INTERVIEW I

DATE: June 3, 1968

INTERVIEWEE: Warren Woodward

INTERVIEWER: Paul Bolton

PLACE: Mr. Woodward's office, Dallas, Texas

Tape 1 of 1

B: We are in the Dallas office of Mr. Warren Woodward, vice president in charge of operations for American Airlines for the Southwest United States, Southwest Region. Mr. Woodward has had long associations with Mr. Johnson, and we'd like to let Mr. Woodward right now tell us what some of those associations were. How did they start?

W: Paul, it got underway one day by my walking into John Connally's office there at KVET. This was about January or February of 1948. John had received a call from Congressman Johnson and the gist of it was something like this: [the Congressman] said, "John, the war is over now and we are beginning to get settled and we've got to kind of regroup and rebuild. I've got to start getting the staff back up to its level that we had before the war and so forth, and we've got to start over. I want you to come back and come on up here to Washington and help me and get some things going. Now if you can't come, then you've got to find somebody." That was about the position that John was in.

And just by sheer chance I walked into John's office there at KVET. He had just started KVET, and it was getting underway. You remember where it was there on the alley, Bradford's Alley.

B: In Austin.

W: In Austin. I walked into Bradford's Alley and up those steps there into John's office. He said, "Well, you're it." I said, "What do you mean, I'm it?" He said, "Well, I have just gotten this call from Congressman Johnson and I've got to either find somebody to go back up there or I've got to go myself. Now Nellie and I are just getting started with KVET, and I'm here with Pickle and Bill Deason and all the rest trying to get this radio [station started]." He said, "You're it. You've got to go now."

I wasn't married at the time, I was working for Pioneer Airlines and it was a decision that [was difficult] because I've always wanted to be in the airlines business. I'd flown during the war and I was getting along very well in a struggling little industry there.

B: Pioneer Airlines. Now to back up just a little bit, Pioneer Airlines was the predecessor for Trans-Texas, was it not?

W: No, no, it wasn't. Pioneer was the first of the little feeder lines to start down here, but it was not an offshoot of Trans-Texas nor was Trans-Texas an offshoot of Pioneer. They were started separately.

B: Oh, they were?

W: They started separately, and Pioneer eventually merged into Continental Airlines.

B: Oh, I see.

W: So anyway, I wasn't married, and I didn't have any particular commitments. I was just out of the University of Texas, having finished up after the war.

I did not know Congressman Johnson. I'd never met him and knew nothing about him except I had some vague remembrances of the rather hectic 1941 campaign. Of course, I [was] at an age where I couldn't have participated in the 1941 campaign. So really what I knew of the Congressman was what I had heard around the fraternity house at the University after the war. There was a lot of Homer Rainey conversation and liberalism was beginning to rear its head.

B: Homer Rainey was the president of the University?

W: That's right. He was the president of the University and made an unsuccessful race against Beauford Jester for governor of Texas.

But campus liberalism was not anything like we know it now, and Congressman Johnson was identified with the liberal wing of Democratic politics, I guess, or at least was in my mind. I must confess that I probably had no other impression other than the fact that he was a young liberal congressman and that is about all I knew about him.

But I remember going off to consider this matter as to what I should do. And one of the things that concerned me was the fact that I had read in the paper that the Congressman had serious thoughts about running for the Senate. Well, now, my dilemma was then if I were to give up what looked to be a promising career in the airline work and go to work for a congressman who was about to make a race for the U.S. Senate, if he lost then I'd [have] given up the airline thing and we were out in the snow on the other. I remember going to talk to J. C. Kellam and I've remembered it very well to this day.

I went in to talk to Mr. Kellam about my problem here. I said, "Now, I've got to [decide]. I don't have a whole lot to lose because I haven't got anything, but I do have a little bit of a foothold in the airline industry. Now, what if I give this up?" They had offered me an assistant vice presidency of this little airline if I would stay and not go on this other assignment. That looked very big at that time. And I went to see Jess Kellam. Jess Kellam said, "Well, don't you worry about it, because Lyndon Johnson is a leader and if he isn't leading in the Senate or the House, he'll be leading something else. You'll never regret following him because he's going to be a leader and if it's not here, it's somewhere else because this man is just getting started." And I do know maybe I'm congenitally a follower, but I like to be led, I like to have a leader. That's the thing I've enjoyed about the President all these years: I've always had the sense that I've never had any doubt but what we were moving forward. When you're associated with him, you know, you don't have any sense of feeling that you are standing still. It is always a sense of going forward and sometimes the path isn't always clear, but you know that you are being led forward and that you are making progress. And I liked that about it when Kellam told me that he was a leader and that if we missed out on the Senate that we'd find other fields in which he'd be a leader and to come on and take a chance.

So I went back to Connally and reported that that would be fine and that I would go up there. I cleared my desk of airline matters and went up there on March 1 of 1948. I arrived on that day at

International Airport. Walter Jenkins was the administrative assistant and was on the staff at the time and Marjorie, his wife, and Beth Jenkins who is now married was about six months old, I guess. They came out to meet me in a Chevrolet coupe, and they took me out to the Johnson home on 30th Place there, out Connecticut off Ellicott Street. I moved upstairs and I lived upstairs in that top room.

B: Third floor?

W: On the third floor.

That got me to Washington.

B: Did you ever stay up there on the third floor back there in that attic portion? Was that where you [stayed]?

W: Yes, it was on the third floor up in the attic portion, and it had the disadvantage of being directly over the then-Congressman's bedroom. And attic floors, being attic floors, creak a little bit. Now, by the time I reached Washington I'd heard all sorts of stories about the seemingly volatile nature of the Congressman's personality, that he was really high geared and that you just had to be very careful. So I was trying to be super sensitive. There was not a bath on the third floor, so I had to come down and the floors would creak and the steps would creak. I found myself in the morning, in order to avoid the floor, I would stand in the middle of the bed to get dressed because on one morning I was not that cautious and I heard a rap on the ceiling which was my floor but the ceiling of the Congressman's bedroom below me, and I knew that I had awakened him.

Now, I had to get up a lot earlier; I tried to be up by about six and downstairs by about six thirty. That was where I first became really acquainted with the First Lady because she would be down there warming Luci's bottle, and she'd be kind enough to fix me a little breakfast and while that was going on I'd hold Luci and give Luci her bottle which her mother had prepared, and we'd sit and talk and chat. It was under those very doubtful circumstances that I came to know the First Lady. We had marvelous conversations those mornings and I got to know a little bit more about the whole family at that point.

I would sneak out the house, and I'd try to be down to the office by about seven thirty because generally by about seven forty-five the Congressman had had his morning orange juice and was calling and wanted the mail read to him. That's about the way I got started in Washington.

B: What was your title there in Washington? Did you have a title?

W: Well, they tended in sort of official dealings to call everybody administrative assistant. In practical terms, though, there wasn't but one administrative assistant and that was Walter Jenkins. But we just sort of referred to ourselves as assistant to Congressman Johnson. They seemed to have gotten away a little bit from the title "secretary." Now, before the war, the title "secretary to the Congressman" was more in vogue. It tended after the war to drift and we had very unclear understanding of that. We'd type our letters, and if we wanted it to sound a little more official or stronger, we'd say "Administrative

Assistant to Congressman Johnson." Sometimes it was just "Assistant." But my memory is that we kind of got away from the title "secretary" after the war.

B: March 1, 1948, was very close to the time that he announced for the Senate.

