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CLAUDIA "LADY BIRD" JOHNSON ORAL HISTORY, INTERVIEW XIX
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CLAUDIA TAYLOR JOHNSON

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Claudia Taylor Johnson 6/20/02

Claudia Taylor Johnson Date

by Patti Howell

Allison Fawcett 5-10-2011

~~Archivist of the United States~~ Date

Assistant Archivist
For Presidential Libraries

Appendix A

Attached to and forming part of the instrument of gift of oral history interviews, executed by Claudia Taylor Johnson, and accepted by the ~~Archivist of the United States~~ Assistant Archivist For Presidential Libraries on 5-10-2011.

Mrs. Johnson's Oral History Interviews:

May 26, 1975, with Merle Miller
June 25, 1976, with Merle Miller
June 29, 1976, with Merle Miller
January 30, 1977, with Merle Miller
February 14, 1977, with Merle Miller
August 12, 1977, with Michael Gillette
August 13, 1977, with Michael Gillette
August 14, 1977, with Michael Gillette
February 4, 1978, with Michael Gillette
April 1, 1978, with Michael Gillette
August 6, 1978, with Michael Gillette
October 9, 1978, with Michael Gillette
January 23, 1979, with Michael Gillette
January 24, 1979, with Michael Gillette
January 25-26, 1979, with Michael Gillette
February 27-28, 1979, with Michael Gillette
August 19, 1979, with Michael Gillette
September 2-3, 1979, with Michael Gillette
September 9, 1979, with Michael Gillette
November 13, 1979, with Anthony Champagne
January 4-5, 1980, with Michael Gillette
January 29-30, with Michael Gillette
September 20, 1980, with Michael Gillette
September 26-27, 1980, with Michael Gillette
February 6-7, 1981, with Michael Gillette
February 20-21, 1981, with Michael Gillette
August 10, 1981, with Michael Gillette
August 23, 1981, with Michael Gillette
September 5, 1981, with Michael Gillette
November 15, 1981, with Michael Gillette
January 2-3, 1982, with Michael Gillette
January 10, 1982, with Michael Gillette
January 30, 1982, with Michael Gillette
March 15, 1982, with Michael Gillette
March 19-20, 1982, with Michael Gillette
March 22, 1982, with Michael Gillette

March 29, 1982, with Michael Gillette
August 3-4, 1982, with Michael Gillette
September 4, 1983, with Michael Gillette
December 30, 1984, video and audio interview with Michael Gillette
January 4, 1985, video and audio interview with Michael Gillette
February 23, 1991, with Michael Gillette
March 4, 1991, with W. C. Trueheart
March 8, 1991, with Michael Gillette
August 1994, with Harry Middleton (six interviews)
November 5, 1994, with Harry Middleton
January 23, 1987, with Nancy Smith
August 18, 1987, with Lou Rudolph, Jim Henderson, and John and Sandy Brice
August 19, 1987, with Lou Rudolph, Jim Henderson, and John and Sandy Brice
August 20, 1987, with Lou Rudolph, and John and Sandy Brice
August 1994, with S. Douglass Cater
March 22, 1985, with Louis S. Gomolak
July 16, 1996, with Jan Jarboe Russell
July 17, 1996, with Jan Jarboe Russell

INTERVIEW XIX covering 1945-1946

DATE: February 6-7, 1981

INTERVIEWEE: LADY BIRD JOHNSON

INTERVIEWER: MICHAEL L. GILLETTE

PLACE: LBJ Ranch, Stonewall, Texas

Tape 1 of 2

G: Now in January 1945 you gave a dinner at your home in Washington on Thirtieth Place for some very distinguished guests, among them Harry Truman, William O. Douglas. Do you recall this event and the people who were there?

J: I don't, actually, although I know every last one of those people and the roles they filled in our life. I've seen your list of them. Grover Sellers, who was up from Texas for the inauguration, was Lyndon's helper in all his campaigns that were state-wide. He began, I think, in 1941. I know he was in 1948. He's been our good friend all these years. I think the dinner was for him. He was attorney general of Texas then.

Oh, Bill Douglas and Fred Vinson were often there. Judge Marvin Jones and Bob Hannegan and Ed Clark and dear Albert Jackson from the *Dallas Times Herald*, and Bill Kittrell, who could tell some of the best stories of anybody I ever knew. Suave, kind, Arch Underwood from Lubbock. You know that the list included Harry Truman; I frankly did not remember it. I wish I could. Memory is a very imprecise tool.

G: Let me ask you about the inauguration. That was the last--

J: One thing I remember about it was that it was held in a place that it never has been before or since to my knowledge: the porch of the White House, the one where you walk out of the Blue Room and where those two lovely circular steps go down to the grounds. It was a cold, dreary, bitter day, and it was a very brief ceremony. I certainly thought nothing of the change of place. No doubt, in retrospect, it was because the President, then in--what was it--the thirteenth year of office, and actually only about three or four months before he died, must have been a very worn and weary man.

It was a bitter cold day, gray and sort of spitting sleet. I do remember Lyndon and I started to the ceremonies and the ticket on our car windshield permitted us to park, but a good long ways away. We got out and we walked, and a car drove up beside us and said, "Get in." I would like to know for sure. My memory of it is that it was the man I really came to know as Senator Bob Kerr. I think he was then governor of Oklahoma. Every governor was invited to the inaugural, so far as I know, always.

G: Was that your first association with him?

J: That was the very first time I remember him in our life. He became one of the staunchest friends.

So we went on up and we watched the ceremony. I remember that it was brief. Later on I have sort of an odd across-the-years return to that at a reception in the White House to which I had invited all of the Roosevelt children, and their children or indeed--I don't know whether any of them had grandchildren by that time, but anyhow all the family, and a great many of them came. I was standing this time inside the White House, inside the Blue Room as I recall, close to the windows that become doors and open out

onto the porch, with one of them, and I think it was James [Roosevelt]. He said something like this, that he had just flown in from his military service. Was he in the army or the navy? Whichever it was. He had just flown in for the ceremony and he had not seen his father in quite a long time, and [he said] that he was shocked by his appearance, thin and pale and wan. I certainly did not know that he was a sick man there in January of 1945, as I watched.

G: One more question about that party. Did they usually talk politics at parties like that?

J: Always. Always. And you know, it's a funny thing. Lyndon was very much inclined to have stag parties, and, I guess because I was the hostess, I was there. But then I was often with him when I would be the only woman in the group. It's the men that I remember and their conversations. Except in a few brilliant cases, the conversation among the women was not nearly as fascinating, and I was always glad to stick around with the men.

G: Did they argue?

J: In a good-natured fashion, yes. In an exchange of banter, and no doubt there may have been an edge of opposition sometimes. But I don't remember anything unpleasant.

G: Let me ask you about Senator [Alvin] Wirtz and his relationship with Secretary [Harold] Ickes.

J: Extraordinarily good. Ickes had a reputation for being irascible, and domineering, and difficult to work for, but he and Senator Wirtz just got along just fine. Senator Wirtz was a tough, strong, independent man, very cooperative, but couldn't be bent if he wasn't persuaded to agree. Titles and position of the person who he was with didn't

impress him. But they just got along fine.

G: Do you think he ever expressed a desire to be a judge, that you recall?

J: I think it's quite possible that he did. He would have made a good one. He had a judicious temperament. I don't remember what I know you're thinking about, the incident when a federal judge died in Austin, and there was an attempt on the part of some of his friends to get him the job. I don't know that he actively sought it. I think maybe he would have liked it.

G: I asked you about Henry Wallace, and you didn't recall a particular incident. But this might be a good opportunity just to ask you about Henry Wallace's relationship with the President during these years. He was a controversial figure.

J: Yes. Arms length. [We] didn't know each other very well. Our only association with him was sort of secondhand through Mary Louise's husband, Harold Young. They were good friends. Harold was always bringing us some kind of word from him. Later on, I remember when he was out of office, he used to send us some of his marvelous seed corn every year. Or could that possibly have been his daughter that sent it to us? In any case, we would get seed corn every year which had been produced by him. You know, he was something of a scientist and very interested in agriculture. And it would make marvelous corn. His wife was one of the gentlest, most charming women I knew, and if her husband was controversial, I'm sure there was never anybody that got mad at Mrs. Wallace. She was the most faithful member of the Senate ladies during their period in Washington and would come back for our annual meeting in the spring when we hosted our one big party for the wife of the president, and then when the wife of the president invited us back in

return to the luncheon at the White House. Mrs. Wallace was a regular, and I liked her just fine.

G: Well, now, wasn't Charles Marsh an admirer of Henry Wallace?

J: Yes, he was. And close to him. I'm searching my mind to try to recall whether that survived his abortive attempt--was it in 1948?

G: Yes, to run for president.

J: To run. I don't remember.

G: President Johnson did a good deal of work on the Naval Affairs Committee during this year.

J: Oh, yes. Naval Affairs all during his House service was a big part of his life and a big part of his companionship. He looked up to the old chairman, Carl Vinson from Georgia, with the greatest admiration and affection. And then he had a lot of other good friends on there, too: Sterling Cole I think of New York--and also I'm practically sure he was Republican, but that never made any difference to Lyndon--and [Edward] Hébert of Louisiana and Bill Hess and Warren Magnuson, Maggie, who was on Naval Affairs until he went to the Senate in--when was it? Did he go in 1944?

G: I think it was.

J: And sworn in in 1945, yes.

So, yes, Naval Affairs was a big part of his life in the House. As you know, Senator Truman had sort of built his reputation and moved to prominence on a Senate committee--I guess it was the opposite number of Naval Affairs--that was investigating waste in the military. Chronologically, I can't quite fit it into the pattern, but sometime

after, Lyndon was very interested in rooting out waste and duplication and absenteeism and companies making undue profits off of the war effort. The Work-or-Fight Bill was something that he cared very much about. I think it got passed in this year, 1945. He had a sort of a curious dichotomy about the military. On the one hand, a strong defense man from the word go--well, almost from the word go. I think I've told that story about when he first got to Congress in 1937, about the referendum on do you want to fight or not. Senator Wirtz clarified that for him, that having a referendum before Congress could declare war.

