it a task force.

The amusing reason, I think, why this became known as a task force is as follows. Letters started arriving and we started answering them, and in fact there was no paper to answer them on. So we were using White House stationery. The White House, and we for that matter, got concerned about that. We were told to stop using the White House stationery, which was right, we shouldn't have been using it. Then the question was, well, which should we use? We didn't have any stationery. So [Hyman] Bookbinder was sitting in the office and he just said, "Well, why don't we just call this the War on Poverty Task Force?" So he got some fellow to print up some stationery and that's where this

phrase came from. It isn't as if it was some magnificently thought-through idea of having a task force.

The basic idea of this whole operation was simply to pick the brains of any qualified--and many unqualified--Americans, asking them what they would do if they had the job of trying to run a war against poverty. So what we did was this: We'd say, "Let's get in a half dozen economists." And Yarmolinsky and Wofford and Mankiewicz and myself, but mostly those guys, would sit down and say, "Who are six good economists we could bring in here?" Then we did the same thing with businessmen. And we did the same thing with labor leaders. And we did the same thing with women, *et cetera*. It was a brain-picking, or brainstorming they call it in advertising, process. We were trying to extract ideas out of America.

G: President Johnson didn't initiate this concept with you in his discussions? He didn't say, "Assemble a task force," or anything like that?

S: No. What he did was, like Kennedy he'd say, "Okay, you go organize a war against poverty." Johnson went further than Kennedy because he at least gave me a document, a proposed presidential statement written by Galbraith, and a piece of legislation which had been drafted in the Bureau of the Budget. And both of those consisted exclusively of Community Action.

G: I see. There were a lot of ideas that had been bouncing around and had ended up at BOB [Bureau of the Budget] evidently, one being community action.

S: Yes.

G: Did you sift through all of these or did you just start out with community action?

S: First of all, I did not sift through all of these, to use your phrase. Secondly, all we were given officially was the Community Action package. When we got the Community Action package, I described to you what I did, and it was clear that that Community Action package couldn't even use the money we had. In addition, the Community Action

package by itself, on the basis of my experience with poor people, was not enough to constitute an all-out war against poverty, which is the phrase Johnson kept using. This is not to say that community action is not good. I used to draw the analogy to a real war. You can't fight a whole war simply by having all the tanks in the world. You have to have machine guns and airplanes and rifles and hand grenades and everything else. And to the extent that the war analogy was appropriate at all, which is questionable, but nevertheless it was used, we thought that to eradicate poverty we needed more than one device, if you will, to do it effectively, that no one device could do it all.

There were some people who thought that community action was adequate to do it all. Those were people who believed then, and many still believe today, that the cause of poverty is exclusively structural, by which they mean that society as it is now structured causes the poverty and that if you can change the power structure you can change poverty.

In a sense that's the same kind of approach that Marxists take, that in order to get rid of poverty you have to change the capitalistic system, that as long as you have a capitalistic system with owners and employers, employees, that you inevitably have a master-servant relationship which will inevitably cause poverty. That's Marx. Well, some people maintained that the only way we could get rid of poverty was by empowering--they call it--the poor politically, that if they had the political power they could change the local structure. That was Saul Alinsky's idea. I knew Saul Alinsky very well. He was the founder of the Back of the Yards movement in Chicago where I lived, and I knew him personally quite well. I liked his book which he wrote, in the early forties I think, called *Reveille for Radicals*, which was a terrific book. I was not opposed to his idea as part of the totality, but I was opposed to it as being the only approach; and I still am.

G: You felt, in other words, that part of the War on Poverty should be to aid the poor in securing political power.

S: Not quite that baldly, but to aid the poor in becoming masters of their own destiny. That could be economic power, it could be social power, it could be political power. It wasn't exclusively political power. But the reality is that a large number of poor people are excluded from our entire system. Now, if you provide them with education, for example, and it is effective and they can hold a job and thus join the system, some ideologists will argue that they have then been co-opted, as the phrase goes. Or if you give the guy a job, you have co-opted him. And therefore as Saul Alinsky one time said about our effort, the War on Poverty--it was political pornography, he said. The reason he said that was because he believed that a program like Head Start, just as an example, or legal services for poor people, that what those programs did was to mitigate the difficulties that people had, but not solve the difficulties. [He believed] that we were buying them off, as the cliché goes, by giving them a semblance of power through services, like Legal Services, without giving the reality of power. And that what was needed was community action by which they themselves became trained, became more sophisticated, so that they could actually take political power themselves.

Now, many politicians feared exactly that, especially southern politicians or politicians who were in borderline districts. Let's say [there was] a politician who won his last election as congressman by 51 per cent. What he did not want to have happen, financed by the government, was for us to start a Community Action Program in Toledo, Ohio, at the head of which he would find his political opponent, who would then be financed for two years and use that base to run against him. And actually that happened. Some guys--quick fellows--went out and got themselves into the antipoverty program and used it as a base on which to popularize themselves and their ideas so they could run for Congress. There's a number of them in the Congress right now who did, quote, "get a start," a political start, through Community Action.

So some people said that to empower these people politically or to empower them economically was wrong, for the government to do it. The argument was that it wasn't right to use tax money to finance those fellows into political power or into economic power, because that was using everybody's money to finance one guy, so to speak, or a hundred people. The theory being [that] there's only so much production, if you will, and if I assist one person to have a larger slice of the production--I mean the food or the housing or education or political power--if I finance one guy using government money to get more of that, it automatically means, according to their theory, that other people will have less of it. I've always disagreed with that on the theory that the more people that are participating, the more there will be of everything. There will be more educated people, there will be more economic growth and development, there will be more justice, more equity, a more stable community, because people will not be dissidents, they will not be out of it, they will not be ostracized. But some people who are in the system are very scared that others will get in, and in the process knock them out.

