

INTERVIEW II

DATE: December 19, 1968

INTERVIEWEE: W. MARVIN WATSON

INTERVIEWER: Dorothy Pierce

PLACE: Postmaster General Watson's office, Post Office Department, Washington,  
D.C.

Tape 1 of 1

P: Continuing with our interview of November 22, when we left off we had concluded with the vice presidential campaign, and as I was leaving you mentioned also remembering some events surrounding the 1954 episode when the Puerto Ricans shot some guns off in the House and also during his 1955 heart attack. I'd like to ask you about those and then continue forward more or less chronologically.

Could you tell me, to begin with, what the circumstances were of your being with then-Senator Johnson in 1954 when the Puerto Ricans were in the House?

W: I was with him in his Senate off in the Capitol. It so happened that his office at that time overlooked the steps leading up to the Capitol and leading up to the House and Senate Chambers, the side of the Capitol that faces the Supreme Court Building. When the shots were fired by this group in the House of Representatives, of course he was immediately notified for the purpose of protection of the Senate, not knowing exactly how far-ranging this effort might be. Of course, he immediately set up for tight security of the Senate Chambers.

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By the time these calls and these things had been done and he had given notification to others by phone, the police and the ambulance attendants were taking the Puerto Ricans out that had been arrested, and the ambulance people were taking out the members of Congress that had been injured by their shots. From this vantage point of overlooking the steps in the front of the Capitol, we had something of a bird's eye view of at least these people leaving the House side of the Capitol. I was impressed, of course, at that time with the way that when he was notified he was immediately able to know who to call to put the best possibly security on the Senate. Although as far as I know there never was any attempt made on any of the senators, it would have been awfully difficult for them to get in after this notification.

The second thing, I was with Senator Johnson off and on, just maybe ten minutes, fifteen minutes, thirty minutes a day, for several days preceding his heart attack. I must admit I was not able to detect that anything was wrong physically with the man whatsoever. He worked hard; he always had worked hard. His hours were long, but they always had been long. I had left. In fact, Marion, my wife, was with me. We had been here in Washington for several days. We left and flew back to Dallas and were driving to East Texas from Dallas, driving to Daingerfield. On the car radio we picked up that he had suffered this heart attack that day. We had not been able to detect that anything might happen when we had been with him a few hours before.

P: In this early association with the President, did you have any awareness of his temper?

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W: Temper? I'm not sure I know what you mean, what you might be trying to--you may be talking about what someone may have written in the press that didn't know him. There have been some columnists write about his temper. I've never detected that temper that they say exists. It is true that he is a man that expects the things that he's made a judgment on to be carried out by those that work with him and for him. And he does not mind relating why he believes that they should have done something, when they have failed to carry out his instructions. But if that's a temper they've talking about, it seems to me that they may have picked these feelings up from people that he may have been associated [with] at some time or other during his life that were not able to carry out his instructions.

P: I was recalling, at the time of his heart attack, that preceding it he had had some sort of press conference in which he apparently spoke pretty harshly to some reporter. Now, I don't really recall all the events surrounding that, and people have just said this was an indication that he was really at a point where he was maybe working too hard and was worn out.

W: Well, it seems like those again are judgments. I don't know. I was not at the press conference so I don't know exactly what he said or what may have promoted him to give a rather straightforward answer to this particular reporter which I'm not familiar with. If I could read the question and the answer, maybe they very closely parallel in reasoning.

P: All right, to bring us back where we more or less left off in our last interview, we had discussed the vice presidential campaign and had concluded with talking about the Adolphus Hotel incident and part of the whistlestop tour of the South. Were there any

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other events during his vice presidential campaign that you recall or that you participated in?

W: Did we talk about the trip following the Dallas incident at the Baker and the Adolphus Hotel? They'd left and--

P: I don't believe so.

W: --went to Houston and made the tapes, and to Beaumont and to New York to meet with presidential nominee Kennedy and to appear on nationwide TV and then back to the Valley and on up to Corpus Christi and then into Austin for the. . . .

P: For the election night.

W: --election night. I'm trying to remember if we had a statewide TV appearance from Austin. I just really do not [know]. I think possibly that he did go on TV with a group.

P: Were you with him during all of this?

W: Yes, I traveled with him all during the 1960 campaign for vice president. Of course, the reason I asked if we had discussed that was that it became very apparent to those of us that were traveling with him following the Dallas situation that wherever we went after that, whether it happened to be in Texas or whether it was in New York or what not, that this incident in Dallas had had a great impact on the election proceedings to the extent that those that were dedicated Democrats, the organizational people, that gave them something with which to work, that gave them some cause to work, because one of their two national nominees had been attacked. So it sort of gave them stimulus. To those that may have been independent in their beliefs and would vote for the man, this gave them

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something to be ashamed of for the other party, the major party. Because it so happened that particular time in our history, Dallas had one congressman and that congressman happened to have been a Republican. Although he first denied to the newspapers that he was there during this incident, Margaret Mayer of the *Dallas Times Herald*, the reporter, not only saw him there but she had asked her photographer that was with her to take a picture of him standing on the curb in front of the Adolphus Hotel where the Congressman held a very uncomplimentary sign of greeting to the vice president nominee.

P: This is Bruce Alger, right.

W: Yes, Congressman Bruce Alger. So although they did not have time that particular day, since this happened at twelve forty-five or one o'clock, at noon, they did not have time to publish that picture or develop it and put it in their afternoon paper, it certainly was in their next day's paper. So he had been there, and I believe that particular picture got wide national distribution, which gave the independents something to be sorry of, that one political party group of workers would have done this. Which gave them some stimulus and some reason to vote for the Democratic ticket. We had many letters and phone calls and messages of one type or another that came in that even many Republicans found this to be distasteful. And if messages and if statements and if letters were any indication, then we found that because of this, because these people were sorry it had happened and felt it was an unjust thing, then they also voted for the Kennedy-Johnson ticket in 1960.

So off of all of this comes a very firm conviction in my own mind that if there was a slight reason that the Kennedy-Johnson ticket was successful in 1960, this may

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have been it. Because when we went into New York, we had so many people to stop us and talk about this horrible incident that had happened, and so it was not confined to Texas. It went nationwide. I think it was repulsive to most people, and I think they reacted in the proper way by casting their votes for the Democratic ticket. So I think this was a rallying point for the Democrats. It was a cause for independents and Republicans, to some extent, to leave any beliefs they may have had toward the Republican nominees and to vote Democratic.