But early in his career he became a strong defense man, always respected the military, was a patriot through and through, and yet he also had a strain of cynicism about waste and two or three people doing the job of one, and companies making too much out of army contracts, and renegotiation of contracts became something that he applied a lot of investigation, study and efforts to.

G: Of course this year we see his investigations required him to be away from Washington to travel quite a bit, as it had, I guess, ever since the war started. Was this a hardship for him? To have to be away from Washington or Texas and go on these various trips?

J: No. I wouldn't say that it was a hardship. Whatever was a part of doing the job is just something he expected to do. I'm not aware that he minded. Our house, all during the war years, was kind of a revolving-door hotel. Young men and some few young women who were in the armed services, when they would get sent back to Washington for some kind of report or being reordered to somewhere else, and they were there for a week or a month or a day, they very often stayed with us.

G: Was this common for congressmen at the time to be sort of the lodge keeper for constituents and employees?

J: Well, it's got to depend on the nature of the congressman and his wife, and the sort of feeling of the people back home. The Tenth District was a very intimate, homey sort of place. Everybody called Lyndon by his first name. Everybody brought their problems to him. Individual problems are the bricks and mortar of the building of a congressman's reputation and whatever he stands upon.

G: It's hard to imagine them moving in on Speaker Sam Rayburn.

J: No, he was a bachelor and he lived in a very small bachelor apartment, so that was the difference. Back home in Bonham where his sisters presided over a sizable house he was a mighty hospitable man.

There was a joke that folks--let's see, it sounds like Bill Kittrell--told about how Senator Tom Connally back home talking to the constituency would say, "Now whenever you all are in Washington, I want you to come see me. Knock on my door." One day, one of them, I can't remember what his name was, played a joke on the Senator by telephoning him and changing their voice and saying, "Hello, Tom? This is so-and-so," and that was one of his constituents whose name he would remember, but not terribly well, a man with a large family, about six children. The Senator said, "Well, hello. How are you?" He said, "I'm fine. I'm down at the depot, me and all my family. Because you said to let you know when I got here." (Laughter) Oh dear.

G: That's great.

J: So we used to always say, "I'm down at the depot," whenever we were fixing to impose

on somebody with a sizable request.

G: John Connally was at sea on the *Essex* in the Pacific.

J: Yes. And we had off and on some wonderful letters from him. I don't remember the dates or the places.

G: He wasn't real specific about where he was, but it was clear he was--

J: No, I don't think he could be, and I'm not sure that any of them took place in this particular year that we're talking about. But first and last, from "all of his boys," in quotations, Lyndon got interesting correspondence.

Nellie was staying in Austin then, in the early part of that year at least. Lyndon's mother had one of several operations that plagued the last ten or fifteen years of her life. She had an appendicitis operation, and Lyndon went home to see her in March.

And of course in March another important event took place. Lynda Bird was a year old, and I remember what she looked like exactly. On her first birthday she had on a snowsuit, sort of a pink snowsuit with a hood, and she was crawling all over the place. We put her cake with one candle out in the front yard because it was a fairly sunshiny nice day, although still cold enough, nippy enough for a snowsuit. She was crawling around looking at the cake and all of a sudden, she got up, stood up, and took her first consecutive steps alone.

G: I know in one of the letters the President describes her reaching for a tablecloth or something and pulling the tablecloth down and an apothecary jar, and giving herself a black eye. Do you recall that?

J: Oh, yes, I do. And one time when she was little--that may have been the time--but

anyhow, she got quite a little cut, not nearly so awful as I thought at first, because I was scared. I called our doctor. He wasn't in his office. I knew of another doctor who had an office not many blocks down the road. I picked her up bodily, got in the car with her nurse, and down we flew to this office and I snatched her up and took her in. The doctor was very fatherly and nice and reassuring, and I think maybe he might have taken a stitch or so. But it was no big deal.

Our household at that time, we had Zephyr [Wright], thank heavens, firmly ensconced as cook and just taking care of ever so many things. And I'm trying to remember the name of the very nice young black girl from North Carolina, I think.

G: Was it Patsy?

J: No. Not at first. Otha Ree had gone, and I think this girl was next, and then Patsy. I'm trying to remember when Patsy entered our lives. I think it must have been maybe about three or four years later, when Luci was born. We had, briefly, a very nice black man, quite fine-looking, from Culpeper, Virginia, who had been part time in the household of Alice Marsh. But we didn't have really enough space downstairs or enough need, so he wasn't with us very long.

G: Do you recall the rejection of Aubrey Williams as Rural Electrification administrator? Of course, that was in the Senate rather than in the House, but . . .

J: No, I don't except that--well, I mean I do vaguely. And that we were just real, real sorry about it because we liked him very well and we knew that--at least we firmly believed that he was as stout an American as you could find. But he was too liberal for the taste of a lot of folks, and I think that's the reason he was rejected.

G: There was a lot of encouragement for President Johnson to run for governor coming up in 1946.

J: Funny, but I really don't remember it. I'm quite sure that Lyndon himself--he may have thought about it, toyed with it briefly--never considered it strongly. His thoughts were always on the federal scene.

G: You know, there's nothing really explicit here, but reading these documents from this year you really get the impression that he was raring to go after something else. He wanted to run for the Senate, or he wanted to do something else.

J: Well, I think--yes. In every job that he was in he felt at first an intense need to master it, and then a great period of being absorbed, totally absorbed in it, and then after a while, after years, there would come a sense of having sucked this orange dry, so to speak, learned all he could, done all he could, and sort of begin to look almost subconsciously maybe for something else. I'm not sure whether it continued from 1941 on to 1948, because it was sure a lot of good work done in those years. But maybe it was just resting in the back of his mind from then on.

But of course the two dominating things in the year of 1945 that I remember are just what everybody else remembers, the death of FDR [Franklin Delano Roosevelt] and the end of the war.

G: Bill Deason got married, had the reception at your house.

J: Oh, yes, yes. Lyndon was a great part of the life of his staff, and he loved the members of his staff. And almost without exception, they loved him and remained his close friends from beginning to end. And several of them--we participated in their weddings in

some way or another, gave the reception or he was best man. In this case we were absolutely overjoyed to do it, because we just loved Bill and we came to love Jeanne. But at the same time I had, and Nellie Connally I think had, a kind of a, "Gee, what are we going to do?" feeling. Because Bill was always there for us to lean on when our husbands were busy or out of town to carry the heavy suitcases, to move the furniture, to escort us out at night, anything. So we felt like it was saying goodbye to him in a way. But nevertheless, he had been a bachelor a long time and so marriage was highly due.

And it was a sweet little wedding out at the chapel at Fort Myer. Then we had all their good friends and ours. It was just real convivial and happy.

(Interruption)

G: Let me ask you about President Roosevelt's death. I think it was April 12 of that year. Do you recall how you first learned of the event?

J: I do, precisely, and I guess everybody does who was above ten or twelve years of age at that time. Aunt Effie was visiting us, as she did every year for a period of four or five or six months. She was downstairs listening to the radio, and I was upstairs. She came to the foot of the steps and hollered up at me, "Lady Bird, President Roosevelt is dead!" My first reaction was just a quick flash of anger. Now that doesn't make any sense. But I think perhaps it's not an unusual thing if you depend on somebody a great deal, and everybody that I knew had a sense of dependence on him. He was our leader; he was sort of a father figure. We felt everything was going to be all right, or as close to all right as could be, with him at the helm. You just got mad if such a person was removed from your life. I've encountered that feeling since, with Senator Wirtz' death, and with

Lyndon's nearly fatal heart attack in 1955.

At any rate, I just flashed back, "That's not right; you haven't heard it right," which was unnecessarily rude of me. Then I immediately flew to the radio and every station was full of it. There was nothing else on the air. Soon you had to believe it. Then the most curious--I don't know how to describe what befell our circle of friends, the city of Washington I think, and the nation to a sizable extent. It was sort of a period of everything ground to a stop, of almost paralysis, and then of wanting to know every detail. And then of finally, gradually, coming to. Was it on a Saturday? I don't know. In any case, the days all seemed like Sundays from then on for several days. Anyhow, the next day Lyndon and I went out to Helen Gahagan Douglas'. I don't know that we even called and said, "Could we come?" It was just kind of a time when close people got together, and I know that off and on for the next twenty-four or forty-eight hours we were with close people who had loved him and believed in him. Tommy Corcoran, I think we were with. I believe I remember Jim Rowe and Libby being there. You sort of huddled together for warmth, so to speak.

And then the day when the body reached Washington and when the cortege moved down the street, down Pennsylvania Avenue, Lyndon did the oddest thing. He stayed in bed all day, and he acted like he just really didn't even much want to have me around. I told him, somewhat timidly, that I was going downtown and stand on the street and watch it pass. He sort of said something sarcastic like, "This is not a circus, you know." But I still wish I had gone. I'm sort of mad at myself for not going. Not that you didn't share being at home listening to the radio. You did. But it would have been a

moment to absorb and share right close on the street. I wish I had gone.

G: Was this typical of him?

J: Well . . .

G: I know he hated funerals.

J: Oh, golly! But that one was one he certainly would have gone to had he been asked. It was a small group, I understand, that was asked to come to the White House, and I do not know who composed the list. I know when he was asked by a reporter--because eventually you get up and go back to work--or else he was called and asked to make a statement, he said something like, "He was like a father to me."

Lyndon could not very well have been in the Board--I don't know whether Lyndon was actually in the "Board of Education." You know, that was the little room that the Speaker had, to which he invited close friends. Lyndon may have been there, I simply don't know, and most of the folks that we could ask are not around anymore. But at any case, we all know, because we've all heard the story many times, that Truman was there. He had been asked to come over and he had left his office and was walking over to the Board of Education, and the phone rang in the Board of Education, and the person on the other end of the line asked if Truman was there. "No." They said, "When he gets there, ask him to call the White House immediately." No explanation, but a potentious [portentous?] thing to do. When he got there they said, "Mr. Truman, you're supposed to call the White House," and he did. He paused for just a moment and he said, "Jesus Christ and General Jackson!" and hung up the line and grabbed his hat and went out the door. I think Lyndon was there, and I think he is one of the several people that I have

heard tell it. The Speaker was another, and I don't know who else may have been there. Possibly Tom Corcoran might have been around. In any case, wouldn't that be interesting to know, just exactly where Lyndon did hear it? Have you heard it from any of the people that you have interviewed?