G: And those are the ones that control the political system, the ones that are scared.

S: That's right.

G: Did Lyndon Johnson share this view, that the existing power structure had to be broadened, shaken up as he said in *The Vantage Point*, that the institutions had to be more or less shocked into being more responsive to the poor people?

S: I'm going to say yes.

G: Did he ever express this sentiment to you, or was there ever anything in your association that, number one, indicated that he was aware of it, and number two, indicated that he agreed with it?

S: Just a minute.

G: On page 7 I think you may have some of the initial . . .

S: I'm going to say yes, as I said a minute ago, namely that he was sufficiently experienced about politics and political structures at the state, local, as well as national level, to realize that a significant proportion of them were managed by people who were either apathetic, entrenched, ignorant, or scared, or all those things put together, and that mere exhortation of some of those people to do things would get no results. Therefore it was both necessary and legitimate to shake the place up. But he always would say, "Let's shake it up a little bit, but don't burn the barn down."

G: A parallel would be the Voting Rights Act and his belief that if you really enabled blacks to vote, they would achieve significant political power and be able to control their own destiny with the ballot.

S: He's right. Look at Strom Thurmond. Strom Thurmond, who was the number-one segregationist in the country, a Dixiecrat candidate for president, is now palavering around the blacks and sucking around the blacks and appointing the blacks to office and the rest of it, just as if he were black! So Lyndon Johnson was wiser, let's just say, about human nature than some of his critics have given him credit for.

G: Let's go back to the other side of the points that you raised here on Saul Alinsky. Did he have any input at all in the task force?

S: I don't really think so.

G: How about any apostles of his?

S: Oh, a lot of the people who had been working in the juvenile delinquency operation were dedicated followers of Alinsky, and there were a considerable number of them around the country because Alinsky had gone from Chicago to other cities to try to develop entities in other cities like the Back of the Yards group in Chicago. So yes, we ran into Saul Alinsky devotees in a number of different cities, and there were some in the War on Poverty itself. Unsurprisingly, some of them constituted a rather obstreperous lot; they were agitators, feet stompers and gesticulators and yelling protestors. In fact, a lot of

people got a little bit upset when I attended a meeting in a hotel in downtown Washington; I can't remember which hotel it was. There was something which was organized, I think it was called the Citizens' Crusade Against Poverty. I went over there and they booed me. The truth of the matter was, I wasn't much disturbed about it, but a lot of my good friends who were working with me in the War on Poverty were both disturbed by it and irritated by it. But I wasn't, because it was very easy to see what was going on. They had a cabal of people in the back and then they marched three or four people up to the front and started yelling. I'd seen the communists do that in New York twenty-five years ago when I was in the labor union movement up there. So it was no surprise to me, but it was completely a prepared and staged demonstration. I didn't like it, don't misunderstand me, but it didn't surprise me very much.

G: Did Johnson ever talk to you about that episode?

S: I don't really think he did, but I'm not sure.

G: Let's talk about the physical location of the task force. You had this group that you had put together over the weekend, I gather, and was growing. Where did you put it?

S: I was recalling that with some of my friends yesterday, and apparently we used an empty office on the fifth floor of the Peace Corps building to begin with. Then the task force moved up to the twelfth floor of the Peace Corps building, because they got more people. Then there wasn't enough room, and the Court of Claims Building became available. That's that brick building on Pennsylvania Avenue across the street from the Executive Office Building. It's now a historic landmark, I think, an actual landmark. At that time, however, it was collapsing. It was empty, vacated, and nobody wanted it, so we were allowed to use it. It was extremely inefficient. If you've ever been in it, you'll understand what I mean. It was set up for courts, great monumental staircases and so on, but not for what we needed.

But we were there, and we were there for maybe a month or two when, funnily enough, they were doing some blasting across the street, and the fellow in the blasting operation came charging into our building saying we had to get out of there right away because the building might fall down, the Court of Claims Building. Well, the blasting they were doing was CIA blasting for new shelters underneath the White House. I don't know for certain about this myself, but I believe that there is some kind of a subterranean headquarters under the earth in the neighborhood of the place where the president's Oval Office is, and under the Executive Office Building, down there under the earth, God knows how many feet, there's a whole headquarters. I've never been there, so I have no certain idea. I may be just totally wrong. I think there is down under there a place where the president can go, along with other top officials, in case of an atomic war. I think they were actually blasting out underneath to establish both the physical and the communications business and everything else. It made me laugh that in the process of doing that they were blowing down the War on Poverty headquarters.

So we were evicted from the Court of Claims Building. Then we went to an abandoned hospital which was on New York Avenue, and to another place simultaneously, too.

G: Was that the one that had been the house of ill repute?

S: I guess. No, no, you're thinking about the hotel we went into. The abandoned hospital was just that, an abandoned hospital on New York Avenue. Moreover, all of these moves show that at least we got started off right in the War on Poverty; like the poor, we had no place to call our own. And we had no money . . . had *no* money.

G: How did you survive without having any funds to work with?

S: This fellow Kelly that I mentioned a few minutes ago whom you interviewed, I think. . . .

G: Bill Kelly, yes.

