INTERVIEW WITH CLAUDE C. WILD, SR.

Interviewer: David G. McComb

Austin, Texas, October 3, 1968

M: To start off, I'd like to know something about your background. When and where you were born.

W: Well, I'm a Tarheel. I was born in North Carolina. My folks moved to Texas when I was a child a year or two old.

M: Can you tell me what year that was?

W: I was born in 1891.

M: And you moved to Texas. Where did you get your education?

W: University of Colorado.

M: Did you get a B. A. degree there?

W: Yes.

M: Where did you get your law degree?

W: There, too.

M: Can you tell me when you graduated?

W: Well, it was during World War I; 1918, I guess it was.

M: And then you began to practice law in Texas?

W: Yes, I practiced. My first location was in the oil field in West Texas. The small town of Cisco. Bunch of oil towns out there.

M: Did you specialize in oil law?

W: Well, not necessarily that. You don't specialize when you're right out of college.

M: You just take anything that comes.

W: This /microphone/ picks it up here, doesn't it?

M: Oh, yes. This is all recorded. Where did you go from West Texas?

W: Well, I lived in Fort Worth later and I came to Austin in 1935. I was always interested in politics as a youngster, but never took an active part until 1934. Governor Allred was running for Governor and some people that I had been associating with in other things thought I had some organizing talents, and they called me and said they were in trouble, and I came down here to help them out. One thing led to another and I've stayed here.

M: Was this in a State Governor's race?

W: Yes. He was the Governor of Texas. Allred in 1934. He served from 1935 to 1939.

M: Then you retained your political interest.

W: Yes, you make your contacts and I took part in several campaigns. For a while there you build your contacts and your friends.

M: What kind of work did you do for Governor Allred?

W: I was his organization man.

M: What does this mean?

W: That meant that I selected and somewhat directed a campaign manager for each of the 254 counties. In other words, that was my job--to see that they had one.

M: Did you have to follow up and check their activities?

W: Yes, I followed up some, but we had other departments that followed up, sent them materials, and so on. We were doing it in a short time, and my job was to get somebody who was willing to do what we requested and most of them did. We won the race.

M: You must have been a pretty good organizer then.

W: Well, I don't know.

M: When did you run into Lyndon Johnson?

W: Through this Allred deal, I had made a number of friends and a couple of my campaign managers in South Texas--one of them from Floresville and one from Kenedy--Sam Fore and Denver Cheston--they're both dead. They were both newspapermen and they had helped me quite a lot in that Allred affair. They came in to see me one morning, and said, "We want you to manage Lyndon Johnson's campaign." He had just announced the day before. Until that time I only knew him by newspaper accounts. He was head of the NYA and I didn't know him personally.

M: You had never met him before.

W: Never. I remember my question to them, "Who the hell is Lyndon Johnson?" They said, "Well, we want you to meet him."

So they brought him by to meet me, and I took over his campaign.

M: They contacted you because they knew of your experience?

W: We had worked together quite a lot and they were very much interested in him. Their Congressman for quite a period of time was one of the Klebergs---Richard Kleberg. And Lyndon had been Richard's administrative assistant before he got the NYA job. Fore was from John Connally's home town, and they were all friends there together.

M: So they turned to you, and you met Lyndon Johnson. What did you think about him?

W: Well, I thought he had some possibilities. He was an aggressive kind of fellow. Quite emotional. And he said that whatever I asked, he would do. He had some misgivings, but he did them.

At that time we had ten counties in this Congressional district, and there was no runoff in a special election. So high man took the deal. And we had about ten candidates from the different counties around here. There were two or three here in Austin. And I hit on the strategy of making it Johnson against a different one everywhere. And we'd pick a fight with the one at Burnet or the one down here somewhere. That was in the days when

Roosevelt was President, and Johnson was pretty much running on the Roosevelt platform. Of course, we had anti-Roosevelt people then as we've had since and pretty much the same group that's anti-Johnson now. Wherever we thought a man was strong, for instance, one of the candidates in the east end of the district had been district attorney and well-known, we didn't touch him; we didn't say anything about him. We didn't know he was in the race as far as public statements were concerned.

