

Claudia Alta “Lady Bird” Johnson Oral History Interview, 3/9/1979
Administrative Information

Creator: Claudia Alta “Lady Bird” Johnson

Interviewer: Sheldon Stern

Date of Interview: March 9, 1979

Place of Interview: Washington, D.C.

Length: 62 pp.

Biographical Note

Lady Bird Johnson was the First Lady of the United States from 1963-1969, involved in the First Lady's Committee for a More Beautiful Capital, a supporter of the Head Start Project and founded the National Wildflower Research Center in 1982. In the interview Johnson discusses her recollections of the Kennedy presidency, her husband's role as Vice President and President, and her relationship with the Kennedy family, among other issues.

Access Restrictions

No restrictions.

Usage Restrictions

According to the deed of gift signed March 1, 2000, copyright of these materials has been assigned to the United States Government.

Copyright

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be “used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research.” If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excesses of “fair use,” that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law. The copyright law extends its protection to unpublished works from the moment of creation in a tangible form. Direct your questions concerning copyright to the reference staff.

Transcript of Oral History Interview

These electronic documents were created from transcripts available in the research room of the John F. Kennedy Library. The transcripts were scanned using optical character recognition and the resulting text files were proofread against the original transcripts. Some formatting changes were made. Page numbers are noted where they would have occurred at the bottoms of the pages of the original transcripts. If researchers have any concerns about accuracy, they are encouraged to visit the library and consult the transcripts and the interview recordings.

Suggested Citation

Claudia Alta “Lady Bird” Johnson, recorded interview by Sheldon Stern, March 9, 1979, (page number), John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
JOHN F. KENNEDY LIBRARY

Legal Agreement Pertaining to the Oral History Interview of
LADY BIRD JOHNSON

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 21 of Title 44, United States Code, and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth, I, Lady Bird Johnson of Stonewall, TX, do hereby give, donate, and convey to the United States of America all my rights, title, and interest in the tape recording and transcript of a personal interview conducted on March 9, 1979, in Washington, DC, and prepared for deposit in the John F. Kennedy Library. This assignment is subject to the following terms and conditions:

(1) The transcript shall be made available for use by researchers as soon as it has been deposited in the John F. Kennedy Library.

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

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

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

(5) Copies of the transcript and tape recording may be deposited in or loaned to institutions other than the John F. Kennedy Library.

Donor

Claudia J. Johnson

February 2, 2000

Date

Archivist of the United States

Date

3-1-00

LADYBIRD JOHNSON

Table of Contents

<u>Page</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1	Earliest recollections of John F. Kennedy
3	Lyndon Johnson's relationship with Joseph P. Kennedy
4	1956 Democratic Convention
10	1960 Democratic Convention
13	John F. Kennedy's call to Lyndon Johnson
14	Ladybird's feelings towards accepting the Vice Presidency nomination
18	Visit to the Hyannis Port house
21	1960 presidential campaign
27	The inauguration
29	Lyndon Johnson's role as Vice President
30	Diplomatic traveling
36	Lyndon Johnson's relationship with the Senate
39, 58	Lyndon Johnson's relationship with Robert F. Kennedy
40	The life of the Vice President's wife
45	The Connally-Yarborough split
47	The 1963 trip to Texas
48	Post-assassination plane ride to Washington D.C.
54	Post-assassination sentiments
55	Lyndon Johnson's relationship with Jacqueline Kennedy

Oral History Interview

with

LADY BIRD JOHNSON (Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson)

March 9, 1979
Washington, DC

By Sheldon Stern

For the Oral History Program of the John F. Kennedy Library

STERN: Can we begin with your earliest recollections of Congressman Kennedy [John F. Kennedy] and in the early years, in the forties?

JOHNSON: They are vague and just vignettes. You see, Lyndon [Lyndon B. Johnson] had come to Congress in `37, and by the time Senator Kennedy came in, it was some ten years or so later. He had really very little time as co-workers in the House of Representatives. Lyndon ran for the Senate in `48 and by January of `49 was in the Senate. I remember him as one of the young bachelors who became the subject of a lot of newspaper

[-1-]

stories, glamorous sort of stories--particularly in the society pages--because of his handsome boyish good looks and his family background. And I remember some sense of sympathy from time to time because we'd heard that he had serious back trouble, that it happened to him as a result of war injuries when he swam a long time carrying a comrade, and that his back bothered him badly off and on thereafter, which caused, sometimes, absences. I don't remember in what years exactly. But Lyndon was sort of his, not only his senior in years of service in the body, but I guess, what, eight or ten years older.

So I have not many memories. I guess the first really clear one was a beautiful story of the wedding, in a spread in Life magazine, lovely pictures of the beautiful bride

[Jacqueline B. Kennedy]. It said she had been the outstanding debutante of a season or so, and that she'd worked briefly as an inquiring reporter in Washington. And my first attention was probably riveted on it by seeing the face of a friend of ours, George Smathers, looking out at me in the magazine, and he was a member of the wedding party. The first time I remember meeting Mrs. Kennedy was when I decided I would ask all the wives of the new senators to come to lunch at my house to meet each other and then have some of the top leadership, the wives of the top leadership and the wives of committee heads. And I may or may not have had Republicans as well, just as likely to as not, can't remember. Lyndon was quite ecumenical about party matters.

We lived in a very comfortable but ordinary house at 4921 Thirtieth Place, Northwest, actually for a very long time, eighteen years, till we moved into a house which we bought as vice president. So I had all these ladies congregated in the downstairs basement recreation room, which used to be the garage. I was in very modest circumstances, but we were all interested in each other's lives and our husbands' careers and interested in seeing the new members. It's good

[-2-]

to get to know the wives of your husband's colleagues. We were all particularly interested in her because she was so young and pretty, and I remember her big eyes. I felt, as I expect a lot of us felt, sort of like here is a bird of beautiful plumage and all of us little gray wrens. [Laughter] Afterwards – and I remember this because it's unusual – I had a nice letter from her husband, just thanking me for inviting his wife to meet a lot of his colleagues.

STERN: Do you have any recollection of Senator Johnson's relationship with Senator Kennedy's father [Joseph P. Kennedy]? I know we have a letter at the Kennedy Library in which Senator Johnson thanked Senator Kennedy's father for his offer of support for the presidential nomination in 1956 and refers to a telephone call to that effect in 1955, October, I think, of '55. I wonder if you had any sense of what their relationship was like or how long he knew Joe Kennedy, Sr.

JOHNSON: No, I don't. I just remember that he had a lot of respect for him for several reasons. One, he was a strong family man and took so much interest in planning for his family and teaching the children and spending time with the children. One read about that, demanding leadership and demanding competition of them. Lyndon liked strong family life, and also he admired successful businessmen, the whole structure of American business, although he had plenty of fault to find with it, too. But in general, it had an allure for him, and I think he always had an enticement in the back of his mind. And if he hadn't been so much more wanting to be in public service, I think he would have liked to be a businessman himself. Those two things, I remember, were very much on the plus side.

[-3-]

I also remember that he disagreed with him, completely and vocally, on his feelings, as when he was ambassador to Great Britain in regard to this country's policy and Germany's... Well, Lyndon was always a strong national defense man and a strong....

STERN: I understand, yes. From `56 to `60 the press was beginning to speculate a great deal about both Senator Kennedy and Senator Johnson as being in contention for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1960. Can you recall what their relationship was like during that period? Did your husband talk about Senator Kennedy at all, or how did he feel about, for example, how close Senator Kennedy had come to the vice presidential nomination in 1956 when, for example, Senator Johnson had cast the Texas delegation's vote for him for vice president, although he lost to Estes Kefauver.

JOHNSON: That, the convention of `56, I remember rather clearly because it was the first convention I ever went to.

STERN: Really?

JOHNSON: Lyndon had been going since 1928, when Al Smith [Alfred E. Smith] was nominated in Houston, Texas, and he was a very young man. I think maybe he had gotten in as a page at that time. At any rate, from the topmost balcony or somehow, he watched it. I never had wanted to and never was about to want to, but Lyndon had asked me to, and he also took his mother and one sister, I remember, Josefa [Josefa Johnson].

[-4-]

There may have been other family members there. We were in a box, and there was another box somewhere not too far away, where the much more numerous Kennedy family were: Mrs. Rose Kennedy [Rose F. Kennedy], as I remember, and Jacqueline Kennedy, very lovely, and I think a couple of the sisters, and there may have been a brother-in-law or two. I don't know how many of them but quite a lot. Occasionally the press would come over and stick a microphone in front of us and ask, "Well, how do you feel, so-and-so?" Much more often they would go over there and stick one in front of them, and I remember at one point going over and speaking to them myself.

I remember the total confusion of our hotel suite, where the comings and goings went on twenty-four hours a day, it seemed, and the conferences and the telephone calls. One night.... But my most poignant memory, and it's got to be that one, was of Senator Dick Russell [Richard B. Russell]. Wasn't that when Senator Dick Russell was nominated for the presidency, but it was clear early that he was not going to be a serious contender?

STERN: I believe so.

JOHNSON: That to me is the most poignant, clear memory of that. Of course it was a nice moment when I saw on this board up there that Lyndon had eighty votes, I think, but as a favorite son. Which was all before it was ever....

STERN: Do you recall the scene when Stevenson [Adlai E. Stevenson] threw the convention open and allowed the convention to choose its own vice presidential nominee? That's when the struggle really began between Kefauver and Kennedy.