G: No. Of course, he told it, the President himself I think, told it on that interview he gave about President Truman.

J: Was he there in the Board of Education?

G: I just don't know; I'd have to check. But now, we know he was on the Hill. He was either there or came in the room shortly thereafter.

J: Because he was walking into an elevator--this I remember hearing him tell--when a press man--

G: Bill White.

J: --came up to him and said, "What do you think?"

G: Well, when did you first see him after that? Do you recall?

J: No, I don't.

G: Surely your thoughts must have switched to him.

J: Gone immediately to him, of course they would have. And it seems to me it was about three o'clock in the afternoon, or mid-afternoon or something, when I heard the news, when Aunt Effie heard the news on the radio. What time was it in Washington, do you know?

G: I gather it was evening, maybe five, six o'clock, something like that.

J: Yes, I guess it must have been later than that. Odd that I wouldn't have any memory of

Lyndon walking in the door, and what I might have said to him first. But I know I would have felt like I wanted to comfort him. But he just was not comforted by me or anybody for a little spell.

G: But he did want to go and be with friends?

J: Yes.

G: Do you think that he felt hurt that he hadn't been invited to that funeral?

J: I think he probably did. Because he had a curious dichotomy about funerals; they really just laid him out. They were emotionally exhausting and physically exhausting, but on the other hand he wouldn't miss them. If he was at all able, he went to them. And this, of course, was private, and he was not included. But he was pretty small fry, you know. He was still just a member of the House, and I think he considered himself personally close, and I think he must have been, in a way, by the number of times that he went down there, because they were really quite frequent.

G: I wonder, as you look back over the years, the amount of influence that Franklin Roosevelt may have had on Lyndon Johnson.

J: Oh, lots, no doubt about it.

G: In terms of how a president should function?

J: Yes.

G: Did he ever consciously, do you think, use that as a model or a reference point of things to do or not to do?

J: I can't really answer that. Anyhow, if he did, he couldn't quite have achieved it. Because in a way President Roosevelt, for all that I loved him and the world loved him, he was

pretty well armored against personal involvement and personal hurts. He had to fire a number of people, and he did. I think he was pretty well armored against the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. Maybe it was one of those fallouts from having gone through polio.

G: Could be. One thing, in President Johnson's letters after that he seems to have had almost a hostility to the people who had criticized Franklin Roosevelt.

J: Yes, and a lot of us did. I remember--let me think if I can remember the names of the characters. I think it was Milo and Tharon Perkins who were in an elevator shortly after his death, full of strangers, and one of them said something about, "Well, the old son of a bitch is dead." Milo drew back his fist and was just about to hit him with Tharon holding onto him, and all of a sudden the elevator stopped at the floor and the couple got off. I don't know. It was all so simultaneous that I don't know whether the man knew that he was about to be attacked or not. And if I am correct in remembering that it was Tharon and Milo, that in itself is a curious and sort of a sweet thing. Because Milo is one of those people who had served him mighty well, served President Roosevelt mighty well to my thinking, and then at some juncture in his life he wasn't promoted or appointed to a bigger thing or something, and a lot of people thought he wasn't done right by. But he had a very successful and happy career in independent work nevertheless.

Yes, there was an awful lot of passion on both sides. I really loved that story that Lyndon told often, not until years later, many, many years later, and I think you have it on your tape about the man who bought the paper every day, bought the *Chicago Tribune* every day and paid his nickel, stood at the newsstand, read the headlines, put the paper

down and walked off. You have that.

G: No, I don't think I do, do I? Well, tell it again.

J: And finally one time the man who had the newsstand just couldn't stand it any longer. He said, "Mister, every time you come by here and pay for that paper, you just read the top headline and turn around and walk off. How come you do that? You can see the headline anyway." And the man says, "Well, son, all I want to do is to read the obituary." The man says, "Oh, the obituary is on section D, page 16. You can't see the obituary on the front page." And he said, "When the fellow I'm interested in dies, you can see it there."

So that was certainly one of the two most important things in the year for the country and for us personally. And a great change. It took a while to get used to President Truman. Earlier, months earlier, after he was nominated for vice president and election was going to be pretty sure, anyhow I forget just when, the Speaker began asking him down to the Board of Education, and so there were a lot of people who had sort of a beginning closeness to him.

G: Did you have the feeling that after FDR's death that something happened in Washington? That people were not as excited or as enthusiastic about government and what was going on? In one of those letters to Jim Rowe, he says, "Washington is just not the same place that it was."

J: Oh, yes. There were a lot of the close devotees of FDR who never could see, in any successor, no matter how brilliant and wonderful he might have been, their shining star. That's just the way with close friends and staff people and folks like that. But it took a

while. And I must say, Lyndon was soon close to President Truman. He had known him before. But I remember him going out on the ship, which was then, it seems to me, called the *Williamsburg*. In our time it was the *Sequoia*. But I think possibly it was the same one. There would always be just stag parties, poker parties I think, and he would have with him folks like Bob Hannegan. The President would take with him his close friends. (Interruption)

He would have with him his close friends like Fred Vinson, who was also a very close friend of Lyndon's, and his secretary of the treasury [John W. Synder?], and you and I both ought to be able to remember his name; it escapes me right this minute. And Clinton Anderson, who became his secretary of agriculture I think, didn't he?

G: Yes.

J: And whom we had known in the House and then later of course on in the Senate. And Bob Hannegan, who was the head man of the Democratic Party. What's the title?

C: Chairman of the DNC, wasn't it?

J: Chairman of the Democratic National Committee. They would enjoy some relaxing moments on the ship.

G: Was there a vacuum in Washington, a political vacuum, after Roosevelt's death?

J: There was a queer sort of a sense, as I said, of everything having come to a halt, a paralysis of sort of like being in a vacuum. And then things got to moving again. Truman plunged right in and made a speech that was well received. And of course there were snide people, you know. Washington was a great place for trying to coin a phrase or tell a joke, even if it's cutting, maybe even more often if it's cutting. I remember once

somebody was talking about how would this be if Roosevelt were alive. "I wonder what we would be doing about this problem, this situation, if Roosevelt were to be alive?" And this quipster said, "What would we do if Truman were alive?" meaning that he was just sort of walking around dead, which he wasn't by a long shot.

G: The image that we have of you during the New Deal and the Roosevelt period was a close knit group of lively, intellectual, aggressive, New Deal-oriented people who were a reasonably close group. What I'm wondering is, did this group of your friends more or less disperse after Roosevelt's death?

J: Oh, no. We clung together. Many of us have remained together ever since, in my opinion: Jim Rowe and Libby, his wife, Tom Corcoran, for ages Ben Cohen. Every one who were old FDR people, their friendship remained. The luster was somewhat off. I think they will all remember it as their special day in the sun. Those of us that were in an elected public office and had our constituencies, we still had our job to do. It remained in our memories forever, but we went on with the day's work. And of course Clark Clifford was a part of the Truman days. There was a whole lot of us. Your words are exactly right. There was a lot of midnight oil burned, a lot of feeling that we can roll up our sleeves and remake America. It was a heady time to be alive and to be in government.

G: This next question is something that we'll encounter in specifics down the road, but this might be a good time just to ask you to think generally about it. Did President Johnson, do you think, become more conservative in the years after FDR's death?

J: Yes, I expect so. Of course you know, it really is representative democracy and Lyndon represented first a district, and then a state, that was more conservative, I think, than he

was. Of course for a long while they were in love with FDR, but then he had plenty of opponents in Texas and liberalism has always had--well, just in Texas we are a little bit more conservative. The miracle is that Lyndon survived successfully for such a long time in Texas. One of our friends, speaking nationally, said, "Lyndon, you took us about as far as we could go, and farther than lots of us thought we could," thought we could or would I'm sure.

And then the year was not all troubles. We had a few merry times. I'm sure there must have been some weekends or times that we got home and down to Buchanan Dam or to the West ranch and occasionally going out to dinner and getting a good seafood dinner with constituents who could afford to take us. I have one nightclub scene which is really offbeat for us. My eyes were always out on stems and I just love them where we're sitting around a table in the Troika with Tom Clark and dear sweet Mary, and Bob and Irma Hannegan and one or two people I don't recognize.

G: Now in May Germany surrendered. Shortly thereafter the President went to Europe on that subcommittee to investigate the disposition of surplus property. Do you recall the origin of that idea and how you first learned that he was going to go to Europe?

J: No, I don't.

G: He was chairman of that subcommittee, so I gather it must have been his doing to some extent.

J: Oh, yes. I expect he had something to do with getting sent. I don't remember the origin of the trip. I very distinctly remember the end of it.

Do you mind if I switch back one little moment to tell about something else that

has a place in my mind? That conference in San Francisco in April of 1945, was that when the UN [United Nations] was born?

G: Yes.

J: Well, our little fledgling radio station sent its top newsman, Paul Bolton, who stayed out there for days and days and covered it from beginning to end. I was sort of proud of doing that.

G: That was really a first, wasn't it, when it came to live reporting for local stations rather than . . .

J: I don't know whether it was or not, but I know that we were pretty small to have done such a thing. But we always strove to be the top news station in town. Paul had quite a following and a great reputation for integrity and ability, if not for a particularly good voice.

G: Whose decision was it to send him, do you recall?

J: I don't know. I expect it was entirely mutual. I expect Paul probably suggested it and Lyndon grabbed at the idea. I certainly would have.

G: Anything else on the forming of the UN?

J: Not that I was personally acquainted with. Later on, Mrs. Tom Connally, who had been Mrs. [Morris] Sheppard, you know, a beautiful woman--a rare career, married to two United States senators--gave us, the ladies of the Texas delegation, an interesting little talk about her twenty-five years in Washington and about being out there--this was 1945, and she was still married to Sheppard, but she--

G: No, Sheppard had died.

J: No, no, no, you're right. You're right. She *was* out there with Tom Connally then. Because she was recalling Tom Connally, what he said and did, memorabilia they had. I wonder where that memorabilia ever wound up?

