INTERVIEW II

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INTERVIEWEES: GLEN and MARIE WILSON

INTERVIEWER: MICHAEL L. GILLETTE

PLACE: The Wilson's home, Washington, D.C.

Tape 1 of 1

G: Let's start out with his kidney stone operation and the trip to the Mayo Clinic.

MW: Well, the main thing I recall about that is that Mary Rather was his chief secretary at the time. She was sending things to him at the Mayo Clinic. She addressed a whole bunch of stuff to Rochester, New York that the Senator was most anxious to have and became quite irritated to learn that they came floating back in. They should have gone to Rochester, Minnesota. But that was just his personality. He was very angry that he didn't get his mail on time. That's what I remember at the Mayo Clinic. And the kidney stone, that's what it was, a kidney stone removal.

G: He went back evidently again--

MW: Yes, he went back again. But I just recall he was in and out of the Mayo Clinic, and I don't remember anything more about it. But I do remember Mary Rather mismailing things to Rochester, New York instead of Minnesota.

GW: My comment on that is somewhat of an aside, but it's related. In May of 1958, when we were having hearings on the Space Act--we only had

six hearings and this was like the second week in May, about a Wednesday. We were having a hearing and right in the middle of the hearing I had a kidney stone attack. If you've ever had one of these you know how painful it is. The pain just got so intense I just couldn't stay. I went over and whispered to Gerry Siegel, who was the counsel there. I said, "Gerry, I'm having a kidney attack"--I'd had previous ones, so I recognized it--"and I'm just going to go downstairs." We had a room in the basement in the old building there. I went down to that basement. Somebody helped me down there and laid me out on a desk, horizontal, and called the Capitol physician.

Very shortly after that, Lyndon Johnson left the hearing, turned it over to somebody else, which was very rare. These were very important hearings. He came down to the basement, and he stayed there with me, comforting me in my pain, until he was certain that the Capitol physician came over to give me a shot to ease the pain. As I have said many times, that's a courtesy that I never have forgotten, and it was very typical of the way Lyndon Johnson would treat his employees who were in trouble. He would just stop everything to help them, and that's part of the reason why he had such intense loyalty from the people who worked for him, in spite of the fact that he would mistreat them from time to time, and he'd cuss them out and he'd give them hell, and all these other things. Nevertheless, when it came down to the bottom line, he was right in there fighting for them.

G: Was he pretty quick to recognize when someone needed his help?

GW: Well, obviously he recognized a kidney stone attack. He knew what the pain was, because he had had it. He was right down there in that room. Okay, that's just a peripheral story.

MW: When it was physical, a physical ailment.

G: Is there anything else you want to talk about before we get to the McCarthy Resolution?

MW: I don't see anything, or I can't remember any of these things.

G: Okay, let's talk about that.

GW: I just want to say one thing about the McCarthy Resolution. As I said to you a little earlier, Lyndon Johnson I think probably raised to the level of an art the operation of the Senate by unanimous consent, by his ever-forceful presence of moving the thing on by unanimous consent, unanimous consent. Because at any step of the way, in the old way of doing things, somebody could stop the operation. They could stop it then. But the Senate rules were so encumbered by all the things you had to do, like reading the journal every morning and all this kind of business, that Lyndon Johnson used the one tool that you can use in the Senate. You can do anything in the Senate by unanimous consent. I think probably he developed that to a very high order. I'm certain he's not the first one that ever used that modus operandi, but at the same time he did raise it, I think, to a very high art and kept things moving in the Senate at a reasonably brisk pace by the unanimous consent agreement. Of course, people were reluctant to object to unanimous consent agreement requests because if they did, then they of course would be looked on as the stumbling blocks in getting things done.

He had some other gimmicks he used to use. Senator [Wayne] Morse was known around the Senate for many years as the "Five O'Clock Shadow." The reason for that is because Morse was one of your world's greatest orators, and he just loved to talk. Ordinarily he could get the floor and talk for a couple of hours on whatever subject pleased him for that day. Lyndon Johnson finally persuaded him to postpone his orations until after the Senate had finished its work. The Senate would go through a typical afternoon, do all of its business, then Morse would get the floor and everybody would leave. Morse would proceed to orate to an empty chamber for God knows how long. This irritated all the elevator operators and the trolley operators and the doorkeepers, because they all had to stay on duty while the Senate was in session, and there Morse would be up there speaking on some subject and everybody was gone.

MW: And the Senate Democratic Policy Committee staff.

GW: Right. All the official operations, the bill clerks' room and the whole thing all had to stay in operation while the Senate was in session. So Morse was not particularly popular because of this tendency of his to speak.

But getting back to the McCarthy thing, Senator Johnson had agreements generally with Senator [William] Knowland from California, who was the minority leader then, on action on the floor. They had to come to some kind of agreements at the beginning of a day or beginning of a week on what they were going to do. Senators are busy men; they've got a lot of commitments and a lot of things they have to do. So

generally, they would make an agreement, let's say, that there'd be no votes today after four o'clock or after five o'clock, or something like that. Lyndon Johnson would, of course, try to abide by that.

Now when this McCarthy thing came up--and I'm almost certain it was a Monday, and it would have to be the twenty-seventh of June, 1955--Johnson had an agreement that there would be no votes after such and such a time. I think this resolution which you've mentioned here on this little sheet of yours was in committee or something.

G: It was in the Foreign Relations Committee.

GW: Yes, but I'm not quite sure of the status of it in connection with the story I'm about to give you. But late in the afternoon on that date, when things were just about to wind up, Senator McCarthy got the floor. He demanded that his resolution be voted on right then and there. This was an embarrassment to everybody, because most of the senators were gone from the chamber. As I said, Johnson had an agreement that there would be no more votes that evening, and so forth. People had gone off to their evening engagements. You can check all this by reading the Congressional Record, I'm sure. But what you may not see in the Record is what was happening. You see, Johnson was trying to get him to agree to let the committee, you know, "Let's go through the normal process," and all that sort of thing.

There's a rule in the Senate that says that when you've got the floor, when you're speaking, you have got to physically stand up by your lectern, at your assigned spot. Frequently senators will address the Chair from other places in the room, but ordinarily if they're making

a speech or a major talk of some kind or statement, they will be at their assigned desks and standing. What happened was--and I'm going to try to make this long story short--at one point somebody asked McCarthy if he would yield for a question, which is a normal statement: "Would the Senator yield for a question?" meaning that he doesn't lose his right to the floor. Particularly when you're trying to filibuster or something, you've got to keep the floor. Once you get the floor you've got to keep it, and if you yield you can give up your right to the floor, except that normally you would say, "Well, all right, I'll yield for a question," which means that you're not going to lose your right to the floor.

Anyway, somebody asked McCarthy to yield for a question, and this went on for a while. At one point, McCarthy--now I was not there and did not personally see this--but at one point apparently he leaned back against his chair or something, or he may have sat down briefly, I'm not quite sure.