S: Yes. He is a long-time government bureaucrat and he knew how to "finance" our operations even though we had no money. For example, I think we had the rent, and all the studies about utilizing defense installations for Job Corps, and all the rigmarole of working out the costs for the proposed Job Corps; that was all done by the Defense Department. The Defense Department called up one day just to find out where to send their bill, which was for a million or so dollars worth of services, phones, messengers, *et cetera*, use of machines, and Kelly told the comptroller there, "Don't send that bill over to us. We don't have any money." The guy said, "What do you mean, you don't have any money?" He said, "Well, we don't have any money. We got no way of getting any money." The fellow said, "Well, we spent this money." Kelly said, "Well, who authorized you to spend this money?" He said, "Well, as a matter of fact I guess I don't have any strict authorization, any piece of paper." He said, "Well, you'll just have to get that authorization from someplace else. We never told you to spend a million and a quarter dollars," whatever it was. So they just absorbed it over there in the Defense Department.

GSA absorbed a considerable amount of expenses for us, too. But what happens in the executive department is that if you really know your way around and you've got friends, especially if you've got friends at the comptroller's level, they can always find money to pay some bills and they can always work out some way to do something, *provided* they think they're safe in doing it. In this case, since ours was a presidential operation, the governmental financial personnel felt safe; so they handled our problems and that was the end of that.

G: There was evidently a president's contingency fund that you got freed up?

S: Oh, yes, that's right. But there wasn't a lot of money in that fund. I knew about that fund because we financed the beginning of the Peace Corps with those monies. However, I got

a lot more money out of that presidential contingency fund for the Peace Corps than for the War on Poverty.

G: How about getting these people detailed to work on the task force from various departments? Did that present any problems to you?

S: Well, it always does, but that's another thing where if you have friends, they will make the necessary arrangements for you.

G: You've mentioned one example, where Wirtz didn't want Moynihan to come back for meetings and discussions.

S: Yes, he took him out.

G: Were there any others where--

S: They took them out?

G: --you had to use influence to get a guy initially or to keep him? Say, Yarmolinsky at Defense, was that a [problem]?

S: Well, to take Yarmolinsky, that wasn't that much of a problem because in the first place, Yarmolinsky was a good friend whom I had introduced to Bob McNamara. Bob McNamara knew that I knew Yarmolinsky before Bob McNamara did. In fact I got Yarmolinsky, in a sense--I can't really say that, but more accurately Yarmolinsky was hired to be in the Defense Department because McNamara saw him perform at a time when Yarmolinsky was working with me. So there was no problem about Adam Yarmolinsky. Bob McNamara was happy to permit him to help us establish the War on Poverty. But with others there probably was difficulty, like [James] Sundquist over in the Agriculture Department. Some of these departments had a vested interest in getting somebody detailed, because obviously if there was a detail from the Agriculture Department, he could keep the Agriculture Department informed about what we were doing.

G: Was there a problem of loyalties here and representation of views? Did the people from the departments represent the views of the departments, or did they divorce themselves from that and give you whatever input they felt was appropriate?

S: They really did both. None of them were disloyal in the sense of coming over there and saying, "Hey, be sure not to do anything with my department because they're nothing but a bunch of stiffs in my department." On the other hand, they didn't go back to their department and say, "Hey, stay away from those guys over there at the War on Poverty, they're all nuts." What happens normally is that people come in, they give you their suggestions, but at the same time they will tell you, in let's just say as an example, the Interior Department, "Our position is this. This is what we would like to see happen and this is why we want it to happen and this is what we can contribute, what we think is useful." It isn't as if it was a war, it's an exchange of views. If they feel truthfully that they're getting a hearing and an honest evaluation and they've got a chance to put up an argument for their point of view, they're accustomed to winning some bureaucratic decisions and losing some.

G: Did you yourself make an effort to achieve a certain degree of accommodation with each of the existing departments? Did you try to have something in there for Interior, something for HEW, something for Labor, that sort of thing?

S: I probably did. I don't really remember it quite that way; but since poverty was so pervasive and the causes so diverse, to struggle against it requires enlisting everyone.

G: How about a balance of urban and rural? Did you attempt to do this as well?

S: Oh, yes. The problem is that it's always harder to start activities in a rural area than in an urban area. Therefore more effort of an administrative nature, or even creative nature, is required to get something going in a rural area than in an urban area.

G: I guess sheer lack of density would mean that you would have a lower yield with the amount of money you spent.

S: That's right. Moreover, if you take the poverty areas which are rural, they have less people able to come up with suggestions. They've got fewer advocates. They've got probably fewer ideas about what to do in the way of getting money out of the government to do something in a particular county. That's one of the sad things about people who are poor, is that they don't have the personal resources or the friends to make up plans for them which fit into a government program. So it's always harder to organize in rural areas. So what you do even among the poor areas is, you start with the ones that are the better-off-poor areas. So if you get a program out of Kentucky it's likely to be in that county in Kentucky which, although poor, is the least poor of the poor. But that's life. There's nothing unusual about that. The deeper down you go into poverty or into any other problem, the harder it gets, and--how shall I say?--the more entrenched the poverty, the harder it is to root it out. It's just like a disease. You can cure some cancer if you catch it early enough, as the cliché goes, but if the disease gets entrenched it sometimes becomes impossible to deal with. Same thing with poverty; similar thing with poverty.

G: Adam Yarmolinsky really served as your assistant during this period, isn't that correct?

S: He was surely one of them, yes. He surely wasn't an exclusive one because, for example, Hy Bookbinder was executive director, executive officer, some phrase like that, of the task force.

G: What was his role?

S: His role was to keep the place operating efficiently. It was his job to have pads and pencils and people and schedules and rooms. If there was going to be a meeting of a task force on rural poverty, he had to know who was coming and where they were coming from and get a place for them to meet. If I was supposed to be at the meeting, his job was to get me there. Then Bill Kelly came in and worked with Bookie. It was Kelly's job to find the money, and process the papers with the other departments, and make sure that we

didn't have unauthorized people fumbling around in the building, and protect us from all the other difficulties attendant to government operations.