G: I don't know.

J: At any rate, what happened to his papers I think is one of those sad things that happened by chance. They packed up a whole lot of boxes full of things that were to go to be destroyed and boxes that they considered valuable and wanted to keep, and alas, some of them got mixed up.

G: Really?

J: Really.

G: Well, there was some indication that Tom Connally might be appointed secretary to the UN or ambassador to the UN.

J: I have a vague recollection about that. I personally think he had so much power in the Senate that he would not have left it for anything. I don't have any precise recollection.

G: Anything on the Truman Cabinet? Tom Clark becoming attorney general?

J: Just that we cheered, because Tom and Mary were dear friends of ours, and gentle, true people, good folks.

But you were asking me about Lyndon going to Europe, and I do not remember the genesis of the trip, and him taking off. But he did stay quite a long time. Do you have a record of how long he stayed? How long was it?

G: Yes. They stayed about a month, just about a month. I think two days less than a month, gone from mid-May to mid-June.

You might just look at those stops and see if they rekindle any memories.

J: They don't really. I'll tell you the reason why: because when he arrived back, he got there, let's see, I don't know what time of day, but at any rate he brought with him Jerry Wilke [English], a young woman, a darling young person, who was I think with the Red Cross, had been stationed in Europe. He had seen her over there, her period of service [was over or it was] about time for her to come back or something. In any case, he just picked her up and brought her back on that plane. He had made it a point to get in touch with every service person whom he knew personally, particularly anybody from Texas, and bring back word from them and give it to their parents later on.

All of this I absorbed later. All that I absorbed when he first got home was that there he was, home, and I was glad to see him. He had brought Jerry Wilke with him and he had a whole batch of presents. But I was just very, very sick and not wanting to admit it. I'd been feeling ill for a couple of weeks, had called the doctor, just only got his nurse, and she knew how overpressed and exhausted he was, and she said, "Is it an emergency?" I said, "Well, no, I don't think so. I think I'm probably pregnant." So she said, "All right, I'll put you down for let's say Tuesday, two weeks from now," or something like that, anyhow, still a good ways off. I said, "All right," because I didn't know that it was an emergency. As it turned out, the day Lyndon got back I was really miserably sick and I remember wanting to be joyous, wanting to express my happiness that he was home. He wanted to show me some presents he had brought me, and I didn't much want to look at them or anything, and I really had to exert all the power I had to maintain my composure and try to be happy, because I never have wanted to admit it if I was sick, and it just

seemed like such a beastly time to be sick.

But that night, in the middle of the night, I really thought I was going to die. I didn't want to wake Lyndon, who was exhausted, and I got up and just crept into another bed. Now Jerry, she stayed with us, and I can't remember where she stayed. Maybe she stayed upstairs in our makeshift guest room. But [at] any rate, I was torn between wondering whether I just had to tell Lyndon to get up and call the doctor or not. Finally I must have gone to sleep or passed out or something. The next morning I got up and felt--I didn't really get up; I felt even worse. I told Lyndon I didn't feel well and just good-bye. But he didn't know how sick I was. So as soon as he was out of the house I picked up the phone and called the doctor and told him how I felt and everything. He said, "I'll be right out." Then I did pass out. Zephyr or somebody came in the room, they told me later, and they were just very much upset and they phoned Lyndon's office.

The doctor got out there in a few minutes, and he had very, just wonderfully, called an ambulance just on the assumption that he would need it. I remember them loading me into the ambulance and me trying to tell him the symptoms. I remember being put in that ambulance and thinking as I rode along the oddest string of thoughts about, isn't it wonderful if I am all this sick that there is an ambulance, and there is this fine doctor, and that I'm on the way to the hospital, and I'm going to be taken care of. I also remembered having bought a dress and paid more for it than any dress I had up until that time, and wondering what somebody else who couldn't pay for that ambulance or buy that dress, what they would do when they're presented with a situation like that, and sort of sending up a prayer of thanks to my father and my grandfather and my very hard-

working husband that I could buy that dress and hoped I got to wear it later on, and that I could ride in that ambulance going to get help as quickly as possible. Sort of ridiculous, random thoughts, particularly the dress.

But anyhow, they took me down to the hospital and it was a ruptured tubular pregnancy. I think the name of the tube is called fallopian, anyhow, pregnancy that doesn't make its way to the uterus but gets stopped in the tube and necessarily gets bigger and bigger and then bursts, which means that blood poisoning would set in and you would die if you didn't get an operation. So I was real sick. I remember it quite well, and it went on successively for several days, with high fever and a couple of bad ups and downs. Particularly I had lost a lot of blood and had to have a couple of blood transfusions. One of them, none in the hospital handy because I guess in the war years it was being used so much for returned servicemen. In any case, there was none of the proper type, so they asked Lyndon to see if he could find a donor right quick who was the proper type. He got Congressman John Lyle, and then he got a visiting friend of ours from Texas. I don't know whether he was a federal judge then or became one later.

G: I think he was just a lawyer at the time. Irving--

J: Irving Goldberg. Still our good friend. Sends us a big can of popcorn every Christmas.

But I wasn't still quite out of the woods. I had some peculiar reaction, and I passed out and scared myself and the doctor, and had the oddest sensation of falling down, down, down in a bottomless hole. Sometime in the middle of the day Lyndon came to the hospital to see me, not called by anybody and not his habit at all, because once he was reassured that I was going to live and be all right, it would be his natural

custom to just stop by in the evening when he got the work done. But this particular time the doctor knew how sick I was, and I felt I was very sick, but nobody had called Lyndon and he said he just had the feeling that he wanted to go see me. And oh boy, was I glad to see him, because it just felt like a lifeline, just something to cling onto, sort of a reassurance.

But that's a long way around to tell you how I felt about Lyndon's getting back. Actually, when he had talked so much about his trip that night before, and when he had showed me the gifts, I was just in no shape to take it in. And then life did run on so quickly after I was out of the hospital. However, I came to know that it had been a hideous, horrible, stomach-turning trip, and he had seen so much misery and degradation and cruelty that it had just been emotionally exhausting. He went, as you know, to Munich and Dachau and the underground city of Berchtesgaden, and oh, just a whole lot around over Europe, saw the devastated cities. I think it strengthened forever his determination that nothing like that was going to happen to us.

G: He met with General Eisenhower, and that could well have been the first time that the two had ever met. Do you recall?

J: No, I don't, but I should think it would be.

G: Did he talk about that meeting with General Eisenhower ever?

J: Oddly, I don't remember that he ever did. Now we had a brother-in-law--Josefa was married to an army colonel named [Willard] White, who was a fighting man--and he got decorated by General Eisenhower, and he was properly very proud of it, and did talk about it. But no, I don't remember. I remember Lyndon getting to know President

Eisenhower very well later on, and especially coming to feel--well, when he worked as majority leader when Eisenhower was president, coming to know him well and to appreciate his help and have so much more closeness to him after he himself, Lyndon, became president. But no, oddly enough, I don't remember.

G: How about General Lucius Clay? He also met with him.

J: Ah, that I do remember! He was a great admirer of Lucius Clay.

G: Clay evidently had a very impressive voice and way of presenting things.

J: Yes, and he was just one of those aristocrats in government and long may there be a line of them! Just one of those men of a sort of natural--at least Lyndon felt--nobility and ability. And General [George] Marshall, that was the general that Lyndon looked up to so very much.

G: They went to the *Folies Bergère* in Paris. (Laughter) Surely you've heard stories of that?

J: No. Gee, later on in 1956, Lyndon, in the company of some very favorite people, Senator [Richard] Russell of Georgia, took me to that, but you know, he's bound to have talked about it. But I'm afraid it's one of those things that dropped through the cracks that night I was so sick.

G: One thing, when he visited Germany, the other members of the group seemed to be just awed by the total destructiveness of the bombing and just how it had leveled virtually everything. Did he talk about that and just the extent of devastation?

J: Later on he certainly, I felt the fallout of the trip and his horror of the whole thing, and if he had been determined to have a strong national defense before, he was even stronger afterward. Yes, the whole thing just turned his stomach. He was horrified by all of it,

everybody's cruelty to everybody else.

G: Another thing that seems to have made a mark was the sheer poverty, particularly in Sicily and Palermo and places like that. Do you recall how this affected him? The fact that the people just didn't have enough food.

J: I recall just an aversion to all the misery that he saw. I can't particularly remember that he said the names of any particular areas.

G: Another theme that seems to be expressed in some of the correspondence is fear of communism, and especially the Soviet Union. Edward Hébert really perceived that as a threat. Did he talk about that upon his return, do you remember?

J: No. I think his--and here I'm trying to, maybe I'm imposing past events on that particular time, because one's memory shouldn't be overlaid with one's experience of succeeding years. They certainly tend to get that way. But my feeling is that he never varied from his thought that you better be strong when you face the Russians, but you have to try to be friends.

G: Now he also went to Italy and met the Pope, Pope Pius XII. Do you remember that?

J: Only as a story. Popes have played an odd role in the life of this Texas Protestant. He was terribly impressed by the Catholic religion and by popes. He used to have a joking expression that he would say. He'd ask somebody to do an impossible task for him and then he said, "And if you'll just do that, I'll make you pope." And of course it's absolutely absurd. But it was his idea of the tremendous prestige and importance of the pope.

G: This must have been the first time he met a pope.

J: Oh, I'm quite sure it was.

G: Did he talk about it? Of course, I know he brought back things for his Catholic friends. Do you recall his impression?

J: No, once more, I'm sorry but for the succeeding two weeks or so all I thought about was staying alive. So all of that I didn't absorb and digest as I should. I'll always feel kind of rooked out of it, because you know, that was one of the world's greatest experiences, if a hideous one. To be over there and to see it so quickly after the war, and to contrast it with the happy security that we have up until now enjoyed. Because that must have been very strong in his mind. I guess only in the time of the Civil War had we ever known anything like that, and then it was not the whole land. Then it was just the South.

G: Do you recall Churchill's defeat?

J: Yes, I do, with an odd mixture of dismay and sorrow. You know, you thought you knew him better than you did. He was such a giant of a figure all during the war. I sort of had a personal regret about it and about the ingratitude of his constituents.