P: General Watson, when an event happens like this, and this is really political hay and I'm not saying it in any derogatory term here, do the members of his staff see that this gets nationwide publicity?

W: Of course, candidates running for national office such as president and vice president candidates, the national press travel with the candidates, which meant that their wire services representatives were there. Obviously the wire services representatives of North Texas were there, because this candidate was in town. And the major news outlets, newspapers, magazines and TV have their own reporters there. So it's not a matter that you have to do anything. When an incident like this happens, of course it goes nationwide very quickly. Then the stories are filed and they're written for that afternoon or tomorrow morning's paper. So it's not anything that the staff does. You're aware that it's going on. But to be helpful, no, not other than to be helpful on a day-to-day operation.

P: Were you with Mr. Johnson on election night, too?

W: Yes.

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P: Do you recall the events that occurred?

W: Yes, I was with him.

P: Or his feelings about what was going on as you waited for the returns to come in?

W: Yes, he had made arrangements for rooms in the Driskill Hotel in Austin. Of course, during such a night as this when you're in a hotel, particularly one of that size--it's not a very large hotel, a very comfortable but not very large [hotel]--you found that we really pretty well dominated the facility. So what is sometimes referred to as the mezzanine or the second floor is where our operations were set up. We had telephone hookups in Massachusetts with Mr. Kennedy's people from there, and we had some hookups statewide and some nationwide, where we could keep up with the returns. I must admit, I found that the news media had the reports about as soon as we did, so I'm not sure that all this elaborate setup was necessary.

Then the vice president candidate was on the second or third floor, or maybe the fourth, of the hotel in one of the hotel suites; he and Mrs. Johnson and one or two of his very close personal friends were there. So as we gathered this information as it became available, it soon became rather apparent to us that the places that had to be won to win the election were being won. So I'd say by one o'clock that night we all felt very comfortable, and several people came to see the vice president candidate. I recall that Senator [Ralph] Yarborough did visit him, and Congressman Homer Thornberry, and Governor Price Daniel, and people of that type and other close friends did go up and visit with him for a while. Personally I spent some time downstairs in the headquarters until I

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thought it was--I was either comfortable or thought that I could receive information if I was not there. Then I went upstairs and stayed in his suite until it was--in fact, I believe he came downstairs and met with the news media. Following that shortly, he had some fourteen to twenty of us went over to the B & B Cafe, which was then in existence across the street from the Driskill, an all-night restaurant, and had scrambled eggs and bacon about three o'clock in the morning, I assume.

P: What was your reading of the election before the polls closed? What was the final feeling between the two camps, the Kennedy and the Johnson camps, of what the turnout would be.

W: Well, of course here again sometimes when you're dealing with people that are very partisan, as obviously these candidates do, that the vote will always be big, it will always be Democratic. That's the position you get. Of course, sometimes you have to be more realistic than that and think in terms that maybe the other side is predicting the same thing. But I don't think we were ever overconfident, but we were confident. Because, one, we knew Texas was such an important element in this election, and those of us from Texas felt very comfortable over that. Probably the final vote may not have indicated we should have been so comfortable, but we had been all the time. Then, of course, Texas did vote Democratic in 1960. So really, we felt really comfortable with all of it.

California was the key and several of the major states. There were some states that some felt we'd win that we did not win, of course. But at all the time we felt very comfortable and very confident. Then the votes proved it may be closer than we had anticipated.



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P: What was your position with your work and taking time off to help in this campaign?

W: Oh, you mean from the company that I was with?

P: Was this an arrangement you had with--?

W: Oh, yes. Our company policy at that time was that those that had an interest in political or civic affairs would be given time off without it hurting their opportunities for future promotions or opportunities within the company, and that was somewhat of a company policy. I did take advantage of it in 1960 as I had before.

P: And after the election, did you return to Lone Star Steel?

W: Yes. The election was on Tuesday, and I went back to work Wednesday.

P: Between the 1960 and 1964 election, did you have occasion to see the Vice President very often?

W: When he was serving as vice president I did see him I really think not as often as I had seen him when he was a senator. I'm sure that's correct. Because he no longer had specifically and only the duties to be a senator, but he had the duties to be the vice president. So although I saw him quite often, I'm sure it was not as much as I had seen him back when he was a senator. And here again, it was more on a personal basis than any other reason.

P: Were there any specific occasions that you saw him either socially or personally during those years?

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W: I saw him several times. I don't know anything specifically. I always enjoyed being around him and Mrs. Johnson, but I don't remember anything specifically other than just good friendly visits.

P: Were you ever involved in any of his travels outside the country?

W: No. No, I was not.

P: What was your involvement during this period in the early sixties in Texas politics?

W: Let's see. Well, it was in 1960, of course, I was on the State Democratic Executive Committee. Then in 1962 I was re-elected. However it was the year 1962 that in the governor's primary election there were several candidates, including the incumbent, Price Daniel, and John Connally, who had resigned as secretary of the navy to run for governor on the Democratic ticket, and Don Yarborough and several others. The end result of the Democratic primary was that it was a runoff between John Connally and Don Yarborough. I had been active in John Connally's campaign during the primary and had been helpful the best I could because I was a strong supporter of John Connally over Don Yarborough. And of course, John Connally was successful.

P: Did Mr. Johnson indicate his preference?

W: No, if he ever did in a Democratic primary I was never [aware of it]; if he ever did I never did know it. He always had a hands-off policy on any primary. Then in the general election he always gave the support and assistance that he could for Democrats in the general election.

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This was also in 1962 the year that Preston Smith ran for lieutenant governor and was elected, and I had been helpful in that campaign and for all the involvements that I usually had in statewide offices and state offices and congressional offices and what not.

P: Coming up to 1963 how would you read the political climate in the state of Texas?

W: Nationally? As it relates nationally or statewide?

P: No, I'd say internal politics. This would be within the Democratic Party.

W: Of course, John Connally was elected by somewhat of a narrow vote in the Democratic primary. However, once that election was over, once the general election was over, which had also been an unusual election in 1962 as I recall, but once a team was formed of those that had been elected in the general election, which of course included John Connally, and Preston Smith as lieutenant governor, and Waggoner Carr as attorney general, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Byron Tunnell, it had been determined he would be elected by the pledge cards he had. Then it was just a matter of putting that together. In so doing it became apparent that a strong personality in our state would be John Connally. By January--when he was sworn in--of 1963, I think it was pretty well accepted by everyone that the next few years would be a Connally era in Texas. He just became stronger and stronger each time he ran for office, so it seemed. Of course, he ran for office, for a two-year term, three different times. Without going back and checking the specifics, if I recall correctly, each vote indicated he was just a stronger personality in the political scene in Texas, so he pretty well dominated. Except, of course, in 1964 when there was a United States senator up for re-election and when the

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presidential candidate from Texas led the national ticket. So with all of these things going together, the Democratic Party became something of a united front and in so doing we did not have the bitter battles that we had had even in 1956 or 1958.