W: That's correct, because I had not been in Washington very long when we had to make a weekend trip, a little foray down into Texas. The Congressman wanted to test me out a little bit to see what I could do and couldn't do, so he took me with him and we went down to Austin, and we stayed in the penthouse on the Driskill. Now, who had that, Paul, do you remember? Was it Reed? Somebody named Reed that might have had that? There was a penthouse up there on the Driskill.

B: I don't remember.

W: But you had to walk up some steps.

B: That's right.

W: The elevator didn't go all the way. And we went up, stayed there at that penthouse and there were just the Congressman and myself. The purpose was to investigate the possibilities of running for the Senate. We received various groups during the day. We'd have a raft of people come in and the Congressman would discuss the possibilities of making the race. And I would assist him and drive the car and do odds and ends and chores.

B: Okay. Do you recall the time when he announced or not? I mean, I have forgotten the dates, and I do not have the dates with me. Do you recall those dates?

W: It's got to be early May.

B: Yes.

W: But I don't have the exact dates. Probably somewhere in the files, but it was early May.

B: Yes. Now to lead up to the anecdote that I'm particularly interested in your version of, I'm going to have to do a little talking myself.

W: All right.

B: I'm Paul Bolton, of course. At that time I had taken a leave of absence from the radio station by which I was employed to assist Mr. Johnson in preparing his speeches for this senatorial campaign.

Sometime in May, I forget the exact date, but it was during May, we had planned a party, an opening speech party at Wooldridge Park in Austin which is a public square immediately south of the courthouse. Wooldridge Park is in a depression with a sort of band-stand in the middle of it, and it is ordinarily the place where public speakings were held in those days when public speakings were held more frequently and out-of-doors. The reasons for describing this will come out in a moment. Mr. Johnson had requested that I try to find him someone else to help in this work, and I had employed a young man named Horace Busby who was at that time the graduating editor of The Daily Texan at the University of Texas. He and I had worked with Mr. Johnson on the opening speech for this Wooldridge Park opening. On the afternoon of the opening of the rally in Wooldridge Park, I had completed the final draft late in the afternoon, I think it was around five o'clock, five thirty maybe, and it was my duty to carry it out to Mr. Johnson's home and give him the final copy of the

speech. He lived about two miles, I guess, from our headquarters building downtown. I drove out there. He lived in an upstairs apartment. What was that address?

W: That was 1901 Dillman and the Dillman Place residence loomed large in the early days because so many rallies [were held there]. It had a great big back yard, you know.

B: Right.

W: And informal conferences and gatherings and barbecues, on a smaller scale, were held out in that back yard. A lot of political planning went on underneath those big trees at 1901 Dillman.

B: That's right. So, I didn't ring the bell, it wasn't necessary to ring the bell ; I'd been in and out of the house all the time anyway. I opened the front door and started up the stairs and as I got almost to the top of the stairs I met Dr. Bill Morgan coming down. I looked at him aghast and I said, "My gosh," or words to that effect, "Who is sick? Is someone sick here?" He shook his head at me and didn't say anything and went on down the stairs. I went on into the Congressman's bedroom. He was quite evidently ill. Incidentally, I talked with Dr. Morgan just a few days ago, and Dr. Morgan says that he had given the Congressman several shots of pain killer that day and that he didn't know how in the world a man could keep functioning in the pain that he was in from a kidney stone. In any event, I went into his bedroom and he was just starting to dress for his speech that night. I gave him the speech and talked to him briefly and saw how sick he was. Mrs. Johnson was there trying to help him. He didn't know whether he was going to be able to make it or not, but he was

determined to try. So I left the Dillman house very much in a turmoil as you can imagine and went back down to Wooldridge where the rally was to be held.

At the appointed time, the Johnson car pulled up on the south side of the block near the public library and Mr. Johnson got out and he was all dressed up; he looked beautiful in his well-tailored clothes, looked like he was feeling beautiful. He ran to the center stage after his introduction, made his speech without a single hitch, and got a huge ovation from the crowd for the speech, and I felt a little bit better about it. Now, the next morning after that opening speech which he--

W: Paul, was that speech on a Friday night? My memory was that it was a Saturday night speech. Because the next day--

B: The next day you and I and he--

W: Left on the same Pioneer Airlines flight.

B: Got on the Pioneer Airlines and flew to Amarillo and that's where I want you to pick up the story.

W: All right. All right. Well, I guess we can come back to Busby in a little bit. I had a little story about Busby.

But I'd first become aware that something was amiss on Thursday before this Saturday night opening speech. But it would have been kept awfully quiet as to his sickness, and so we just went ahead with our planning. We had the headquarters at the old Hancock place on the corner of Colorado and Seventh, I believe it was, and it was an un-air conditioned place.

Now, this was my first introduction to something that was characteristic of the President from that day until this and this is his interest in the art of getting a crowd out. I remember very forcefully learning my first lesson in crowd generation. We had worked very hard that week to get all kinds of delegations in from the old Tenth District. It was really to kind of build this as a Tenth District rally. We had worked very, very hard and I had been preoccupied with that. That's when I first became familiar with getting crowds and with names like Johnny Simmang and--

B: Will Rogers.

W: Will Rogers and our friend over in the bank in Blanco--his son is over at the American National Bank, Ben Brigham--Mr. Percy Brigham, I believe his name was. Anyway we called all the people and were getting a crowd.

I was just beginning to hear a little bit of a rumor through the old Hancock residence that the Congressman was sick, but we didn't pay much attention to it. It wasn't until after Saturday night, the speech had been made, and he was in a white suit, as I recall, and his mother was on the platform. That's a very idyllic setting there with that band shell down in the bowl of the Wooldridge Park. We did have a real good crowd and he made a great speech and it was warmly received. It looked like the campaign was off to a great start. Well, as you pointed out, he left almost immediately to go back to, I imagine, Dillman, because he undoubtedly was a sick man, although again we still didn't know all of the details.

It was at about that point that John Connally told me that I had been selected to sort of be the traveling assistant. [He said] that the rest of the organization--we had a very limited staff at this point--hadn't been built up so they needed a lot of bodies at the headquarters to keep things going and they could only spare one out. You [Paul Bolton] were going along to do some of the journalistic and writing and press chores and I was going along to do some of the administrative tasks.

So John then felt it necessary to tell me that the Congressman was suffering from a kidney stone, and that the kidney stone was causing a blockage and throwing off poison and causing fever and pain, so we had to be careful. But he felt the necessity to tell me because we were going to try to take care of him. Now, the Congressman's position in all of this was, I think he said, that he had had stones before and he'd always been able to pass them and he felt that he would pass this stone. And once the stone would pass the condition would clear and we'd all be back on the trail. So he just said, "Leave [me alone]" in effect his position was, "You just leave me alone, I can take it, and I'll pass this stone, and when that's done, why everything will be clear." But Saturday night passed and Sunday morning we took about a seven or eight o'clock flight to Amarillo.

B: Quite early.

W: Quite early. We stopped in San Angelo and in Abilene and then in Lubbock. At each stop he'd get off long enough to make a phone call, generally to a publisher of a paper. Houston Harte was a good friend and I remember we tried to talk to Houston Harte and in Abilene

the Harte-Hanks group there at the Abilene Reporter-News, and so forth. We got to Lubbock and I remember one of my first lessons in being sure to keep a lot of dimes ready for the phone, because I didn't have a dime and we were trying to get a quick phone call in to Charlie Guy at the Lubbock paper while the plane was being serviced.

B: He's the Lubbock publisher.