[-5-]

JOHNSON: It seems to me that Senator Gore [Albert Gore] was also in there.

STERN: Yes, he was.

JOHNSON: It seems to me that every time I would look up, he would come charging into our suite, and I don't know who else may have been in there.

STERN: They were the major contenders. And for a while it looked as though Senator Kennedy was going to get the nomination, but it slipped out at the last minute.

JOHNSON: I remember, yes, indeed. I do remember when Lyndon cast the vote. I can tell you very little about all that went on. I think he had a lot of respect for his ability and drive, but there was no particular closeness between us. Lyndon's close friends were likely to be such old-timers as always, Dick Russell, and Senator George [Walter F. George], in his time, and Bob Kerr [Robert S. Kerr], and even dear old Senator Theodore Francis Green.

STERN: From Rhode Island.

JOHNSON: And Hayden [Carl Hayden], and Lister Hill of Alabama. So, no, I don't remember any personal vignettes until one, and I think it was probably.... Oh,

I do remember when Lyndon had the serious heart attack in '55, many, many people

[-6-]

did many, many wonderful things for him and wrote letters and all sorts of things. I would sit by his bed and read to him the letters. And I remember Senator Kennedy wrote him a very nice one, and he smiled when I read him that one.

I think we have already talked, have we not, about the fact that – this had been somewhat earlier – that Lyndon was a great hand to want to give each new young Democratic senator an important committee assignment, because the system of the Senate had somehow gotten around to the oldsters having several big committees, more really than they could give all the time they should to. He wanted to spread it around. He put Senator Kennedy on the Labor Committee, and later on there was a very nice exchange of letters about that.

But at some point during that there was a time when Lyndon, by this time, I expect, majority leader, had the job of appointing a special committee and naming a chairman to select the five outstanding senators during our history's service, and they were going to have portraits painted of them to fill the five empty medallions that were still on the walls, I guess as a result of Brumidi's [Constantino Brumidi] unfinished work in the Capitol. This was in the Senate waiting room, right outside the Senate chamber and also right outside Lyndon's office, which was a wonderful office. So he appointed Senator Kennedy as the chairman of the committee, because he had by that time, I believe his book Profiles in Courage had come out. At any rate, he had acquired a reputation as being a student of history and well-versed in it. So Lyndon thought it would be a good appointment.

I think it took them quite a while to decide on those five senators and, predictably, there was Webster [Daniel Webster] and Clay [Henry Clay], and, I expect, there was Calhoun [John C. Calhoun], and then, naturally and rightly, Bob Taft [Robert A. Taft] and then Bob La Follette

[-7 -]

[Robert M. La Follette]. Then there was a ceremony and a sort of raised temporary platform and lots of seats, and I remember some of the.... I think there were some of the descendants of some of those five senators there, Lyndon presiding and quickly turning it over to the chairman, Senator Kennedy. And I remember sort of the little buzz, you know there's always a little excitement when somebody who is a comer enters the room, and everybody was looking at Senator Kennedy. He made an excellent speech, brief, but talking about those senators. At least that's the way I remember the scene.

STERN: Can you recall at all what Senator Johnson's feelings were between `56 and `60 about Senator Kennedy's fairly obvious interest in the nomination in 1960? Did he think it was premature, that perhaps Senator Kennedy was too young, that he ought to wait, or....

JOHNSON: No, not a thing. Lyndon was a nose-to-the-grindstone man, and he loved being majority leader and running the Senate. When he recovered from that heart attack enough to make up his mind to think that he was really going to live and really going to be able to handle that job, he was so immersed in it that, no, he didn't.... I don't remember him saying anything about that.

STERN: During the early part of 1960 when.... Well, of course, Senator Kennedy had been very obviously moving towards, the nomination as early as `58, even earlier, and had begun to gather delegates and make friends around the country, and he,

[-8 -]

of course, entered the primaries, which from his point of view was critical. As a Catholic he had to demonstrate that he could win primaries, particularly, for example, in West Virginia,

places where the Catholic population was not large. There was a lot of speculation at that time that Senator Johnson wanted to come in, too, as a candidate for the nomination. And I wonder if you could comment at all on, one, why he didn't enter the primaries, because in a sense he had a similar problem in that if Senator Kennedy had to demonstrate that he could win in non-Catholic areas, Senator Johnson had to demonstrate that he could win outside of the south. Many of the press at that time felt that he should have entered the primaries and probably could have won some of them. Do you have any recollection why he didn't enter the primaries?

JOHNSON: Well, I have a very strong feeling about it. [Laughter] I don't remember if he ever sat down and said why he didn't. That was because he was using up all he had being majority leader. That was a full-time job which he loved, and I do not think he was planning, plotting, intending, heading in the direction of being president.

STERN: You don't?

JOHNSON: I do not think so. I think, reluctantly and at the last minute, he was propelled into it by the unending faith of Sam Rayburn [Samuel T. Rayburn] and the determination of John Connally and then just maybe the beckoning prospect of, well, maybe it's now or never, maybe I ought to. It was certainly not for lack of knowing how. Not for lack of realizing that if you wanted to work toward.... If you wanted to become president, you had to

[-9-]

work to become president, and you ought to be going around the country to every Democratic meeting, and I would have felt Lyndon would have tried to go to a whole lot of non-party meetings as well, if there had been anything in that direction.

It seemed to me that he didn't. He did hardly any of that, except in '52 and '56, when he did take a lot of visiting senators and himself to cover the state of Texas for the candidacy of Adlai Stevenson. He may have gone to other states, I don't recall, but I do remember a stream of senators passing through our house and being taken all over the state, speaking for the candidate.

STERN: I see. Well, could we turn to the convention itself? Senator Johnson announced his candidacy on July 5, which was just shortly before the convention.

JOHNSON: To go back one second to what you were just saying, there was an abortive, not an announcement on Lyndon's part, but some of his friends rented a building and put up a sign.

STERN: Right. Wasn't John Connally involved in that?

JOHNSON: Yes, I think so. It's my recollection and Lyndon had them take it down, and

that was pretty painful. He was very reluctant. I think, you know, he'd lived pretty darn close to that job. He watched, from a fairly intimate vantage point, Roosevelt [Franklin D. Roosevelt] and Truman [Harry S Truman], and from quite a different vantage point, Eisenhower [Dwight D. Eisenhower]. That's a scary job! It's also one that an honest assessment

[-10-]

is bound to make you think, can I, not run and win, but can I live up to all the American people deserve out of that job?

STERN: Of course, there has been so much written about that convention and all the events of that convention, you could pile the books up once Senator Johnson had announced his candidacy. Then, there; was a tremendous effort to get delegates.

JOHNSON: Then he did go into it as hard and fast and earnestly as he could.

STERN: His strategy, as I recall, essentially at the convention, was to try and prevent Senator Kennedy from getting the nomination on the first ballot. The general belief was that if the Kennedy bandwagon did not succeed on the first ballot that his strength might kind of wither away and he'd fail. He had to win on the first ballot. When Senator Johnson arrived, it's clear that he was trying first to keep the favorite sons in, of course, because they would hold important votes which might prevent a decisive vote on the first ballot. And then, of course, things began to become a little bit more, well, I don't know if I should use the word "bitter," but direct, between the Kennedy and Johnson forces. There were intimations about Senator Kennedy's health and whether or not....

JOHNSON: From one lady, as I recall.

STERN: That's right, but some of the people around Senator Kennedy, of course, became

[-11-]

very angry about that. And then there were some remarks apparently about his father, and apparently John Connally made some remarks and . .

JOHNSON: That I don't remember.

STERN: ... that Senator Johnson would never support an isolationist. That's some sort of. ... But anyway, the point I'm trying to make is that, obviously, once they were down to that point, one has to expect that it probably became pretty tough. Presidential nominations are not won without a great deal of difficulty. Do you recall in a very specific way how Senator Johnson responded to not getting the nomination? Was he

disappointed? Had he thought that he had a chance to stop Senator Kennedy on the first ballot? I mean, I have read a good number of people who said he did believe that he could be stopped on the first ballot, but that apparently some of his staff...

JOHNSON: To tell you the truth, I don't even remember whether he was or wasn't.

STERN: He was not. No, he did win...

JOHNSON: On the first ballot? [Laughter]

STERN: Yes, Wyoming, the final state, just put him over. So it was very, very close. If he had failed to get the fifteen or twenty votes he would have been stopped on

[-12-]

the first ballot, and then everything could have been different.

JOHNSON: No, I do not remember all the interplaying, but then, as I was just telling you, I

am not a politician. That was Lyndon's life. I do remember a lot of people going scurrying around to different delegations, talking to them. I do remember Lyndon and Senator Kennedy mounting a platform ...

STERN: The joint appearance. Right.

JOHNSON: ... and talking, and that I remember as very civil and dramatic and tense.

STERN: That was the joint appearance before the Massachusetts and Texas delegations.

JOHNSON: Yes. And I have to give Senator Kennedy high marks, and I thought Lyndon did well, too. But.... No, it was the best night's sleep that we'd both had in a long time – I know, I speak for myself, and I think that that was the way Lyndon felt--broken too early by a telephone call. I'm a light sleeper, so I woke up quickest to it, and my recollection is that it was John Kennedy's own voice.