P: To what would you attribute the factional split that was growing between Senator Yarborough and Connally?

W: I don't know whether I could really make a contribution to that or not. I'm sure that just basically that their philosophies possibly differed. One serving at the national level, one at the state level; one believing that the state government should have a big part in judgments on expenditures in that state or a given state, even though the money might have originated by appropriation by the Senate or the Congress or by the federal government. And the other believing that certain things needed to be done, and the state for a number of years may not have [been involved]; maybe the state had never been involved in these particular subjects. And just thinking that if it's to be done, the federal government should appropriate the money and put their people in and go solve it without any real contact with the political leadership or the elected officials of that state or any state. I think it just might be a different philosophy that these two men have. Both are strong-willed, serving as public officials of the same state, and so it's not particularly unusual that they'd disagree. We've seen it happen in so many other states.

P: But you feel that the Democratic Party under Governor Connally had a more or less united front? Now I'm thinking in terms of just prior to the assassination in 1963, where

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we had enough political infighting in Texas where there was, in part, a need for the trip by President Kennedy to patch up politics in the state. Is this true?

W: I think here again you're reading [this into it]. I don't have any doubt in my mind that it's not true. It had nothing to do with him being in Texas whatsoever. Here again, it's just somebody wrote a story in the newspaper and people picked it up and believed it. I don't think that has one thing to do with it. Because one, I think Governor John Connally may have known or possibly knew President Kennedy as well as any Texas officeholder except the Vice President. They were friends and personal friends. If he had had in mind to try to patch up political differences between the factions--if that's correct terminology--I've never agreed to that, but if the Vice President had certain followers and if Governor Connally had certain followers and if Senator Yarborough had certain followers, and he was there to patch up differences, well, two of the three were already in Washington. I'm sure if he would have asked his friend John Connally to come to Washington, that those three could have gotten in his office and sat down and settled any differences that he could have had any influence on.

P: Were you involved in the planning for this trip, this swing through Texas?

W: Not from the national level, only from the state level.

P: What was the thinking behind this political swing with the President and the Vice President?

W: I think that, as I understand it, that President Kennedy had wanted to come to Texas. They had a terrifically large debt with the Democratic National Committee. It had been

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there ever since he had been president. They had made some effort to raise money elsewhere in the country, and Texas, being the home of the Vice President, being the home of his friend Governor Connally, that this was one way in which to help raise and pay off some of the debt of the Democratic National Committee.

While there, it was a time that he could visit certain sections and parts of the state. He came for that purpose. At one time he was thinking in terms of having three or four fund-raising dinners, or affairs, whether they'd be dinners or not. Finally it was decided that it would be best to have one, one big one, and to have it in Austin and all efforts be concentrated along that line. Because that had been successful in Texas. Those of us that had had some experience in that felt that this would be the most successful way in which to raise money. So this is the program we set out to do. And so we think it basically was a success in that regard. But I've never thought he came to settle any political differences.

That's just a figment of someone's imagination.

P: There was never any fear with next year being an election year that political infighting might allow for the state to go Republican?

W: Well, I'm not saying how the election may have gone if President Kennedy had lived and he had been the nominee in 1964. But here again--

P: There was no consideration of this, though, in terms of this being a political swing through the state?

W: No, that wasn't under consideration at all as far as I know obviously. When the president or the vice president goes into a state, you can say that they might be talking to those that

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head up certain political arenas. But as far as preparation for 1964, it was not. Remember, one, that's the Vice President's home. Governor John Connally was a close personal friend of President Kennedy's and the Vice President's. Who in any state really has control of the party machinery? The governor. Therefore as governor he was the man on the national level that must be dealt with. It was his views that were important from a party standpoint because he was the man that controls the party. As he did up until September of this year, when in this particular case in Texas, Preston Smith is governor-elect, and he controls the Democratic Party machinery in Texas.

So whoever is going to do business with the Democratic Party machinery in that state must deal with that governor. So those that may have been preparing for the Democratic National Convention in 1964, they only had one place to go, and if anyone in this world understands that it's John Connally. There never was any doubt in anyone's mind. Others can talk and criticize. Other can say we can do these things. But really my experience has been there's only one man can do it, and that's the governor.

P: General Watson, there had been some things written, though, that due to the state of Texas politics, that Mr. Johnson could have or might have tried sooner and been successful in 1956 or 1960 as the presidential nominee if he had had a firmer political base in his own state. And it's attributed, of course, to the factional politics in Texas.

W: I assume you're talking back in the time when Mr. [Allan] Shivers was governor. It was in 1956, if you'll recall, that Senator Johnson was the favorite son candidate of Texas. If you go back to 1952, he was not the favorite son candidate. But you had a strong

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governor in 1952, Allan Shivers. You've got a strong governor in 1956, except he had chosen not to run for re-election. Therefore when the first state convention came around to select delegates to the national convention and to elect a national committeeman and committeewoman, Senator Yarborough [Johnson?] was elected by that convention in a contest with the then-Governor Shivers. He was elected as favorite son to the Democratic National Convention without a great deal of opposition. So that was because a governor was going out, and a new governor was coming in.

That new governor ended up being Price Daniel. So in the second state convention of 1956, when some felt that they would try to embarrass this man that had been duly nominated by the votes, that's when many in the Democratic Party machinery in Texas came together to support him, although some of them had not been his strong supporters in the primary. So when you have a governor that's duly elected, he will pretty well control the party machinery in his state; in Texas at least it always had been that way, and for the foreseeable future I think it will be. Because those that even may disagree with him give him the right to do that. So the delegates to the 1964 convention pretty well are going to be those people that support John Connally.

P: And you feel that through his senatorial years that President Johnson did have a very firm and reliable political base in his home state?

W: All I know is, every time a resolution came up supporting him the majority of people voted for it.

P: Do you think that this ever worried Mr. Johnson?



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W: I don't think it worried him one bit, because he always knew where the votes were. I think it worried a lot of columnists and writers. They could write and say things were going to be bad and he was really in trouble, but they were never proven right no matter what they wrote.