But one was a very fine man, but he had represented the preceding Congressman, had been right active for him. He had an office in the Washington Hotel and sold stone to the government, you know; so we made a lobbyist out of him. You know that purpose.

And the one up here in Burnet we found something on him; we made one of them an economic royalist. We were going on the theory that some of the vote would go for Roosevelt or anybody that he directed. Anybody that was sympathetic to him. That's the role we wanted; we figured that would win for him and let the others split up. That was the philosophy of the campaign and it worked.

M: Did you work out the strategy?

W: That was mine. Yes, I did that; I don't want to throw bouquets at myself but I was active in that campaign. If you're a pretty good lawyer, you are a reasonably good strategist. If you're practical. You've got to be pragmatic. There's no emotion and there's very

little philosophy as far as a campaign manager is concerned. The adding machine is what counts with him. And that's the way we planned it.

M: Well, then your strategy was to come out strongly for FDR and his New Deal Program.

W: He had started that. That wasn't mine. This other about dividing up the opposition was mine.

M: And then to attack the opposition on their weak points?

W: Each one individually. A rather interesting experience there--I don't know whether Mrs. Johnson would appreciate it or not. She was quite young and she was a delightful person at that time. I didn't think she would become so interested in politics as she later did. She has done a fine job, incidentally. But she thought that what I was doing to these people was mud-slinging. And she came and told me that she was helping finance this campaign herself and that she wanted her husband to be a gentleman. She didn't want him to be doing that. I remember my comment was, "Mrs. Johnson, you're going to have to make up your mind whether you want your husband to be a Congressman or a gentleman."

Anyhow, she finally agreed to let us run it, and that's the way it turned out. And those people were all good friends of Johnson and me afterwards. I mean that all the candidates that were on the other side.

M: You couldn't be both a Congressman and a gentleman?

W: I didn't put it that way, but you'll have to make your mind up which one you want. Because he wasn't known in this district. His home county, Blanco, had been in this district only a few years. He was a young man and had been in South Texas. He had never been in the bulk of this district except his short experience as NYA director. And nobody knew him. We had to create interest--had unusual experiences--we challenged one of them to a debate and he didn't show up. In Texas you know that's fatal. We had to do that in order to get Johnson known, to win against several people who were entrenched here and well-known.

M: Did Mrs. Johnson campaign at all?

W: No, she didn't campaign.

M: Did many woman of the time do campaigning?

W: Not many. That was before-- In those days, women didn't -- Oh, they voted, but they didn't campaign-- In these parties we have now, you know, where ladies have something at their house day after day in their neighborhood, those things weren't thought of in those days. It has all changed. They took a less active part. Mrs. Johnson, of course, was interested and worked around the headquarters, but she took no part otherwise.

M: Is it true that she helped finance his campaign?

W: I think probably so. She was reputed to. She had some money from her grandmother or grandfather or somebody, and she got an advance on it some way. Lyndon didn't have any money in those days. He has made a lot of money since. I think she did advance the money. She has been very loyal to him. She finally decided that if she was going to have to live with a politician, she'd make the best of it and do the best she could. She has been a good soldier.

M: Well, then, in the campaign itself, what did he use: signs, handbills?

W: Not very much. I want to give Ray Lee here in town credit--you may know him. He was appointed by Johnson to the American Embassy or something in two or three other countries. He worked at that time for the newspaper here.

M: Which one, do you remember?

W: It was the American Statesman--same one that's here now. We would work it up so that--- In those days you could have a little speech at Lockhart or any of these little towns. You might have 50 or 100 people. You probably wouldn't get five to go out and see the President now, you know. They're so accustomed to TV. But nobody ever thought of TV then. We'd figure out that at this place you'd make this statement in your speech. And then he'd get it in

the paper. They just read his speeches that way. Between the two of us, we kept it going.

M: So he got very good publicity in Austin.