You see, we weren't authorized. That's what a lot of people find hard to understand. I have probably more experience with unauthorized, experimental, new projects than anybody around Washington, because I'm one of the few who really started something that didn't exist. If you start something, let's say in the Defense Department, and you're in the Defense Department, then you do it with all the resources of the department. Certain people help you and certain people hinder you, I'm sure; but nevertheless you have a *situs*. But we didn't have any *situs*, any home, any authority.

For example, when I started the Peace Corps and we established our task force on the Peace Corps, we used to meet in the Mayflower Hotel. I was so ignorant about the government that I didn't even know that I could have asked somebody for an office in a government building. That may sound hard to believe, but that's the truth. When I came down here at President Kennedy's request to start the Peace Corps, I went and lived in the Mayflower Hotel and I asked the manager of the Mayflower Hotel to give me meeting rooms, which he did. So we had our meetings in meeting rooms in the Mayflower Hotel. Normally if you start a government program you'd say to somebody in the government, "I need space," and they'd give you space in a government building to work. I'll say again, I was so ignorant I didn't even know there was such a person. I didn't even know who to call. But it's also true we had no authorization to start the Peace Corps. We didn't even have a name, and no one knew what a Peace Corps was.

Now when we started the War on Poverty, again we had no appropriation, we had no authorization. If you're the comptroller for XYZ department, you can't allow me to come in and use space in your department, because I'm not authorized. I don't have any right to exist. Now the president can give me space if he's got space, so to speak, in the executive office. Of course they didn't have any space in the executive office, but the

space that we did get came about because of the efforts of the executive office to find us some place. Otherwise we wouldn't have even had the Court of Claims building. Since I was running the Peace Corps, at least for a few weeks I could put the War on Poverty personnel in the Peace Corps building, until we didn't have enough room left. But if you're not authorized it's just like being a bastard. If you're not authorized and you [have] no appropriation, what can you do? You're just floundering around with no status.

G: Was this at all influential in determining how the program evolved or developed? Would it have been different if you had had plenty of money to work with during this task force period?

S: Would the program itself have been different?

G: Yes.

S: In a way I guess it might have been. I'm not sure. I guess I have to say no, I guess it wouldn't have been different. But the kind of people who are attracted to something like the War on Poverty are possibly more attracted to it because it isn't highly encrusted and bureaucratic and stable. The people who want to try out new ideas are more likely maybe to come if they can see that they're in on the ground floor.

G: How did you actually divide up the work in the task force? Obviously you had a diverse range of programs to discuss and ideas tossed in and thrown out. How would you describe the work of the task force here?

S: I would say that it wasn't all clearly thought out in accordance with a neat, cleanly articulated plan. Why not? Well, first of all, the people who were in it, I knew them intimately: Yarmolinsky, Mankiewicz, Hy Bookbinder, Wofford, Harold Greenberg, Kelly, Vernon Alden, Glenn Ferguson, Pat Kennedy, *et cetera*. Those were people who knew me as well as I knew them, and *vice versa*. They knew what I liked and they had the same kind of motivation, if you will, that I had. The result was that I could go over to the Peace Corps, which I did, and be in the Peace Corps office 75 per cent of the time,

and go over to the Court of Claims Building for meetings, or in a sense check in with these fellows and get, you might say, an account of what had gone on, and then plan what should be done the next day or for the next two or three days, without having a great deal of problem about it. That's because those men knew me and trusted me, and *vice versa*. I knew them and I trusted them. They were all experienced government people. I knew damn well they weren't going to make a lot of stupid mistakes, so I could give them a terrific amount of running room and freedom. Therefore I did not have to be there night and day, every day, all day long supervising things or nervously watching over what everybody was doing.

G: Was their task to get together in these brainstorming sessions and just hammer out programs and ideas?

S: Yes, sure. Yes.

G: Then would they come back to you and say, "Look, we've decided this is good or this is bad?"

S: No, they wouldn't say, "We've decided," but "Look, here is something we think is pretty good." To give you a very simplistic example of that process, Adam Yarmolinsky one day came into my office at the Peace Corps and he said, "Read this article in the *Yale Law Journal*. I think this is something we might think about for the War on Poverty." I took the article home and I read it. I came down the next morning and I said, "Adam, we have to have that. Let's get the guy that wrote that article. Who is he?" So we called the *Yale Law Journal* to find out about the author, and discovered that the person who wrote the article was a GS-15 in the Department of Justice. So we called the department, got him on the phone, invited him to our headquarters, and said, "Look, we want to include your idea of neighborhood legal centers in the new War on Poverty." The reality was, I had never seen that man in my life. Neither, I believe, had Adam Yarmolinsky. His name is Edgar Cahn. You can say that's a funny way to develop a national program, and I guess it

is. But that's exactly how the national Legal Services Program, which is now a supremely successful program, came into existence.

I can give you another example. We started the idea of neighborhood health centers. There are now, I think, eight hundred--approximately--in America. There were not *at that time* any government-financed neighborhood health centers, comprehensive health centers, in the slums. So let's just say you lived in the middle of Watts. If you wanted to get any medical attention and you were poor, the only thing you could do was go to the hospital run by the University of Southern California, which was maybe eight miles from where you lived, and sit on a bench and wait for somebody to take care of you. There just wasn't anything in Watts. So we said, what we ought to do is *take the medical services to the people*. So we started neighborhood health centers, rural ones and city ones. There were no such things in existence prior thereto.

G: Do you recall who in particular put forward this idea?