MW: He leaned over on his desk.

GW: He leaned over somehow, and Johnson immediately went on to the next issue: "I request permission to go on to the next issue," or whatever. McCarthy was very disturbed by it. He said, "Mr. President, Mr. President, I have the floor." Johnson said something like, "I'm sorry. The Senator sat down and lost his right to the floor," and they just rolled him over. Johnson said, "I say we adjourn," and so they adjourned. They kept from having a very embarrassing situation at that particular moment on the floor. But that was a case of intimate

knowledge of the rules of the Senate, which of course Johnson had, and [the ability] to use whatever was available at the moment to try to take care of the situation. In this case, it was to try to keep McCarthy from forcing an embarrassing issue at a late hour in the Senate.

G: That's a marvelous story. This resolution was one that would tie President Eisenhower's hands at Geneva, dealing with Eastern Europe. Evidently the Republicans wanted it killed quietly in the committee, and LBJ managed to have it brought out on the floor and have McCarthy overwhelmingly defeated. Do you remember anything [about it]?

GW: Yes, I see that from what you have here. But the point I'm making is this was late of an evening, and Johnson didn't want to go through the embarrassment of having to call all the senators back from their engagements, and all that sort of thing. It was a procedural matter more than anything else.

G: Right, but do you have any recollections on the conflict between LBJ and Knowland during this resolution controversy, where Knowland wanted it killed quietly in committee and LBJ wanted it brought out?

GW: All I can tell you is that Knowland was absolutely no match for Johnson. Knowland, as I've said before, made one of the poorest political decisions of the fifties when he left a good, safe seat in the Senate as minority leader to go try to run for governor, a perfectly bad decision.

G: Do you recall any other interaction between Johnson and Knowland that adds to this fact that Knowland was not up to dealing with LBJ?

MW: It was constant.

GW: It was just a constant, day-to-day [thing]. He ran circles around him every day over there.

MW: And Knowland never related to LBJ the way [Everett] Dirksen did. Dirksen would come around and be friendly and grub Pall Malls off everybody, and sit around and talk about his favorite flower. He was friendly and Knowland was sort of an uptight guy.

GW: Knowland was one of the most pompous people that ever walked the face of the earth; he really was.

MW: Can you imagine an uptight football [player], an uptight Jerry Ford, a stiff Jerry Ford? It's really kind of a hard thing, but that's what he was.

G: Some people have suggested that LBJ, in addition to being the majority leader for the Democrats, was also actively involved in the Republicans' leadership in the Senate, telling Knowland what to do and advising him daily on this and that.

MW: I wouldn't be surprised.

GW: I wouldn't be at all surprised, but that brings me to a point. Knowland's AA [administrative assistant] in those days was a fellow named Jim Gleason who later went on to be the first assistant administrator for legislative affairs at NASA. After Knowland got defeated, they had to do something with him. He's the executive officer of Montgomery County now. He's right out here north. You might try to chat with him some day about the relationship between Knowland and Johnson, because he's right here in town.

MW: There are very few who really understand that one, that's right.

GW: Gleason would know, yes, or at least he could give you a very personal viewpoint on that.

G: As long as we're on LBJ's relations with other senators, you mentioned Wayne Morse, who was sort of in a position of helping LBJ retain that slim majority in 1955. He and Strom Thurmond, I guess, were sort of the two men in the middle.

GW: Yes.

G: Did he take special care to insure Morse's loyalty, as far as you know? He was a guy who had switched parties, and he did get a great committee assignment.

GW: I just can't answer that, Mike. I just don't know. Obviously, there were a lot of things that went on between Morse and Lyndon Johnson. Morse was one of the great super-egotists of all times. He considered himself just one step this short of God on just about everything that came. And in fact, he was a very brilliant man. He was a brilliant constitutional lawyer; he had an intimate knowledge of history, and he could get up and speak for hours on just about any subject, as in fact Hubert Humphrey can. But Morse was no Hubert Humphrey. There was something pompous about Morse that never comes off with Hubert in my estimation. I cannot go any further than that. It was obvious that in that period from 1952 to 1954 when Morse had resigned from the Republican Party because he refused to support Eisenhower, or whatever the hell it was--I don't remember the details--there was a period in there where Morse was sort of in limbo, very much the way [Harry] Byrd [Jr.]

of Virginia is now. The only difference was in those days the line-up in the Senate was so close that it made a difference as to which way Morse was going to vote. Today it makes virtually no difference how Byrd votes. The Democrats have got such a majority it really doesn't matter. But in those days, it was so close. It was so close.

G: Let's talk about LBJ's relations with other senators. Do you have any recollections of his association with Walter George, for example, who was a real power in those days?

GW: I can't answer that, except that he had a remarkable admiration for George. I remember in--what was it, 1956?--when they had a big party for Senator George.

MW: A one hundred-dollar-a-plate dinner.

GW: The objective was to gather money for him to help him in his next election.

MW: It was at the Mayflower Hotel.

GW: It did fail. That was when [Herman] Talmadge beat him.

MW: Wait a minute. Wasn't there something about Senator George and Senator Johnson and the George Resolution?

G: The Bricker Amendment?

MW: No. This had to do with all the southern senators signing the Southern Manifesto.

G: This was in response to the Supreme Court decision.

MW: Right. Johnson refused to sign, and there was great worry over his ability to relate to Senator George after that because of his absolute split on that issue. There must be something in the record. Senator

George somehow forgave him, but there were some of us--I'm one, anyway--who thought that because Mr. Johnson might have helped to get a lot of money for Senator George's next campaign that that might have been part of the forgiveness aspect. There was this great big hundred-dollar-a-plate dinner--and then a hundred dollars was a lot more than it is today--given in the early summer of 1956 at the Mayflower Hotel for Senator George. We got free tickets to it from Senator [Robert] Kerr of Oklahoma. That's what sticks in my mind about Senator George and his relationship there. But there was this Southern Manifesto mess.

GW: This is a story which indicates the way in which many southern people felt about their senior senators, a feeling which is almost gone from the Senate but can still be seen in the likes of Senators [James] Eastland and [John] Stennis and so forth, some of the older senators. This is a story that was told to me once by a person who worked for Senator [Richard] Russell.

It seems as if a constituent from Georgia had come to see this man on Senator Russell's staff with some problem, a veteran's problem or something of that sort. The man was from the same little town in Georgia that Senator George was from and in fact was his neighbor, lived close to him. After the constituent related his request to the staff man of Senator Russell, the staff man inquired rather gingerly, "Well, we're awfully happy to help you with this, but why didn't you take it to Senator George, who is your neighbor in your home town?" The constituent said, "Well, I wouldn't dare bother the Senator with a problem like this."

G: A problem this mundane.