W: Very good.

M: Was the city of Austin a crucial point?

W: Well, it was the largest town in the district.

M: What kind of opposition did he have? What groups?

W: Well, the anti-Roosevelt people; the business interest generally fought him at that time; and I would say generally the most conservative people. Most lawyers fought him, because that was at the time that Roosevelt wanted to stack the Supreme Court. And he was coming out for everything that Roosevelt wanted. He had opposition. They were well-organized groups, not large, but they were clannish and stuck together. And the east end of the district, the three counties down there, heavily German-populated, were pretty heavily Republican and in a special election they remained loyal to party. And he did lose those counties. He did lead here--he led in three or four and he lost the others. But he led in enough to have more votes than any other one man had. The man who ran second was the man in the east end, the district attorney in this German section, which we didn't talk about. We didn't want to advertise him. He got second place.

M: If the man was strong, you just didn't talk about him at all?

W: That's right.

M: Where did Mr. Johnson get his support then? What groups?

W: Roosevelt people. Enough of the New Deal people. Some farmers--they split. Of course, the federal employees pretty well supported him. But I would say primarily-- of course, that was right after the depression. And there were more people sympathetic to the New Deal than claimed to be New Dealers. And here was a young fellow who had come along, and was carrying it out, so they went for him. I would say generally, if you could generalize, it would be the Roosevelt organization.

M: Did he use the radio at all?

W: A little. Interesting thing in that connection--the last night of the campaign, the Friday night before the end of the campaign on Saturday--we had engaged WOAI, a San Antonio station--they covered a good deal of a bigger territory than this district, but our station at that time--we only had one, possibly two--didn't reach that far off, so we had to get WOAI. He took an acute attack of appendicitis and had an operation two days before the election. The speech was written by, probably Ray Lee, and I went to Luling where he was supposed to give it down there. It was an outside pavilion and it turned cold and we had some people there. Quite a few. I read the speech; I gave the speech myself and told

them that he had prepared it. That's what I told them. I'd bear down on the points that I wanted to make.

M: Did this go out over the radio?

W: It went out over the radio.

M: That was his final speech?

W: That was his final speech. And it was a pretty good speech. One little thing. He had that operation and some of the opponents spread a rumor that he had had a fake operation, and he did it just to gain sympathy. Well, that backfired a little bit. I remember there was a doctor in one of these other towns that was supporting of his opponents pretty heavy. He called over here to the doctor who had performed the operation and asked him how serious it was. Well he said his blood count was so and so. It incensed him. He knew they had been telling the wrong story and he went out and worked for Johnson.

M: So Johnson picked up a few more votes?

W: Yes, not in the way they thought it would be. There wasn't any fake about it. He was sick.

M: Well, he found out about his victory then while he was in the hospital?

W: Right. He had a radio there and he got it over the radio.

M: How did he celebrate?

W: Well, that I couldn't answer. I don't know. He was just very happy about it, of course.

M: How long did he have to stay in the hospital then?

W: I don't remember. A week or ten days.

M: But he won it from his hospital room? In the campaign itself, what would Lyndon Johnson himself do? Did he go around making speeches? Shaking hands?

W: We had a regular itinerary for him. He went to every one of these little places. He'd go into one of these little towns that might have five or six stores, and he'd go around and shake everybody's hand. Then he'd go on to the next place. It was organized.

M: How long did this go on?

W: About 30 days.

M: Was he a hard worker?

W: Very. Just like he has been ever since. In fact, I've often wondered how he stood up under it, and I did then. He wasn't as heavy then, just a long, lanky youngster, 29 years old. But he kept going. He would go 24 hours a day.

M: Did you travel by automobile then?

W: He did, yes. I didn't go with him. I would have to stay in one place and run the organization.

M: Where were your campaign headquarters?

W: I ran it out of my office, over here in an office building. I just turned my office into a campaign headquarters.

M: And worked out the itinerary for him?

W: Yes. Ray and I together. And then we used a lot of other people. I've forgotten now, but they were friends of his and we'd give them things to do.