P: To get back to November of 1963, did you hear or feel any of the political climate of Dallas? This is other than the assassination. There were appearing in the papers, ads and articles the day of the assassination which evidenced our political [climate].

W: Well, certainly Dallas was such, the public image of Dallas was such, that the people there were not strong supporters of President Kennedy or Vice President Johnson. And although in 1960 the Democratic ticket had lost in Dallas County rather substantially, there were many people there that did have a great respect and admiration and loyalty to President Kennedy and Vice President Johnson. So the papers I sometimes think would like to run the negative attitude that may exist, whether it be a minority view or majority view. In the event the negative view is what you sometime read the most about. And so we could see that in the papers.

I had personally been spending most of my time in Austin in preparation for receiving President Kennedy and Vice President Johnson and their parties there that night. So I don't remember ever buying a Dallas paper while I was in Austin during that time. I very likely did from my office in Dallas and my office in Daingerfield. In talking back and forth it became apparent that there was much negative information being in the paper. But it never entered my mind there was a security problem involved.

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P: Were you concerned about the turn-out possible in Dallas?

W: No, because it was planned to be there at noon, when the streets are normally crowded or have the largest crowd on them of any time during the day. So it was very obvious as far as the motorcade route downtown, that there would be people on the street. I think most of the people, no matter whether they support a man as president, they want to support him. I think all Americans basically want to support their president, whoever he may be. They may criticize him, but they want him to do good. Because when he does good, they do good. So I always had and still do for that matter, approach the presidency in such a way that everyone really wants to help him, and to come and to show respect and so forth is really not very difficult to do. That had been my experience in watching other presidents on their travels. And I assumed that Dallas would do the same here, although I knew that there were people there that just basically did not agree with the Democratic philosophy as espoused by President Kennedy and the Democratic national platform. Obviously I never anticipated any violent action against him or any of his party.

P: Do you recall the sequence of events surrounding the arrival of the information of what had occurred in Dallas?

W: Yes. It happened to have been that I had made a speech in Northeast Texas the night before and had flown home on the afternoon preceding the assassination. The plane was to pick me up the next morning early and carry me back to Austin, and I had a planeload going down for the dinner. We had fog in East Texas that morning, the plane could not land. It looked as if it would be at least mid-afternoon before it could, so I decided to

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drive. So six of us were driving down, it was in my car. When we got to Hearne, Texas, which is ninety miles from Austin, I had the radio on, I had it on a Dallas station, and the first notice we had of it was the announcer said the President had been shot. Then it seemed like almost eternity before he said anything else. I remember I leaned over and turned the volume up. I thought maybe he was talking softly and we couldn't hear him. But eventually he came back and said, "Yes, the President has been shot. We do not know his condition but he's been rushed to the hospital." Then of course thereafter we picked up all the news as they gave it.

So instead of turning and trying to go to Dallas as something was an instinct that I really wanted to do, I realized, one, I could not contribute anything there, so we proceeded on to Austin. Of course, long before we arrived there it had been announced that President Kennedy was in truth dead. So it was a very emotional moment, because all of us in the automobile, including my oldest son, Lee, we were Democrats and had been and had worked in behalf of the Democratic ticket of Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Johnson. So it was an awfully moving and emotional time in Austin, one, an experience I had never had before and must admit, I never want to have again. I was staying at the Driskill and the people that were there, the people that had worked in behalf in preparation of the President's visit, they just almost walked as zombies, really without much conversation.

P: Who were some of these people?

W: Oh, I don't recall. We were having an SDEC meeting, which meant many of those members were arriving or were on their way. Just people generally from over the state. I

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only saw those really that may have been staying at the hotel, those that had been working in the offices. Just as soon as I got there I called and set up some arrangements for those people to be off. So we all got to the various rooms and suites. I know in my suite there were twenty or thirty people there I suppose until eleven o'clock that night all watching TV and the things that were going on. That was just a time that we were all rather numb as to the happenings. But of course the real action had been in Dallas and so forth. So we were somewhat far removed from it, but could only be involved as the networks and the radio and eventually the written press permitted us to be through their information, of course.

P: Did you have any conversations with any people in Dallas or in Washington on Mr. Johnson's staff or with Mr. Johnson?

W: No, not with Mr. Johnson. I do not recall bothering any of his staff at that particular time. I'm sure I didn't. I do not recall calling any of them.

P: When did you first speak with the President after this event, do you recall?

W: I do not recall exactly. Oh, obviously I communicated by letter or telegram or however it was to him right away. But as far as visiting with him, it may have been six or eight, maybe ten weeks later. I just don't recall when it was.

P: I'd like to carry this on up into 1964 and to the campaign and the election of that year. You eventually were in the Washington area as the campaign for the presidency began unfolding.

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W: Well, really my involvement in it was in May or June I was in Washington of 1964, and the President suggested I go by and visit with Walter Jenkins and with Cliff Carter and Dick Maguire over at the--Cliff and Dick being at the Democratic National Committee, and if I could to assist them in some special project that they wanted me to work on in Atlantic City. And so I did go see them. Cliff and Dick and John Bailey asked that I go with them the next day to Atlantic City and look over the situation on housing.

P: Was this the special project?

W: Yes. And so I did fly up with them. I believe we stayed two or three days, at least I stayed two or three days. Blake Gillen of Corpus Christi then, who now lives in Austin, was with me. We looked over the contract that the committee had with New Jersey and Atlantic City on the housing arrangements. The number that they were supposed to furnish, if I recall correctly, the contract called for approximately fourteen thousand hotel rooms to be furnished. And yet the pledges by then were some several thousand less than that. So we looked around to see what the problems were.

If I recall exactly we went up very likely on a Thursday morning or it could have been a Wednesday morning. And after two or three days, and after reading the contract and meeting with the people the Democratic National Convention committee had placed there that were in charge of housing and all facets of the convention, I realized that, one, there was a contract. It was not too late to move the convention if that became essential and necessary to get what the contract had called for. So I had asked for a meeting on a Saturday morning for all the property owners and managers that were involved to attend

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and had awfully good help from the mayor's office, one banker particularly, and their state senator. On calling the meeting and having good attendance, and it was just a matter of relating to them that this was a contract and they had until Tuesday to fulfill that part of it or we would take measures to move. So I got on a plane Saturday at noon and thereabouts delivering that message and went back home to Texas.