STERN: Yes, that's what most of the accounts say.

JOHNSON: Let me tell you something, though, because I kept a tape in the White House

[-13-]

for five years myself, and recollections right then are much, much better than

recollections ten or fifteen years later. So I am so glad that I kept my own records then. But my recollection is that it was Senator Kennedy's own voice, and he asked if he could speak to Lyndon. Then there was a moment's hesitation on my part because Lyndon was so tired, and it was just so marvelous to just be able to rest. But I knew I couldn't, because, after all, he was our party's nominee, so I went over and shook him and said, "Wake up."

STERN: Some of the accounts claimed that you kind of instantly felt that the call was about the vice presidency. Did you think that's what it was about?

JOHNSON: I thought it might.

STERN: Obviously, you're the only person who can definitively settle the question as to what your advice was, because there are numerous accounts. Some of the accounts have you telling your husband, "Don't do it," and other accounts have you saying, essentially, yes, that you were willing. It must have been a very, very difficult choice.

JOHNSON: Well, they both could be right, because I did not want him to.... I loved the Senate, just like he did. And I did not know how good a number two man he would be, because he had always been a very free man. In the House of Representatives he was responsible to his 300,000-odd constituents back home, and constituents is the word written in capital letters and branded on your heart if you're in politics, in those days

[-14-]

in any case. Then when he became senator from Texas, he was responsible to the ten million of us, whatever we were. But at the same time, he was a free man. He had to implement their will, but he could do a lot toward trying to persuade them of the path that he thought they ought to follow. Ultimately he could just take the different route and then hope that they would follow him, and if they didn't they could jolly well toss him out of office at the next election. But he was much more of a free man than he would be as number-two man to a president.

Now, vis-a-vis Eisenhower, those had been very interesting years because he was sort of the party spokesman, a very good man to get along with. To assume a new role as number-two man, I didn't know how much, how happy he would be in it. And I also knew that the people of the state of Texas would think we'd deserted them, we'd walked out of them. They would be hurt and angry. So I really didn't want him to. At the same time, it was going to be his life, his job, his career, and I just wouldn't dare try to persuade him. So that's about what I said to him.

STERN: It must have been very difficult. I know, for example, that he got very contradictory advice from people like: Congressman Thornberry [Homer

Thornberry] and even Speaker Rayburn, who had both said no and then ...

JOHNSON: Came back and said yes.

STERN: ... said yes. Right. It was very difficult.

JOHNSON: I remember something about what somebody asked Speaker Rayburn....

[-15-]

[Interruption]

STERN: We were discussing the contradictory advice that was given by a number of people about the vice presidency. Do you recall, for example, the visit of Robert Kennedy [Robert F. Kennedy] to the hotel suite? He apparently came and told Senator Johnson that there were a lot of liberals who were upset about his nomination and perhaps he should withdraw, and that created a lot of, apparently, some bad feeling which remained permanent in some ways. Do you recall that happening?

JOHNSON: I remember him either calling or telephoning or coming in--and frankly I don't know which it was--and Lyndon saying something like, "That is for your brother who is the nominee to tell me, and I will wait to hear from him."

STERN: And then, of course, there was further contact, and it was then confirmed.

JOHNSON: But the contact, whatever it was, from Senator Kennedy, was that he wanted him, hoped he would, and was depending on him. And somebody asked.... I do remember total confusion of the day., people coming in, coming out and great flurries. And my daughter Lynda [Lynda Bird Johnson Robb] had been told that a . . . She'd asked her daddy, I think late the night before, she said, "Daddy, I guess nothing is going to happen tomorrow, will it?" And he says, "No, honey." And she said, "Okay then, I'm going out to Disneyland." So she went out to Disneyland with her boyfriend.

[-16-]

I remember people, constant ringing of the phone and constant coming-and-going, Senator Kerr, we saw him, Speaker Rayburn, most of all, I think, Thornberry, various ones. I forget at just what, at some moment in that, I guess it was after Lyndon accepted the nomination, some of our very best friends, our Texas friends, just got in their cars and on planes and just left and didn't say goodbye, and we couldn't get them on the phone, and we tried and tried. Somebody asked Senator Kerr, no, Speaker Rayburn, "Why did you say one thing this morning and another thing tonight?" He said, "Because I'm a smarter man that [was this morning." [Laughter]

STERN: Apparently he was also concerned to keep Richard Nixon [Richard M. Nixon

out of the White House. Some of the accounts say that he was really....

JOHNSON: Well, the real, I'm sure the compelling force behind Lyndon was forty-odd years of party loyalty, however old he was at that time, or fifty-two or something. How old was he? He was born in 1908, and this was '60. He was fifty-two years of party loyalty. You see, there's something a little bit old-fashioned about him. He came from an era when that was a strong thing in one's life, party loyalty, a discipline. Which never caused him to be rancorous to Republicans, and we had a lot of good Republican friends. And we had a lot of good conservative friends. I believe the final ultimate motivating thing was the fact they did not think that we could win. Well, let me put it this way if he were on the ticket as vice president, it was possible that he would help carry the south and the state of Texas, and the party might win by a narrow margin, and if he were not, that it would very likely lose.

[-17-]

STERN: I think that analysis turned out to be quite accurate.

JOHNSON: That is hard to turn away from. At the same time, possibly he had the feeling that I think I've observed in other times in his life, that he had given everything he had to X job, and X job, whether it was the House of Representatives or the majority leadership or whatever, had been carried as far as he could. So he did accept it.

STERN: Do you recall his reaction to the.... There was at least a minor eruption from some of the delegations, Michigan and a few others with the more liberal delegations, which were very angry about his nomination. How did he feel about that?

JOHNSON: [Laughter] Well, I guess he thought that's just some folks we're going to have to pacify. But the folks that we were going to have to pacify that really worried him were not those folks. They were his folks back home that would say, "Lyndon Boy, you let us down." The really remarkable thing about Lyndon's career, it seems to me, is that he survived as long as he did in Texas politics.

STERN: Were you with him when he went to Senator Kennedy's house right after the convention in July, the end of July, in Hyannis Port?

JOHNSON: In Hyannis Port? Yes.

[-18-]

STERN: Do you have any recollections of that? That was one of the first really major campaign meetings of the....

JOHNSON: Yes, I do. Brief and feminine.

STERN: Was that the first time you had been at the house?

JOHNSON: Yes. I remember a sense of there being crowds around, and a feeling that this becomes a tourist attraction, or is likely to. I remember Jackie was there resting. This was not long before she was going to have their second child, right?

STERN: That's correct.

JOHNSON: It was still several months off, but this was July or August, whatever it was.

STERN: It was the last day of July.

JOHNSON: We went up there sometime, did we go up there in August?

STERN: I think it was July 30 or 31.

JOHNSON: It was a charming house, full of pieces of much-used family furniture and

[-19-]

some attractive antiques, and a lot of pictures of the family doing things. We arrived late at night, and Jackie and her sister [Caroline Lee Bouvier Radziwill] were there and Senator Kennedy. They insisted that we have something to eat, but it was late at night and we'd already had something. I remember she spoke of lobsters, and I thought to myself that lobster is my favorite food [laughter] but I'm not going to ask for anything at eleven o'clock at night. Mostly, the men went off and talked, and I was not a party to it. I have memories of, I guess it must have been the next day, because I do not know whether I was ever at that house more than once or not – I guess we'd have to look back in the records and see – but I remember large quantities of press arriving and I remember the brother-in-law, this Polish count, what was his name? "Stash," they called him.

STERN: Radziwill [Prince Stanislas Radziwill].

JOHNSON: Anyhow, a titled man named Radziwill, "Stash," they called him. He was looking at the press, and sort of putting his hands and saying, "Extraordinary, extraordinary." [Laughter] That they should so invade, so beleaguer, so make themselves a part of everything. I was interested in seeing all the memorabilia along the walls and the things that the family had done and of the period of time when they were in London in the embassy.

Then plans were.... Obviously, the meat of the meeting, whatever really went on, went on among, between Lyndon and Senator Kennedy and their staff and their advisors, and

I know virtually nothing about that. I just saw this great big, rambling white house and the ocean and thinking what a nice place it would be, except it would be too cold for, for a family to have a

[-20-]

summer home.

STERN: Well, I suppose the next inevitable subject would be the campaign itself, in which you, of course, played a very substantial role. Can you talk about that for a while?

JOHNSON: I think perhaps we had better wait till in the morning. What time do we have? Yes, it's ten of seven, I think. What do you have?

STERN: I have twenty to. . . [Interruption] If we could discuss the 1960 campaign and particularly the train, and all that you and your husband did in the campaign, which turned out to be crucial, obviously, to the outcome.

JOHNSON: I'll make a stab at it, but just for about five minutes.

STERN: Fine. Okay.

JOHNSON: Would you like to start off in any particular. .

STERN: Well, can you describe your part in the campaign?

JOHNSON: Actually, still not a great deal. I do remember Senator Kennedy's coming to Houston and talking to the ministers. I remember Lyndon's great sense of pride

[-21-]

and sort of vindication. He was proud of his home folks. He was proud of the way they received him there, and he was proud of Senator Kennedy and his responses, and he felt it was off to a good start. In discussing the campaign, I must say that our return to Texas was shadowed by the fact that a lot of our friends felt at a distance from us because of Lyndon's agreeing to go on the ticket as number-two man. That was not what they wanted for him or of him, and there was a distance between them and Senator Kennedy. And Lyndon knew he had a selling, job to do. He never tried harder in his life to do a selling job.