M: What role did Alvin Wirtz play in this election?

W: Alvin Wirtz was a long-time friend of Lyndon and his father. He was chief advisor, I would say, both legally and politically. He was a very shrewd operator. I think he knew what the score was and he was a good politician. He was later Under Secretary of the Interior under Roosevelt. I think he is the man who probably advised Lyndon to run on a 100% Roosevelt platform. That was all done before I got in it. I discussed things with him, but he took no part in the campaign itself. He had contacts and he talked, of course, to them, but he didn't run the campaign and didn't try. He said, "That's your job." He wouldn't get in it. Wirtz was a very able man.

M: Was he also a lawyer?

W: Oh, yes.

M: In this campaign, how good a speaker was Lyndon Johnson?

W: Only fair. But he wasn't talking to mammoth audiences. His enthusiasm carried him over. He's a former speech teacher or debating teacher, and he's still a debater in form. You cannot call him an orator. He wasn't the best speaker then, but he was good enough for the occasion.

M: Did you have barbecues then?

W: I don't think we went into it to that extent. They might have had some small one somewhere.

M: Did you use any slogans that you recall?

W: No, except 100% for Roosevelt. That was the big one.

M: After his victory, according to the stories, he met with FDR. Do you know anything about that?

W: Yes, I do. One morning when he was just recuperating from this operation, Roosevelt was out on the Gulf in a boat, ship, or whatever you want to call it. And we were in a hotel room down here--Governor Allred and three or four of us--and Allred was the one that suggested it to him that that would be the contact. That Roosevelt would be happy to see him because he had carried his banner in this campaign. And asked him if he would meet him. He agreed to and it was Governor Allred who made the appointment.

M: Was Allred supporting Lyndon Johnson in this race?

W: Yes. He didn't endorse him publicly, but he gave me some help. He gave me suggestions and probably some of his people helped.

M: So when President Roosevelt stopped in Texas, then Allred made the contact between Roosevelt and Johnson.

W: Well, I think he made it by wire, or however they talk in that kind of a situation. They arranged just where, Galveston I guess, I've forgotten just where they took it. And from then on, Roosevelt liked him. And

invited him to go to the White House, and he got in there. He was relatively the age of two or three of Roosevelt's boys, and he ran around with them. He could come in the back door just like they could, you know.

M: That must have been a tremendous boost.

W: It was. And a lot of things that he does now-- I wouldn't say, copying, but he's using some of the principles that he learned from Roosevelt.

M: After this campaign, did you work in other Johnson campaigns?

W: In the one he ran for the Senate in 1948.

M: Not the 1941?

W: No, I didn't work in that one. That's when Jake Pickle and John Connally and a bunch of them ran it. But I didn't take part in that. I've forgotten now but I was doing something else. I didn't think Lyndon ought to run. I thought he was too young at that time.

M: This was in 1941?

W: In 1941. I didn't do anything against him, I just laid out. But in 1948 I was kind of known as his campaign manager. I think that's a misnomer, because he's his campaign manager. He's a hard man to be a campaign manager for, because he's a better campaign manager than he is a campaigner.

M: He's a good organizer then?

W: In 1948, that's the one he won by 87 votes, we had to run against the incumbent, the Governor Stevenson. The polls showed him to have 75 percent when Johnson started, and he was 100,000 or 75,000 [ahead], some large figure like that, at the end of the first primary. We had to make that up and we were fighting an uphill battle all the time. I wasn't the only one in that; there were lots of people interested in that. I assume that the most active one outside of myself probably the most effective one overall, was John Connally.

M: Did you devise any particular strategy for that 1948 campaign?

W: Well, we did that by a group of us--I don't remember the details of that very much--It was just a question of getting his name known because you can be a Congressman and still not be known in the rest of Texas. We were doing that. That was the first time he had used a helicopter for campaigning in the State.

M: Whose idea was that?

W: I don't know. Johnson's, I think.

M: Did the helicopter prove effective?