GW: Yes, a mundane problem. After all, he was the Senator, and you didn't bother the Senator with something as minor as that.

G: How about Senator Russell? Do you recall anything that sheds light on the friendship between LBJ and Richard Russell?

GW: Well, I think it certainly is clear that Senator Russell looked upon Lyndon Johnson as a protege. You may recall when the Korean War broke out in the summer of 1950, Senator Johnson was a very brand-new senator. He was elected in 1948 and sworn in in 1949, so he had been in the Senate for less than a year and a half. When the Korean thing broke out he was on the Armed Services Committee, which was a tribute to the fact that he had been on the Naval Affairs and then the military [Armed Services] Committee in the House before he was elected to the Senate.

During World War II, the Armed Services Committee had created an investigative committee which was chaired by Senator Truman. The Truman Committee became one of the great forces in the early part of World War II in helping to cut down on [waste], trying to point out the various mistakes that were being made in the military and so forth. That, of course, was how Truman got his name. That's how he became prominent in the news, how he came to everybody's attention, which of course led to his being selected as vice president and then president. It was that activity of Truman during World War II that vaulted him into prominence.

When the Korean War broke out, Senator Russell [thought] it looked to be time to do a similar thing for the Korean War, so he appointed this to Lyndon Johnson. Well, Lyndon Johnson went after this with full force. He was a tiger in this area. He brought in some staff people; Don Cook was one. I don't remember who all worked for him at that time. George Reedy came on at that time, around 1950-1951. I don't remember the exact date.

MW: For what?

GW: On the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee. I don't know exactly when Reedy was hired, but it was Johnson's activities on the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee in the 1950-51-52 period that brought him and George together. George was a reporter. I don't know the exact date that George went to work for him.

G: This was made possible by Senator Russell, is that right?

GW: Oh yes, absolutely! You know, you don't create a subcommittee and give a guy as much power as Russell gave to Johnson, only a year and a half in the Senate, unless you had something in mind it seems to me. Now Russell and Johnson were very close. Johnson did absolutely nothing on that subcommittee without being sure that he had the tacit approval of Russell. Later on, you know, when we got into the space business--and some of this is on this interview I have there--you've got to be certain that Johnson did not contrive to go into the Missile and Space Hearings in November of 1957 without the full support and agreement, not only of Senator Russell, but of Senator Styles Bridges, who was the Republican.

G: How about Senator Kerr?

MW: Can I add something on Senator Russell before we depart from that? When I first came there, Senator George was the big thing, then Senator Russell became very big. By the time, I would say, 1960 came around, I was in the Capitol office. Lyndon Johnson came in one day and said, "Get me Dick Russell." I never placed phone calls for him; I wasn't in that role. So I had to look up the number in the phone directory and the whole thing. It was the first time I had ever really placed a call for Lyndon Johnson, never had done it before, all those years. I said nervously, "Senator Lyndon Johnson is calling for Senator Russell," and the next thing I heard was, "This is Dick Russell." He didn't wait to say, "Make sure he's on before I'm on," one of those things that executives go through all the time. It wasn't one of those things. He was then answering to LBJ, but that was shortly before the convention in 1960 at that point. Actually, it was during the voting rights act debate.

G: In 1960?

MW: Yes. I thought we were kind of back in 1955, but since you brought up Russell I thought I would just say whatever I could recall about Russell.

G: I'm trying to trigger memories of any traffic that stands out between LBJ and other senators. How about Senator Kerr? Do you remember any instances of their working together, let's say in 1955, the first year you were there?

GW: No, but I could give you an instance that happened in 1958 with Kerr.

MW: He knows that. That's the HR 3 thing.

GW: Oh, no, no, no. I'm not talking about that.

G: We haven't talked about HR 3.

MW: HR whatever it was to abolish the Supreme Court.

G: That was Howard Smith's resolution. Do you have a recollection there?

GW: No, mine was in connection with when they appointed the original members of the [Aeronautical and] Space [Sciences] Committee. I'll try to shorten this up. The very last night of the Congress in 1958--it was like August 28, 1958--the permanent space committee had been created, but the members had not been appointed to it. About three or four hours before they finally adjourned, I was up in the Capitol there talking to Solis Horwitz and some of those guys. One of the girls over there had typed up the list of the Democratic senators who were going to be appointed to the space committee. I took a look at the list, and I thought, "Dear God, they don't quite understand what's happening here." There was Johnson and there were Russell and [Warren] Magnuson and quite a number of people there--[Clinton] Anderson--who were all chairmen of other committees. The first name who was not a member [chairman?] of a committee was Senator [Allen] Frear of Delaware.

I went to Solis and I said, "I'd just like to point out to you from this list that if anything ever happened to Lyndon Johnson that Senator Frear would become the leader of the space program, because he would then become chairman of this committee." Solis said, "Well, that's none of your damn business. Don't worry with it." I said, "It is my damn business, because this <u>is</u> my business, not yours."

What happened was, about two hours later there was a revised list, and Senator Frear had been taken off of it and Senator Kerr had been put on it. As a result of that, when Johnson did leave the Senate in 1961 it was Kerr that became chairman of the committee.

G: Why was Kerr more desirable than Frear?

GW: Kerr was a real power. I'm not trying to denigrate Senator Frear, but Senator Frear was not by any stretch of the imagination the kind of power, the kind of forceful man that Senator Kerr was.

G: Then your thinking was that Senator Kerr could do more for the committee?

GW: I had simply pointed out to them a fact that if you went down this list far enough that all of a sudden it was distinctly possible that Senator Frear would be chairman of the space committee. I cannot tell you what happened in between there. Solis Horwitz is dead, so he can't tell you. Maybe George Reedy or Gerry Siegel could tell you. The fact is that in a two-hour period of time they tore up the first list and typed the second list that made Senator Kerr the guy who was in fact the heir to the throne as far as the space committee was concerned. Now that's a true story.

MW: I had forgotten all about Frear, and he was right next door to us, too.

GW: I had never had any contact with Frear at all. He was the guy that always used to answer the roll by yelling, "H-E-E-R-E!" at the top of his voice. You could hear him three buildings away.

MW: That's about all he could be remembered for.

Where are we passing along to? We've got past the McCarthy Resolution. On the airport grants scene, I think I've reported everything

in the earlier transcript that I recall that started it.

G: You have a recollection of HR 3, I think, and Senator Kerr. Although that comes later, let's go ahead and talk about that while you've got it on your mind.

MW: I think I've told you--and I just can't index this mentally right away--I think I mentioned last time it would be a good idea to look up a Drew Pearson column on it. The vote was 41 to 40 to recommit the bill, and that killed it. Drew Pearson wrote--and this is Kerr-related information--that Bobby Baker had locked Senator Kerr up in the men's john. Harry McPherson has another version of this, but Pearson says it, and it's got to be in the Washington Post Drew Pearson column for that period: late August of 1958. It has to be after August 23, and it may even be later on, you know. I could dig back into the records. It has to be around that time he reported this locking-up-in-the-john routine.