S: Sure. Yes, indeed: Joe English, who is now head of psychiatry up at St. Vincent's Hospital in New York; Lee Gehrig, who had run the medical services in the Peace Corps for me, he was a captain in the United States Public Health Service; Dr. Julius Richmond, and a couple of other doctors.

G: Another program, Head Start, I understand was discussed, or at least the concept of preschool education was discussed during the task force period, but was not specifically set forth in the legislation. Do you recall the early discussions of Head Start?

S: I recall that very well, because I was personally very much involved and interested in that. And it wasn't discussed in the task force so far as I know.

G: Oh, it was not?

S: Well, it may have been, but it wasn't discussed so far as I knew or know.

I'll tell you what happened. At one point, I don't know who did it, but somebody in the Budget Bureau prepared a pie chart of the poverty population of America, at our

request. Incidentally, Alice Rivlin, who now runs the congressional budget shop, may have produced that pie-chart presentation of poverty in America. If you looked at the pie chart, at who was poor in America, a certain percentage was rural poor, a certain percentage were mothers without husbands, running families. But the biggest chunk, about 50 per cent of all the poor people in America, were *children*. I can see that chart as if I had just been shown it, and I said to myself, "My God, look at that. Fifty per cent of all the poor people are children." What does that mean? It means that if we have a war against poverty and we don't have programs specifically aimed at children, nobody can say we're having a war to help the most numerous victims of poverty. It's just as if you had a war to conquer Germany and you didn't drop any bombs on the German soldiers; you wouldn't be conducting the war intelligently.

So I said we have to have programs for children. Well then, what can you do for children, really? It was in the struggle to come up with programs for children, coupled with a second experience I had had--I didn't mention this before but it's relevant--which produced Head Start. In the Kennedy Foundation we were doing work for mentally retarded kids, and a woman in Nashville, Tennessee, at the Peabody School of Education there, whose name was Gray, had done some extraordinary research which showed that if you intervened early enough with children living in the slums, rural and city slums near Nashville, you could change their IQ. Well, that shocked me. This was about 1957, 1958, 1959, 1961 when she did this research. I had always thought--I was ignorant on that, too--if you had an IQ of let's say 90, that's what you had. That was what you were given by nature. That was your genetic endowment. The idea that you could take somebody with an IQ of 85 and make it 88 or 90, I had never heard of. But she proved you could do that with mentally retarded children. I knew about that research because I worked for the Kennedy Foundation, with my wife.

So when I was looking at this pie chart with all these poor kids, I said, "Look, if we can intervene with mentally retarded children and raise their IQ, we surely ought to be able to intervene with children who are *not* mentally retarded and have a beneficial effect on their IQ and on their abilities in school." So I got in touch with a scientist named [Jerome?] Bruner at Harvard. Like most good scientists, he was very skeptical about government programs. After [I talked] with him at some length he wrote a paper for me and recommended that it would be feasible to try an experiment in early childhood intervention--which is what the experts call it--with a group as large as twenty-five hundred children. We would get the baseline data, do the experimenting, and see whether we could have the effect on normal children that this lady Gray at the Peabody College had achieved with the retarded. I said, "Professor Bruner, that's wonderful, but that's no good. We've got to help five million children out there. What we can do with twenty-five hundred is not large enough." He said, "Well, good luck to you, Mr. Shriver; but you can't succeed with a mass program in this field."

But I kept talking to people and one day I had lunch with Joe Alsop, the famous newspaper columnist, and in the course of lunch I said, "Hey, Joe, what do you think about this?" and I trotted out this idea of early childhood intervention for the poor. He said, "My God! I think that's a great idea!" I nearly fell off my chair, because I had expected him to be very much opposed to it. I can remember going back to the office and saying, "My God, if Joe Alsop will support this idea we can sell it," because he's such a hard-nosed conservative.

We went back to the War on Poverty headquarters, where the job now was to get together some people who had had experience. I got Dr. Bob Cooke, who was the head of the scientific advisory committee of the Kennedy Foundation, which had been the financiers of the research at the Peabody College in Nashville, Tennessee. We put together a group of people in public health, nurses, pediatricians, and so on, and the

objective I gave to them was to devise a program of early childhood intervention, to attack or to help with that huge piece of the pie chart which represented children. That's the origin of Head Start.

G: How about Community Action? We've talked about the antecedents, community development, *et cetera*, in the Peace Corps. In the task force itself, you had people like Dave Hackett and Dick Boone, who had worked with the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency. Was there sort of a subgroup that worked with Community Action, and how did this emerge as a part of your program here?

S: Well, Community Action was *the* part which was presented from the beginning. The guys who were most interested in it were Dick Boone, Dave Hackett, and four or five others who had worked on it under Bobby Kennedy's leadership. In fact, Dave Hackett never did come to work for OEO. He decided to stay with the juvenile delinquency program. But Dick Boone, for one, is an example, and several others, Dick Salett and several others whose names I can't remember offhand, did decide to come with OEO--

Tape 3 of 3

G: There's been some suggestion that you were initially skeptical of Community Action, and it was Robert Kennedy that met with you and convinced you to retain that in the War on Poverty. Can you recall any--?

S: I've heard that said before, but that's just false. I don't know who said it, but I've heard it said before. The reason why it's false is that, with all due respect to the people who were interested in community action, I think I knew more about community action than they did. Since Saul Alinsky, for example, had been a friend of mine in Chicago, I knew all about the Back of the Yards movement. Moreover, we'd been running community development in the Peace Corps for three years before it ever started here in the War on Poverty. My wife and I had started the program on juvenile delinquency in the Department of Justice. So there wasn't anything new that anyone had to sell me. I think

the misapprehension may have come because I did not think we ought to try to spend our entire five hundred million dollars on Community Action. I did play down the idea that Community Action could be the totality of the War on Poverty. Of course, I still think that decision was correct, to make Community Action an essential part but not the whole of the War on Poverty.