W: Publisher at Lubbock. But the point was that at each of these stops we tried to get in touch with the publisher. The Congressman always put great store in having newspaper support because he felt that in those areas where he always had good, active newspapers supporting him he always did well. When he didn't have them, why, he didn't do well. So we took advantage of the stops. He never lets a minute waste. When we'd have five or ten minutes on the ground at San Angelo and Abilene, well, he'd do this.

To my memory, he didn't speak of his health on the way up there. I remember just sort of keeping an eye on him. We got on up to Amarillo and we checked in at--was it the Herring Hotel?

B: Herring Hotel. Ernest Thompson's old hotel.

W: Oh, Ernest Thompson's old hotel. We got up there and it was Sunday, and we started checking in with the Jay Taylors and the Ernest Thompsons and those people. And maybe I was just looking for it because John had tipped me off that he was sick and to watch it, but I thought I noticed him beginning to perspire and look feverish. But he just kept on going, and we administered aspirin to him and whatever medication [we had]. I believe Dr. Morgan had given us some

pills or something, hadn't he? Or given us some general instructions as to what [to do].

B: He may have given you something; I had none.

W: I remember I would pack him and unpack him. He perspires freely and I was concerned about having enough shirts. I made a note to be sure to tell Zephyr Black that we were going to need more shirts, because he was running through six and seven shirts a day at this period, as he was to do all through the campaign, because the campaigns had not been moved up into the cooler period of the spring. We were in May, June and July in this campaign and it was very, very hot. But in any event, I remember I was worried about having enough shirts for him.

But we had a breakfast on Monday morning, and then we took a car--I believe you stayed maybe in Amarillo to work on a speech that was coming up Wednesday in Wichita Falls.

B: Now, just before you had the breakfast, I believe on the night before, he had a date at an Amarillo radio station to make a speech.

W: Yes.

B: And he did go to that station. And he did make that speech.

W: That's correct; he sure did.

B: Then the next day--

W: We had a breakfast and then we were to get our car and go to neighboring North Texas communities like--I believe, we went to Borger and Pampa. He was a very young man and he was identified with the young people. I remember we met very frequently with junior chamber of commerce groups as well as the leading citizens in the groups. We also met the young people of the community. But he got through those days. Now, that

was Monday and Tuesday, and we'd make those forays out into the North Texas communities and come back. It was perfectly obvious that he was getting more sick as those days went on and as I look back at it now, it was because this stone was not passing and it was throwing off more poison into his system. Well, Tuesday night came, and we had a late night, maybe like ten or eleven, as I remember. [We had a] train to catch, an overnight Pullman to Dallas. We had three lower berths, and my berth was opposite his and yours was maybe one up from ours, as I recall. Well, we were put on that train and we started out for Dallas. Now, the plan was that you, Paul, were to get off in Wichita Falls as we came through during the middle of the night. Or was that decision made [later]?

B: That decision was made on the train, as I recall. Mr. Johnson was a very sick man when we got on the train.

W: That's right.

B: You will recall that he had asked you not to permit any visitors to come up that evening prior to our departure.

W: That's correct.

B: He spent the evening in bed and we talked about it, and until we got on the train, we weren't sure that we were going to do at Wichita Falls. We had a radio speech commitment, I believe.

W: No, it was a public rally.

B: Was it a public rally?

W: You recall that the purpose of going to Wichita Falls was on Wednesday; now, this was Tuesday night we left.

B: That's right.

W: And Wednesday night it was a public speech at a public rally, in my memory, because the purpose was to be able to announce that Sheppard Air Force Base was to be made a permanent base. Now, the great concern all through Texas in 1948 was that some of these military bases that had been used during the war were going to be closed and dried up. All the communities wanted to keep their bases open. Well, all of them couldn't be kept open, but certain key ones were going to be kept open. And Rhea Howard and the people of Wichita Falls were terribly concerned that Sheppard AFB was going to be closed down. Congressman Johnson had been working very hard with the then-Secretary of the Air Force Stuart Symington to keep that air base open and designate it what they called a permanent base, meaning simply that it wasn't going to be closed down, that they had long-term use in mind for it. So obviously this would be a great political plus if the Congressman could announce in his Wednesday night speech to his crowd there that he had been able to secure a commitment from the Air Force that the base would be kept open as a permanent facility.

B: Yes.

W: Now, we were going to go all the way to Dallas and arrive in Dallas early in the morning because Secretary Symington was in Dallas, and Congressman Johnson had to make his final arrangements with Secretary Symington about this matter. So that was the reason we had to go on to Dallas. And I guess you are right, we were on the train, and it was agreed that you would get off at Wichita Falls during the

night and be working on the logistics and arrangements for this speech to come up Wednesday night. We were to fly back from Dallas to Wichita Falls, and that's a short hop, maybe forty-five or fifty minutes. We were going to spend the day in Dallas to good advantage, working with Secretary Symington, the Congressman was. Then we'd come in later in the day. I believe that was the plan as it evolved as we got on that night.

But you are right, he was very sick Tuesday night. The train didn't leave until like tenish or eleven or something of the sort, and he spent that evening in bed. We were giving him medication as best we could. But he was very strong-willed. It never entered his mind that he wasn't going to pass this stone. He always had that in mind and therefore he just felt it was a personal trial of his; he just had to tough it out until that stone passed. But it never dawned on him that it wouldn't pass. So all we could do for him was try to keep his fever down by aspirin and maybe some medicine for pain. That was it and the rest was up to him. And that was his mood, but I guess a few comments on the train ride itself. We got on board.

B: That is right.

W: That was a wild night. We had three lower berths, and mine was right across the aisle from his. It was not a compartment. He immediately went to bed. Well, he was suffering alternately from chills in which he would literally freeze to death or fever in which he would literally burn up. And they would come in waves. In one moment he was just as hot as could be and in the next moment he was cold as could be. And

that went on most of the night. Now, I would hear him and he'd holler for me to come and when he was hot, say, "Get this window open." Well, Pullman windows weren't the easiest things to open. I remember leaning over him and having to yank on this thing, and then trying to get a porter. The porter and I would take hold at opposite ends of the thing and try to get it open, and we'd finally get it open. But then the noise and the outside soot and the clickety-clack of the train didn't help matters much. Finally the fever would pass and he'd maybe doze off for a little bit. Then the chill would come and we'd go back and repeat the process of getting the window down. Then he'd call for extra blankets. So I'd go get the porter to get all the extra blankets to put on him. He was just shaking with chills. Finally, one time he asked me to get in the berth with him, and I actually got in the berth with him on two occasions that night to try to give some heat from my body over to his and try to keep him warm, because he was literally just racked with fever and chills. Then when he would start the perspiring period I'd get back out and go into my berth, and that's the way it was.

B: Did you get any sleep at all that [night]?

W: No, I didn't get much, no, I didn't. I never did doze off because I was young, I was nervous, I didn't know the man very well, and I was very concerned about him. I frankly just didn't know how to work with him at this point, I just hadn't had that much exposure to him. And I was just trying to do what he wanted to do and then combine that with what some of my judgment would tell me to do.

The next morning I unpacked his bag, and with great determination he was ready to face the day. I got a fresh shirt out and we got him dressed. I remember that the compartment at the end of the Pullman car we were in had a gentleman in it, and I went up and asked him if he would let us borrow it so that the Congressman could come up, so we wouldn't have to dress inside that lower berth. The gentleman very kindly agreed to do that and that helped a little bit. But he was able to wash up without having to go up to the end of the Pullman. We got him cleaned up and got his fresh suit and shirt on, and I repacked and we pulled in. You had gotten off during the night.