G: Drew Pearson emerges as a rather--

MW: Substantial influence on Mr. Johnson, or let's say a thorn in his side, constantly.

G: He was so equivocal. One article would be praising LBJ, and the next minute he would be attacking LBJ. He was of course very friendly to Earle Clements after the marriage of Bess and Tyler [Abell].

MW: Yes, yes, the wedding there, right. Did you know--I feel as though I've said this, heavens knows--that we had a special file cabinet, a Drew Pearson file cabinet? Mildred Stegall knows about this.

G: No.

MW: I may not have mentioned it. Drew would write something about LBJ. The staff would prepare a retort, because it was always wrong in some way. It was never totally correct. The staff would reply to it but not mail it. It would be just a memo to the file to attach to it in case it ever came up; the record, the real history, would be there. It was the Drew Pearson file drawer, or cabinet it got to be, there were so many of them, as I recall. Mildred Stegall knew about it. The only reason I ever really found out about it was because [of] something he wrote one time that I knew something about, and I was asked to contribute to it. I regret I cannot recall what that was.

G: I gather the relations between LBJ and Jack Anderson were much more cordial than they were between LBJ and Drew Pearson.

MW: Jack Anderson was just a youngster and a kid coming up. I remember Jack Anderson coming in one day to the office on a Sunday--Glen, don't you remember? The two of us were there working, and nobody else was there. Jack Anderson brought along a cartoonist. They said they wanted to sketch or photograph a senator's office, and the only offices they knew would be open on a Sunday would be Johnson's and Humphrey's. So we very carefully tiptoed around and looked at Johnson's desk. It was actually Walter Jenkins' desk at that time, but we made sure there wasn't anything that if a photograph were taken it would reveal anything secret or whatever. "Sure, go ahead," and we stood there while they took the pictures. They took pictures of the reception room and other offices. I can't remember his name, but this fellow was supposed to be starting out a cartoon strip about Washington and the Senate and

whatnot. It was a long time ago. That must have been 1955, had to be.

Well, moving along to or through the airport grants, I think I've said all I had to say the last time. [reading a document] School construction bill, Glen? No? Anti-segregation rider. Draft extension. Foreign aid--just that we got a tremendous amount of mail on that subject, incredible.

G: Was it usually pro or con?

MW: Against. Against. It would go something like this. Oh, there was one fellow who used to write us "fornade," like orangeade, lemonade, "fornade," F-O-R-N-A-D-E. So we all got to calling it "fornade": I'm going to have a drink of fornade." "I'm doing the fornade bill." Almost nobody ever said "foreign aid" any longer; they just said "fornade." Sounds like a drink: Kool-ade, fornade. The letters that came in against foreign aid, or "fornade," were also against the Supreme Court and for the Bricker Amendment--right?--and what else? It was kind of the whole right wing--

GW: The Alaska Mental Health Bill.

MW: Well no, that was separate, the Alaska Mental Health Bill. You do know about the Alaska Mental Health Bill?

G: No.

MW: Oh, icky-poo! Wow, it really opened up a big can of worms with that. Gee, it should come along . . . no, it's 1956.

G: The Alaska . . . ?

MW: Mental Health Bill. All right, we're at it, might as well talk about

it. A wire arrived from a physician in Dallas saying, "Stop"--I may not have the number right--"HR 7686, Alaska Mental Health, to send U.S. political prisoners to Alaska." So, knowing the medical doctors in Texas and how right wing they are, I couldn't imagine what this was, and the guy asked for the bill return air mail. I called up Senate Doc [Senate Document Room] and I got a guy named Waggoner, just an old-shoe guy we always talked to, really cooperative. Let's say a kind word for him, incidentally. If you ever got up to the Senate Document Room, there's a guy named [John T.] Waggoner up there, W-A-G-G-O-N-E-R, who might know something that would be of interest. He probably dealt with LBJ, an obscure type.

I said, "What is this thing?" He looked it up, and he said, "It's Alaska Mental Health; it's just a bill to build a mental hospital in Alaska." I said, "What in the world? Well, send me a couple of copies." Sure enough, by the time late afternoon came around, he called me and said, "Marie, ever since you called me I've been getting requests from all over the place. What is it? What is it with that crazy bill? We're going to have to get it reprinted. We didn't think it meant anything." And it didn't.

GW: May I just interrupt just half a second? Alaska was a territory in those days, and they did not have their [own] facilities. Whenever anybody in Alaska was committed because of mental illness, they sent them down to the state of Washington, which was the closest place.

MW: [They] had to go to Seattle.

GW: So the territory of Alaska had some sort of agreement with the state of Washington that they would send the mental patients from Alaska down to Washington. This was a bill to try to establish their own mental clinics in the territory of Alaska so they wouldn't have to send their people all the way down to the state of Washington. A very straightforward bill, nothing to it.

MW: We discovered that later on, though. At this time, we don't know what in the world this man is wiring about. Apparently, offices all over the place are getting flooded with requests.

It seems that because Alaska was a territory, that any Alaskan from anywhere could be shipped from [Alaska to another state]. They meant it to allow those who were confined in the States to go back to Alaska when they had a facility built. But the right wing had interpreted this as meaning anybody who was declared mentally off the beam could be shipped to Alaska, and started a volley of wires. Clinton Anderson was chairman of the Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee at the time. The only thing we could do was have his staff prepare a response explaining the Alaska Mental Health Bill, which is how we responded to all these lunatic-fringe correspondents. They really got up in arms. But typical of perhaps today's government rather than then, they prepared a three-page response, detailing every aspect of the bill. Instead of a one-page, short explanation we had this great big tome to send out, and of course we didn't have Xerox machines then. It had to be mimeographed and all that. It was a great

effort to send these replies. But the Alaska Mental Health Bill we did get passed.

GW: The point was the "Cross and the Flag" and all these really right-wing people--

MW: That was a tremendous amount of mail.

GW: Bushels of mail! Bushels of mail on a trivial issue. Incredible.

MW: Over nothing, absolutely nothing.

The other thing I see is the railroad retirement [bill], number thirty-six on your page five of the 1955 Highlights. I recall bushels of mail coming in on a railroad retirement bill which would have been to the advantage of the retirees, and that there was so much of it the automatic typewriters couldn't keep up. We didn't have very many of those at that time, and we just couldn't answer them, physically, even type envelopes to say, "We've got your letter. I'm for it."

So Johnson called up the president of the union, which he alone somehow knew was responsible for generating all this mail, sponsoring all this mail. He told Walter to call--I don't remember the man's name--"And tell that son of a bitch I have already said I'm for it and to knock off all this goddamn mail, because I haven't got enough staff to even open it, let alone answer it." And it stopped [snaps fingers]. It stopped a couple of days later. They were coming in with four or five of those great big canvas bags a day of just stuff on the railroad retirement, because this union leader had really generated, sponsored or pushed.