STERN: It was a very difficult campaign in Texas, and the result, of course, was close.

JOHNSON: It was, indeed it was.

STERN: Did you feel that religion was one of the major reasons for it being so close?

JOHNSON: It was a reason, yes, but it was not all that strong a reason. There was a . . .
They just did not feel he was their sort of man. Now, Roosevelt was, easterner
though he was. He was loved, and also hated. Adlai Stevenson was always at
a distance from them. Try as hard as he could in `52 and `56, Lyndon couldn't make much of
a dent in selling him to his constituency in Texas. They did feel a distance from Senator
Kennedy. A great many people did. But the appearance before the ministers was a help, I
think, sort of a turning point. There was a growing respect.

[-22-]

STERN: I'm sure you recall, I can't see how you wouldn't, the incident in Dallas just
before the election.

JOHNSON: You bet! [Laughter]

STERN: A number of people have argued that that may have been a turning point in
Texas, and that there was such a revulsion throughout the state and throughout
the south with the way you have been treated....

JOHNSON: It was absolutely the most unexpected thing. You just couldn't dream it would
happen. It was a meeting set up in the Baker Hotel, and as we emerged
from—

I don't know where we got out of our car or what, but we were approaching
the Baker Hotel--and we were surrounded by a mob carrying banners and shouting. I can't
remember now what some of the banners said, but they were all very unfriendly and ugly
things: "turncoat," that sort of thing, and "don't belong here anymore," something like that.
You could hardly make your way because they were on all sides of you so close. And I
remember seeing Stanley Marcus walking with us, and I thought, oh, good, perhaps he can
help, since these are his customers.

[TAPE TWO]

JOHNSON: They were carrying a banner, and somebody was shoving them, probably, but
anyhow, it knocked off my hat, and I think that was the nearest thing to
making

[-23-]

Lyndon mad. But anyhow, I think that was unintentional. And I looked over in the crowd and
saw Senator Tower [John G. Tower], who was Lyndon's opponent, because, you may
remember, Lyndon was running for Senate, reelection to the Senate, by a bill specially
passed to make it possible in the Texas House, Texas legislature, and running for vice
president, too. So I leaned over and told that to Lyndon. By this time I think we were in the

lobby and heading toward the elevator, and it was getting harder and harder to move. But all of a sudden I had the feeling somehow, like sort of a transmutation of thought, that Lyndon is going to make the most out of this. Painful as it is, he's figuring out how he can turn it around and make some good out of it. Then we went on upstairs. We finally got to the elevator and went on upstairs.

STERN: How long did it take you to get through the lobby?

JOHNSON: I don't know.

STERN: A long time?

JOHNSON: It seemed like a long time. And it certainly was minutes, because people were blocking you at every step. Nobody physically hit us; they just hollered at us and showed their banners and said ugly things. We finally reached the elevators, walked into a cheering, loving, affectionate crowd. It's the sort of thing that makes the blood flow faster and the adrenalin go up. I expect we had better stop now.

[-24-]

STERN: Okay, fine.

[SECOND SESSION]

JOHNSON: For us, for Lyndon and me, election night took place in the old Driskill Hotel in Austin, where so many election nights had gone with us, and I think we were in the Hogg Suite--Governor Jim Hogg [James S. Hogg] Suite--and a lot of our close friends were there. There usually have been, in the elections that I remember, a blackboard and one or two people who would be rushing in and putting up figures, and just a whole cluster of phones ringing, and people coming and going, and a lot of confusion. I may be mixing this up with lots of other election nights [laughter]. They start flowing into a montage.

I do remember very late at night when it finally got fairly certain that Senator Kennedy and Lyndon had won by a tiny majority, that it did occur to me that I ought to say something, just sort of a salute, to our opponents, the Nixons, because they, too, had tried as hard as they could and given it all the strength and energy they had. Gosh, I have the feeling that I probably went to bed a long time before Lyndon. He was a good deal more revved up than I was. I wish I could be more precise and have more anecdotes. I don't.

STERN: Do you remember talking with the Kennedys at all up in Massachusetts? Was there any conversation?

JOHNSON: I don't remember it, but I'm sure it would have been Lyndon's instinct to do it.

[-25-]

I'm quite sure that he did, and he was always putting me on the phone, sometimes without me having heard who it was I was talking to [laughter], because they were noisy places. We were surrounded by a lot of good friends. I'm sure we went to, gee, I don't know where we went to make any victory statement. Perhaps there is a record of it. But you see, I had not begun the discipline of keeping a tape myself at that time, and so those days are lost in the haze of all the subsequent events that flowed over them.

STERN: I see. Can you recall the period between the election and the inauguration, what activities your husband was involved in, what his expectations were about what the vice presidency would be like?

JOHNSON: It was a very considerable flurry of planning, and I remember at one point Senator Kennedy invited, and here I'm afraid that he invited just Lyndon alone, but anyhow, Lyndon, who would always say, "Come and bring your family," or at least, "Bring your wife"--that was his sort of general pattern--and he understood that I was invited. Anyhow, we went down to Palm Beach, and they were staying at the home of the senior Kennedys. Mrs. Kennedy had just had the baby not long before, hadn't she?

STERN: It was in November, right after the election, that's right.

JOHNSON: Just a matter of a while, anyhow, and she was recuperating there. This was the second time, I believe I had mentioned earlier, or had I, that we had been to that

[-26-]

lovely place once before when Lyndon was a senator.

STERN: No, you didn't mention that.

JOHNSON: Mrs. Kennedy, Rose Kennedy, had invited him. In fact, we were in that house three times, as I recall. It was a comfortable, charming house, with a patio, and

this time Lyndon and Senator Kennedy were shut up in conversation most of the time. I remember Mrs. Kennedy telling me about, that she had been so busy with so many, trying to plan all this wardrobe that you'd have to have, and looking at little samples and swatches, and at the same time trying to get her strength back. She was walking on the beach and getting out in the sun as much as she could. There was a movie in the patio at night and staff and secret service men, as I recall, were invited to take some of the chairs and sit around and enjoy the movie. Except: for that it was talk, talk, talk.

STERN: Can you recall, I'm sure you do recall, the inauguration and any specific anecdotes about the inauguration?

JOHNSON: Sure. [Laughter] The coldest inauguration in the world, I'm sure. Everyone of our friends had a story about it. One of the most elegantly dressed couples I know from Texas started out all dressed up at one of the balls, and the taxi they were in came to a dead halt and couldn't go a foot farther, and finally they got out and flagged a ride in a truck which turned out to have been used to carry fish. [Laughter] They arrived at the ball, as you

[-27-]

can imagine, redolent of fish, but just loving it, you know. It made a big story for them, just for fun. There was an endless round of balls, and a magnificent setting for the actual swearing-in ceremony itself. A truly rousing speech that you could be so very proud of, from Senator Kennedy. I can remember a touching little moment when Robert Frost was reading from some of his poetry, wasn't it Robert Frost?

STERN: Yes, it was.

JOHNSON: He was very old, couldn't see very well, lost his glasses or something. Anyhow, I remember Senator Kennedy – by that time I think he was probably already sworn in – President Kennedy¹ got up and helped him find his place or find his glasses or some little gesture of helpfulness, I forget what. But it was, of course, one of the most dramatic moments in our life. To me, well, no more dramatic than one, I guess it must have been, I don't quite remember the sequence of events, but, you know, Lyndon had been elected to both the Senate and to the vice presidency, and so the time came for the swearing-in of the senators, and he was there in the chamber and made the required speech about resigning. I was in the gallery watching, and I felt like one of these watchers at a wedding when the preacher gets to that part about, "If there is anybody here that knows why this should not be done, rise up now or forever hold your peace," that line. That was the last good-bye to the Senate, and it was an emotion-charged moment. Then we walked out of the Senate and into the new job.

[-28-]

STERN: The vice presidency is, obviously, under the best of circumstances, difficult, a difficult job. The constitution, I think, leaves it extremely vague and does not assign very many direct duties to the vice president, as, of course, you know. I think that given particularly the fact that as senator and majority leader, your husband had been really, as it had been often said in the fifties, probably the second most powerful man in the country after President Eisenhower, and there were some at the time saying he was more powerful than President Eisenhower. It must have been difficult for him, I imagine, to become vice president as opposed to president.

¹ Actually, Vice President Johnson assisted Robert Frost by shielding him from the glare of the sun.

I wonder if you could discuss his expectations about what the vice presidency would be like, the degree to which he was either surprised or disappointed or pleased with his relationship with President Kennedy.

JOHNSON: Well, as he had been a student of the presidency, so he had indeed been a student of the vice presidency, necessarily, and I can't say that he was surprised. But I do think, and he would have very likely stoutly denied it, because it's a loyal thing to say that you just love your job, but I think he was, he had hoped it could be more substantive than it was. None of that was due to President Kennedy. President Kennedy couldn't have been more understanding and perceptive and active in choosing the things that he assigned to Lyndon to do and giving him a very free rein and back-up in doing it. That is, he was chairman of the space council, I can't remember the precise name. He was also chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunities Committee [President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity]. Then he wrote him a letter and asked him to serve as, I don't know what the word is, chairman, anyhow,

[-29-]

be there and take charge of the Security Council [National Security Council] whenever he himself, the president, could not be there. These were things well chosen to Lyndon's liking. Particularly, nothing in Lyndon's life ever excited him, in his later life. In his early life, I think rural electrification and the series of dams along the lower Colorado River gave him greatest satisfaction, but few things ever gave him more satisfaction than this nation's progress in space, with which he had the opportunity to play a sizeable role.