We were now at the Union Terminal about nine o'clock in the morning. And we were going to the Baker Hotel where Fenton Baker [who] was a good friend had arranged for a suite. I couldn't find a sky-cap--what we call sky-cap--porter, Red-Cap, and I had to haul those bags by myself. And he was getting a little more irritable about this time because he was just feeling horribly. He still had his infection and that was going to poison his system and fever. Well, we got to the Baker Hotel, and I make a suggestion that maybe I'd better advise John Connally and the campaign headquarters the status of events. And he said no, that he was still determined that that stone was going to pass. We went to the Baker Hotel, and he went directly to bed. He would not let me call anybody nor would he let me advise anyone of the real depth of his illness. I spent that day just ministering to him, because he would not let me even call for a doctor. And I did not call for a doctor. He just thought that by resting that he would be

able to pass that stone. So we spent the morning and up until about three in the afternoon [that way].

Now, meanwhile, I was worried about what to do to call you to say whether or not we were going to make it to Wichita Falls. He continued to believe that he was going to be in Wichita Falls that night. It never occurred to him otherwise. But the important appointment was about three o'clock in the afternoon with Secretary of the Air Force Symington. Now, Symington had been making a speech there in Dallas, and he came to the suite, and he came with a man named Robert J. Smith, who had incidentally been president of Pioneer Airlines when I left it. I knew General Smith, so I had the advantage of having some acquaintance with Smith. I took him aside and asked him if he would call Secretary Symington aside. The three of us went in the parlor there and the Congressman was in his bedroom with the door closed. I poured out my problems to them, and I told them, "I'm not able to convince him that we should get a doctor, and this is the situation," and I explained it. I said, "He is a very sick man, and he'll probably fire me for telling you this, but, I'm here by myself, and I've just got to turn to someone, because I think I know when I see a sick man and this is a very sick man. Yet he's determined to go to Wichita Falls. He's determined to have this conference with you, Secretary Symington, and some others that were coming up to discuss this matter. And I don't know [what to do]." So they said, "Well, let us consider the matter."

I went back into the room and I left them considering what to do

about this situation. I went into the room with him and he said, "Are they gathered there? Are they ready for the conference?" And I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "Okay, let's go." And with great determination he pulled himself out of bed, took his shower, cleaned up, and I dressed him and got him all set up, this very, very ill man. He pulled the door open and sprung out with all the energy and vitality just as if nothing was wrong. He was concealing all this within him. He conducted this conference, and they worked out the arrangements. Finally Secretary Symington and Smith kind of broached this matter to him and said so and so and so and so. By this time he was so sick that he was beginning to admit that he was pretty sick, and [it was] the first time that it had dawned on him that he might not be able to get to Wichita Falls. But then he found another ploy. We looked out the window and the clouds were beginning to gather and it was pretty bad weather. So he said, "I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll call Paul." Now, Paul, you can correct me, but my memory is our strategy was that we would call you and say that we were unable to get there on account of weather, and that you, Paul, were to read the speech that night. Because we were all concerned as to what we would say to the gathering crowd at Wichita Falls as to why he was not there, bearing in mind that his attitude was that he wasn't going to tell anyone that he was sick. He was still of the mind that he was going to pass that stone and it was going to go away. So he said, "Well, I may not go to Wichita Falls tonight, but I am still not going to tell them the reason is sickness. We'll just tell them it is

weather." My memory is that we used the weather that night as an excuse. So that was the strategy that was evolved, and I believe we did call you and tell you that we wouldn't be there, and I believe we said that it was the weather.

B: I know you left me in an awful hole.

W: We left you in an awful hole. And you were to read the speech that night.

B: That's right.

W: So, the conference broke up and everyone left except Smith and Symington and myself. The Congressman was feeling so bad he went back to bed. He finally agreed to calling a doctor. The doctor was called, and he took one look at him and said, "You know, this is a very sick man, a very sick man, and he needs to be in the hospital." Well, the Congressman just said no, he wasn't going to have anything to do with this at all and he wasn't going to go. Finally it was Symington, for whom the Congressman had a great affection and respect, that talked him into doing this. They thought that they just couldn't treat him there in the hotel room, that the fever needed to be brought under control. Finally, he consented to going to the hospital under great secret conditions.

We went to the Medical Arts Hospital in Downtown Dallas. It is sort of an office building thing; it was called the Medical Arts Hospital. It is right next door to the Republic Bank now. He went up to the upper floors there, and they had a room for him. As we came in, a couple of orderlies put him in a hospital gown and got him

dressed. Then they took him to some laboratories and they ran the usual tests and so forth. All of this was done under great secrecy, without advice to anyone. They were running the tests. By this time there was a sort of an entourage around, because they knew Congressman Johnson, [knew] who he was. He'd made a statewide campaign in 1941, and he was well known. They had nurses and orderlies and doctors; they were doing the administrative things as well as medical things to get him ready for his overnight stay in the hospital. He was in a wheelchair after being pushed out of the blood laboratory. The test having been completed, the orderlies were pushing him on down to his room, but the nurse at the admittance window stopped me, and I broke off from the group going down to his room. The nurse said, "Would you fill out the admittance papers?" I paused, maybe as long as five minutes, to fill out the admittance papers, address and telephone numbers and all the pertinent information in the record. I completed that and went down to his room, and he turned to me and he said, "Don't ever leave me again. You just left me." I said, "I don't know. . ." I explained to him that the nurse had asked me to stop and fill out the admittance papers. He said, "Well, I don't care. You don't work for her, you work for me and so you stay with me. I don't want you to leave me." He said, "You left me, and I needed you and you weren't there." I just couldn't imagine what had happened in the five minutes that had transpired. One of the orderlies later told me, "Well, the trouble is, he got right on down the hall a little way and he was so sick to his stomach, he threw up." He had just thrown up, and it was

a sort of messy situation, but he had orderlies and nurses and all sorts of people to handle him, and he was well cared for.

But, as you know, Paul, he's always been possessive of his people. The people he feels comfortable around and wants around, he wants them there with him and this was one of the traits of his personality that I learned: that in his moments of personal trial he wants his people around him; strangers he's less comfortable with at these difficult moments. That was a very difficult moment for him and I was the only familiar face around there; the rest were clinical doctors and orderlies and so forth. Well, we got him to his room and tried to make him comfortable. I said, "Now don't you think I had better go and call John Connally and the state headquarters and tell them this development, [that] you're in the hospital." He said, "Yes, do that." But he said, "Call them and call John and tell him what's happened, but tell him not to release it to the press, that I'm just going to be here overnight and they just want to run some tests. Just tell him not to say anything to the press about it." He said, "I'll pass this stone during the night. I am reaching the point, sort of the crisis, and I'll pass this stone and I'll be out tomorrow. We'll pick up the schedule." He said, "You tell John that."