I'll go on and add one other comment. Throughout the time I ran the War on Poverty, there was a continual struggle against my concept of what the War on Poverty ought to be, led by some of the people in Community Action. It was a totally new experience for me. When I started the Peace Corps and got it going, along with the help of dozens of people, there was never any conflict within the Peace Corps about what we were trying to do. There was a tremendous emphasis on community development, for example, in South America, but in Africa there was a tremendous emphasis on teaching. But nobody felt that the Peace Corps should be only community development. But the people who came into the War on Poverty who were devotees or zealots of community action felt that if you were not like them, totally committed to that one concept, then you were a part of the enemy. You were part of the group that was co-opting the poor, to use that phrase once again, and therefore you were a reprehensible person and your influence had to be continually attacked.

So I had the unusual experience for me--it was an unprecedented experience--of having a whole group of people within my own enterprise who were fighting against me all the time and fighting against the people who, like me, thought that we needed many attacks on poverty, not just one. We needed both Community Action and what some people called services, like Head Start or Legal Services or VISTA. People in Community Action felt that those programs were bad, because Head Start was not developed or thought up in a Community Action Program entity in, let's say, Dallas, or Kansas City, or Chicago, or some other place. They thought that if the people in Chicago

who were poor wanted a preschool program, fine; finance it. If the people in Pittsburgh did *not* ask for a preschool program, don't finance it. Because our job was to respond to what the poor were demanding or what the people were demanding at the local level.

I have a great deal of respect for people in general and for poor people. I can learn, as we all can, from others, and I learned a great deal from poor people. But that doesn't mean that I think they know everything. Consequently I steadfastly said that although there should be community action, it should not be everything. There should be these other programs which our local Community Action Programs could utilize or adopt if they wanted to. They didn't have to. But it was a little bit like, I used to say, a department store where, if you were the person running Community Action in Omaha, Nebraska, you could come in and look at the services which were available through the national office. We called them "national emphasis programs." If you didn't want any of them, you didn't have to have any of them. Nobody forced Omaha to have Head Start or forced Omaha to have Legal Services or forced Omaha to have VISTA. But if they wanted those programs or services they were available.

G: But if you felt there were people within Community Action who were, say, not in accord with you and were, shall we say, sabotaging your effort, well, why didn't you get rid of them?

S: Well, for a lot of reasons. First of all, I never felt that they were bad people. They were very ardent, very zealous people and I didn't think that they were harming anything except the atmosphere. Of course they were harming me because they were badmouthing me; but so what? That's not something you have to lie awake at night worrying about. Moreover, I thought that they were competent and dedicated. Dick Boone, for example, just to name one person, is a very competent, dedicated government administrator and compassionate human being. And a number of others were also competent.

G: But you didn't feel that people, that Dick Boone for example, was advocating something or trying to institute something that you didn't agree with or that you felt should not be part of Community Action?

S: Sometimes, yes. We used to have some of the most incredible sessions in the history of the United States government, because I am one for letting everybody speak out. We had a rather large board room over at the ultimate OEO headquarters, and frequently, let's say at six o'clock in the afternoon we would all gather in there for a staff meeting to decide on grants. I sat at the head of the long table and we would go over all of the proposed grants. We would start with a stack of grants that might be anywhere from eight inches high to a foot and a half high sitting on the table next to me. The first grant would be a grant of two million dollars, let's just say. We had a grant form that the applicant had to fill out. You have to understand that we had to create the form. So when we first started, there was information that we needed to know about the proposed grantee that we didn't have on the forms. In the first four or five months we were changing the form all the time, not because we were incompetent, but because nobody had ever had forms like these. So we were changing them.

This grant application form would be laid down in front of me, and that would be the subject. Now everybody else around the table had a copy of that form and let's say it was a Community Action proposal. Obviously there were people at the meeting from Community Action, but there were also people there from the Inspector General's office. There were people there from the Deputy Director's office; there were people there from the legal office; there were people there--you name it, all the divisions, and they all sat around that table. Some would maybe attack that program, that project. The people who were defending it, that is, who had brought the grant in, the ones who advocated it, would sometimes get mad as hell. People would curse each other, literally. I frequently heard a voice say, "You son of a bitch, that isn't true!" Now, this kind of talk doesn't normally go

on in a well-run government operation; but it went on at OEO every time these grants were discussed. That didn't bother me; it bothered a hell of a lot of people. Some people threatened to quit. One guy--I can remember vividly--wanted to quit OEO, and said if another particular person was ever in the room where any of his proposals were being discussed, he wouldn't even permit his proposals to be discussed because this guy was a son of a bitch.

My theory was very simple, and I still believe in it. When finally I put my name on the bottom of any grant, it wasn't only my name that was involved; our whole agency was involved. The reason why was that ours was a very controversial agency. There were at least a hundred members of Congress who were looking over our shoulder night and day. They wanted to find something that they could pin onto us, something either stupid, or something ill-considered, or something immoral, or something illegal, that we had done. I thought the whole potential of the program depended, at the beginning, on a good defense. I didn't want anybody in the Congress to be able to latch onto anything and say, "Look at this glaring mistake."

G: Was Community Action, in your initial perception during the task force period here, designed to work within the structure of local government?