When I got home from the hospital, which was in late June, I had to stay upstairs for a couple of weeks, and I couldn't lift anything that weighed much at all, and that certainly included Lynda Bird, who was a lively, running around, little fifteen-month old. I would just have to scream for help from the cook or the nurse when she was with me and about to pull the furniture over or hurt herself or something. I remember, I'm pretty sure that Aunt Effie was still there because I remember Lynda Bird very early, before she could certainly have understood much about what Aunt Effie was reading, would just love for Aunt Effie to read to her. I have a mental picture of her climbing up those stairs. She was a chubby little girl and a very strong little girl. She would be getting up those

stairs partly on her knees and partly--well, she could always get where she wanted to get from an early age, if not very gracefully. She was just like chugging up the stairs is the best way to describe it, and she would be saying with every step, "Read, Effie. Read, Effie. Read, Effie." (Laughter) Aunt Effie, up in her bedroom, would cuddle her up on the bed and would pick up almost any book and just pretend that she was reading, making up the story as she went. Because she could make up better ones than she could read probably, and her eyesight was very poor. But Aunt Effie adored her, and I'm glad that she had at least better than two years of knowing her. Let's see, Lynda Bird was born in March of 1944 and Aunt Effie left us for the last time in the late fall of 1946, because she went to Alabama, went into the hospital, and died January 1, 1947.

G: Does Lynda have any recollections of Aunt Effie?

J: Not really. She remembers me telling her all that, which she may or may not [remember].

Then, Lyndon went to Austin to open an office and I was not sorry for once to see him go, because it had been about six weeks since I had gotten out of the hospital, and I did not have much strength and much desire to act vigorous, alert and look my best. I was kind of dragging.

Then we dropped the bomb and Japan surrendered, and the news flashed all over the world. Once again, for the second time in the year, the city was shaken, this time in a very different way. It seems odd to think that what people did was everybody got in their car and drove and drove and drove and just blew the horn, just thousands of vehicles going up and down the streets of Washington, some of them just screaming and crying,

"Hallelujah!" But everybody blowing their horn and the streets just crowded. This time I was right there with them; he wasn't there to tell me that it wasn't a circus.

G: Were you in your car?

J: Oh, yes! I was in my car. I went out; I think perhaps I was alone. Or maybe I got somebody to take me, because there was a period when I couldn't drive, too. I think very likely I still couldn't drive, because I couldn't drive for about six weeks after I got out. But anyhow, I certainly remember I was in the car, in the crowd, feeling the juices of the victory and the wild elation of everybody around me.

G: Now he, I think, almost immediately launched a post-war planning conference in Austin.

J: Absolutely. Because he was thinking of all those people that were going to be coming home, and what were you going to do to put them back to work, how would they all--it had been such a gigantic job to gather them together, and now we were going to have to disperse what we had put together. Letters were pouring in from mamas, "Get my son home," and, "It's time. We need him on the farm. Papa's sick and about to die," and everybody wanted to get their son out of the army lickety split. As a matter of fact, in hindsight, we dismantled it much quicker than Lyndon thought we should. I'm sure you will remember, I know I do, hearing him say over and over that we make these gigantic efforts and then we think it's never going to happen again and we disarm. We dismiss everybody and disarm and wind down, too soon. Or at any rate, not holding back enough strength for whatever may happen.

Oh, and something happened then that has lived on to partly plague and partly bless the University of Texas. There was a terrific housing shortage in Austin, and they

had built a whole lot of old army barracks out on I think--is it West Sixth or is it Riverside Drive? [Lake Austin Boulevard] Anyhow, you know those old ramshackle army barracks. There they still stand. Some of them are I think destined to be torn down pretty soon. Of course, they've been destined to be torn down every year. They may fall down first, because the University rented them to students for something like, well in my time on the board of regents the cheapest one was thirty-five dollars a month. Can you imagine anything for thirty-five dollars a month as recently as the mid-seventies? From thirty-five to sixty-five. Every time they say they're going to tear them down, the students would just rise up, "No, no. We can't afford anything."

G: That's mainly married student housing I think now, isn't it?

J: Yes, it is. But it is really slum-like. We feared a fire or something.

G: But this was really LBJ's idea, wasn't it?

J: Oh, yes. He got the board of regents to accept these eight hundred or so apartments that had been surplus army barracks. Because it was a real housing shortage; there had been virtually no housing in wartime.

G: If you read the *Daily Texan* during this period you'll see that it's filled with nothing but ads looking for housing. It's just covered, the want ads. [It's] just amazing.

J: I remember we took our--by that time we had 1901 Dillman, and I know I commented to you on that. I divided it up into everything you possibly could. There had been two servants' rooms downstairs and each with a little bath, and we made an efficiency apartment out of that. And then we had added on one on the other side. No, it was a duplex to begin with, but we added on--gee, we certainly added on something. In any

case, in that one house we could house a lot of people, and many well-known folks have lived there.

Tape 2 of 2

G: You were going to talk about President Truman.

J: Yes. We've already discussed the end of the war, but there was a footnote that I may very well have included in *A White House Diary*, but in case I didn't. Many years later when Lyndon was president, President Truman came over. Lyndon brought him unexpectedly to me, but, oh, mighty welcome in any case. We were sitting around the dinner table, and as I remember there were just the three of us.

(Interruption)

I think there was just Lyndon, President Truman and me, and the subject of the bombing and the end of the war came up. I do not know whether I was bold enough to ask--maybe it was Lyndon; in any case--how did he make the decision? And he said, "It was very simple." He'd gotten George Marshall in there, General Marshall, and he said, "If we have to conquer this island landing ships, and American servicemen getting off and just invading the island, city by city, can you estimate the number of lives it would cost, American lives?" And General Marshall did. I don't remember the figure precisely enough to use it, but it was a big number. He felt that we could, but that it would be just at very heavy costs of men killed. President Truman said, "And that made the decision for me right there. I said, 'Drop it.'" To be that clear-cut about it, I guess we ought to be thankful that he didn't really, we didn't know, the world didn't know, any more about the bomb than we did at that time. If he had, could he have made the decision, and what

would it have cost us? In any case, that just about finishes what I can remember about the end of the war.

So Lyndon was down in Austin and I was in Washington. Very soon he began to think about what's going to happen when all the men start coming home. He put on a post-war planning conference for his own Tenth District and had about four hundred folks there. But he was also thinking of it personally. I don't know just when it began to enter his head, but I know it was early, that when Jesse Kellam got out of the navy that he would sure be a wonderful man to go to work for us at KTBC.

G: How did he relate to Pat Adelman when he came back? Was Pat Adelman still the station manager?

J: I think he was, but I think Pat had--at any rate, it was all very amicable--let it be known that he would welcome going off and doing something else that he wanted to do. At any rate, there was no rift or dissension, and Pat came to all of our Christmas parties for about the next ten years.

G: Let's talk about the founding of KVET.

J: My own impression of it was that, having done pretty well in the radio business from the time we began operation at a loss in February of 1943 and made our first eighteen dollars in August of 1943, now two years have passed and it's just like somebody, a bunch of friends are out hunting blackberries and you find yourself a good patch and you're doing real well and say, "Hey fellows, come on. There's more here to pick." So he began to think--he was always thinking of his boys, who by this time were surely men--what was going to happen next to them. I think he had a lot to do with selling them on the idea of

seeking this franchise and going into this business.

G: Was it his idea, do you think?

J: I cannot say for sure. You'd have to ask Jake Pickle or John Connally or some of those six or eight people who were in on it. But I think he was father of the idea.

G: I guess the saying that I've heard associated with that was that he felt that if you're going to have competition, you might as well have your friends be your competitors rather than your [enemies].

J: That's not a bad idea. He was a person with a good deal of vision and you could see that this was a coming industry and a coming city.

G: There's been a lot of skepticism about separate ownership, because KVET owners, some of them, worked for KTBC and the fact that they lived at Dillman Street and one thing [or another].

J: Oh, yes. Skepticism all over the lot.

G: Why don't you, if you can remember, just sort out how separate they were, if in fact they were separate, and who owned what?

J: Well, of course, they were separate. It was *their* business. I'm trying to remember who "their" was. I'm pretty sure that Jake, Bill Deason, John Connally were part owners and then, oh--

G: Ed Syers.

J: Ed Syers.

G: Bob Phinney.

J: Bob Phinney. Bob Phinney I was trying to think of. He was early on one of them. I

believe that's about as many as I can think of right now.

G: Didn't you have any fear that this would cut into your market?

J: No, it was really a growing industry and a growing city. I certainly didn't have any fear. I know somebody was going to. It might as well be somebody that you knew and liked.

G: It seems that the two stations did complement each other, because KVET right away went heavily on sports. So you could see an expansion of the market rather than a close overlapping. Anything else on the origin of KVET that you feel is important?

J: No. I remember going over there and seeing their facilities. Part of it was in a very old and quaint building. But no, I really just don't remember.

G: I'd even heard that he helped lend them money to get it started.

J: I wouldn't doubt it, wouldn't doubt it.

G: Do you recall specifically?

J: No, I don't. In fact, that bunch of people, they had helped him in every way they could. Bill Deason gave him his first car. I mean, took his, Bill's, car and said, "Use this car during your whole campaign," in 1937, and we practically used it until it was--put enough miles on it so that it was a very old car by the time we finished a few months later.

G: Was there a friendly rivalry once KVET got going?

J: Yes, I would say there is, and I would say that they've outstripped us in many ways. Until this recent downturn of AM though, we've certainly been a big part of Austin radio.

G: Did he himself at this point, do you think, consider again going into business or involving himself more actively with business? It was a period of going from war to peace and

there was a lot of opportunity.

J: Well, I think the idea was always in the back of his mind. He was ambivalent. He would have liked to have been in business, yes. It called to him. He was a little bit envious about people who went in and did make a big success. He also felt a certain amount of ability; he would have had confidence in himself as a businessman. But staying in public service had a greater appeal. So it's just one of those dormant ideas that never come to bloom, except insofar as helping manage and direct my own income and business life.

G: Did you yourself now, with this young baby, take a less active role in the station?

J: Yes, a less active role.