Then the next Tuesday or so I had a call from the White House asking that I go back and take these guarantees that had now been secured and to classify them so they'd know exactly which were the better properties for the governors and the senators and the chairmen of delegations to stay in and somewhat identify the properties as to size so that they'd know. For instance the New York delegation staying all together versus a New Mexico delegation that would need different size arrangements for headquarters. So we went up that week and with a lot of very good help from here, from Washington, and other places, and looked at all these various properties and defined them and classified them and appropriated them. By that Saturday I came back to the White House and gave that report, left that information, and then I went back to Texas thinking I was through with my special project. About the next Tuesday or Wednesday I had a call and asked if I would go up and be more deeply involved in the convention in its entirety and so I did. Altogether I was there some twelve weeks for the convention of 1964.

P: Beginning in about June, did you work on the campaign at all or were you primarily with the convention arrangements?

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W: Well, of course we didn't have a campaign until after the convention. So we first had to get a nominee and write a platform and handle credentials, proceedings, and get the convention over, which we did. I must admit, I thought that it was an awfully good convention. There was very little dissent there, except there were some problems on the credentials committee.

P: How would you define your authority at that convention, when you came back and were more deeply involved, as you said?

W: I don't know about my authority. I coordinated the convention and those things that were done there were pretty well with my sanction or they weren't done. Of course, there had been very commitments made before I arrived that I had no control over, but I suppose you'd say convention coordinator would be sufficient.

Then following the nomination I went back to Texas. That was in the latter part of August, during the convention. And then the second week in September I was elected Democratic State Chairman in Texas in 1964, and so from the political involvement other than trying to get back to my regular job, I found it rather necessary to start organizing the state for the November election, the general election. And we did, paying some attention obviously to the President's nomination, the governor and the statewide officers, but also to those people that may have had the Republican label that served at various offices throughout the state that would be up for re-election in 1964. So we set about to organize the state in its entirety, but paying special attention to the Republicans that were running for re-election in the state at that time.

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P: How did you assess the state politically prior to the election?

W: No question, it was going Democratic, the only question to resolve was how big was the vote going to be percentage-wise.

P: You felt very confident about that?

W: Yes. I think the record reflected that there were no Republicans running for office that were elected that year in November.

P: At whose instigation had you run for the state chairman[ship]?

W: Well, it wasn't an instigation. I had served six years on the committee and had a great interest in party affairs versus an individual or an office. I happen to be an individual that believes very strongly that whatever party an individual, a person, may support, he should support it to its fullest. And to support a party, you do it at the precinct. Eventually you may get to a county convention or eventually to a state convention or some day even maybe to a national convention. But I think the only way any party can be successful is to have many strong and dedicated workers at the precinct level. With that involvement, that party, I believe the democratic process becomes much stronger. So it wasn't unusual I think that I had an interest in being state chairman, and when Governor John Connally asked if I would serve if he nominated me, of course I was very honored to accept the nomination. And in our state you are nominated to the state convention by the nominations committee and then after that nomination it goes to the floor convention and that's where you're really elected by the convention in its entirety, after the nominations committee and its officers' committee has so moved.



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P: Did Mr. Johnson talk with you regarding his vice presidential running mate?

W: No, he did not.

P: Did you talk with any of the other people regarding who you considered would be his best [choice]?

W: Oh, yes, of course with his staff and some of his friends, obviously we discussed it many times. But I thought there were a great number of people that were highly qualified that could have been selected by the President, of which obviously Mr. Humphrey was one of those.

P: Did you feel yourself, did you interpret the events that occurred, that Mr. Robert Kennedy was in the running, had put himself in the running for the vice presidential slot?

W: I really don't know what Mr. Robert Kennedy had in mind in the actions that he took. Of course, I happened to have been a person very strong in my conviction that whoever the presidential nominee is, he should have the right of selection of his vice president candidate. So it never really gave me much concern what anyone said about it. I always believed and knew in the work I'd done with the various delegations, that President Johnson would name his vice president candidate and it was just a matter of we had to wait to the day, which happened to be the twenty-sixth of August, 1964, when that day came along on the convention calendar that he could do that. Anything preceding that was just folly.

P: Did you discuss this with any of the delegations regarding not committing themselves to anybody, but letting the candidate make his own selection?

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W: No, I think those that have been around party affairs know that's always done. Any that may have been over-anxious and somewhat of neophytes in this field that were making contacts, they were sort of shrugged off as being neophytes and so no one really paid too much attention to them.

P: I believe there were a couple of resolutions, or there was a resolution passed as various regional Democratic meetings regarding the candidate of being able to have a free choice of his running mate. Did you participate in getting any of the passing of this resolution?

W: No, I think those were just the free will resolutions by people who had been around party affairs for a number of years.

P: There was some resistance to it. I believe New Jersey refused to sign any sort of resolution.

W: I can understand why you wouldn't want to sign such a resolution because it recognizes that the real facts of the process do not exist, but in essence I would dare say people such as Governor [Richard] Hughes and people such as Bob Burkhardt and people such as Dave Wilentz of New Jersey, that there's never any question in their mind that the presidential nominee would name his vice president candidate, or nominee, and that the convention would accept it. Of course, it was only unanimous when finally Mr. Johnson did name his running mate. It was unanimously accepted by the convention, so I think that speaks for itself as far as all the so-called interplay that went on beforehand.

P: Did you ever have any good source of information that Mr. Robert Kennedy was attempting to create a groundswell?

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W: Well, I don't know whether I have a source of information of that at all. I do not know why certain people were put in Atlantic City to run the convention. There is no question that they had been loyal supporters of President Kennedy, as had been Vice President Johnson and Marvin Watson. But President Kennedy was not with us any longer and so these people, in their belief to carry on the traditions they sometimes read about in the news media, they thought possibly that the Attorney General, or by that time the former Attorney General, that he might be the person who should be the vice president candidate. Many of the people that were working there felt that way. But I personally did not think that that was the main order of that convention. I'd always thought the main order of the Democratic National Convention was to do two things: write a platform, nominate a candidate for president and allow that candidate that you put your faith and confidence and votes with to name the person that he believes could best carry out his program, which was the platform written by that convention. So of course that's very obviously what happened in 1964, as the records will indicate also happened in 1968. It is certainly what happened in 1960 and 1956 and 1952 and for as long as I can remember.

P: When did you know that Mr. Johnson had decided on Mr. Humphrey as his running mate?

W: That day, August 26, the day he was nominated by acclamation.

P: And why do you think Mr. Johnson selected Mr. Humphrey?

W: For the very reason he gave, that he felt that this man was better able to carry out the policies of this administration, in case something happened to him, the presidential

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nominee and president, than any other person. That he was wise enough to see the needs of the country and wise enough to project a program, present a program, get a program carried out that would be adopted by the majority of the elected officials of the Senate and the House.