W: Yes, it was unusual. And attracted a lot of attention. All of those things are just accumulative of cutting that deficit down.

M: I suppose the helicopter allowed him to get around better.

W: Well, he could land in these little places that didn't have airports. He could go almost right downtown or he could be in a little airport no more than a mile from the heart of town, could drive in and

make a little speech to 50 or 75 people. We couldn't handle the papers that way then like we did the first time, because it was a local race and we didn't have somebody inside there who was helping us. This time we had to do like you always do, get your name in the papers. But that was unique enough and they picked it up.

M: The people would come out to see the helicopter---

W: That's right.

M: And listen to his speech. Did he use any gimmicks in his campaign? The reason I ask you this is that I have heard that he would use a Stetson hat sometimes which he would lose out of the helicopter and people would run to pick it up. This would add interest to the whole affair.

W: This may have happened, I don't know. I didn't go with him. That could have happened, but I never heard any discussion of it.

M: But then he campaigned the State in his helicopter and you helped run the campaign at home. Is that right?

W: That's right.

M: Were your headquarters here in Austin?

W: Yes, he had official residence up here. It has been torn down since.

M: In your campaign, did you concentrate on an attack on Stevenson?

W: I wouldn't say we concentrated on it. I think we--yes, I think some of his records as Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House, and as

Governor, he had made a record. Those were all attacked. I don't think the personal attack was quite as severe as it was the first time, because we had [an] entirely different situation. You can just only go so far with that kind of thing. Backfires a lot of times, but I don't think it was a big factor. There were such things as this. The Taft-Hartley Act. Johnson voted for it when he was in the House. Until he became President, he was always for it. But Stevenson, a conservative, who had never had the labor support, he came out and said he would repeal it if he was elected to the Senate. Well, the labor didn't believe him. And other people thought he was being dishonest. That was the big crack in his campaign.

M: Then did labor come out against him after that?

W: No, I don't think so. I don't remember. But labor organizations have never been too strong in Texas [though] there are lots of laboring people. The issue itself wasn't as important, as whether Stevenson was trying to hoodwink somebody, you see, and that was important.

M: Where did Johnson find his support in that campaign? Who voted for him? Did the oil people vote for him? Did businessmen support him?

W: Generally speaking, the oil people didn't. They thought he was too close to the New Deal. Of course, that was a Democratic campaign.

Of course, I think he got the Mexicans and Negroes--that was still in 1948--and of course that was a good while after the depression, but he had done this while he was a Congressman. He had done favors in Washington for different politicians, business people, lawyers and what not, all over Texas, in everybody else's district. So when he ran for the Senate, he had these people as his nucleus and they got their friends. And I would say that it was less a matter of issue than that we just got him sold as a man who can get something done.

M: Did he use the radio a great deal then?

W: Yes. The radio was used quite a lot. He also got sick in that campaign. Gallstone or something.

M: Did he have to have an operation?

W: No, he went to the hospital, but he got out. He made it all right.

M: You didn't have to make his last speech then?

W: No, I didn't make it. There were so many of us involved in that race. Though I had the title and I kept the thing moving, I didn't have nearly as much to do with it as I did in the first one because I didn't make all the decisions. I want to be truthful to you.

M: Did Johnson have the reputation of being a liberal then?

W: Yes. He did. That stemmed from the Roosevelt label to start with.

This one break in that was the Taft-Hartley Act. But he got a lot of labor vote, because they thought he was honest and they felt the other fellow wasn't. The Taft-Hartley Act wasn't as important as a lot of these other things that were issues at the time, which I've even forgotten. But the State was more liberal then, I think, than it is now. And then he has always been quite successful in having both sides. He got a lot of liberals, I would say the intellectual liberals if you can call them that, from that philosophic standpoint. The conservative business interests who despised the New Deal, didn't vote for him. A lot of them haven't yet. But to those who knew him, yes, he was a liberal.

M: How was he able to attract support from both conservative and liberals?