S: No. Let me just add some comments on that. I think President Johnson may have thought that the way Community Action was going to work was through local government. But frankly, that never was my idea. My idea always was, by analogy, that a local Community Action board would be like a local board of education. Now a local school board in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, or any other place in America is, I'm sure you know, an independent agency. The board is responsible for the schools. I thought a Community Action agency ought to enjoy that same type of independent status on the local political scene that a board of education had. Just as a board of education speaks out on behalf of education, on behalf of teachers, on behalf of school children, the local

Community Action agency should speak out on behalf of poor people and the needs of poor people, whether they were needs for jobs or housing or health care, whatever those needs happened to be. Therefore I wanted the local Community Action agency to be composed of distinguished people at the local level, private businessmen, private philanthropy people, poor people, and government people. I wanted it to be what I used to call "the community." Ours was not the poor community versus the rich community, or the business community versus the labor community.

Community Action to me meant, very elementary, the community of Cincinnati, the community of Rochester, the community of Dallas; and therefore Dallas ought to be, so to speak, represented there. That's where this idea came up that the local CAP [community action program] ought to be one-third government people, one-third private philanthropic people, and one-third the poor. Now, I never really liked those arbitrary rules like one-third, one-third, one-third. I always felt that first you selected good people, and if it turned out to be 40 per cent poor people, that was okay; if it turned out to be 40 per cent businessmen, that was okay, provided they all had the same purpose and the same motivation. Because on a board of education, like the one I was head of in Chicago, there were labor-union leaders, there were businessmen, there were women, there were educators, there were lawyers, *et cetera*. We didn't say you had to have *a* lawyer, *an* accountant, and all that kind of detail. So I saw a Community Action agency as being a very elementary entity, a community, a group representative of the community.

G: It seems that in essence what you're saying is that it was to be a cooperative effort among these different--

S: No question. That was looked upon as heresy by people who were total devotees of Saul Alinsky, because for them "the community" was only the poor community. A Community Action agency should be exclusively poor people. Because the community that you were attempting to work with or to help was the poor community, and therefore

if anybody was involved in it who wasn't poor, that was corrupting the pristine perfection of their concept. I never bought that concept; I don't buy it now.

G: How about in the South, where you faced the potential of having blacks excluded totally from the project?

S: That's right.

G: Did you see this as a chance to bypass the local power structure and include elements that had traditionally been excluded?

S: Of course. I mean it isn't only in the South, the same thing was true in Appalachia or was true in Chicago or was true in San Francisco, I don't care.

G: So that it could conceivably be a vehicle for conflict?

S: Sure.

G: That possibility didn't bother you at all?

S: Not at all.

G: What formula did you use in determining whether or not it should be or shouldn't be?

S: What?

G: In conflict with the local power structure.

S: What we did was to press as hard as we thought we could to make the local CAP totally representative of the community, I mean the larger community. For example, take Atlanta, Georgia. I can remember it very well, because the head of it down there was a good friend of mine named Boisfeuillet Jones. He used to be an official in HEW. I was very pleased that he was the head of CAP in Atlanta because I knew he was trustworthy. I knew he had the same motivation as we did, and I knew he knew Atlanta. So the first Community Action agency they put together in Atlanta had one black person on it. Well, in the OEO headquarters everybody was yelling at me that I shouldn't authorize that CAP because it only had one black person on it. I used to talk to Boisfeuillet Jones about this and he said, "Now listen, Sarge, we've never had a black person on anything like this in

the history of Atlanta, Georgia; I mean since the start of Georgia. This black person we have on here is going to do a very good job. We are going to reconstitute the agency every year. Now you can trust me and I guarantee to you that next year we'll have two or three black people on it, and the year after that we'll have four or five black people on it. But please don't ask me to tell you that I can put five black people on it"--which is what the purists claimed they should have on there--"the first year. You can't do that in Atlanta the first year that we ever have an integrated operation. In the history of Atlanta there had never been an integrated school board, or an integrated anything in Atlanta."

You can say I was "chicken" not to say to Boisfeuillet Jones, "You're crazy! You've got to have five!" But according to my theory of life that's just stupid. If you know that the man is reliable and [that] you will make progress toward the five or six or seven ideally required--in human affairs, politics particularly, you make progress sometimes somewhat slowly. The one thing you can't accept is *no* progress. It was not being suggested that we accept no progress.

So I caught a lot of criticism for authorizing an agency in Atlanta, a Community Action agency, that only had one or two black people in it. But the next year there were three or four and the next year three were four or five. Therefore the criticism became more and more muted. But at the beginning the zealots who wanted perfection instantaneously were all over me like God knows what. They were castigating me publicly, privately and every other way they could think of.

G: In the literature on the Community Action Program, critics have charged that the program was initially conceived and sent to Congress with the idea that Community Action agencies would be local groups working within or with local government and would coordinate and cooperate with local institutions, and that in the development of the program it became one that sought out conflict with local established government.

S: Yes. Now--

(Interruption)

What was that question now again, please?

G: It had to do with conflict emerging after it seemed that the initial purpose was to cooperate and coordinate.

S: The purpose was always, so far as I was concerned, to cooperate and coordinate. But I used to use an analogy which I'll just finish this session by repeating for you. It's this: I found out that if you made the proposal that I tried to describe a minute ago, to Dallas or Wichita or St. Louis or Cincinnati or Syracuse or Boston or wherever it might be, the reaction you got was similar to a doctor putting a thermometer in a patient's mouth. If the community actually had a good community spirit and a good community existence, nothing happened; the Community Action Program went ahead very nicely. If, before Community Action as part of OEO ever existed, a particular community or locality, city, was itself a place suffering from internal lack of unity, it showed upon the thermometer. There was tension, conflict, anxiety.