When that October night, in '57, was it, when that rocket went overhead, we were at the ranch, and we all went for a walk, and I think that's the first night any of us ever looked up into the skies and thought that there might be a potentially hostile force out there. He just came to a boil and didn't cease until he got the space movement going from his vantage point in the Senate, and then President Kennedy was most far-sighted, cooperative, helpful, gave Lyndon a lot of leeway. One of the best things that ever happened to it, of course, was finding Jim Webb [James E. Webb], who happened to be a long-time friend and acquaintance of Lyndon's and who did the selling job of getting him to take it over. It really was a magnificent achievement, just the human engineering to me was quite as wonderful as the electronic engineering. I mean, getting government and business and scientists all to work together. So, that was one of the very unfair divisions of labor, that vice presidency, because I just had most fun and enjoyed it tremendously. But I can't say that Lyndon enjoyed it a great deal, although he learned a lot and we traveled a lot.

President Kennedy asked us as early as April of '61. I think that was our first trip. We went to represent the United States when Senegal in Africa.... Its independence came about from France, and that was a trip full of panoply and display and I had.... My trips had been very

[-30-]

limited. I just adore travel. I would just listen with envy all during our House years and our Senate years to my fellow, Lyndon's colleagues and their wives, tell about trips, some in a parliamentary union, and things like that. We never went anywhere until one magnificent time when Lyndon just.... He always wanted to do things for me, but it was just awfully hard to get around to them. So finally we did, a glorious trip in the fall of `56. I think that was partly a result of him realizing that he really was mortal, quite mortal, and wasn't going to have that many years to get it all done, so he'd better take me someplace. So we went on a trip in `56 and then in `57, but then in the vice presidency we traveled a great deal. This first one to Senegal was an eye-opener, but the biggest eye-opener to him was the one when we began to go to.... In `62, President Kennedy asked him to undertake a trip to Southeast Asia. They get a little mixed up because I have not done all the reviewing on this that I should have for your purposes. But we made two separate trips, which included among them the Philippines and India and Vietnam and Thailand, and I forget what else. Perhaps you have studied it. I know our folks at the library, when they start doing one of these, they know more about me than I know about me. [Laughter]

STERN: Well, there are a number of accounts of some of the specific trips. I wonder if you might have some....

JOHNSON: Pakistan, we went to Pakistan.

STERN: Yes, right. Well, that, of course, resulted in that famous visit. Maybe you could talk a bit about that, the camel driver.

[-31-]

JOHNSON: And Lyndon, his main.... What he came back thinking about Asia, particularly, was that such an enormous part of the world's population lived there. And he got more of a perspective on the Western world, the United States and Europe, on which everybody's history, in my growing-up time, concentrated. We learned very little about Asia and virtually nothing about China or Africa, but here our first trip was to Africa and then to these Asian countries.

STERN: I know that. I can't recall which source, but one of them, indicated that both of you were very much struck particularly by the incredible phenomenon of poverty.

JOHNSON: Uh-huh, just revolted.

STERN: It was beyond anything you could imagine.

JOHNSON: Revolted. And also, Lyndon kept on wandering into the little villages of India where you would see so much done by manual labor that just something as

simple as one motor, dig a well and get one motor and get some water up, instead of pulling it up bucket by bucket by bucket, and just even have a steel plow instead of a wooden plow, or a tractor. And he.... It was his exposure. It was a great learning experience from which he gathered a great deal.

STERN: I seem to remember that you wrote some place that you didn't see any children

[-32-]

smile, that that had a great. . . .

JOHNSON: I don't remember about that, but I sure did see....

STERN: That had a great impact on you?

JOHNSON: Yes, it did, and a great one on him. And then I suppose the year `62 was a very, a bad year, a very bad year. There was one magnificent moment when the President asked Lyndon to go to Berlin. The wall had just gone up.

STERN: That was August `61.

JOHNSON: Oh, that was `61?

STERN: Yes, August of `61.

JOHNSON: Oh, yes, of course it was `61. Lyndon went, and I have some marvelous pictures in front of him. It was raining. He was wearing an overcoat, sort of khaki kind, and he stood out in the crowd. And the crowd was absolutely fast and surging. And it was that flag, you know, on the bumpers of the cars. It wasn't the man so much, as the message from America, and you had a tremendous feeling, in fact, in all our experiences the feeling for America was very, very strong, and very respectful and hopeful. And I never saw such a mob in

[-33-]

my life as I did in Turkey, and it took us I don't know how many hours to go from the airport: to downtown, to the hotel. I guess it was Istanbul. But I did think if that mob, which was so friendly and wild with greetings, if it turned against you, that'd be one of the countries I would least want to be in. Only in, some years later in South Korea, did I see a mob, a greeting, a welcoming of that magnitude and that force.

But to get back to why the year `61 was a bad year, Speaker Rayburn had something that he said was lumbago, said he had a little trouble, a little back trouble. And I remember the day that I went out to the airport to meet Lyndon coming back from his Berlin trip, and there was the speaker to meet him. I took a look at the speaker and my heart just sank, because he, his face was grey, he had lost a lot of weight. He was never a portly man, but he

had.... This time his clothes just hung on him, and my heart just sank. He was not.... He was always just the dearest, most wonderful man and gentle with the wives of his good friends – if he liked them – which he very frequently did. He never did put on with anybody, but if he liked you, he was a very courtly gentleman. But this time he was more so than usual. When I got home I wrote him a letter, the basis of which was how wonderful it was of you to go out and meet Lyndon. I didn't say, "I'm worried about you" or anything. But I just sort of said how wonderful it's been, you've been one of the greatest parts of all of our years in Washington – Lyndon had known him even when he was secretary to a congressman – and every time I see you it makes me feel more reassured about my country and happier for myself. And I got back really a very nice letter from him, and I think he knew he was saying good-bye – I think maybe that letter is in a case on display at the Library [Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library] – and he did leave, I think the next day or two, never to return. He went into a hospital and it was pretty soon diagnosed as cancer. We made a trip or two

[-34-]

up to see him, and he died in, I think, about November or something. And also Senator Kerr, to everybody's great surprise, because he was a monumental tough guy. You'd think death was a long way off for him. He got sick, went to the hospital, was what everybody thought on the way to recovery, and then just suddenly died. And I think that was probably late December of `61, it could have been in early January of `62. So those were two things that took the underpinnings out of the House and Senate.

To complete, wind-up any observations about the vice presidency, I had the best time you could imagine. For the first time we decided we would just spend everything we could afford and more, because we had lived quite frugally, because it was always one more tractor we needed to buy or we needed to put up a tower for the radio station, or we needed a few more acres of land or something. But this time we decided we would spend it on living, and so we bought a beautiful house, The Elms, which had belonged to Perle Mesta. I shall always remember that house with greatest affection. Lovely grounds. And I set about furnishing it, and when Lyndon did anything, he went whole hog, so he was all for it and wanted me to get good furniture, good everything.

We had some marvelous parties there on the most fantastically modest budget, because of the ability of Bess Abell [Elizabeth C. Abell] and my own staff which had been with me from Texas for a long time. I was always blessed with a good staff Zephyr Wright was the cook, Helen Williams, the maid, Helen's husband Gene did just everything. And that's all we had except we hired a youngster for a gardener. So we did everything we could to help President and Mrs. Kennedy on that basis, because Mrs. Kennedy was not very well. And every now and then we would get a message from her social secretary that so-and-so was coming to town, and could I manage to have a party for them,

[-35-]

because she was going to be out of town or was not feeling well or something. And I always took great pleasure in that, and they asked us to many delightful parties. And, as you know,

the parties at the White House assumed a different flavor in that administration, more informal and more gay, and more glittering, and frequently, too, more substantive, I'm sure. I'd been to quite a lot of Eisenhower parties and a much lesser number of the parties in preceding administrations. Enjoyed them all, but these did have more grace and glamour. So it was a time of growth and great trips and a sadness at losing closeness with the Senate and the deaths of two people we cared so much about.

STERN: I wonder if you might be able to comment on one specific thing about the leaving of the Senate. During the period between the election and the inauguration there was a lot of speculation that in becoming vice president, Johnson would remain essentially the most important person in the Senate, even though he was no longer a member of the Senate, and in January, early January of 1961, Senator Mansfield [Michael J. Mansfield], who succeeded as majority leader, offered to the Democratic caucus a proposal that the vice president preside over the Democratic caucus. And it was adopted by a vote of 46 to 17, but there was a lot of very substantial disagreement. And some of your husband's closest friends, like Clinton Anderson, or people who had supported him for president, opposed it, not on a personal basis, but because they said it was not a constitutional, there was no constitutional precedent for a vice president who is not a member of the Senate to preside over senators. So, even though it did pass by a very comfortable majority, a lot of people who have written about this argue that Vice President Johnson was deeply hurt by the fact that so many senators had opposed it, and

[-36-]

essentially withdrew, and that his expectations had been that he would be able to maintain a considerable influence in the Senate. And he withdrew and became much more, well, passive, if that's the word, because he felt that as vice president he really didn't have a role in the Senate. If you have any recollection of that and how he felt about it.