W: He's a master salesman. He can talk to you and want you to do something or take another position, and it's pretty hard for you not to do it. They talk about his making a fortune out of real estate or something. He could have made it anyway. If he had never been in politics, he would have gotten rich. He's just that type--if he had used the same energy and the same drive. He could sell a businessman the idea that he was his friend and he had to do some of these things for whatever reason he gave. They'd forgive him for it if he'd do something else and if he had to take another position. And he has been that way all the time. Henry Ford, a bunch of big businessmen, are for him right now, and lots of other businessmen think he's so liberal that

they can't speak to him. He's an unusual character, and you've got to place him in that category.

M: Did you see any difference in the Lyndon Johnson in 1948 and the Lyndon Johnson of 1937? As far as his maturity was concerned or his ability as a campaigner?

W: No more than you would see in anybody who had avanced that much would be. I think he has matured more since 1948 than, of course, he had any time prior. But he had a lot of the same qualities, and he was fractious and high-strung and a hard worker and driver.

M: What about the contested returns at the end of that election? He won by 87 votes, did he not?

W: Have you got an appointment by any chance with John Cofer? John Cofer, a lawyer here, was one of the lawyers in the litigation. And I understand that he has turned over some of the papers in that lawsuit to Frantz, or to someone. I don't want to comment on that litigation, because I wasn't involved in it. I know that they brought a lawsuit and then it finally went to the Supreme Court of the United States. It wasn't in session but some judge rendered an injunction. They tried it in the State Executive Committee, or in the Convention, they tried to move to have the Executive Committee to not certify him, which they have to do and it was very close. It was 15 to 16, I think, but he got the vote. Then somebody went into Court which he won. But I just keep talking in the dark. I wasn't involved and

it has been 20 years and you forget a lot of things. Cofer knows, though.

M: Did John Connally and Jake Pickle get involved in this 1948 campaign.

W: Yes, they were very much in it. Connally especially. They were both also in the 1941 election. I think that's where both of them began.

M: What was their job in the campaign, do you recall?

W: No, I don't. They were just, whatever----Of course, John had a lot of contacts. I expect John raised some money, things like that. And he took a pretty active part. He is the closest man to him. I expect if Johnson gets in trouble and he doesn't know what decision to make, he would call John Connally.

M: Where would you get money for a campaign like that? How do you raise money?

W: He got it from people who had it.

M: Managers would contact them or he would contact them and ask for support?

W: Yes. They did. Of course, he also had the support of a firm known as Brown and Root, which you've heard about. They had a lot of contacts and they helped raise a lot of money for him. I didn't handle the money and I don't know where all it came from. But Connally probably does and probably wouldn't tell you.

M: Do you have any idea when Lyndon Johnson first made contact with Brown and Root?

W: No. Herman Brown was always a good friend--I think he was even when he was running for Congress. He lived here at that time. What the relationship was I never did know. It might have come through Wirtz.

M: Did you work in any of the other Johnson campaigns?

W: No. Not as a campaign manager. I may have done him some favors, but that's a pretty hard racket, you know, and I got out of it as fast as I could.

M: What does this quotation up here on your picture mean? [picture of Jake Pickle inscribed, "To Mr. Claude--who started us all."]

W: A little baloney. He means by that that Ray Roberts, a Congressman, that 1937 campaign, who was the youngster working here for NYA and living with the Johnsons. John Connally was one--I hired John Connally in a campaign for Governor here one time in about 1938, I think it was, and these boys all came in. To that extent he thinks I started him. But he has a little baloney. I didn't start them all.

M: You made a statement earlier that makes me rather curious. You said that the state, you thought, was more liberal then--in 1948--than you do now. What do you mean by that? And why has there been a change?

W: The state is more liberal in spots now than it was then. You take the state as a whole. Why it has changed--well, maybe they're more prosperous. That could be one thing. The liberal leadership down here hasn't done very much to improve. Their theory of things doesn't appeal to the people. The labor leadership doesn't amount

to as much here. The liberals have become fragmented, you know, like they did nationally. McCarthys and what not. The intellectual liberals as I call them, like Ronnie Dugger, who runs a paper here. He has provoked, for instance, in his group, the organized labor, because they're pragmatic people. They play the game to suit whatever fits them. It's a philosophic matter with him and you can just keep breaking it down. I think that has as much to do with it as ---

M: The state is more strongly conservative now?