P: At the convention, had Mr. Johnson given you a clear-cut authority that all details and arrangements were to be clear through you?

W: No, I don't believe he works that way. I don't know whether anybody else does or not. Since I was there there was never any question that it would be necessary to get some clearance before plans were made. But he didn't write a memo and put it in the press, if that's what you mean.

P: Well, I wanted verbal communications anyway.

Do you recall any events at the convention that we haven't discussed.

W: No, as far as I was concerned it was a good convention. It went just exactly the way I thought it should. Someone else may disagree with that and think it should go another way. But from my vantage point it was just perfect, it couldn't have been a better convention. Except we started seeing--if we had seen in the 1960 [convention] a little, in Los Angeles, some of the demonstrators some of those from the outside that had wanted to have influence on the delegates and alternates in the convention, well, there was more of that in 1964. Because there was much more in 1968.

But for instance, I was told a couple or three weeks before the convention that there was a training school for those that would be in charge of the demonstrations in

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Atlantic City and said that their representatives had been to the appropriate officials in the state and in the city asking for authority and clearance to have certain space on the boardwalk in front of the convention hall, and unless I objected that they were going to give that authority. And I said, "What space are you speaking of?" Well, it was practically all of it, on the boardwalk in front of the convention hall. I said, "Why should we block or narrow down the passage up and down the boardwalk for demonstrators? Let them demonstrate out on the beach. Let them demonstrate someplace else. Why should we clog up this area?" They said, well, one, they have the capability of moving many tens of thousands of people in here and they will move them in and they will lay down, and you have to call out the National Guard if nothing else just to move them, just to get them off so people can walk. So eventually after some negotiations, we did agree that a certain space would be made available for the demonstrators training in Chicago as to how to fall and act as if they'd been hurt, how to scream, how to respond to their leaders when they are given certain key words, all of these various things that go to make up what the press media considers a successful demonstration.

P: Who were these groups?

W: Oh, there were several groups. Of course, they were rallying primarily around what they called the Mississippi Freedom Party. Of course, Mississippi we know is considerable mileage south of Chicago. But anyway, the school was in Chicago or out of Chicago, in Illinois.

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So eventually they told me basically what they would do, the intelligence people from the state of New Jersey and others. They said they will arrive a few minutes before midnight on Sunday night before the convention opens on Monday. They will have a prayer vigil on the boardwalk. Then they will sleep. Then they'll demonstrate every day and they'll stay here, on the boardwalk.

Well, of course this was my first personal involvement in this, so I made it a point to be in my office which overlooked the boardwalk and the convention hall on this Sunday night at midnight or a few minutes before. At ten minutes to twelve the buses pulled up and they filed out just like soldiers. They went to their appointed spots. And at twelve o'clock they all fell to their knees for the benefit of the cameras and onlookers that might be there. So they held their prayer vigil. Then they did go to sleep. Everybody got a blanket or two blankets as they so desired out of another truck that had blankets. The next morning when I got back to the office at seven or seven-fifteen, they were serving them hot breakfast out of a truck equipped to serve hot meals.

Then I became fascinated with this operation that was so spontaneous in support of a movement, because it was an awfully expensive operation. You just can't go out and organize a hundred neighbors and do it that way. So they served the meals, they served the coffee during the day. They rose and sat on cue. They marched on cue, they hollered on cue, they prepared their placards on cue, just whatever it was taking, that's what they'd do. I know that we had made every preparation which is always necessary, because the only people that have a right to vote in that convention hall are delegates, and if a

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delegate is gone, his or her alternate [is] to move in, to cast that vote in that state delegation.

P: Weren't these demonstrators demonstrating for seating of various [contested delegations], the credentials examining--

W: Well now, that's what they said that they were interested in, Mississippi and Alabama, that they said the delegates had not been properly selected from those two states. But the point I tried to make is on these credentials. That's always important in any convention, party convention. Because it's only certain people that are qualified to be there, assuming that the credentials committee in the convention agrees to seat whatever delegations they are, that they finally agree to seat. We had made--we thought--fully good preparations for credentials. You had to have a ticket, which was something of cardboard, special printing, a watermark on the cardboard. It was very elaborate. Under a black light it would show up just right, and you'd get a cardboard ticket for each night of the four-night session, each delegate and each alternate, reserved seats.

Then the big pass, though, that was supposed to have been more exposed had this hard cellophane cover over it, probably about three inches by four and a half inches in length. It never entered my mind that that could be duplicated, because, one, on the inside of it it had a watermark, it had a slip saying "delegate, state of Texas," or California or an alternate or whatever it is, and a number, and this hard cellophane over it. Well, by the second night, Tuesday, those in front, that unorganized group and unsophisticated group, they had duplicated those and were handing them out in a great big bread box, get

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all you wanted. Which meant someone had worked twenty-four hours to get that done, a very expensive operation.

It was I believe also Tuesday, it may have been Wednesday morning, because we picked up they had a radio net that was hooked up to stations here in Washington and Philadelphia and to Chicago and New York and all up and down the Eastern Seaboard and they were directing how many people they wanted there that night. They'd call and say, "Can you send five buses from Philadelphia?" Five busloads of demonstrators. So I did take advantage, since it was a free frequency, that I did sort of monitor that so I could find out how many they were going to bring in that night to the convention to demonstrate, or that day, so we could make preparations accordingly.

So I think other than some of those using these dummy credentials to get in to vacant seats that the credential committee said in essence would stay vacant until the delegates that had been elected would agree to vote for the Democratic nominees of the convention. But that was basically the only real problem we had, if that's a problem. It at least was a proceeding of the convention. So no problems really. It went all right other than that one little thing of this group using their counterfeit credentials to get in.

P: Had you planned for the fireworks display? That was a part of the convention arrangements?

W: Oh, yes, that was on Thursday night, the last night of the convention happened to be the President's birthday.

P: Was that planned, Mr. Watson?



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W: Oh, yes, it was planned.

P: No, I meant that the convention fell on [his birthday].