G: That's an interesting episode.

MW: Yes, and then one call to a union leader turned it off, saying, "I've already said I was for it. I don't want to hear any more about it." He was pretty peeved, pretty peeved about getting all the mail, because he did not go around saying he was for or against things. As leader he kept his position relatively quiet until it came to the floor and the actual vote, and then he would have to say which way he was [leaning], or just before when he would be pushing, but that was all manipulating and behind the scenes. He didn't say it publicly, but if he said he was for something publicly, generally--like the Social Security liberalization or whatever he had said he was for--if he had declared himself for something, then he got very annoyed when people wrote to him urging him to support something he had already said he was supporting.

G: It seems that in 1955 he really blossomed in terms of the Senate leadership.

GW: That was his first year, you see, as majority leader.

MW: Yes, but just remember, he had a heart attack, too.

GW: He'd been minority leader before. 1955 was the time when he really first had his opportunity to do this.

G: Evidently the housing bill was passed with the defeat of the Capehart amendment on one day, and the next day they got the minimum wage increased from seventy-five cents to a dollar. There were two Johnson victories, one on the heels of the other. Do you recall here his state of mind as he was chalking up all these victories?

MW: No, I think the man was as tense as. . . . Let me go back to, I think, number seventeen here, the reciprocal trade bill. He worked as hard as anybody ever worked on that particular bill. In fact, in my estimation, that's when it started to show on him he was about to have a heart attack. That's when he started to get grey in the face, just drawn.

G: What sort of memories do you have of that? I mean, where did you see him?

MW: Oh, just coming in the office to see Walter, or something like that.

G: How do you know he was working on this bill, though?

MW: On the reciprocal trade bill? Well, I was following legislation at that time, and the reciprocal trade bill was a great controversy. It was a matter we had mail on, and I was having to follow it. It looked at that time as though many of the southerners who had traditionally been low-tariff people were turning about, because there was now industry coming into their states, I guess, and becoming protectionists in a way, or tending that way. So he had a terrible fight. It was probably one of the worst fights of that whole session, as a fight. Minimum wage was nothing.

G: This was a case where he managed to secure a compromise.

MW: Yes, the three-year extension.

G: Allowing the President to raise tariffs.

MW: That's right, and Eisenhower was pretty much a free trader, so they were in agreement on this thing. It was just that the southern bloc, which you had been able to count on in the past as being low tariff,

had suddenly taken a swing to the right on the thing. I'd say that wore him down, the trade bill, really wore him down. Because that was in June, wasn't it? I don't have a date here. It must have been in June.

G: Let's talk about the heart attack. What are your recollections?

MW: Shock.

G: First of all, did you have any other forewarning that he was in this condition?

MW: No. No. You know, he'd had these kidney stone attacks, and he looked tired and worn out. But then, anyone who works hard gets to look like that. We didn't know of any, but I have just heard through the years that other people have said that one time he was riding in a car and had some sort of a gas attack. I guess that's in here some place.

G: Right. It was I think on the eighteenth [of June], or so.

MW: Anyway, but I don't know about that.

G: Where did you see him first after the heart attack, do you recall?

MW: I had to go out to the hospital. [Glen], do you remember that? I had to go out to Bethesda. I don't remember [the date], I'm sorry. No.

G: You don't remember going out there?

MW: I remember going out there and being very nervous, and the heavy security, and Mrs. Johnson being there, and Mary Margaret Wiley being there, and delivering something, and kind of peeping into the room but not really seeing him, and that's about it.

G: Did the heart attack change him much?

MW: For about five minutes.

(Laughter)

GW: Well, he quit smoking.

MW: For about five minutes.

GW: And he quit running up flights of stairs.

MW: Yes. He couldn't stand to wait for elevators.

G: Is that right? So he used to take the stairs?

MW: Yes, those marble steps. Oh yes, three or four at a time, big long-legged thing. Right. He was just running. He did everything sort in a spirit of fury, I guess. It wasn't in a spirit of exercise; it wasn't like a horse out gamboling. It was just: "I gotta get there!"

G: He didn't slow his pace up for long after the heart attack?

MW: He went right back as far as I'm concerned.

GW: Except for that little stint at the hospital, nobody saw him again until the following [January]. That is to say, those of us who were here in Washington didn't see him again till the beginning of the next year in January when the new Congress convened, because he was at the Ranch. He recuperated out there for a while. As you point out, people came to see him and all that, but that's not quite the same thing as the frantic activity on the Senate floor. So he had in effect a six-months' period of recuperation there, which may have changed his powers a little bit.

G: Let me ask you some general questions about LBJ at this point when he was majority leader. He has a reputation for telling each staff member

how to perform his job better, and he had all of these definite ideas. Did he ever sit down with you or stand over you and say, "This is the way you can do this or you should do this?"

MW: Not to me.

GW: No, not to me, but I know he used to prowl around in the offices and look in people's desks. I got this story from Jack Hight one time. I don't know whether Jack Hight is in your memory bank there. Jack Hight told me that he had gotten a letter from his mother. He had stuck it in his middle drawer, and it had been there maybe for a week or two; he hadn't done anything with it. One morning LBJ came in and said, "Jack, damn it, write to your mother!"

MW: "Jack, write your mother. LBJ."

GW: The only reason he could have done that is because Lyndon was prowling around drawers and found an unanswered letter to Jack Hight from his mother.

MW: Those stories that people say he prowled around and told people precisely how to do their job, I've never heard that kind of story.

G: Well, that he always had a better way of doing things, a more efficient way, and he concerned himself with the intricate details of each job.

MW: No, he came upon me with some backlog of civil rights letters, voting rights act letters, and hovered over the desk and said, "What are you doing?" I said, "I'm answering your damn mail, Senator." He stood there for a while and peered at me and then walked away. He gave me no suggestions as to how to do it. It was obvious; the mail was stacked up. It was a couch as long as the one you're sitting on, letters

several feet high all along. He never gave me any suggestions as to how to do it. All those reports, of which you have a sample, on the legislation, I really wrote those daily. He never said word one, two, three. He never complained. The only thing he said was that I was the most thorough person that he had on the staff and that sort of thing. He just complimented me on them in person or through Walter. But he never did [complain]. Maybe I was a little intimidating because I remembered all these bills, to follow them. HR 7249, who remembers that from one day to the next? But I remembered a list of them. So I guess he felt he shouldn't do that. And I guess with Glen, too. We were just not in the kinds of positions where he felt he had to watch over us. He just never did.

GW: I just never got into that kind of a loop, you know.

MW: Even when he came by the desk it was mostly just to say hello.