JOHNSON: My only recollection is that there was a lessening of his ties with the Senate and of his association with them. Each body is always very jealous and guarding of its prerogatives, the executive is, the representative is, and the judicial is, and I can understand that. And, yes, Lyndon was sad that he did not see more of the senators, but as for elaborating on that and how it took place, I just don't know.

STERN: You have no recollection of his reaction to it specifically?

JOHNSON: Not to that. I just know he was sad that he didn't.... The ties with the Senate were very much less.

STERN: He was quoted as saying after the election that when somebody asked him about why he would trade his position as majority leader for the vice president's gavel, he said, "Power is where power goes." That is, he had assumed, well, perhaps he had assumed, that he would maintain a considerable influence in the Senate, and I think it would probably be fair to say that he was, that that didn't work out.

[-37-]

JOHNSON: No, it did not work out, and how much he really expected it, I don't know.

STERN: So you're not sure as to whether he had been actually disappointed, or....

JOHNSON: I know he missed the Senate, what he really expected of it, and as I say, he had

been a student of the vice presidency long enough to have long pause on whether he wanted that job either. But in the final analysis, loyalty to the party and respect for the man took him into it, and so he tried to play the role to the hilt, the role of vice president. And he did miss the Senate, his closeness with it.

STERN: Well, there are also accounts of his, for example, he attended all National Security Council meetings, and President Kennedy apparently made a major effort to be sure that he was in on these things and briefed.

JOHNSON: He did, he did, and never at any time did he have any cause to feel anything but the president wanted his help, advice, work, and participation.

STERN: There are some accounts, some of them are accounts by people who are close to some of President Kennedy's staff, people like Kenny O'Donnell [Kenneth P. O'Donnell], which claim that a certain kind of, well, sort of an unconscious tension or understated current of tension developed because the president expected the vice president to be doing more in the Congress and then didn't understand or was perplexed as to why he seemed to

[-38-]

withdraw. On the other hand, some of the people close to the president--and I think there is documentation for this; I've seen some which is convincing to me--I don't think treated the vice president as well as they should have, or as well as President Kennedy thought they should have, and he; was very sensitive to that. There were stories that, for example, at National Security Council meetings he was kind of reluctant to say very much because he felt he had not really been, he didn't have the kind of expertise that, say, the secretary of defense had, who had all these policy-planning people around and giving him all the details. And so the vice president tended to be fairly cautious about what he said at these meetings. As a result, some of the people--the general term for them is the Irish Mafia--tended to start circulating stories which did get into the press in that period, that the vice president is not saying very much, and he is really not carrying his weight, and that he is really a lightweight, etc. All kinds of stories began to circulate, some of which, I think, became kind of ugly. And then they probably, I think, had a cyclical effect in that they probably created some, well, distrust, or certainly feelings of discomfort, I would imagine.

Some of this inevitably was attributed to the president's brother, the attorney general, and certainly some of the evidence I've seen suggests that there is some truth to this. I don't doubt it for a moment, and I wonder if you have any specific recollections of how he responded to that? There were these stories that went around Washington of people asking, "How's Lyndon doing?" And then the response was, "Lyndon Who?"

JOHNSON: Oh, sure, certainly. I remember it.

STERN: That kind of thing.

[-39-]

JOHNSON: Well, there are several things you have to throw into the pot. And one is that Lyndon used to always say to the press, "Your business is to start a fight, my business is to stop one." And to a certain extent, that is also a factor with staffs. Each staff has their champion, their knight in armor. And they all.... The tendency is to say, "My champion is a bigger man than your champion." So just throw those two into the pot. In my feeling Lyndon was never hurt, angry, or disappointed at the principal, that is, President Kennedy, in his belief that he wanted him to take part in everything. He did feel that there was some dislike, some withdrawal on the part of some of his staff toward him, Lyndon. It was a pebble in a shoe. It wasn't a major thing, but it existed, and it made those years less buoyant, wonderful years for him than the years of the House and the Senate. Although, on the other side, there was the learning experience of trips, the feeling that he was contributing, both in the election and in the carrying out of all implementation, something to the man whom he had chosen to help. But they weren't his kind of years as much as the preceding years. I think he also took a good deal of, sort of a wry pleasure in seeing what fun I was having. [Laughter]

STERN: I'd like to ask you a little bit more about that. We hope.... Inevitably the press gives a lot of coverage to the president's wife, to the first lady, and what she does, and her staff, all the rest of that. But there is rarely very much said about the vice president's wife. I wonder if you could at least briefly describe...

JOHNSON: Listen, that couldn't have bothered me less. [Laughter]

[-40-]

STERN: ...what it was like to be the vice president's wife, and what kind of a routine it was, as compared to being first lady. How did it change your life, etc., in terms of the staff you had and various things?

JOHNSON: Well, it didn't change my life. I had the same staff I had had at 4921 30th Place, except that I added a gardener. And I got myself a secretary, Bess Abell,

who was a secretary for all purposes, social, business, typewriter, everything. She was absolutely a jewel. And I went on, had a lot more company of an official nature, became the presiding officer of the Senate ladies' Red Cross, instead of just one of the ardent members who went every Tuesday. I enjoyed that body, because it was a wonderful way to get to know your husband's colleagues completely without any political overtones. You'd sit by your husband's toughest Republican opponent's wife and just have the best time, sewing and making bandages. And I, all my life had, all my years with Lyndon had taken quite a part in.... Whatever he couldn't do, he sort of assigned me. And it was naturally assigned to me to keep him closely informed on our business back home, because it was really my business.

STERN: Right.

JOHNSON: So I still kept up with, KDBC [radio station KDBC] it was then, with the reports on that. Had a lot of official parties that Mrs. Kennedy or her social secretary would ask me to have, delegations, some ladies from Japan, Indira Gandhi, the Shah, some daughter of some prime minister, just the whole panoply of visitors, you know. And

[-41-]

then, all of the people from, all constituents back home, instead of being just Texans, we began to have something of a wider range, groups that would come to town when it was not possible to go to the White House, perhaps that we could offer them some hospitality. And I did see a good deal of the press, because Liz [Elizabeth S. Carpenter] began to work. My recollection is that she worked for Lyndon during the years of the vice presidency and didn't come with me actually officially until after the assassination. But we all found ourselves working together, more or less. Whoever worked for Lyndon was likely to help me out, if needed, and vice versa.

STERN: So you found the vice presidency.... You enjoyed it?

JOHNSON: At top notch. Except for the fact that I knew it was somewhat limiting to the capacities of Lyndon. And that was.... But that is a built-in component of the job, and I don't know how you could ever change it, 'cause Lord knows we tried to learn from it and tried to, when our turn came to have somebody that we dearly loved as vice president, we tried to do what we thought President Kennedy had tried to do for Lyndon, and it didn't always work.

STERN: Of course not, sure. It's a very, obviously, by nature, the way it has been structured, it's a very difficult relationship. It has to be. There were reports in late '63, not long before the assassination, that the Vice President might not be on the ticket in 1964, and there have been endless things written about that, too. And again, some of the people; who have written about it claim that it was people around the President, people on his staff

[-42-]

and again, possibly, the Attorney General, who were kind of, perhaps, involved in this. And from what I've seen, I think the Vice President was in a very difficult position, in some ways.

And one thing, of course, was that the administration had been, and I think in some ways reluctantly, pushed into a very strong civil rights stand in '62 to '63 in the Meredith [James H. Meredith] episode, and Birmingham, and the march on Washington, and the civil rights speech in June of '63 that President Kennedy made. Obviously, that was going to be a liability in the south, and there was strong concern, particularly if Senator Goldwater [Barry M. Goldwater] were the Republican nominee, as to whether Kennedy could do very well in the south in 1964. And some of the accounts claim that, obviously, this put the Vice President in a very difficult position, because if he was too closely identified with the administration on civil rights, he would, in a sense, be providing the rationale to drop him from the ticket, because he would no longer carry the weight in the election.

[END OF TAPE ONE]

STERN: We were talking about the rumors about the possibility that the Vice President might not be on the ticket in 1964. Did he talk about that? What was his response to that? And most importantly, what did he think was the source of the rumors, as you recall? Did he blame anybody in particular for that kind of speculation?

JOHNSON: Well, of course, it was painful, and it was just something to endure. I don't know that he blamed anybody in particular. He knew the general sources, and it was a,

[-43-]

you know, it was not as though you would be losing something that you cherished or wanted. But now that issue, you wouldn't... You'd rather walk out of it than be pushed out of it. And it was not a good time. And he received assurances, from time to time, from the president himself, but it was not a good year.

STERN: Perhaps we can turn now to the trip to Dallas, although I don't really see that there is any point in dwelling on the assassination itself.

JOHNSON: No, I don't want to much. For one thing, I've gone into it at great length...

STERN: That's right, I know that.

JOHNSON: ... with the Warren Commission and a time or two for other people and once, so I was told, at the request of Mrs. Kennedy--and I'm not sure that's actually true or not--when Mr. Manchester [William Manchester] came to see me.

STERN: Right. No, I really don't see any point in that. I know, I've read your accounts

of it, and I really don't think there is very much that you could add.