G: Of course, it was in the black now, too. You didn't need to--

J: Yes. I was not spurred on by necessity. We had waited a very long time for a child, and Lynda Bird was just sort of an eye-popping miracle to us. No, I think my thoughts turned to taking care of her and helping Lyndon's career in Washington. But, every week I got reports, and there were years and years when I signed all the checks. I cannot remember for sure whether I did that in 1945. I think I did it until we got in, maybe it was either the vice presidency or--I know we quit everything in the presidency, put everything in trust. But there were years when I signed all the checks, and knew what big decisions needed to be made and had the opportunity to say something about them and sometimes did.

And of course one of the pictures from that year that everybody will remember forever is that one of the *U.S.S. Missouri* and [Admiral Chester] Nimitz sitting on the deck surrounded by his officers and by the Japanese admirals and representatives in the signing of the surrender treaty.

And then Lyndon, having stayed down in Austin from the middle of August until, gee, I guess it was sometime in September when Congress reconvened and he came back. Letters began to pour in. But I think I've already talked to you about this, haven't I? About the barrage of letters wanting to dismantle, "send my boy home."

G: Operation Magic Carpet I think they called it. Get them all home quickly.

J: And Robert Patterson was appointed secretary of war, and he is one of the great figures to our thinking. One of these people of great integrity and character in government service.

Then we had a visitor in Texas in the late fall. Gee, we surely didn't know how many times later we were going to be thinking about him and quoting his name, because it was sure no part of my thinking then that I'd ever be living in Stonewall and close to Fredericksburg. But Admiral Nimitz flew to Texas and of course was going to his home in Fredericksburg, to see all the hometown folks. There was a big parade for him down Congress Avenue. Lyndon spoke and had a big part to play in it. I remember the bunting on the box and the banners and flags and how festive it was. We were up at the head of the avenue. The men were riding up in the cars, and those of us that were waiting for him and waiting for the speaking were sitting in this box in what is now a parking lot right across the street [at] the head of the avenue.

All during that summer and fall there were these rumors and sort of, just word that Lyndon might be planning to run for governor. I really can't comment from any knowledge on whether he ever considered it really or not. I think some of his friends really wanted him to, and he was flattered but unenthusiastic. I think that his straight line of his public service was always running in the federal direction.

G: Why do you think that is?

J: I don't know. I think he had an enormous respect for the U.S. Senate and I think he thought being governor was somewhat less than that, and if and when he ran for any job bigger than the House, it was going to be, once again, for the Senate.

G: Do you think maybe it was that early Washington experience, the fact that he went up there and worked for [Richard] Kleberg and had that Washington orientation as a young man rather than working at the state level?

J: Yes, could be. And I guess a natural thing would be that he thought that you could be more effective and do more on the national scene than you could just limited to the Texas scene.

But I do have the feeling--I don't know whether I had it then, I do in retrospect--that the year 1945, particularly after Roosevelt's death, after the urgent necessity to get on with the war had come to an end, there was just sort of a miasma of uncertainty and not exactly the winter of your discontent and certainly not stalemate, but still sort of a waiting period. It wasn't one of the most glittering times of our lives.

I do remember that President Truman began something then that it took a long time to bring to fruit, and that Lyndon tried to bring to fruit, and tried to share with President Truman when he went out to Independence to sign the Medicare bill. President Truman introduced something called the five-point health and social welfare program, to give all citizens a full measure of opportunity to achieve and enjoy health. So, gee, from 1945 to 1965, twenty years! Not much gets done immediately.

Rationing of meat and butter and all those red food stamps, red points, came to an

end. I'm sure I've talked to you about some of the funny stories of the rationing times.

G: Yes. Sam Houston had injured his leg, I guess.

J: Yes. He had been in the hospital. He had, I think, what was the first of several times of breaking a leg in the course of the years. But anyhow, it was a pretty good year for Sam Houston, a pretty good period of time as I remember. He was happily married. In the course of several years along there he had two children, held down a job, and it was a pretty placid time. Except for his mother's operations and, from time to time, health problems, all over the family it was a pretty good time. And he was very proud of Willard White, her [Josefa's] husband.

There were bills to give veterans priority in all sorts of ways and beginnings of legislation to benefit them. But for Lyndon there was kind of a--you can't say vacuum, but sort of a waiting time.

President Truman nominated Eleanor Roosevelt to go as the delegate to the United Nations, and the country very much approved. We knew and liked and were on real good terms with so many of his cabinet, of course.

So, 1945 came to an end, and I don't really have a clear picture of where we were at Christmas time.

G: I think you were in Washington, because I have a note that says he was flying to Texas early the morning after Christmas.

J: Yes. There were several of those years during the war when Congress was in session almost continuously. If it adjourned, it would be just for a month or so. And so although he made trips to Texas, I didn't go and set up housekeeping and stay, particularly not this

year after that serious illness and Lynda still pretty small to carry around.

She was really a very amusing child, and when she wanted to express her displeasure she had several mannerisms. She would lie down flat on her back and cover her hands with her eyes and just be stiff. You just knew that she was saying no to everything you wanted her to do. And another one, she would bend over and put her head on the floor with her little hands. That means she just didn't like a thing you were saying to her about do this, do that, or show Uncle so-and-so whatever tricks we wanted her to perform. Lyndon used to take her bottle away from her or make out like he was going to take it away from her, and oh, she would just laugh, because she didn't think he was going to do it at all.

G: Was he an attentive father at this point?

J: A very proud father and for the time that he spent with her, he was very interested and very easy around her. I can't say that he spent a lot of time with her, though. Something that I think he chided himself with unduly in the last years of his life, because she certainly managed all right.

That's about all that I can think of for 1945. I'm wondering if there was some time along in there, but I really believe it's going to be a little bit later, when I started escalating the grace and charm and looks of our house, sort of went to work on it, so to speak, began to spend a little money on it.

G: On Thirtieth Place?

J: Yes.

G: I think it's a little bit later.

(Interruption)

This segment will deal with 1946 and is recorded on February 7, [1981].

As we start the year 1946, Mrs. Johnson, what stands out in general that you remember, about the year?

J: On the big scene, in the world big things were happening. Like the first assembly of the United Nations opening in London, and all the troops coming home, and settling in to looking for housing and finding jobs and trying to readjust, and Truman asking Congress to combine the War and Navy Departments into the Defense Department.

On our front, Lyndon's and Lady Bird's, the main thing that stands out in my mind is a real hard campaign, the first hard campaign for the House of Representatives that we had had since the initial one in 1937. Actually it was the only one. And it was one that left a kind of a slur, a dark mark on our life that existed, overridden, true, but it did exist for all the rest of time. And that was accusations by our opponent, whose name was Hardy Hollers, about Lyndon's affluence and enrichment of his friends, accusing him of owning everything from the Travis Apartments--apartments were kind of vague.

(Interruption)

G: The Travis Apartments.

J: The word was vague. In most instances apartments and I expect bloomed and proliferated--we were supposed to have owned quite a lot. But I do remember one particular one that they said we owned and that was called the Travis Apartments. Then there were breweries we were supposed to own. I never quite understood which breweries. Fortunately they didn't yield any income. And some big properties in

Arkansas, and KVET radio station, and just a whole lot of rumors floating around. All those things, once let loose into the air, little gnats continue to sting and annoy. It was the first time that we had not been the young challenger, the fair-haired boy with nothing against him, the common man's friend and a poor boy.

Well, the other thing that stands out in that year is the number of times Lyndon was sick. He was actually in the hospital, I don't know, but I think three times in the course of that year. I know right after Christmas he was in Seton. He had what was first called flu. Then I think it went into pneumonia. At any rate, all his days he was subject to respiratory ailments and just had many repeats of them.

G: Why do you think Hardy Hollers emerged as a candidate? Weren't the opponents trying to find a really strong opponent?

J: Yes. Obviously they were. John Connally has an interesting letter on that, but it's a little too long to repeat. It was in general supposed to be conservative people, anti-New Dealers, oil men. So somehow or another they lit on Hardy Hollers. He was seeking support as early as February, and I think by April he was making speeches, Austin Rotary Club and all around.

G: Do you recall any other candidate that they tried to get to enter the race that was dissuaded or simply wouldn't do it?

J: There were some mentions of a young man, a returned veteran whose name I can't remember, but who had been a private and who was thought for that reason to have had some appeal and to have particular appeal to black people. At any rate, he really did not emerge as a candidate. In March, Lyndon made his own announcement that he would

seek re-election to the Tenth District job. That little abortive talk about whether or not he was going to run for governor was thereby laid to bed.

After that January episode in Seton, there was another time in about March when he went into the hospital. I just do not re[call]--I think he went to Mayo's. Or was it after the campaign was over? There was that third hospital experience in Mayo's. At any rate, he was in the hospital about three different times in this year.

Some of the legislation coming up was an attempt on Lyndon's part to get some money from REA [Rural Electrification Administration] to extend the lines to all the farms in his district. He had at least sympathetic ears to talk to. Clinton Anderson was secretary of commerce and Claude Wickard was head of the REA, and whatever could be obtained from the Congress, the Tenth District would at least have a good chance at it, we felt.

Our old friend Roy Miller got sick that spring, and I think late in the spring he died in Corpus Christi.

G: Did you go to the funeral?

J: No, and I think perhaps that was one of the times when Lyndon was in the hospital and couldn't go himself. For some reason, I don't believe he was there; I'm not sure.

We also had at KTBC some labor troubles, handled successfully in the end, but did give us some trouble. Our downtown studio and the transmitter site where we were putting up a larger tower were picketed for a while.

G: There was some threat that they were going to attempt to damage the transmitter. Do you recall that?

J: I don't. And in any case, it wasn't done. But the big news at KTBC was that Jesse Kellam was there, and there began for us a long period of breathing a sigh of relief about that business. In the hands of Jesse we felt that it was secure. At least he would look out after it with great industry and very great integrity and devotion to us. And so from--I've forgotten whether he came in late 1945 or in early 1946. I just know that by early 1946 he was there. From then until his death in 1977, which makes more than thirty years, he made it possible for us to continue in public service knowing our living was taken care of. That was a kind of freedom that is just the best thing that can happen to a public servant in my opinion.