G: It was said that he was able to get the most out of the people who worked for him.

MW: Absolutely yes, I would say so.

G: How did he do this?

GW: Well, through a combination of intimidation--

MW: That's the main thing.

GW: --and, as I said, from time to time a close personal thing. For example, I remember I think the first year we were here he insisted we all go out and have a big party, all the staff, out at some Mexican restaurant out here.

MW: Juanita [Roberts] arranged that.

GW: Yes, we were all there. He had this feeling that the staff--

MW: It was his birthday.

GW: --were his children or a part of his family and he'd treat them like that. He'd be mean to them or nasty like you would to an errant child. It wasn't--it was that kind of an atmosphere that he created, the strict father.

MW: Strict but loving father.

GW: Yes, strict but loving father, that's right. As I told you in the little incident about my kidney stone attack, he was down in that room. He wanted to be sure that I was taken care of. He did this many times with Glynn Stegall. You may have stories about Glynn Stegall and how he made sure that Stegall was taken care of, and in fact, took him back to work when he really shouldn't have been working at all, because of his high blood pressure and everything. He looked after them, he looked after his people.

MW: The press conference that LBJ held on July 2, 1955, which is when he had his heart attack, didn't that deal with the trade issue?

G: I'm not sure. There was one question that really sent him into an orbit and I don't remember which one.

MW: Okay, I'm just going back to my theory that the trade bill was what triggered the heart attack. [Reading a document], "Conferred with Senator George in the hospital on July 2." Was Senator George in the hospital?

G: Yes, I think he was in for some bronchial condition.

MW: Oh, okay. All right.

G: Did you ever get a glimpse of LBJ's humor? Telling stories, anecdotes?

MW: Yes.

GW: Well, somebody has written about this, Booth [Mooney] maybe. Or there's that thing at the Library about LBJ's humor. His humor was almost always directed at the things that he knew about, namely politics. His stories were political stories, and he was a great mimic. He would mimic certain of his colleagues.

G: Do you recall him doing it on one occasion or another?

GW: All I can tell you is stories that I've heard about how he used to mimic some of these people, some of them in great and very good detail. You can get a lot of those stories from other people besides me because my stories are second-hand. I didn't personally ever witness anything. You can get that I'm sure from people who were closer.

G: Do you have a favorite?

GW: No, I can't think of it right now. Let me think, maybe I'll come up with something.

MW: The imitation of Nixon at the Novak wedding.

GW: Yes.

G: I've never heard that one.

MW: You haven't? All right. Geraldine Williams, former staff member, married Bob Novak, then Wall Street Journal reporter. Johnson had, at The Elms when he was vice president, the reception at his home. It was after Nixon had made his famous "you won't have old Dick Nixon to kick around anymore" tirade. Johnson made a little talk about

Geraldine and Bob, as befitting the host of a wedding reception, and he somehow got that whole entire speech of Nixon. It's one of those rooms where you have a couple of steps elevated, about three steps up, and here was this great audience in this great big room and he delivered this perfect imitation of Dick Nixon doing his "I'll never run for anything again" speech. Yes, it was absolutely amazing. It was absolutely perfect. I was right by Liz Carpenter, who was laughing so hard you could hardly hear. Tears were rolling down. Everybody was breaking up over it. It was marvelous. You could have a sellout crowd with that kind of performance all the time. Forget Rich Little and David Fry, you know, just LBJ doing Richard Nixon. He could have made a living at it. That is my favorite. He used to do Arthur Perry, kind of bumbling along and being serious. And he would kind of imitate Walter once in a while, Walter Jenkins being anxious. But my absolute favorite is that imitation of Richard Nixon.

GW: I can tell you an absolutely astonishing story about Arthur Perry which illustrates how very loyal people were who worked for Lyndon Johnson, and particularly Perry, who had many years in the Senate.

(Interruption)

As you know, every senator gets a lot of kooks coming in his office from time to time. Mr. Perry was the guy who dealt with most of them because he was a gentle man and he would talk to them calmly. There was never a frantic moment about Mr. Perry.

MW: Absolutely perfect gentleman, courtly.

GW: Mr. Perry looked like a senator. In fact, he was frequently mistaken for a senator. He had this nice shock of white hair. He was a very stately looking man, a very fine gentleman. Anyway, to make a long story short, there was this guy that had been out at St. Elizabeth's Hospital, and he had frequently come in to talk to Mr. Perry. Mr. Perry was the guy who would talk to these people, until I came along some years later. Because of my background in psychology I got an opportunity to talk to some of these people, too. But this guy, he had been confined at St. Elizabeth's. Somehow or another he blamed Johnson or he blamed Perry for this. So he came into the office one day--and I got this story from Mr. Perry and I don't know who can verify it for you. Maybe Mrs. Perry can; I guess she's still alive and around some place. But the guy came in the office and drew a pistol, pulled a gun out and was going to threaten to shoot him. Mr. Perry, calm as he could be, sat there and just talked with the guy for a while. I don't know how long it went on. But finally the guy got up and left after this droning talk from Mr. Perry. I said, "My God, Mr. Perry, what did you do? Didn't you call the police?" And he said, "Oh, no, no, no. I didn't want to create any disturbance. I didn't want anything to happen that would reflect against the Senator." And I thought to myself, that is really carrying loyalty just a hair too far. If anybody ever walks into my office with a gun, I'm going to protect the Senator as best I can, but believe me, I'm not going to carry that so far as to not to call the police to tell them that the whole thing happened.

But seriously, Mr. Perry felt that if he had called the police it might have created an incident that would have gotten into the newspapers and he did not want that to reflect against the Senator in any way. That's carrying loyalty to the nth degree.

G: One of the things I wanted to ask you, since you do have the combination of the background in psychology on the one hand and the long experience with LBJ on the other, could you put him on the couch and just sort of analyze him? What were your impressions of him?

GW: Well, my Ph.D. in psychology was mostly in the statistical area. I am not what you would call a clinical psychologist or a psychiatrist.

G: But you must have some professional impressions.

GW: Well, professionally I can tell you that he was a very brilliant man. He was a man of uncommon intelligence. I would hate to try to predict what his IQ would be. He knew everything about everything. It had to be way up above 150, clearly in the genius stage.

MW: 200.

GW: You know, off the scale. He was a very smart man.

G: He seemed to have a thirst for information, too.

GW: But he absorbed it.

MW: Rapidly.

GW: The only other man I've ever seen who came even close to him was Hubert Humphrey. And Hubert is in a similar vein, you know, a man of unbelievable intelligence. You could sit down and explain an extremely complicated thing to him, and you'd have to do it real

quick because he'd be ahead of you. He'd understand what it was. Hubert is the same way.