W: Oh, yes. I had a man that worked on that in preparation of it. New Jersey people had wanted to do it, they paid for it. I believe they're the first ones that approached me on it, said it happens to be the President's birthday, although he'll be nominated and bound to feel good, it just seems like the delegates should have an opportunity to wish him a happy birthday as well. And that grew and of course they first thought about just having a cake, and then you get a committee appointed and the first thing you know they've thought of something else. They said, "Let's don't do it down on the convention floor. Let's go up to this room in the convention hall which would seat five thousand people"--and it was a nice-sized room itself--and said, "Let's us bring in our ethnic groups and they've be dressed in their native dress and they'll sing songs and it will be colorful. We'll have this cake." I've forgotten who it was that wanted to bake a cake, and it was a mammoth thing of course. First think I knew they said, "Well, let's get fireworks." There was one man that wanted to buy the fireworks, and so they put on a fireworks display. So an idea to sing happy birthday grew into a birthday party for the President. So that did happen on a Thursday night, the last night of the convention.

P: Anything else about that convention?

W: Oh, quite an experience to see the various forces and factions come together and all unite.

P: Did you have many occasions to speak with the President during the convention, by telephone until he arrived?

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W: I never did talk to him a time. I didn't talk to him at all about the convention other than when I first went up. After I went up to be the coordinator, if that's the right terminology, well, then I had hoped he'd know it would be all right when he got there.

P: When did Mr. Johnson first approach you about coming on his staff?

W: We had discussed the things I was doing in Texas in the private sector and what not at various times. I don't remember the exact day that he may have mentioned that he'd like to have me on his staff. After he did suggest it or request it or make the offer, well, it wasn't long till I responded and got my personal business where I could. As you know, I arrived and went to work on February 1, 1965.

P: What were there considerations that you made or thought about when this request came?

W: Oh, I was very comfortable in Texas, had about as good a job as I ever expected to have and as much security as anyone could expect to have. And it was very comfortable officing out of Dallas and living in Daingerfield in East Texas and having an office there and other places. The family and I were just very comfortable and just to have worked for the number of years we had, to leave that and to move to Washington into an arena that I knew very little about and uncertainties that accompany such a move, it was all a personal involvement but one that when we analyzed it, it became apparent that this was such an opportunity that comes so seldom to anyone that we felt that no matter what conditions may be to us at that time, that it would be to our better advantage to come and to serve the President if he felt that we could make some contribution.

P: What reasons did Mr. Johnson give you for wanting you to come on his staff?

W: I don't know whether he gave me any reasons. He was kind enough to ask me, said that he would like for me to have the job that I did, which was sitting outside his office, and to assist him in staff coordination and to assist him personally in his scheduling and the various things that he does in that office and I assume any president does in the office. There's probably many people that could have done as well or better, but once a president, whoever that president may be, feels that an individual may make a contribution to him and to his administration, I feel very strongly that that individual should accept and come and do the best he can.

P: He did indicate to you that he would be making some changes on his staff to bring you in?

W: Making changes. I don't know what you mean changes.

P: Of personnel occupying positions.

W: Well, there was never any question in my mind. Are you talking about Jack Valenti? Jack, I think, well understood. Jack and I talked about it before I arrived, so he knew that we'd be working together for a while, yes.

P: In taking this, did you have benefit of Mr. Johnson's great persuasive talents in asking various people to work with him?

W: No, the President does have great persuasive talents, there's no question about that. But it wasn't necessary in my particular case. And I personally do not know of anyone he's ever used it on to serve on his staff or in his cabinet or in the government, because he has felt

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it's something a person would want to do. If they did not want to do it, then very likely they'd be unhappy if they did it.

P: Many of the people that have worked on Mr. Johnson's staffs have become very close friends with him, and of course you already were. Is this a part of working this closely with the man? I mean, do you feel that you needed to know him personally and have a good social-personal type relationship with him as opposed to just a working relationship?

W: Oh, I think so. He's a man that loves big and respects big and has great compassion. So those that he's associated with are those people that in the true sense he does love and does understand. So although we might be in the office for many hours a day, at least from my personal feeling, I always enjoyed the evening that I may have spent with he or spent with he and Mrs. Johnson. We may have talked some business along at the same time. It's just a different atmosphere that prevails then, and it's just almost family. I have that feeling toward them. I don't know how they feel, but I imagine and I have the impression they feel the same.

P: I, of course, was thinking in terms of comparing it to other presidents, and it is said of President Kennedy that he kept his working relations very much apart from his personal relations. Not that there was any handicap in doing this, this was a different approach. But that you feel this is definitely Mr. Johnson's approach, that it is a personal as well as a working relationship with his staff.

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W: Oh, I think so. I'm not at all familiar with President Kennedy's approach. I was not familiar with he and his staff and how they worked. I had read the same things that you mentioned, but from personal knowledge I do not know.

P: What do you see as the role of a presidential assistant?

W: To do two things basically: to serve up to the president the questions or the information in the form that he wants them, and to carry out his instructions. This President allows, or did allow and I'm sure still does, any staff man to give him any thoughts and any ideas that he feels are worthy. He would like for this person, when he gives him an idea, to tell him what this staff man or what his judgment leads him to believe would be the pros and cons of the issue that's involved. Then it becomes the President's position to make a determination, one, if he has enough information to make a decision. Sometimes he does not; he asks for more information. Sometimes he wants this particular thought or idea checked out by some other experts or some experts and to come to him with their recommendation.

But in any event, a staff man can get his ideas to the President and the President will act on them. But it is not the function of a staff man to be in the decision-making business in the White House, because under our great system of government there is only one man that can act as president, and he has to be elected. He cannot be appointed. So under that system only the president can make the decisions. The others, no matter how wise they may be or seem to be or think they are or how wise some press may indicate they are, it's still the president that makes the decisions. It has certainly been *this*

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President that has made the decisions, and while I was there on the staff I never recall any staff member making a major decision. The President made the decision after proper information had been given to him. And of course the beauty of this President is that with his long tenure of public service, there's really not many new subjects you can present to him that relate to government. So often was the case that those that came along later, such as I, that when we were giving him ideas we found that maybe that idea had been explored by him twenty years ago or sometime in the past. So it wasn't necessarily a new idea to him.

P: Does a specific event of this occur to you in mind, an example of it?

W: I wouldn't want to get necessarily specific, but it happened many times. What he wanted was the problems that may have occurred twenty years ago on this subject. If we were wise enough to work out those problems, to show him how it would work, then he would consider it. But it's not a new day with new ideas every day of our life anymore.

P: General Watson, when all the things that are written about staff people, staff assistants, staff men that have served under the President, there have been very, very many adjectives to describe them and they have ranged all the way from advisers and confidants to valets and lackeys. Can you describe or give me an adjective of what you think a staff man to the president is?