There was not a phone in his room that I remember, or if there was, I guess there was a house phone, but I didn't want to talk through the switchboard. I remember I couldn't find a suitable telephone that would give me the confidential privacy that I felt I required, so I got out and down the elevator and across the street to Skillern's, to the drug store, and I went in a phone booth. I called John and gave him

the story. I said, "John, these are the developments. After the meeting with Symington, we had the doctor, and he's very sick, in my opinion, and the doctor felt he ought to be in [the hospital]. He's in there and he feels he'll pass the stone. But do not tell the press, because he'll be out tomorrow." And John took exception to that. He said, "This is ridiculous. You can't have a candidate for the United States Senate, a member of the Congress, enter a hospital and interrupt the schedule. . ." I said, "Well, now, on the schedule we've got the weather. We're telling Paul Bolton that it's weather." And he said, "Well, that's just ridiculous. We can't do that!" He said, "You just go back and tell him it is my opinion that we've got to release this and tell the press." I went back across the street, up the elevator and back to the room and he said, "Did you talk to John?" I said, "Yes, I did, and he said to tell you that, in his opinion, he thinks we'd be better off telling the press that you are in; we can play it down if you like, but he thinks you just can't disappear into a hospital without the press knowing it. That it's his recommendation that--" He said, "No, I don't want that."

Now, at this point, I think it must be said that his fever was such that he really was not in complete control of his thinking processes, because there was an element of delirium from this high fever that he had. He really wasn't capable of making a judgment of this type in his physical condition, in my opinion. But in any event, I was just the aide going back, and I didn't attempt to make any judgment about this thing. He said, "You go back and tell John, 'No, do it the way I said.'" I went back down the elevator, across the

street into Skillern's a second time, and John said, "That's just ridiculous. Just tell him we can't do that." John was very, very firm: it had to be done; the press had to be told.

Back across the street, up the elevator, back to the Congressman's room, and I repeated the conversation. He said, "You just tell him that I order!" And I went back the third time and called John, and I said, "John, he orders that this not be done." John said, "Well, it's too late; I've already done it. The press called me since we last talked and told me that they were making inquiries, understood that he wasn't going to be in Wichita Falls, and I just told them what the situation was." He said, "You just go back and tell him it has already been done." I said, "Yes sir, I will." And I, not knowing what to expect, went back to the room, and he said, "What did he say?" I said, "Congressman, he said he'd already released it. He said that somebody from the press had called inquiring about the cancellation of the appearance at Wichita Falls, and he told them that you were in the hospital here."

And rather than explode, a sort of a calmness came over him and sort of a resignation. He said, "Well, if I can't run my own campaign, I guess I might as well [withdraw]; now is the time to get out. I'm going to withdraw from the race right now." I stood there stupified, and he said, "No, I'm going to get out of the race." He said, "Get your book and a pencil," and in my own handwriting, I took as he dictated his withdrawal statement from the race for the campaign of the U.S. Senate, 1948. I took it down, and somewhere in my files I

still have, in my handwriting, the statement he dictated to me withdrawing from the Senate campaign of 1948. He said, "You just call and tell them that either I can run my own campaign or I'm not going [to run]."

But again, he wasn't really being rational because he was sick, a very sick man. And there I was, instructed to leave the room at that moment and go call the press and read that statement. I knew that it wasn't the thing to do, but I wasn't mature enough or had enough experience with him to know what to do. But every now and then the Lord takes care of you, and a stroke of genius came over me. Because someone had told me even in those early stages of my relationship with Johnson that the First Lady, Mrs. Johnson, was always the one that he would turn to in these types of things. So I didn't argue with him, I said, "Congressman, fine. I'll certainly do this." I said, "Now, John has told me that he is sending Mrs. Johnson up when he'd first learned you had gone in the hospital after that first phone call, that she was going to catch the next plane and come up to Dallas to be with you. She's en route right now. She's in the air right now, and I'm going out to the airport to meet her." I said, "I understand that she has always been with you in these important decisions and you've always counseled with her. Let's go ahead and make the announcement, but let's do it after she gets here, though. She would want to be a party to that." That, in his fevered condition, seemed to ring a bell with him; that made sense to him. He said, "Fine. You go out and meet her and pick her up and bring her back. Then we'll call the press in and we'll announce

this thing together." I said, "Fine."

Well, that bought some time, but you must understand that he was very, very firm in telling me to do it right that moment. And that bought the time. I got in the car and was halfway out to the airport when it occurred to me that some alert reporter might call the room and ask to talk and in his fevered condition he might very well just tell him that he had this important announcement that he was getting out of the race and invite him up to the room. So I stopped the car and called back to the hospital, and I told the superintendent of nurses, or the supervisor of nurses, that under no circumstances, under any condition, was he to have any phone calls put into his room or any visitors of any kind until Mrs. Johnson got there, that that was not to be done. The supervisor didn't quite understand, but she agreed to that request. Later it turned out that there had been some inquiries and the phone calls began to come in, and there's no telling what might have happened. But he was spared any further contact until I could meet Mrs. Johnson at Dallas Love Field, put her in the car, and on the way in from the airport I had an opportunity to brief her on the situation.

Then, as now, she was calm and understanding and was in complete control of the situation and seemed to know exactly what to do. When we got there I turned the Congressman over [to her]. I had not had any sleep, I was about at the end of my line, and I was never so glad in my life to see anyone as I was Mrs. Johnson because she took over very completely. She talked to him soothingly and quietly and

he felt reassured having her there. Somehow or other the notion of withdrawing from the race seemed to kind of fade into the background and concern for his health took over, and if there was any conversation about the statement, he seemed to have forgotten it. It was agreed that whatever was to be done would be done the next morning. We'd see what would happen, and she was able to control him.

By this time, the kitchens at the hospital had closed and his appetite seemed to be in pretty good shape. He asked me to go back to the Baker Hotel and get some food. He didn't want the hospital food, and besides their kitchens had closed anyway, so he told me to go over and get some bacon and eggs. I went over and got the head chef at the Baker Hotel and asked him to prepare me some bacon and eggs. The Congressman had always stayed at the Baker and was well known over there, and they knew something of his taste and his appetite. They prepared some bacon and eggs and put it in one of those Dutch oven type things, and I got a taxi and was carrying this big Dutch oven out of the lobby of the Baker Hotel to bring him his bacon and eggs. I got to the hospital, took it up to his room, opened it up and spread the feast out before him, and he just looked at me and said, "Well, you've done it again." I looked at it and I thought it looked very [good]. He said, "There's no salt and pepper." The salt and pepper had been left off the tray, and I had to go searching around the hospital to try to find salt and pepper for the egg.

But that concluded that day. Now, if you want me to go on.

B: I'd like to get to the trip to Mayo's.

W: All right. Well, Mrs. Johnson stayed with him, and I went back to the Baker and got some rest that night and tried to pull things together.

B: And I made my speech at--

W: And you made your speech at Wichita Falls.

I called John again to tell him the situation as it existed. Being removed from the situation, he was beginning to get his feelings on his sleeve a little bit, you know, and getting kind of firm about the situation, and there I was in the middle. But I felt a nice rest on all . . .

Well, the morning did come without further incident, but the day's events started off pretty strangely. I got dressed and went over to the hospital to see whether or not he had passed the stone and kind of report for duty and be of assistance to Mrs. Johnson. He had not passed the stone. He continued to have fever caused by the infection and the situation was not much better. The morning papers carried the story that he was in the hospital. John had given them that information. It was in there and he [Johnson] was concerned about that.