JOHNSON: I asked if I could see them--the tapes of whatever I said to Manchester--but I'm not sure that we, if the library....

[-44-]

STERN: I know where they are. NARA [National Archives and Records Administration] has them in Washington. I checked on it.

JOHNSON: Who does?

STERN: National Archives has them in Washington.

JOHNSON: Oh, yes.

STERN: After Mike Gillette [Michael L. Gillette] called me, I checked on that. We don't have them at the Kennedy Library.

JOHNSON: I guess we don't either, because I asked for them, and I didn't get them.

STERN: No, they're in Washington. What I would like to talk about briefly, in terms of the trip to Dallas, is your recollections of the political aspect of the whole question, the split, the Connally-Yarborough [Ralph W. Yarborough] split. What precisely the President and Vice President hoped to accomplish and to what degree they were accomplishing it before the unexpected happened.

JOHNSON: Well, Lyndon wasn't, and this aggrieved him somewhat, he wasn't as much a part of the planning of that trip as he thought he should. I mean, it was just presented to

[-45-]

him as something that was going to be done, is my recollection. And he...

STERN: I thought he had urged the President to go.

JOHNSON: I don't quite think that's right.

STERN: I may be wrong about that. I seem to recall that Governor Connally and....

JOHNSON: Yeah, but Governor Connally, I think, had. And there's no doubt about it, he was needed. His popularity was not good at that time, and he needed, his

popularity needed to be improved and also needed to.... Fund raising was going to have to start ...

STERN: Right.

JOHNSON: ...before too long. But I think the trip was good for somewhat more of John's planning than of....

STERN: Well, there are all sorts of accounts of the split being very bitter between Connally and Yarborough.

JOHNSON: Oh, yessss. That's true. [Laughter]

[-46-]

STERN: Refusing to sit in the same car, do you have any recollections of all of that?

JOHNSON: Yes, yes, all of that existed. But the odd thing from our standpoint was that Senator Yarborough had always been pretty good about voting with Lyndon's line of what he had wanted philosophically and legislation he had pushed. However, personally we were never close, and we were very close and devoted and had years of association with John. But it was just, perhaps just as simple as the fact that John was a good deal more conservative, and Yarborough was a good deal more liberal, and their chemistries just didn't mix.

STERN: And, of course, Yarborough was running for reelection in '64, which complicated the situation also. Did you feel that the President was successful in the trip, I mean up to....

JOHNSON: Yes, yes. The crowds were better. I remember meeting, gee, I guess it was in, because I don't think I was in Houston. I remember meeting them in San Antonio, and there was a moment when Mrs. Kennedy was going to.... She went out into the group and spoke to, this was a few young girls, and they were Latin Americans, and she was very sweet and gentle with them. And I thought, "Oh, gee, she's going to do it just fine."

STERN: Did she speak to them in Spanish?

JOHNSON: I don't remember. But she had spoken the night before in Spanish to great

[-47-]

accolades and applause, in Houston, is the way I remember it. This was just a group of youngsters, you know, youngsters working in the airport, "working the fence," as it is called, something quite new in her life and very old in ours. And she was

doing it gracefully and sweetly and making a lot of people happy, and I thought, "How nice." And it did look like people were turning out in sizable numbers and very friendly. So we were feeling good about it.

STERN: Do you think that....

JOHNSON: Although Dallas was never, not in Lyndon's entire political life, was Dallas very friendly to him, and his strength was other places more. And I really think

it's the whole state of Texas. It's really something of a miracle that he was successful in politics from '37 to '69--he got out in '69--in the state of Texas. And I expect the fact that he was about six feet four had something to do with it [laughter], and the fact that they knew beyond a doubt: that he loved the state of Texas, so they could pretty much forgive him all of his strange ways. [Laughter]

STERN: Once the events had taken place in Dallas there are, again, a lot of conflicting accounts of the trip back on the plane with President Kennedy's body, etc. Can you recall.... I imagine.... Let me give you a specific example: I was going through the Godfrey McHugh papers, you probably remember him as President Kennedy's ...

[-48-]

JOHNSON: I do.

STERN: ...air force aide who arranged a lot of transportation, presidential trips, and at one point I discovered the trip, a list of the passengers which he made, or his staff made, for every presidential trip. It always had the president, and if Mrs. Kennedy was there, Mrs. Kennedy, and then whatever people in their order of rank. There was, for the Dallas trip, there was Air Force One and Air Force Two, and there were sheets for the President's plane and there were sheets for the Vice President's plane, with all the various staff members associated with each person. Then suddenly, on the trip back, there was a hastily added sheet which essentially was a combination of the two previous sheets, and at the top it listed the people by seat number, where they sat, and the first seat was occupied by President Johnson. The second seat was Mrs. Johnson, etc., but then at the top it listed President Kennedy, but it didn't give him a seat number, and obviously because he was not occupying a seat. In other words....

JOHNSON: You mean on the trip back, when he was dead, and he was in....

STERN: That's right, that's right. So, obviously, the person who had typed this, had done it on the plane. It was an example of the chaos of that moment, dealing with this reality, and, of course, you could also see on the sheet, which I thought was so fascinating, the mixture of the two staffs, because you had O'Donnell, you had O'Brien [Lawrence F. O'Brien], you had Valenti [Jack S. Valenti], you had Moyers

[William D. Moyers], and all the people.... And now they were all on one plane. And it was fascinating to me to see how this

[-49-]

event had suddenly caused this mixture to take place. There are, of course, accounts that there was a, great deal of bitterness on the plane, and that Mrs. Kennedy had wanted to take off, and that there had been a delay and....

JOHNSON: Well, I know the delay was because Lyndon would not leave until she arrived, and the body. He said he was not going to leave until she got there.

STERN: Well, yes, I know that...

JOHNSON: Can't you imagine how awful that would have been?

STERN: ...yes, of course, I understand that fully. What I'm talking about is something else, and that was their accounts that once she was on the plane and the casket was on the plane, that she had asked to take off. And General McHugh had gone up to Colonel Swindal and said, "Let's get out of here," and he said, "We can't. We have to wait." And then there is, of course, that much publicized or alleged incident in which, when the plane landed at Andrews Air Force Base, the Attorney General came on board and raced to the front to be with Mrs. Kennedy, and, according to a number of eyewitnesses, President Johnson extended his hand, and the attorney general just ran right by and didn't shake his hand.

JOHNSON: You're the first person that's ever told me that.

[-50-]

STERN: You've never heard that?

JOHNSON: No.

STERN: That's.... I must admit that surprises me. There are so many accounts of that, and I asked Godfrey McHugh about it....

JOHNSON: Can't you understand that his mind was so.... One could easily forgive him that.

STERN: Well, that is exactly my feeling. And Godfrey McHugh's feeling was that, he said he didn't think that anyone would refuse to shake the hand of the President. There was no reason to. And that, obviously, his first and only thought was to get to his brother's widow and to comfort her and to be with her, and he obviously.... But the press, of course, seized upon that and used it in terms of some of the

things we were talking about before: the rumors that the Attorney General had been interested in getting rid of the Vice President, or here's just another example of this growing feud between Robert Kennedy and now President Johnson, and it got a great deal of publicity. And now so much had been written about that trip back and all the so-called chaos and the tension, I can imagine it must have been an unbelievably frightful thing, just the whole nature of it, but I wondered what specific recollections you have of what that trip back was like, and....

JOHNSON: That everybody congregated in groups and that everybody was.... And naturally

[-51-]

you gravitated to those that you were closest to. And that somebody would come by and offer us coffee or bouillon or a sandwich, and that hardly anybody ate anything. That everybody was wrapped in his own cocoon, sort of, or nightmare or.... And Lyndon was vastly more alert than I was. I remember, suddenly he looked around, and he said, "This is the President's compartment; let's get out of here." And so we went back and sat in the body of the plane, and in just a few moments Mrs. Kennedy came in and, of course, went in there. And then.... No, there was never anybody that wanted to give more deference and assistance than Lyndon. What could matter less than the fact that Bobby rushed on, rushed past, if indeed he did? I don't remember. I know that the casket went off first, and I think that is entirely appropriate.

STERN: Yes. Well, of course, I think you quoted your husband as saying that the press likes to make a fight, and obviously this was an example of that. Is there anything else about that trip back that you think is worth....

JOHNSON: Oh, I remember Lyndon was saying to his secretary, I think it was Marie [Marie Fehmer] was putting in calls while we were still on the ground, and two of them were to the Attorney General.

STERN: About the swearing-in?

JOHNSON: Yes, about to dictate the oath, and then on the way back we called Mrs. Rose

[-52-]

Kennedy. And that's another one of those instances where as soon as he could say it, what he could, which is nothing, really, except that we'll all pray for our country or something like that, that he handed it to me. He was always handing me the telephone when I didn't always necessarily want it. Then he tried to reach Nellie [Idanell Brill Connally] to be brought up to date on John.

STERN: I suppose at that point you didn't know how serious his injuries were?

JOHNSON: Oh, I had been to see her, and she had said that he was going to be all right, and we felt that he was. He was big and strong and tough. But this really laid him out for quite a while.

STERN: Did you have any part at all in writing the statement that President Johnson delivered at the airport?

JOHNSON: No, I didn't. But I saw it and read it in several drafts and approved it.

STERN: It must have been an unbelievable strain.