But as far as his conflicts are concerned, I can't really delve into that. I've gotten a lot of this from Sam Houston. You know, that family is a very interesting family. They had a lot of conflicts as well. But apparently the father of the family had thought it was Sam who was going to be the politician in the family, not Lyndon. That is to say, Sam Houston was more or less the favorite of the father, whereas Lyndon was more or less the favorite of the mother.

Now I'm sure you've talked to a lot of the people in the family, and what I'm telling you I get almost entirely from Sam. It's not because I have any great knowledge of the background of the family itself. But you don't have to be a psychologist to see that Lyndon was trying to excel in the eyes of [his father], when he knew, or let's assume that he knew, that his father had thought of Sam as the guy that was going to excel and not him, so clearly--and at the goading of his mother. This comes out in Sam Houston's book. Whether it's true or not, I don't know. But you could reasonably hypothesize that Lyndon had an early tendency to overachieve on the basis of the goadings from his mother and the effort to try to sort of show his father, to prove to his father that he was the guy that should get it and not Sam. So there's no question at all in my mind that there was a considerable amount of sibling rivalry in that family, going back to the earliest possible days.

But these are amateurish musings, really. I'm not in a position to give you any detailed, deep, psychological analysis of Lyndon Johnson. That would be foolish to do. Obviously, somewhere in his early life he got this overachieving business. He drifted around when he was a teenager; he took the trip to California; he worked in the farm fields, et cetera, et cetera. But something, somewhere along snapped in his mind that he, by God, was going to make it and make it big, and once he set himself off on that course he really did it.

G: Did you think that he worried too much about things, a worrier?

MW: Yes. Pick, pick, pick, pick on little things.

G: What was the source of this, do you think? Do you think it was an insecurity or do you just think it was a--

MW: No, perfectionism.

GW: No, I would say it was his desire--he wanted to know everything about everything. Now, obviously, nobody can do that, but he did and he wanted to. He wanted to know everything about everything. He didn't want to miss out on a single detail. He wanted to check out every letter that went out of the office if he possibly could. Obviously he couldn't. He'd want to check into everybody's personal life to be sure that they were working hard and that they were happy. He just wanted to be involved in everything. It was incredible how he had this feeling that he wanted to know everything. He wanted to know everything. Obviously you can't know everything, but he sure tried.

G: Do you think that his temper was something that he triggered voluntarily or do you think it was just something that exploded without his control?

GW: I would say he was easily capable of both. By virtue of the kind of stories--

MW: [He was a] ham.

GW: --Marie told you earlier, he could act. He could have been a good actor. He could have made it big as an actor because he could put on a face or he could act a role at an instant. So what I'm saying is I think there are times when he genuinely burst out in anger with a temper show because he had a lot of people around him who weren't as smart as he was. This will happen to anybody.

MW: An awful lot of people around him who were not bright.

GW: At the same time I think he frequently did it as a part of a show or as a part of an effort to try to affect a person in a certain way. Sometimes I think it was contrived, other times it wasn't.

G: He seemed to change moods quite rapidly, too. This is something that you noted in your first interview.

MW: Yes.

GW: Yes.

G: Did this seem extraordinary to you?

GW: Well, I think everybody has mood changes. I'm not so sure they come as rapidly as they sometimes did with Mr. Johnson. But let me say this about that, I never saw that affect his ability to be effective. You know what I'm saying? It never occurred at inappropriate times. It never occurred at a time which would keep him from trying to fulfill whatever his particular goal was at that particular moment, whether it was something on the floor or whatever. So I think that while he

was moody, while he did change his moods frequently from time to time, I think he had absolute control over it. And these things never happened, like say a burst of temper or an outburst of invective at somebody, at a time which would adversely affect whatever it was he was trying to do. Do you understand?

G: Did he ever talk to you about his ideas about space, just philosophically? For example, it's been told several times the night he was out at the Ranch walking around and got the news that Sputnik was up. Did he ever talk to you about that?

GW: I've heard that story from Gene Emme, whom I know very well. He's the NASA historian, and Gene has got some of that stuff in his files. He has an extensive amount of material on this. If you don't know Gene Emme, you should go talk to him while you're here, just to make the contact. He's got an enormous amount of [information]. I personally didn't do that. Frankly, the whole time I worked for Lyndon Johnson I don't think he ever called me in his office but one time where I really sat down and talked to him, and that was about the X-15 incident which is in that other transcript over there so I won't go over it.

G: But you never heard him just holding forth on space?

GW: No. But let me tell you, it was pretty clear--Lyndon Johnson, as far as I'm concerned, did the right thing whenever he could. The right thing may be hard to describe in your mind or mine, whether it was civil rights or whatever. In the space area he had a perfect opening to do the right thing and to do the political thing at the same time. Lyndon Johnson was basically a political animal. But he wanted to do

the right thing, and here was a perfect opening. Here it was clearly--at least at the time it was clear--that it was a challenge to our technological leadership that had serious political overtones as well as survival overtones, because of the military aspects of it. It was a case where Lyndon Johnson could be a statesman and a politician at the same time. This doesn't always happen.

So he clearly saw the importance of the space program, both in terms of its importance to the country and in terms of the way the Eisenhower people were treating it. It just fit beautifully. So all the statements he made about this were calculated to both be correct, be true, be right in terms with what was right or what he thought was right for the country and what I think most people felt was right for the country, and at the same time to sort of turn the screws on the Eisenhower Administration because of their lukewarmness over the whole effort. Because they had really been caught flatfooted on this thing. So I think there's no question about it. Lyndon Johnson understood the importance of that in the early days.

Now as it turned out, later on when he became chairman of the [National Aeronautics and] Space Council and when he became president, he never denounced the program, but it had served its purpose in the late fifties for him. Space was just not as glamorous in the latter part of his tenure as president as it had been earlier. Of course, we were leading up to the landing on the moon and Johnson was excited about the flight around the moon in December, 1968, which was the last month of his presidency. But there were a number of decisions made

about the space program in the mid and late sixties which, in effect, have led to the sort of general decline of interest in the space area. In his later years you couldn't say that Lyndon Johnson was really a strong advocate of an increased space program, probably because there was no political support for that kind of a thing at that time.

Lyndon Johnson, if nothing else, was a realist about these things. His position on the space program is very clear. The record is clear. He helped start it; he used it both as a political advantage, and I really believe that Lyndon Johnson understood the importance of the thing. Obviously a lot of the importance of the program is yet to be seen. We're going to be living with the space program for the rest of time. So very few people are that perspicacious that they could view where our involvement in exploration of outer space is going to take us. But at the political level there was a distinct cooling of this thing in the mid sixties and late sixties, so that the space program, while it's not degenerated into nothingness, is still at a much lower level of excitement and of interest and of political interest than it was in those early days. I don't know whether I've answered your question or not.

G: One more question on these general observations. Did you ever see LBJ exercise his considerable powers of persuasion on someone? Did you witness this firsthand?

MW: Me!