But a strange thing happened. The famed woman flier, Jacqueline Cochran, had been out in Arizona on some speed tests and she'd set a record out there I believe in a P51. But in any event, she'd been out there establishing some speed records in the Arizona desert somewhere and had noticed that her friend Secretary Symington was making a speech to some Air Force group or another there in Dallas. So on her way back from Arizona she stopped off and then heard Secretary Symington's speech

and she spent the night in Dallas. When the morning paper was brought to her, she saw that her friend, Congressman Johnson, was sick in the hospital with this kidney stone. So she picked up the phone and called the switchboard. I was taking calls at the hospital by this time, and she came on the line and in a very forceful, direct way she said, "This is Jacqueline Cochran. I'm here in Dallas with my Lockheed Electra and I happen to know that one of the great urologists of the world is visiting from England at Mayo's with Dr. Gerst Thompson." Dr. Gerst Thompson was, I believe, the resident urologist, and it seems that there was a very famous urologist from England visiting there at Mayo's. She said, "Both of them are there, and I know them. You just tell Lyndon that I'm going to take him in my Electra. I'll be there at one o'clock. We'll take off at one thirty and we'll fly up to Mayo's. You just give him that message." She didn't give me a chance to say yea or nay, just said, "Give him that message."

I walked into the room and I said, "Congressman and Mrs. Johnson, I just had a phone call from a lady named Jacqueline Cochran." I knew of her simply because of her reputation as a flyer. [I told him] she said the following, and I related the story about the famous urologist visiting at Mayo's and Dr. Gerst Thompson being a great urologist. And I said, "She says she's going to be here with an ambulance at one o'clock and we'll take off at one thirty and we'll be at Mayo's at six o'clock this evening. She said to tell you that." And he said, "No, I'm not gonna do that, not gonna do that. They'll just say that Texas doctors are not good enough for me, I'm not gonna do that. The Texas doctors

can handle this situation. I don't need to go up there."

So I went back and called Miss Cochran. I said, "He thanks you very much, but he says no, that he'll just stay here with Texas doctors." He was still of a mind that he was going to pass this stone. She just wouldn't accept that for an answer. She said, "No, this is what we're going to do." Well, the upshot of it was that I put her through to Mrs. Johnson and they talked about it. And the more they talked about it with the local doctors, it sounded like a pretty good plan, because the local doctors were never of the opinion that that stone was going to be passed because it was lodged very high up and they weren't sure he was going to pass it at all. I think they privately felt that surgery was going to be involved here.

Now, the point was--and this was the main thing that was at issue and why the Congressman was so insistent that he had to pass the stone--if he could pass it, then the recovery period might be four or five days and he could stay in the campaign. If they had to go to surgery, then it would take about six weeks for recovery and the primary wasn't but six weeks away. He would have a full six weeks of recovery and he was effectively out of the race. So indeed he was right that it was terribly important that the stone be removed in some manner other than abdominal surgery. So with those conditions it was apparently decided that it would be a good thing to go to Rochester, [to] Mayo's.

He, I think, had been there before and knew those doctors up there. Dr. Jim Cain, the son-in-law of the Congressman's very, very good friend, Senator Alvin Wirtz, was there in Mayo's, and that made

it kind of more attractive to go up there. And as you know, to this day Jim Cain has been his sort of personal physician and consultant on all health matters. And Jim Cain was there in Mayo's. So it was decided that that's what we would do. Mrs. Johnson played a large part in that decision.

And indeed and in fact, Jacqueline Cochran showed up at the ambulance entrance to the hospital there in Downtown Dallas. We put him in the hospital ambulance, we all got in the ambulance, we drove to Love Field. And she had a berth or bed or couch made down in the plane, and we put him to bed. Mrs. Johnson and myself and Jacqueline Cochran and I believe she had a co-pilot took off exactly as she said we would, at one thirty. I've always remembered the preciseness with what she said she would do and how accurately she carried it out. And we shut the engines off at six o'clock at Rochester, Minnesota. It was a rather uneventful flight. He was in pain, and he wasn't feeling good. Jacqueline Cochran told me that she was a nurse or had had some nurse's training. I had not known this. But she felt that she could care for him pretty well. So she got out of the pilot's seat, the co-pilot was flying, and came back in the cabin of this plane. I was a World War II flyer, and we'd been talking a little aviation there, and she said, "You go sit in my left seat." It was on automatic pilot. I was sitting there, and the Congressman woke up from one of his fitful sleeps and he looked through the cockpit door and saw me sitting in the left seat and was under the impression that I was flying. He rapped on the table to get my attention. And I turned around and I hurried back, and he said, "Don't we have enough trouble without you trying to fly this plane?"

So he said, I believe, he felt just as well if we would have Jackie fly the plane. She got back in the cockpit and we did land at six o'clock, having taken off at one thirty.

He was admitted to the hospital. Mrs. Johnson and I stayed at the Kahler Hotel. She spent most of her time with him over there, and would kind of handle the phone calls and messages. For this time, communications between Connally and the Congressman had broken down; there was no more communication. He was still quite, quite angry about his instructions having been violated by releasing it to the press. John was just as adamant that he'd done the right thing, and there really wasn't anything to say at this point. So they just stopped communicating. But I felt one thing I could do was try to keep them posted. I surreptitiously would call John and kind of talk to him and bring him up to date, although he feigned disinterest in the thing. And you can imagine, the campaign was very much up in the air now. What will we do? Is he going to pass this stone?

In any hospital you've got to run a series of tests. This took a couple of days. They were able to control his fever just by high-powered medication, and he explained to the doctors and they understood the absolute necessity of removing this stone some way other than surgery. So finally we would even get him out of the hospital long enough to ride on the back roads of Minnesota, on rough roads, where we could kind of jar the thing loose. And we'd walk him up and down the back stairs of the hospital thinking maybe the exercise would jar the stone loose. The stone was lodged very high, and so that went on for, oh, my memory

is it was about four or five days there. And no progress was made.

The campaign was being waged in a very indifferent way back home because there wasn't anything that anybody could say or do. They just carried on the best they could. I had only one suit, a summer suit. It was cool in late May there in Rochester, but I think we were reasonably comfortable under the circumstances. It was just a waiting game, and it was a very tiresome situation. I tried to give him some clippings that were sent to me, but he wasn't very much interested. He was a very sick man.

We tried in various ways. Finally this Dr. Gerst Thompson and the visiting English urologist decided that they would take him into the operating room and attempt to remove this thing through some surgical process that didn't require an incision. It involved going way up the urethra and attempting to crush the stone. So it was decided then that they would attempt to go through the urethra and attempt to crush this stone and get it. But they weren't certain of the outcome at all, because of the fact that it was so far up. Well, he was taken into the operating room and [given] anesthesia. Mrs. Johnson and I were just pacing up and down. She, of course, was concerned for his welfare, and the realization was dawning on me by this time that if they were unable to remove the stone this way, crush it and bring it back out, that they would have to operate surgically in some manner. And in fact the campaign would be over. So I had politics on my mind and she had his well-being on her mind, although I was concerned about him, maybe not as much as [Mrs. Johnson] herself, because if you are at

Mayo's you can't get any better help than that. And that's the way it was. So we stood the guard for about forty-five minutes while he was in the operating room and the doctor came back and announced that they had gotten the stone, had removed it. [They said] that he was doing well, and that [the stone] was as far up as it was possible to go and still get it. Had it been lodged any further up, they wouldn't have been able to do it; it was one of the few times they had been able to reach and crush a stone. So, so many things had been hanging in the balance here. If that stone had been up just a little further and they had not been able to reach it, they would have had to operate on him, the recovery period would have been six weeks, he would have been out of the campaign for the U. S. Senate and who knows where we would have been from a historical point of view. But they did get that stone, and I stayed another twenty-four to forty-eight hours with him to make sure he was beginning to get along all right. And he was; he made a fast recovery. The infection cleared rather rapidly and he was coming along nicely. Then he dispatched me to Houston because one of his first appearances on coming back to the campaign trail was to be in Houston, and he was to pick up in Houston.