G: One more question on the labor problem. Was there ever a political consideration on the unionization question? For example, did you ever sit down and analyze whether it would be best for the President politically to have the unions there or not to have the unions there?

J: I'm sure that did come up. I don't know when and how. I have really no personal recollection of it, but I think it's inevitable that it should have entered the minds of really observant people. Somehow or another Mayor [Tom] Miller, who was a most amazing man, his hand appeared in that as a mediator. I cannot say enough about how truly remarkable he was. He was a sort of a Shakespearean character.

G: John Henry Faulk came to work for KTBC, I gather, made his first broadcast in February according to my notes.

J: A lot of people went through our doors, were trained there, went off into--because of the University, and because part-time students just used it as kind of a training ground. I

don't have any memory of John Henry being there, but I know from later correspondence that he was there. But I used to meet him all over the country when Lyndon was in the race of 1960 and in 1964, and some radio or television people would be interviewing me, and ever so often there would be one of them that would say, "I got my start at KTBC."

One of the interesting things Lyndon did at that time was [with] the first magnesium plant. I don't know whether it was first. Anyhow, it was certainly an early one and an important piece of the war effort in Austin. After the war it became surplus. Lyndon was able to work out converting it into a research center under the wing of the University of Texas. There was a bunch of housing out there, and it would provide some GI housing and also educational facilities. In two ways, at least, he worked on the University's problems. Those now ramshackled quarters on West Sixth, those apartment houses which served to send so many folks through school paying thirty-five dollars a month rent. And still, when I was on the board of the regents in 1971 to 1977, they were still charging little nothings of rent. So that, of course, was transferred to the University, and this old magnesium plant, which became known as the Balcones Research Center [renamed Pickle Research Campus in 1994]. I have on my mantel in the yellow room some bookends made from some of the first magnesium that was mined, or however one produces magnesium, there.

The grist that came to our mill in those days were a whole lot about returning veterans. Every mama wanted her boy out of the army. There was always a big rush. Papa needed him on the farm. Somebody in the family had a heart attack. They needed their boy home to take charge. If you couldn't, if they didn't deserve getting out, perhaps

you could at least get them stationed close to home. At any rate, he spent a lot of time working on veterans' claims and easing the transition of them getting out of the army.

G: Wasn't there sort of a reaction to government control at this point, too? The OPA [Office of Price Administration]--?

J: Oh, yes, indeed. Yes, indeed. Just as in Great Britain, they threw out that marvelous [Winston] Churchill, that great wartime leader, there was also a general revulsion against government, which was spelled with a capital "G" and had in the minds of everybody then so many rules and regulations and red tape, and people were mad at the OPA, at all the shortages, very especially at the shortages of housing and of automobiles. I remember one of our secretaries wrote a letter, said she was so sorry she hadn't been able to get a car; she had two new corns and was still trying.

There was a lot of talk about the repeal of the OPA, and a lot of crippling amendments. I believe it was along about that time that our friend, Paul Porter, had the hapless job of being administrator.

G: Did the President, when some of these controversial votes would come up, did he ever agonize over how to vote on a certain bill?

J: Oh, yes, yes.

G: Did he talk about it with you?

J: Yes, he talked about it. It was often a kind of a monologue, sort of thinking it through. He always wanted my reaction. I can't say how much he listened to it, but he was very absorbent. There were a number of times that I found that things that I had said and didn't know that he paid any attention to, later would come out in his conversation or in

his speeches as parts of his own thinking. So somewhere in his mind they registered and made an impression.

So the year went on into the spring and apparently Lyndon, at last, felt really well again. A great volume of correspondence began to go on between him and friends at home about this opponent, Hardy Hollers, who was really surfacing in all sorts of places. You would hear about him in this town and that, and even in our own hometown of Johnson City. We had a marvelous network of friends and helpers. They covered all the strata of our lives. For instance, our office force and our former office force--I believe Dorothy Plyler had left and was back in Austin, and Mary Rather and Walter Jenkins were with us, of course. Jake Pickle, out of the service, I think he was back in Austin, sort of covering the district and trying to help us. Some of the names that surface out of the past, Johnny Simmang of Giddings, and the two Burnet brothers, Will and Walter, of Burnet. In Brenham, of course, there was always Reese Lockett, the perennial mayor, and Brother [Sam] Low. And among the blacks, there was a very staunch, delightful friend, a dentist, Dr. Givens.

G: Everett Givens, yes.

J: Yes, and I'm sure you've heard one of my favorite stories about him.

G: No.

J: I bet you'll find it somewhere. It was at some convention for nomination to the presidency that Lyndon went to, and I never went to them. But Dr. Givens was there. Lyndon was there. Dr. Givens had gone to medical school in the East and had returned home to Texas. He had met a lot of his classmates up there, and they would look at him

like, "You poor man, living down there in Austin where black folks don't have any chance." They were all together talking, and they saw their congressman marching across the floor. I think it was one of the Roosevelt boys. Wasn't one of the Roosevelts a congressman from--

G: California.

J: Well, this one was from New York. Wasn't one of them from New York for a while?

G: Could be.

J: And [saying], "There goes my congressman" with much satisfaction. And I think he turned around and spoke to them, the congressman did, in passing. Then, later on in the day, Lyndon ran into Dr. Givens and said, "Dr. Givens, come on in and let me ask you a bunch of questions. I want to know how things are going in Austin." Dr. Givens said, "Do you mind if I invite a couple of my friends?" and Lyndon said, "Fine. Fine. Bring them in." And so they came in to have a drink in Lyndon's room and sit down and talk. These friends were not Austin friends; these were some of his eastern friends, and he said, whatever their names were, "Here *is* my congressman!" (Laughter)

Throughout our career he was a staunch helper. In Austin there were folks like Brian Spires, the head of the chamber of commerce. Homer Thornberry was active. So was Herman Jones. And then Mack DeGuerin, I think by that time he was not with us, but as a former staff member, he was in our network. We had just a regular network of folks that would tell us what was going on, who they'd seen, what they'd said, "taken their temperature" was sort of the word. Martin Hyltin was the head of the LCRA, and one of the big things you could try to get done for your constituents at that time was to get the

extension of the REA lines out to their farm or ranch. Lyndon tried mightily on that and got great help from Martin Hyltin. Babe Smith was a good friend. I think he was on the LCRA board, or perhaps later he became. And the words that were soon very much a part of our vocabulary were "favorable list" and "precinct chairman" and "woman's division."

And of course Senator Wirtz was still the old alcalde. He was the one to whom we looked for ultimate advice and judicious character.

In the press, our friends were Buck Hood and Lorraine Barnes, Stu Long, sometimes a stormy petrel, sometimes goaded us, but all in all, a friend. Raymond Brooks and Charlie Green.

The old NYA still had its gift of friends, of course. I think Harvey Payne went to work for us in the district. Jesse Kellam was everywhere. This is the first time, I think, that A. W. Moursund, just out of the army and returned to his hometown of Johnson City, surfaced in our life. Uncle Tom and Aunt Kittie and A. W. Moursund were our staunch captains in Johnson City. And Miller Ainsworth, I think, in Luling. Among businessmen in Austin, our list was not so long. Longer than it had been certainly in 1937, but E. H. Perry and Dave Reed . . .

G: Was there some attrition? Did you lose supporters among businessmen in Austin, do you think?

J: No. In the beginning we didn't have them. We had to fight to get them. I don't think there was attrition. E. H. Perry was from first to last, and then there was Mr. Will Davis of the Austin National Bank, I think. Then there was someone who had one of the

biggest hardware stores in town. But they were not as numerous as we would have liked among our supporters. It's interesting to reflect on how rural our district still was. The things that a congressman went to or sent his helpers to, his friends, were things like stag fish frys and cemetery cleanings and rodeo clubs, and of course, always, the American Legion parties. There are whole lots of very rural names that you keep on reading about in the reports from friends, like Creedmore and Del Valle and Elroy Community. A lot of places were named "Community." Cedar Creek and Leander.

G: They were really looking for votes one at a time, weren't they?

J: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. This was, I think, the biggest effort at organization, certainly the biggest one that we ever made in a race for the House. One, we were more knowledgeable about it, and we had more friends and knew more about organization. John Connally was the overall manager and the most prolific of all those who kept Lyndon in touch with what was going on at home. Lyndon would write letters saying to everybody, "We've got ten counties and two hundred and forty-seven boxes. We want to get an organization in every one of those counties and at least one person we can depend on in every one of those boxes. We want to be right on top of all the problems of the day." Housing shortage was one of the biggest beefs, and the contractors gave him a lot of trouble, simply because--well, we had to gear back to a domestic economy from a wartime economy, and we were plagued with shortages and red tape, and it's a congressman's job to cut that red tape and find those shortages *some*where.

G: Was he on the horns of a dilemma that spring? Hardy Hollers was accusing him of not being on the job in Washington enough, and I know he felt that he had to be there to vote

on certain issues, and yet he also felt that he needed to be in Texas campaigning.

J: Yes, he certainly was. Mostly he resolved it by being in Washington. I think he was in Washington most of the time. But things were happening, like Camp Swift was about to be put out of business and the San Marcos Army Air Field, Lyndon was struggling to get that turned into--some of the buildings to house prospective GI students for the school there. There were lots of things happening at home that he needed to get down there to reassure the people about. I think he was scheduled to be in more places than he ever quite made. I think he went back as much as he could. I think he went to Bastrop and Brenham and San Marcos, but I know he was supposed to deliver a graduation speech in Johnson City, and I know that he would have dearly loved to do, and in the end, he couldn't. He did speak in early May in Elgin and at Southwestern University in Georgetown. There was one big time when he brought Secretary of War for Air Stuart Symington down in May and took him around to San Marcos to see the army air field school there and to a barbecue in Bastrop, where he met with Mayor Will Rogers and lots of the civic leaders. I've really got to include Will Rogers on that list of staunch friends who helped control his area as best he could. Lyndon was trying to get Camp Swift made into a training program or reopened in some alternative capacity.

There were a few nice interludes of leisure. Lyndon took Stu to Buchanan Dam with Senator Wirtz for an evening of just putting up your feet and talking and have fun. My recollection is that I was out at Buchanan Dam once with Stu, and I remember us actually dancing, which was a sort of a reprieve from duties and a merry sort of thing to do.