W: I think so. It's hard to tell because they'll switch back and forth. You wouldn't believe the sort of people who'll vote for Wallace here.

M: One reason I bring this up is that Lyndon Johnson apparently tried to appeal to conservative elements in the state after 1948. Was this a wise---I suppose it was since he was successful, but do you suppose he saw where the power lay?

W: He stayed that way until he became President. I assume that different problems faced him, and he went back--basically to the liberal he was to start with. But he's also pragmatic enough to know that you've got to have somebody else to support you. And he grew up here in this little mountain community and times were hard. And he saw, I guess you would call it poverty, saw hard conditions.

That marked him a lot. I think it explains a lot of his position, but as a Senator he figured he was representing the State of Texas. I think he realized that they were more conservative than the nation generally. He's an unusual man and he's hard to analyze. I don't know. Of course, these liberals argue with him. Yarborough, for instance. He thinks they're going to take over down here. And they may. But they haven't up to this point.

M: So it would be hard to classify someone like Lyndon Johnson as being liberal or conservative? Is that right?

W: Yes, if you take a specific issue, it would be hard to predict where he might go. I think if you had to pin it down to where he had to make a decision, you'd say he had liberal tendencies. But liberal means different things to different people.

M: Why has Lyndon Johnson been a success? What's his key to success in politics?

W: Well, he's a man of great capacity. That salesmanship I'm talking to you about. He can sell you anything. He's very convincing and he's an incessant worker. That's number one.

M: He's a hard worker.

W: He's a hard worker, and he's a practical sort of operator until when he was in the Senate. Up until that point. When he got into this other thing, it (the Presidency) got a little big for him. He couldn't use the same

methods and he has gotten in trouble. The war and other things have gotten him into big trouble. But he's a student. He has a tremendous ambition, always has had, and he's a hard driver, plus some native and natural ability.

M: Do you think his ability to sell himself and his ideas has failed on a national scale?

W: I don't want to say that. I don't want to get into this thing. Obviously he's in some trouble. Whether or not he could--I'll say that wherever he has been in position to work any sort of salesmanship that would be effective, he has won with it.

M: Have you had anything to do with state campaigns, such as the Governor's race for John Connally?

W: No, of course I told you about the Allred deal. But of recent years I haven't taken any part in them. I've given advice once in a while; whether they take it or not is immaterial. And I've been for him, and I think he made a great Governor. He has made a good Governor. He's won these tight races. He's had a liberal against him and he's always beat him. That's another explanation. Of course, he is more conservative than Johnson. But he's not conservative to the extent of opposing all progress. But even some of his friends criticize him for a lot of things he wants to do. He has been a fine Governor. A good one.

M: Did you have anything to do with the campaign in 1956? When Johnson fairly well controlled the State? The Governor's race, and so forth.

W: In 1956? No, I didn't have anything to do with that campaign.

M: There was a fight then. He was involved in it.

W: Oh yes, with Governor Shivers. I didn't take any part in that. Johnson won that fight in the Convention. Cofer again was involved in that.

M: Well, then, he would be a good man to talk to about that episode.

W: In fact, he has taken more part in Conventions, much more, than I have, and he is to a certain extent, a historian. You go talk to him.

M: I'll be sure that somebody at least contacts him. That's all the questions I have, and I wish to thank you.

W: Well, if it's worth anything to you, you're welcome. I've tried to be frank. I haven't tried to palaver it. Sincerity is my philosophy of it. A lot of fellows ought to learn that, but some of them haven't.

M: Thank you very much.

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE

Gift of Personal Statement

By Clarence C Wise

to the

Lyndon Baines Johnson Library

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

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Signed Clarence C Wise

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