Question: What happened between John and the Congressman? It seems to me we'd been there about a week or so and John called one day and as simply as not I just handed the phone [over and] I just said, "Congressman, John wants to talk to you." And they talked; they picked up just as if nothing had happened and just went right on.

And there was never any reference to the misunderstanding, if that's what you call it, that had occurred down in Dallas. They went right on and they picked up, and then as now, the conversation between two devoted friends got to be free and easy. They started planning the campaign. You know, Paul, I think this conversation with John occurred after the stone was removed. I don't think they talked before then. It was after and it looked [like] all was well and he was going to be back on the campaign trail.

I caught a plane and went on down to Houston and picked up the campaign at that point.

B: As a matter of fact, the campaign was completely reorganized after his return from the hospital.

W: Yes, Paul. I didn't get to the headquarters much after that, because it was obvious I was going to start as an advance man for the campaign and travel out in advance. But the general headquarters did undergo some changes. I believe Claude Wild was down there at the time, wasn't he?

B: Yes, he was. Nominal--

W: He was nominal head. But really I don't think I remember a comment on what went on there so much, because I was out on the road quite a bit.

B: What does a man on the road do?

W: Well, the Congressman is a stickler for all the logistics and the planning having been done and carried out to perfection. So the role of the advance man in the Johnson organization was, and is to this day, to see to it that all of the arrangements were made correctly and that

the arrangements were such that they would conserve the candidate's time, that you provide him with the best exposure, and in general make any particular visit to any particular area run smoothly and effectively. That's what we were to do. This is a very important thing, because imperfect arrangements can spoil a visit, and you can get a devastating effect. If the microphone doesn't work, or if you have the speaker position in such a manner where the sun shines into the crowd and they cannot see the speaker, if any number of things [happen], if the press is not adequately cared for, if transportation bogs down, any of these things can spoil a visit. Nowadays with the voting public so knowledgeable and so experienced in these things, if you don't handle them well, why, it can materially affect the candidate. So I suppose in those days, in 1948 was about the day when the advance man was born. I don't recall them too much before that time.

B: I don't either. That's what I was going to suggest: that he probably devised this particular--

W: I expect he did. And it came about as a result of his own desire for perfection. I don't think we consciously realized we were starting a brand new era of advance men. But it came about simply because he wanted any visit that he made to any section of the state done well. It was perfectly understandable. If a speaker is trying to sell himself to an audience and he has to contend with a cranky microphone or improperly positioned stage or setting, he can't be effective. So, as far as I know, this is one of the first times the advance man was used extensively and exclusively.

Now let me say this, we were kind of forced into this thing in another sense, because we campaigned for the first time in any major way in the United States with a helicopter. This was the first time, in 1948, that a helicopter had been used extensively and broadly as a means of transportation in a campaign. I know of no previous experience, so obviously we had to go into a town well in advance to make the arrangements for the helicopter to land and arrange for crowd control and crowd protection. If you are going to land in a field there's no electrical sockets out there and you had to find some way to get your sound systems wired in and so forth. So again, of another real necessity, we had to learn the advance business.

B: As a matter of fact, landing a helicopter proved to be somewhat dangerous at times in these small towns.

W: Yes, it did, because we didn't understand them well enough. In 1948 a helicopter was a very new tool. The most common conception of a helicopter is that it goes up and down just like an elevator. Well, in fact, it does have that capacity under certain circumstances, but the plain truth of the matter is that a helicopter needs an approach and a takeoff area much in the same manner that an airplane does. It doesn't have to have as much approach and doesn't have as much clear area in front for the takeoff run, but in fact it does need to do it. You just don't jump a helicopter right up off of its landing spot safely, so I had to learn that the hard way. Joe Mashman who's now vice president of Bell Helicopter, is still one of the great helicopter pilots of all time. He had to teach me a little something about this

because I was one of the advance men selecting landing sites. And [the way] I was selecting them, I just figured if you had something the size of the helicopter, you could land on it.

B: Mashman was the [helicopter pilot].

W: Mashman, that's right. M-A-S-H-M-A-N. Joe Mashman. We had two. We started out with a Sikorsky S5, and we had a pilot of that that wasn't particularly cooperative. He didn't understand campaigning or like it, and he didn't participate in the campaign.

So we got rid of the Sikorsky and went to Mr. Larry, Lawrence, Bell of Bell Helicopter. He was just developing this little three-place Bell Helicopter--I guess it was two-place; I don't guess you could even get three. We fitted a microphone on it and some speaker bells, and we would campaign in that helicopter. And Joe Mashman was the pilot. Now, Joe had a little showmanship about him and a little flair about him. He'd demonstrate the uses of the helicopter during the campaign as sort of a crowd warm-up. While the Congressman was out shaking hands, Joe would take the helicopter and make it dance and perform around and that would attract a crowd. So the helicopter turned out to be a great instrument not only for transportation, but also as a crowd attraction.

You remember, Paul, we'd put [out] our booklet, our little black and white booklet; it may [have] been about an inch by two inches, and it was a little folder booklet about Congressman Johnson. Well, the Congressman got carried away with this helicopter and one day he was throwing these little booklets out to the crowd, you know, just

dropping them out like leaflets out of this helicopter. He got to doing that rather frequently, and one day Joe couldn't imagine what in the world was happening. He just didn't have the power in his helicopter that he thought he ought to have. It was just sluggish. He didn't know what in the name of heaven was going on, so at the next opportunity he had he said, "I'd better pull the cowling on this thing and check it." And when he did he found that those little booklets were plastered all along the intake and exhaust manifolds of this helicopter. It was just as if you had papered the engine with those little booklets. What was happening was, as you'd throw the booklets out, the exhaust would suck them in there, or the wind drafts would suck them in there. It was just a wonder we didn't have an engine failure. But those are the things we learned in using the helicopter.

B: Mr. Woodward, just one more thing: when we started, I mentioned the name of Horace Busby and you said at that time that you wanted to make some comments [on that].

W: Well, it was just that there was one amusing incident about Buzz. Buzz and I were both supposed to report on March 1. I got there on March 1. I flew up. And Buzz wasn't there. I don't think I had met Buzz. Buzz had been editor of The Daily Texan out at the University, and I had not met him. But we had arranged over the phone to live together in the basement of the Dodge Hotel. The Congressman had said that the Dodge was a good address for us. But what he had meant was that it was close to the office, and we could work extra long hours because we would be close to the Capitol. But he said it was a good

address. We, Buzz and I, lived in the basement.

Anyway, March 1 came, and the Congressman said, "Is Buzz with you?" I said, "No, no, he's driving up and I flew up." Two more days passed and we kept asking where Buzz was. Buzz never did show. Two weeks later, still no Busby; calls to Texas didn't produce any results and we didn't know where he was. About that time, a wire came in from Buzz and he says, "Snow and ice storm have caused delay. Will arrive in a couple of days." I took that telegram, I said, "We've now heard from Busby and here it is." He looked at that thing and he said, "There's something wrong. That wire was sent from Jackson, Mississippi." And he said, "You just call the weather bureau and find out if they've had a snow or sleet storm at Jackson, Mississippi." I called back and said, "Congressman, they haven't had a snow or sleet storm or ice storm in Jackson, Mississippi, since 1875, in March." I said, "I just can't account for it." Well, he couldn't either. So when Buzz arrived, he jumped Buzz about that the first thing. Well, what had happened was Buzz had started out from Fort Worth, and in fact they had had an ice storm that had delayed his trip in Fort Worth. But he didn't send the wire until he got to Jackson, Mississippi, so he meant that the wire should refer to the snow and sleet storm in Fort Worth and not Mississippi. But this is indicative of the Congressman's thoroughness. He doesn't miss anything, and he had me check the weather bureau and find out if they had a snow or sleet storm in Jackson, Mississippi in March, and they hadn't.