We *did* get some money for the REA. There *were* going to be a lot of extensions, and that was cause for elation. There was going to be an extension on the airport. Lyndon kept up his relations with Latin Americans through a newspaper they had in Austin. And of course, he always had close relations with black people.

G: It looks like he was trying to schedule three speeches a day: one in the morning, one at noon and one in the evening.

J: When he went home I'm sure he did. He would repeat in letters, I remember, often the phrase, "Time is the most valuable thing you have; be sure you spend it well." And yet he himself was sometime one of the chief breakers of that rule. He would get interested in somebody who was not all that important, or he would get interested telling a long story and be late for a meeting, which would, of course, have a lot of people on edge.

Hollers delivered his opening address in Austin in May, and from then on out, things revved up, and there were a whole bunch of our friends that were just *calling* on us, just *pleading* with us to come home and stay. Lyndon *did* send me down there, I forget just exactly when, but send is the right word. I was trying to help open a women's division, calling on old friends like Marietta Brooks and little Wilke, who is now Mrs. Crockett English, Jerre Wilke.

G: Did you work out of the campaign headquarters, or did you work out of the Dillman Street home?

J: My feeling is that we did some of both, because our home always turned into kind of a secondary [campaign headquarters].

G: How did you decide what to do? Did you sit down and have strategy meetings and plan?

J: Yes. I would say the women were definitely an auxiliary and not the main force, and they would listen to what the more knowledgeable folks had to say. John was really the big boss. I have the feeling that Bob Phinney played a sizable role. Could he have been the head of the office? It seemed that the office was down on Congress Avenue on the first floor of a big vacant store. It's very hard to keep in mind. We had so many headquarters in so many years, and although I have a mental picture of a great many of them, I sometimes get them mixed up as to which year goes with which. I remember Lyndon felt, and wrote, to some of his close people that it was Houston oil men and the National Manufacturers Association who were going to do all that they could to make it a difficult race for him. Hollers was spending lots of money in ads in the country newspapers and speaking on the radio once a week.

The national news was that poor Truman was having his troubles with the railroads and with the coal miners, and there were strikes. It was sort of a bad feeling in the country, a revulsion against government and against interference in one's private life. We really wanted to get home and pursue our own thing and live it up--we, the country, did.

G: Do you recall Harold Ickes' resignation and the rift there?

J: Not personally, no I don't. I don't know whether you could trigger any things that might make me [recall].

G: I gather it had to do with the tidelands and accusations of contributions and that sort of thing, over claims to the tidelands.

J: No, I don't. I know Truman had already, in the year before or early in this year, asked for

legislation that would specify that the tidelands belonged to the federal--to the nation. But that didn't heat up, did it, until one or two or three years later?

All of this talk, both *sub rosa* and out in public, about Lyndon getting rich, sometimes it had its funny side. I remember two occasions: one was when some good friends got questioned about didn't he think this was pretty skeptical, didn't he sort of look at that with a weary eye, about Lyndon getting so rich. This fellow replied that he didn't give a damn if he had made a million dollars and if he had stole every penny of it. (Laughter) That put an end to the conversation.

Then another funny thing was that I got a letter, and I got many like this, but this one was so in earnest and so plaintive and so innocent. This woman wanted to come down to Austin to put two or three of her children in school, and she couldn't find a place to rent anywhere. She knew we owned an apartment house there and couldn't we please manage to let her have an apartment in it? And she wasn't meaning to accuse us of anything that we ought not to do.

G: Do you recall how the decision was made to counter the charges?

J: I only remember that Lyndon held his fire for a long time, much longer than [I wanted]. I got nervous; I got itchy. I was really alarmed by such people as Everett Looney getting alarmed, and I was wanting him to come on down there. I was in Austin. May was progressing on into June. He did finally set, I think July, right after July 4, maybe it was July 6, as the date when he would come and make his opening speech. I don't really recall how it was made, but I know what he asked me to do, and that is to dig up every bit of information I could out of wills, check stubs, what you paid in inheritance taxes, just

everything that I could about my own finances, where and when I had received Alabama money and what I had done with it.

And I did. A large part of my work in Austin was not in addressing envelopes and getting out pamphlets and posting up placards, as it had been in other campaigns, but it was just digging into reams of correspondence that had settled Uncle Claud's estate in 1941, 1942, 1943, whenever it was finally settled, which was I think maybe as late as 1944, and it took two or three years to settle it. Aunt Effie, of course, was still living. When she had given me how much money, how much I had received from my father to apply against what my portion of my mother's estate was. And I had a very large thick folder of information which I got. I made the thorough acquaintance of copying machines at that time. I think I used to go to Miller Blueprint and get things copied. I may even have made a trip to Alabama to go back through such records as I could. At any rate, when I had been in Alabama I had made loads of copies and notes in the settlement of that estate, and I had dug all those up and compiled an enormous, and to me very conclusive, bunch of evidence of where money came from and where it went.

I remember very well that opening night, and actually it was all one night really. It was one giant blast on the night of July 6, I think, in Wooldridge Park. And we were very thoroughly prepared to answer any charges. I was even geared to stand up and start rattling off the facts and figures, and carried this huge file in my arms up onto the stage. It was the custom in those days to ask a whole lot of people that the community looked to as leaders, everybody from the mayor to the big businessman to one representative from the--I think by that time you might have had one representative from the blacks on the

platform and maybe one from the Latins. At any rate, you would think you'd get anybody with a title and a position of prominence in the community, you were likely to have a very impressive roster behind you. Lyndon decided he would march up there on that stage with nobody except him, me, and his mother, who lived there in Austin. By that time she had lived there quite several years. We had dressed up looking as dignified and simple as we could and marched up there, just really strung up to a pitch.

It was a glorious night. There were people stacked as far as you could see, not room enough to sit down or climb up in a tree. Different communities would have banners; they'd just say Lockhart, Luling, San Marcos--loads of San Marcos--Johnson City. People would come in caravans from the surrounding areas, just the ten counties of the [Tenth District]. I think there were delegations from every one of the ten counties.

G: I wonder who suggested the idea, though, of having all of these records here and just confronting the issue head on?

J: I'm quite sure that was Lyndon, but I do not think he would have done it without the Senator's [Wirtz] okay. Because I remember many wonderful late nights and many delightful Sunday dinners, pleasant times, out at the Senator's house. It was on Woodlawn. It was a house later owned by Frank Erwin. Kittie Mae had a good cook and a warm welcome, and he had a quiet cozy library if it was wintertime, or a screened back porch with the trees and lawn on three sides of it if it was spring or summertime. Many times we were out there for long, long talks.

G: Did LBJ see the significance of this speech before he gave it? You said he was worked up to a pitch, but did he, I wonder, feel that this was going to be an important moment in

the campaign?

J: Oh, I'm quite sure he did. He had a great sense of timing, a sizable sense of drama, and I think he was putting in his stack, as he would have expressed it, and he thought he would either knock him out of the ball park, or else he would be in for a long, hard summer.

G: I think in the speech he said something about, "Those that want to come up and shake my hand, do so, or if you want to, come up and examine my financial statement."

J: He certainly did!

G: Do you recall who wrote the speech?

J: No, I don't. I expect that that's one that he almost virtually dictated, but as for knowing who wrote it, I don't. As you know, always before up until a year or so ago, Herbert Henderson had had a big hand in writing speeches. I'm sure that Senator Wirtz had input; John Connally had input. I think most of it was Lyndon's.

G: Did you yourself have an input in addition to assembling all of the financial data?

J: No. I was in on all the decisions more or less in a listening capacity, at least--I don't know all--but I was certainly in on a vast number of [decisions].

G: Do you recall any session where they sat down and went over the speech before it was given and sort of did a rehearsal, or critiqued it and that sort of thing?

J: Well, it happened lots of times, in lots of campaigns for anything that was going to be a blockbuster of a speech. He agonized over them. If somebody else wrote it, never fear, he wouldn't accept it as it was. He would swallow it, digest it, and out it would come in some more words more like his. Oh, yes, there would be a lot of sessions of evaluation. I cannot say that I specifically recall one. I feel sure that they took place at 1901 Dillman

around the dining room table and out, either in the Senator's charming little library or his back porch.

G: Let me ask you, how, during one of these campaigns, when you've got all these people coming in and out of your house just constantly, day and night, how did you manage to keep food in the ice box and drinks and everything else.

(Laughter)

J: It was a very casual affair. We always felt that the job at hand was so much more important than the precision of the service or the quality of the food, that we just did the best we could. And actually our household help was just as elastic, and just as interested and just as devoted to the ultimate outcome of our various causes and campaigns, so--I'm sure it was hard on them, but it was also a kind of a game to see how well they could do it, and they did it mighty well.

G: Do you recall his reaction to the speech, to the Wooldridge Park [speech]?

J: I think we all felt a great sense of--a sigh of relief, we've done our best. We have done what everybody has been after us to do for about two solid months. That is, come home and tell it like it is and try to rally all our friends, and take the reins, and charge forward. I think we felt that our best had been good. I know when I walked down that slope into the basin of Wooldridge Park and looked around at that crowd, I just began to feel this is going to be all right.

G: Did anyone actually come up and look through the financial records?

J: No, not a soul, and I remember being sort of disappointed because I thought I . . . (Laughter) Of course, it had been almost impossible to have plowed through it. You

were 1ooking at Xeroxes of whatever--I don't know that there was Xerox then, but they were copying machines--everything from cancelled checks to contracts of purchase, to wills, to inheritance taxes paid, and letters from my daddy stating how much would be coming when, and letters from Uncle Claud and Aunt Effie.

G: It must have been a good feeling to have this sort of an aura of suspicion dealt with head on.

J: Oh, great. Just great. A great relief. And for years that package, that file, which was finally encompassed in sort of cedar red envelopes, thick and bulging, two or three of them, reposed in the bottom shelf of our little library at 4921 Thirtieth Place in Washington. They're dispersed now; I don't know where they are. I would love to lay my hands on them. But I think we got them out later in checking back on various things, and they gradually got dispersed.

End of Tape 2 of 2 and Interview XIX