W: Well, of course, I strongly believe that any staff man serves the president in whatever way the president deems necessary. I have read some of the comments that you make and it is true that it's been written in this terminology, but just as a matter of fact, this President

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has a valet and he's not listed on the White House payroll or on the staff. So no one served as the President's valet from the staff. I think all served as advisers to this President and serving up information that he could consider, and those ideas that were served up that he felt worthwhile. Then decisions were reached, and he made them. Then often that staff man was given the responsibility to put together a program and for that staff man to do that he would have to go sometimes to the private sector, more often to the government itself for the expertise necessary to prepare the final report for the President.

But as far as classifying what a staff man is, I would think that a staff man is to serve the president. That's really the only reason he's there. He has no authority except what the president gives him. His tenure of office is limited for the length of time the president wants him there. So he comes the day the president wants him; he leaves the day the president wants him to. And during the interim he is to give the president very obviously his best judgment on any subject which he's dealing with. But as far as any staff man making policy in the White House, I do not find that anywhere in the job description of any president for any staff man since presidents have had staff people, which really only goes back to President Truman as we now know it. It's a comparably new thing. President Roosevelt had certain staff people, but very limited compared to the way we know the White House today.

P: What were your specific duties as appointments secretary?

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W: Well, I worked with the President on his schedule, prepared the President's schedule each day. I usually--the proceeding was that on a Friday I prepared next week's proposed schedule. The President would see it Friday night in his night reading. He may make corrections to it, but anyway, the thing we started working with Saturday morning was a proposed schedule for the following week. Then daily that changed, very obviously, depending upon the demands of the office. But that gave us a format to work from and with, and we tried to leave holes in it for these unexpected things. And of course I had Jim Jones, Sherwin Markman and Bill Blackburn and Doug Nobles, Bob Faiss, and a group to assist in this and other things that I was interested in. That basically was it, and to get people in and out of his office when somewhat of a schedule had been set up.

P: And did you have any assignments regarding the White House housekeeping details?

W: I think I was the administrative officer as such for the White House, which has to do with the personal and expenditures and budget levels and all of those things that go to make up an organization, yes.

P: And the hiring of top-level employees?

W: Outside of the White House? On all presidential appointees I always met with them before the appointment was made or announced, as the case may be. We had one program which I was very proud of, only to the extent that it, I think, showed this President's total involvement in all of government, whereas the top three grades in all professional government employees, such as civil service and foreign service officers, these are the career people. In civil service they were referred to as GS-16s, -17s and -



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18s, the top three grades. I met with each one of them after the Civil Service Commission had passed on their promotion as recommended by their various departments and agencies, and tried to point out to them that, one, those jobs were top policy jobs in the government and that in that they were in these top policy jobs, I wanted them to know that they had an entree to the White House, to the President, if they had an idea that they thought would work to improve their department or agency or the government in its entirety.

So over a two-and-a-half-year period--exactly what it was I've forgotten--that we met approximately eighteen hundred of these people, I think that gave them a feeling--I know it was for the first time this had ever [been done], only time it had ever happened that any president was that involved in wishing them well in their jobs. I hope it at least gave them a feeling of belonging to a team effort in this administration. I was very careful always to point out that we did expect them to be loyal, because we understood how government was made up, and once a decision was reached it was up to us to carry out that decision to the best of our ability. This would be whoever the next president was. Whoever is elected president and vice president of this country, they have great resources within the federal establishment. But those resources are only good for as long as they're productive and they contribute. And the people of this country can't vote for me, they can't vote for anyone else on the federal payroll in the administration except the president and the vice president. So all of the rest of us should go to try to carry out that president's

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policy once he becomes president, and give him the best thought and best effort that we can.

So this was basically what I met with them about. But it was something I enjoyed very much, because I found many qualified people. It was not unusual to meet with as few as five a week; that's all that were promoted out of this great big federal government into those three top positions. The largest group I ever met with was twenty-two, the largest group any one week ever to be promoted. It averaged about ten, ten and a half to eleven a week over that two-and-a-half-year period. When if I met with ten, it was not unusual to have two Ph.Ds, two people with master's degrees, two or three lawyers, and one or two with bachelor's degrees. And as an average, over 94 or 95 per cent that fall in this category are people that at least have one college degree. Of that number, approximately 50 per cent had a second degree or more. It shows you somewhat of the academic background of these people that are in those jobs, or at least were promoted during that period of time anyway, which I think speaks very highly of them.

P: Mr. Watson, in discussing loyalty to the President, did you feel that people ever felt that they could not thereby be critical of an event or decision within this terms of loyalty to the President?

W: There are a lot of ways to be critical. One is to run get your name in the paper, and say, "Let me tell you why I think that's bad." To me, I don't think anyone has that authority or that right that serves in an administration. Because if they feel that way, in my opinion they should find other employment. When I was in the private sector, I did not have that

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right, if it's a right. The boss I had in the private sector would not have allowed that, and I know of no boss in the private sector that would. They'd just fire you, period, with a capital F. But they would allow you to come and say to them, "Now, I think that it might be well for you to consider doing something in this way. And possibly this decision you made, maybe it won't work for these reasons." But really the idea process is not any different in government, as I see it, than it is in the private sector, that you give the top administrator, in this case the president, your ideas. Once the decision is made, everybody in that organization should support that decision. And if they cannot support that position, what right do they have to stay and belong to that organization, if they have to go outside and criticize and tear down and cuss?

P: How did the program of interviewing top-grade civil service employees come about?

W: Oh, I suppose that the man that exemplified what I would consider the perfect public servant in the finest sense is Bill Hopkins, a man that's been in the White House since 1931. He was a man that--it would have much more difficult for me to have known what to do or how to do it in the White House without him. He was just terrific, well qualified. He's a lawyer and just can do anything and everything in the procedural sense that's needed at the White House.

Through him I realized that there's bound to be such a great reservoir of talent throughout this government that we had no way to know and we did not [know]. And the President had asked us to seek out ways to know people such as this, to be helpful if we could, to have communications with them if there was a way. So it seemed to us that

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those that were being promoted, where a department or agency recommended to Civil Service Commission, "We want to promote this person for these reasons," Civil Service Commission, they made the decision, this person should be promoted. After the decision was reached, we had no control over it from that sense, because many think the White House is a political arena. Well, in fact it's not, but in that that feeling exists, and because we were a certain party, we did not want to be in a position of anything thinking that we were trying to develop people along the political lines. But after the final decision was made that this person was to receive a promotion, then you asked them to come and let me visit with them. That was the time that I attempted to thank them for their contribution they had made, which permitted them to be recommended and finally approved for this promotion, and let them know that we did care about what they did and we needed their help.

End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview II

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