B: Warren, is there anything else that you think we should add to this tape?

W: Well, Paul, really the main time of this tape has been taken up with that one story. Obviously over a period of twenty years there's a lot of things that could be said, but maybe that could be saved for another tape. I suppose in this tape you are particularly interested in the 1948 campaign.

B: That's right.

W: That campaign was dramatic in many senses, and we always seemed to have a lot of human involvement and personal things that happened. The sickness was one. You will recall in his first campaign for Congress, he had an appendicitis operation, and then we had this one. But we also had another tragedy. I've never seen a man in which so many human events seem to swarm about him. There is always a personal drama somewhere about him. It is never dull. But, you remember, Mary Rather's father was burned to death in a fire during that campaign.

B: Mary Rather was his personal--

W: Mary Rather was his personal secretary for many, many years, and we had to take time off in that campaign to attend that funeral. I don't know, perhaps I'm not stating it well, but there's always a human drama associated with the President. He is so identified with people and I guess he is so people-oriented that things just have to happen with him and people. That's the way it's always been. But that campaign we did have to bury Mary's father.

We had an amusing thing happen down in Rosenberg, Texas, outside of Houston. He wanted his helicopter, and I had gotten gun-shy of selecting helicopter sites in town because of the hazards of wires,

telephone wires and so forth. And I had selected a site on the outskirts of town. But the Congressman was enamored of the fact that that's what a helicopter was for, was to be able to get you where the people are. He kept pushing for sites in town, and Joe Mashman kept pushing for sites away from town for safety reasons.

In a compromise one time I went into a Humble Oil station in sort of downtown Rosenberg. And I asked the owner there, I said, "Would you mind if Congressman Johnson and his helicopter land on the roof of your service station in Rosenberg, Texas?" He thought I was out of my mind. You know, service stations are flat roofed, generally, and there was a flat area there. I got him to agree to it on the premise that he'd get lots of good publicity, that we were going to attract crowds. Then I called Joe Mashman and Joe said, "Well, wait a minute. You've got to make sure that that roof is reinforced. You must do this before I'll land there." Well, to make a long story short, Paul, I had to reinforce that roof and form a landing pad there by the use of dozens of two by fours. The service station operator didn't mind me putting two by fours on his roof that would have the effect of becoming a helipad and at the same time reinforce the roof; he didn't have any objections. But he just wasn't going to have anything to do with it. So I had to go to a lumber yard and borrow all the two by fours that were required. Money was very short; everything had to be done without any money. I had to borrow the two by fours and then I had to get them from the lumber yard to the filling station. I hired an old Negro man with a wagon and a team of horses, and I paid him a modest amount of

money to help me load the two by fours on his wagon. We pulled this wagon up to the side of the helicopter and then I had to rig a block and tackle with some rope and haul those two by fours in 105 degree heat in Rosenberg, Texas, one at a time, on this helipad. That's how we got that helicopter on the roof. Then we advertised for the people to come to this intersection where this helicopter was to land, and we had a good crowd.

The whole point of this is that the Congressman, the Senator, the Vice President, and the President has always been interested in people and crowds. One of the first lessons he taught us all was that there's no use making this effort if you can't get your message to the people. And we had to use whatever techniques we could to get the largest crowds available. He's always been that way in all of the years that I've advanced trips for him or have gone with him; he's always asked about the crowds. "Do we have a good crowd?" And the people, he's always wanted it and insisted on it.

I guess maybe it took a little time to get him interested in radio because he couldn't see people in a radio booth and, as you have heard him say many times, "press the flesh." He'd much rather be out with the people. Obviously, his television broadcasts became more important in the scheme of things. He adjusted himself to it very well.

But in those days he simply liked to be with the people. And we had to attract the crowds. That was part of the role of the advance man. We used to trade literature for money. We'd go to our campaign managers, like I told Royce Whitten up in Paris, Texas--I was out of

money and didn't have any money to check out of the hotel, and I had some campaign literature--"Royce, I'll sell you some of this campaign literature so you can pass it out." You raise the money locally to buy the literature, so he bought the campaign literature from me, and I took the money and bought my way out of the hotel on it.

B: Did you have enough money to buy gasoline with?

W: One day I was going down the road between Jasper, Texas, and Beaumont, and I ran across another Johnson campaign car coming the other direction. I passed and he passed me. We recognized one another and hit the brakes at the same time. We backed up and got out of our cars and walked over to each other and the first thing we said, almost in unison, was, "Have you got any money?"

B: Was that George Bolton?

W: That was George Bolton. We said, "Have you got any money?" We stopped right there on the middle of the road between Jasper and Beaumont. But we were constantly short of money.

I remember one time Charlie Herring was in the State Headquarters there at the old Hancock place, and Sara Wade was our receptionist, as you know, and PBX operator. Sara Wade, I believe is dead now, isn't she?

B: Yes.

W: Well, Sara could find you anywhere. That's why the Congressman liked to have her around, because wherever you were, she knew where to locate you. So a bill collector came in and said to Sara Wade, who was receptionist, "Is Charlie Herring in?" She recognized him as a bill

collector and she said, "No, I'm sorry, he's not." And Charlie could see the man coming in from the second floor window and knew he was in trouble. And while Sara was talking to him, he shinnied out the second floor and down the drainpipe and had just hit the first floor on the outside of the building when the bill collector had left Sara's desk and came back out and walked right into Charlie Herring there, escaping. They had a confrontation right there; Charlie was forced to meet his maker right there.

But I recall one time, and this is maybe illustrative of the Congressman, it might give some insight. About three weeks through the 1948 campaign, hot, oh, it was so hot, and Nellie Connally liked movies. Nellie liked movies very much, and that was about the only recreation [we had]. We'd get a few moments and maybe see about an hour and a half movie somewhere. We walked down to the State Theater. We, being John Connally, Nellie, myself and Walter Jenkins walked to this movie Sunday afternoon maybe about two o'clock; [it was] pretty dull. Sure enough, the Congressman, who was out somewhere in the state campaigning and who neverlets up and who was always working and worked harder than any of us did, called into the headquarters and said to Sara Wade, "I want to speak to John." Sara knew we were in difficulty and she said, "Well, I just don't know where he is." Well, now, the Congressman knew better than that, because he knew Sara's capability of finding anyone anywhere. He said, "Now, Sara, you're just not telling me the truth. I know you know where they are." Well, she just couldn't bring herself to say that we were in a movie.

But he pressed her and finally she said, "Well, I think I can locate them at the State Theater at the movie." You know, he never has felt that the movies were particularly worthwhile recreation anyway, so when we got back from that movie he just laced us up one side and the other for deserting him in the middle of the campaign because we had taken time off when we could have been working in that very difficult campaign. And perhaps he was right.

But I relate this story simply to illustrate how hard and long he worked and how he expects his people to work in these campaigns and by and large we did work that hard and it was very--oh, Paul, I could go on with stories like this for a long time.

B: That's right.

W: They are probably not very revealing. They're just little episodes.

B: Well, I appreciate them very much, Warren. And you've been extremely helpful.

[End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview I]

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