GW: Not except as I--well, yes, to Marie, yes, to get her to come back to work for him in--what was it, 1959?

MW: 1958.

GW: I can tell you the exact date, it was the Sunday after New Year's Day we went out there in January, 1959. We went out to his house to talk to him.

G: Thirtieth Place?

MW: Yes.

GW: That's right, exactly. It was January of 1959.

MW: Well, it could be established from the record.

G: What happened?

MW: He said that he wanted me to come back to work for him.

G: First of all, what was the purpose of your going out?

MW: Well, Sam Johnson said that we should go out. I had been working for the trade organization, the Committee for a National Trade Policy. I became dissatisfied with them and took a job with the Airport Operators' Council, Airport Owners or whatever the name of the place was. I didn't work there very long. All the time I was with the airport people Sam Johnson was in constant contact with me saying, "Come back to work for Lyndon."

GW: This was in December of 1958.

MW: Before. It was constant. I said, "No, I will not come back to work for him. No, I am not going to be abused that way. No, I will not work more than forty hours a week. No. There is no amount of money in the world I need to get sick over. No, I will not do it." I just kept saying no, no, no. It was to Sam. So finally Sam said, "Well, I think you better go out and see [Lyndon]." I was sick with one of

those virus things in the head and just all stuffed up. I had been just saying no, no, no, no. We got a call one Sunday morning, and on top of having a virus we had been out and partying.

GW: It was right after the first of the year. This was in January.

MW: It was during the holidays. I do remember it was around the holidays.

GW: It was in the holidays, but it was right after the first.

MW: So Sam called and said, "I think you should go out to see Lyndon at Thirtieth Place to talk about Marie going to work there." Correct? (Interruption)

All right, we went out to Thirtieth Place. I guess Glen has given you the build-up on how we got out there?

G: Yes.

MW: Okay. Mr. Johnson said that he wanted to know, what he wanted to be sure of, is that "your husband has control over you." [Those were his] exact words, to know that he has control over you. That was sort of offensive. I wasn't feeling well. Women's lib was not in in those days. It was with me but it wasn't with anybody else, or at least with Mr. Johnson. I was anxious that we keep eating. He said he knew I was interested in civil rights, that I cared about the "niggrahs"--he didn't say that in an insulting way, he just said it in a Texas accent, N-I-G-G-R-A-H-S--and wanted to see that something was going to be done for them, and he intended to do something. If I really meant what I had said and had been holding to for all these years that to come to work for him would be to do something for the "niggrahs." He needed me: "I need you. I need you to help me. This is when I

really need you. And if you mean what you say you will come back to work for me." No halting in there of course when he said it, just firm and looking you right in the eye, down his big nose, like that. It was intimidating.

GW: It was hard to resist.

MW: And you can't help but think, well, if I didn't do it, I'd be some kind of a damn phony, wouldn't I? Sure would be. Put my money where my mouth is. I know I'm capable of working at this. I know; I've done it. I've worked for him and I know I've done a good job. So if he says he needs me now how can I say no, when he's going to help people I feel need to be helped, do something I really care about.

G: What about tying in your husband's position in this?

MW: I think that was Sam's idea.

G: Really? Did LBJ mention it then?

MW: No, all he said was, "I wanted to see if your husband had control over you," meaning that he, Johnson, I guess, felt he had no, quote "control" over me to make me come back to work for him, but that Glen would have control over me to come back to work for him. There was no evidence in what Lyndon Johnson said of any of the hanky-panky that Sam might have gone through. It could possibly have been that Sam had said, "Well, I'm trying to get Marie Wilson back to work for you, Lyndon, and I'll see that Glen brings her out to talk to you about it. Nobody can get her to do it. Maybe Glen can get her to do it." Can't you hear Sam making all that up? He was perfectly capable of

making all that up. It was the most moving experience--I was never so persuaded by anyone to do anything ever.

G: You went out there resolved that you weren't going to go back to work for him?

MW: Oh, I was hostile to the whole thing! I was mad. I was sick. I had the flu or some nasty thing and I also had probably a hangover from a party. It was party season. And as a matter of fact my period had started. There wasn't anything right going, and all I needed was to have to go out to goddamned Thirtieth Place. There was Lady Bird and Bobby Baker and Walter and the kids all sitting around having coffee, a bunch of people falling all over each other. We just kind of went off in a corner with LBJ himself. This was not in front of any of these other people. There were only the three of us involved in this conversation.

G: Did he direct any of this toward you?

GW: Not really. As I told you, I had just been announced about two weeks earlier as being the chief clerk of the new committee.

MW: Oh, I know one thing he did. At that time I was not overweight, as I am now, but I was not then. I was wearing a maroon suit with sort of a boxy jacket that sort of stood out like this, and he said, "And you ought to lose some weight." I stood up and I said, "Where? Just where?" I was mad as hell. If I was going to come back to work for him I wasn't going to take any orders about how I was to dress, look, act or whatever. I was to work for him and that's all there was to it. I said, "Mr. Johnson, if you can tell me where I have to lose some

weight, go right ahead, tell me." Now, I stood up to do this, because I couldn't cope with the beady eyes looking down past the big nose, I had to stand up. It becomes body English. He didn't say anything [except] "Hmpf. Okay." And let it pass. But I stood up to him. I really got mad when he started--he used to do that to a lot of women. [He'd] tell them, "Go get a manicure and go get your hair cut," that sort of thing.

G: You were saying about your position had been announced as chief clerk.

GW: Yes. Mine and BeLieu's, Ken BeLieu. It was in the same press release. So you know, I don't think he would have reneged on that. He had already announced to the world he was going to do that. The last thing Lyndon Johnson would have ever wanted done would have been to come back, say, a couple of weeks later and say, "No, I didn't really mean that." It wouldn't have happened. I was going to be the chief clerk and that was the size of it.

G: Well, I certainly do thank you.

[End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview II]

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Legal Agreement Pertaining to the Oral History Interview of Glen P. and Marie Wilson

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 21 of Title 44, United States Code and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth, we, Glen P. and Marie Wilson of Washington, D.C. do hereby give, donate and convey to the United States of America all our rights, title and interest in the tape recording and transcript of the personal interview conducted on February 13, 1977 in Washington, D.C. and prepared for deposit in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

This assignment is subject to the following terms and conditions:

(1) The transcript shall be available for use by researchers as soon as it has been deposited in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

(2) The tape recording shall be available to those researchers who have access to the transcript.

(3) We hereby assign to the United States Government all copyright we may have in the interview transcript and tape.

(4) Copies of the transcript and the tape recording may be provided by the Library to researchers upon request.

(5) Copies of the transcript and tape recording may be deposited in or loaned to institutions other than the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

Glen P. Wilson
Donor

7/7/80
Date

Marie P. Wilson
Donor

7/7/80
Date

Archivist of the United States

August 7, 1980
Date