I used to say to some of these people, "Don't blame me that you've got a lousy community spirit in town X! Look at this town, they've got the same program and it's going ahead very well, and it's because they've got a good tradition and a healthy community. Your problem is to create a community. Don't blame me! I'm like the doctor; I've taken your temperature, you've got 108°; but don't kick the doctor in the shin. Take some medicine to cure your community."

I still think that's correct. Community action, the war against poverty, is not a science. It isn't like running an army. It's an art. Therefore what you can do in Dallas will differ from what you can do in New Orleans, or New Orleans will differ from Miami, or Miami will differ from Boston. But that doesn't mean that one place is wrong or right or that you have to do exactly the same thing in Miami that you do in Boston. I think that's a sort of myopic; it's a dull-witted desire that some theoreticians have that

everything has to fit their theory. It's like Marxism: Everything has to be Marxist. I think that's shortsighted or insensitive to the huge variety of people that there are, especially in our country. We have a bloody continent here, not just one state, one people, one language.

G: Just as the problems required flexibility for a solution, the approaches had to be different in different communities.

S: But to me that's humanity, that's what makes the whole of life interesting.

(End of Tape 3 of 3 and Interview I)

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON LIBRARY

Agreement Pertaining to the Oral History Interview of

SARGENT SHRIVER

I, Sargent Shriver, of Potomac, Maryland, or my authorized agent, William Josephson, do hereby, except as provided in paragraph two below, give to the United States of America for deposit in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library, the content of the tape recordings and transcripts of the interviews conducted with me on August 20, and October 23, 1980, July 1, 1982, February 7, 1986, and November 29, 1990.

This assignment is subject to the following terms and conditions:

(1) The tape recordings and transcripts shall be available for listening and researching, respectively, by researchers authorized by the Library.

(2) During my lifetime I retain all copyright in the tape recordings and transcripts.

(3) During my lifetime researchers wishing to copy the tape recordings or transcripts or any part thereof, other than for short "fair use" quotations from the transcript, must first obtain my express consent or that of my authorized agent, William Josephson, in each case.

(4) Copies of the transcripts and the tape recordings shall be deposited by the Library with my papers in the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library where they shall be subject to the terms and conditions as are applicable to those papers.

Sargent Shriver — 4/26/05

Sargent Shriver or Authorized Agent — Date

A Ne Weinstein — 5/19/05

Archivist of the United States — Date

ONE NEW YORK PLAZA
SUITE 2500
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10004-1980

Direct Line: 212-859-8220
Fax: 212-859-8582

April 29, 2005

Ms. Linda M. Seelke
Archivist
Lyndon Baines Johnson Library
2313 Red River Street
Austin, TX 78705-5702

Dear Ms. Seelke:

This is in partial response to your letter of March 29, 2005.

Please include this letter in the Shriver oral history. There are a number of errors in Sarge's recollection as recorded in his oral history that I know from my own knowledge. For example, on pages 15-20 of the August 20, 1980 transcript he describes conversations he had with President Kennedy and Vice President Johnson about the independence of the Peace Corps. I am quite certain that he never took part in those conversations, if only because at the relevant time he was out of the country in India. So far as I know, the meeting between President Kennedy and Vice President Johnson, where President Kennedy overruled the White House staff recommendation from Mr. Ralph Dungan and the position of Budget Director David Bell, Civil Service Commission Chair John Macy and International Cooperation Administration Administrator Henry Labouisse, was entirely between the President and the Vice President with no one else in attendance. The story is well told in Gerry Rice's *The Bold Experiment* pages 65-66 and Scott Stossel's *Sarge* pages 223 to 225.

The long descriptions on pages 23-28 of the August 20, 1980 transcript of Sarge's conversations with President Johnson about the beginnings of Sarge's War on Poverty are probably extremely exaggerated, if not entirely wrong. The story, from my point-of-view, is told in my July 12, 2003 letter to Scott, copy enclosed. Scott tells the story on pages 343-45 of *Sarge*.

In the August 20, 1980 transcript, page 81, I don't think that Sarge's statements are correct about some presidential contingency fund and the amount of money he got out of that for the OEO start-up, compared to the amount of money the President allocated out of the Mutual Security Act contingency fund for the Peace Corps start-up. But I do not remember what the facts were.

In the October 23, 1980 transcript, page 66, if the Steven Smith is Jean Kennedy Smith's husband, that he was in, or even considered for, the Agency for International Development, is certainly news to me. I am not saying it is wrong or right, but I do think it is highly unlikely.

In the July 1, 1982 transcript on page 14, there is a little bit of confusion at the outset about Bill Kelly and Community Action and Bill Kelly and the Job Corps, but I think it gets straightened out.

In the November 29, 1990 transcript on page 19, Sarge has the so-called five-year flush wrong. There was never a Civil Service Commission vote, let alone agreement. John Macy, then Chair of the Civil Service Commission, was opposed to the legislation, as was whoever was then Director of the Bureau of the Budget, probably Kermit Gordon, possibly Charles Schultze. What happened legislatively was that the Peace Corps was taken out of Civil Service, and its personnel system was based instead on the Foreign Service personnel system which was not inconsistent with the so-called five-year flush which was also specifically authorized.

Also in the November 29, 1990 transcript beginning on page 19 and continuing on page 20, there is a little initial confusion about Sarge staying on the Peace Corps and OEO until he went to France in 1968, but the confusion straightens itself out on page 20. Sarge gave up the Peace Corps directorship in the Spring of 1966, but continued as Director of OEO until 1968 when he left for France.

Sincerely,

William Josephson

/jl
Encls.