JOHNSON: It was, it was just, you know, a nightmare quality. You didn't think this was really happening. It was also a mixture of anger and shame that your country should behave like that. Particularly, although you can't blame the state of Texas or the city

[-53-]

of Dallas for one individual's action, yet there was this horrible feeling that it happened in your own state.

STERN: Of course. Are there any other specifics about the immediate days thereafter that you might want to discuss?

JOHNSON: Well, just that I never in my life saw such a crescendo of activity, never before or after, and such a gathering of forces. Lyndon began to have.... On the way, he sent word to the plane that had taken a great number of cabinet members to Japan, as I recall, and he got back the answer they had already gotten the word and had turned around.

STERN: Turned around, right.

JOHNSON: And he would have the cabinet in, the Senate leadership and House leadership, and then all sorts of groups of press, ministers. In fact, sometimes I would just, my mouth would just hang open at seeing somebody whom I considered, well, practically an entrenched enemy, walking into Lyndon's office. He was determined to pull everybody together that he possibly could, because I think he really was not sure how widespread this might be or how rending. He just wanted desperately to try to unite us and then just to forge ahead with all the legislation that was on the dockets. So it was a tremendous effort to restore order and to bring us together and to wrest from this tragedy

whatever we could get of determination to proceed with legislation that had been stalled or was not being successfully

[-54-]

completed.

You really haven't asked me many questions about Mrs. Kennedy, but it is not possible to deal with all of this period, before, too, and after, and she was.... I certainly saw, well, I saw not much of her, and I was not an intimate by any means, but I saw a bit of her. Lyndon actually saw more of her because she was a very appealing woman, and I remember when she wanted to get something done she was absolutely the most graceful person about getting something done. For instance, getting those chandeliers back from the Capitol, and at the same time I felt like if they.... She could also be a difficult opponent indeed if she ever were. But she and Lyndon liked each other tremendously. At least I know he liked her, and I think she liked him, because she gave every evidence of appreciation in several instances, about the chandeliers, is one that comes to mind.

But another, about something that he did for her, not for the State Department, not even, I expect would he have done it for the president, but because she asked him he did, and that is make a speech. For some reason the president couldn't, I don't know why, and I can't think why Rusk [Dean Rusk] or somebody else didn't. But anyhow, she asked him to make a speech vis-a-vis Andre Melrose, when Melrose came over here. And that was not Lyndon's cup of tea. But I think he would have done anything she asked him to, because she was really so graceful and charming and persuasive, and also apparently very appreciative.

And I found out a good bit about that quality after the assassination. I received several letters from her. One I particularly remember, which is about probably four hand-written pages long, on yellow legal-size paper, about the White House, which just shows the quality of hours and work and knowledge and determination and love she had put into that house. And it really...

[-55-]

I'd heard her friends say that she worked on it very hard, and that every last thing.... The way they would express it, there wasn't a Kleenex box that went into the room that she hadn't supervised to see that it was just right for the room. And indeed, she was a worker, which I don't think was always quite recognized.

STERN: That's fascinating. Are there any other things about the period that ended in November of '63 that you think you might want to add, in general, sort of a general assessment of the vice presidential period, of. . . .

JOHNSON: No, I don't believe so, just that it was a very different period of our lives, somber in some aspects, glittering and gay in others, and a great learning experience.

STERN: Did you feel....

JOHNSON: And a sadness from the loss of people like Sam Rayburn and Kerr and less contact with the Senate.

STERN: Well, there is only one other point that perhaps we can discuss, at least one other point that I have in mind.

JOHNSON: What time do you have?

[-56-]

STERN: It is exactly eleven.

JOHNSON: Uh-huh.

STERN: Do you have....

JOHNSON: Are we just about at the end?

STERN: Just about. One more question?

JOHNSON: All right, let's see.

STERN: Okay. I know, of course, that the Johnson Library has interviewed you on the presidential period. Of course, that's....

JOHNSON: Not yet. [Laughter]

STERN: My goodness, I can't believe that.

JOHNSON: No, we haven't gotten that far. We have, let's see...

STERN: Oh, I see.

[-57-]

JOHNSON:let's see, we have just gotten as far as....

STERN: But they will?

JOHNSON: Yes.

STERN: Obviously, they are intending to.

JOHNSON: Probably are, I'm sure, going to do it. Actually, I've only gotten as far as, oh,

gee, I think we are in the House of Representatives by now.

STERN: I see, so you are doing an entire biographical interview. That's fascinating.

JOHNSON: Just a long one.

STERN: That's fascinating. Absolutely fascinating. We have not done anything like that with Mrs. Kennedy, which is too bad.

JOHNSON: Do, do. I mean, it will be time-consuming, but....

STERN: Let me.... [Interruption] About President Johnson's relationship with Bobby Kennedy, quite apart from the.... Well, in one case, from `61 to `63, while he

[-58-]

was vice president, and then from `64 to `68, I know that that is not.... I know that is an area of some sensitivity, and, of course, there's been so much written about that relationship, and it's usually depicted as a very bitter one. And I wonder if you could give me your assessment of it, one, while your husband was vice president, and then, of course, while he was president.

JOHNSON: Well, it was necessarily made up of many things. It was never close or affectionate. On the one hand you had to weigh Lyndon's.... Some words are written in capital letters in the life of an old-fashioned politician, and to some extent Lyndon was that, and one of them is loyalty. And after he had agreed to be vice president to John F. Kennedy, he had a loyalty to him and to his staff and family and all like that. And that weighed heavily with him. He tried to like him and understand him. Their chemistries didn't really mix. On that other hand, you just had to, everybody had to like his wife. She was a darling, and she had us out to their house a number of times, Ethel [Ethel Skakel Kennedy]. Then there was this enormous surge of compassion and misery for him when his brother died, and once more a big attempt to understand and like, and all of that led to a very considerable output of effort to help him get elected...

STERN: To the Senate.

JOHNSON: ...to the Senate. Actually, I guess it was.... They were just foredoomed not to ever be good friends. I remember a couple of instances myself, one of which I

[-59-]

thought was very graceful. It was after the assassination, and we were welcoming, I don't know whether it was welcoming some chief of state who for some reason had come down from New York on the train, maybe it was a stormy day, or maybe it was the

funeral of General MacArthur [Douglas MacArthur]. I just remember it was a somber, bitter cold, stormy day. We were all standing in line--it's just a vignette in my mind--down at the Union Station, and I found myself standing next to the Attorney General, for he still was the Attorney General. And we waited quite a while and he leaned over to me and said, "You're doing a good job." Then there was a perceptible pause, and with what seemed a real effort he said, "And your husband is too." So, he was trying, too, I think.

STERN: Do you have any specific recollections of the whole, I don't know whether the word "controversy" is the right word, but about whether he might be President Johnson's running mate in 1964?

JOHNSON: No, I don't, except that Lyndon would not have wanted that. He would have wanted a running mate...

STERN: Somebody who he could be very close to.

STERN: ...who was his man.

STERN: Which is perfectly reasonable.

[-60-]

JOHNSON: Somebody that he had warmth for. And then I remember another time standing in the East Room at the White House, and this was somewhere along into the first.... I think Lyndon must have been president by then. Anyhow, he leaned over and said, "Well, Lady Bird, I hear you're going to make Washington beautiful." [Laughter] And I just had this feeling of a little lady over the tea cups. But what he didn't know was that, in my opinion, I was several million people, because that is something that is deep in the hearts of a lot of people all over the country. They just want to make their home town, their capital, their state as environmentally beautiful as they can to live in and work in and play in and be proud of. So multiply me by about quite a few million and you've got something. No big deal for me, but it is a big deal for all of us put together. And I just sort of smiled and said, "I'm going to do my best."

So it was sad that they couldn't have been better friends, and they were not. But Lyndon strove mightily, and I must say against the very strong advice of a whole lot of his friends, to act in a completely loyal and compassionate manner to every one of the Kennedy appointees who were still in their places when he assumed the presidency. And, of course, President Kennedy's brother was at the head of that list to whom he tried to extend loyalty.

STERN: Most of the staff, of course, stayed on for at least some period of time...

JOHNSON: Uh-huh.

STERN: ...Sorensen [Theodore Sorensen] and O'Donnell....

[-61-]

JOHNSON: And O'Brien remained and was actually in Lyndon's cabinet, a higher post that
was in the Kennedy times. And, of course, Dean Rusk and Bob McNamara [Robert S. McNamara] and Orville Freeman were, but Dean Rusk heading the list always, were people that Lyndon had tremendous personal admiration and devotion to.

STERN: I think Willard Wirtz was another one, wasn't he?

JOHNSON: Well, he liked Willard Wirtz [William Willard Wirtz] fine. I think they disagreed on things from time to time, but he like him fine, and his wife Jane [Mary Jane Quisenberry Wirtz].

STERN: Well, unless you have anything to add, I think that pretty much concludes my outline.

JOHNSON: I think that's probably all. I think maybe when I see it, I'll see if there were any
gaps that were left.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[-62-]

Lady Bird Johnson's Oral History Transcript
Name List

A

Abell, Elizabeth C., 35, 41
Anderson, Clinton P., 36

B

Brumidi, Constantino, 7

C

Calhoun, John C., 7
Carpenter, Elizabeth S., 42
Clay, Henry, 7
Connally, Idanell Brill, 53
Connally, John B., 9, 10, 12, 45-47

E

Eisenhower, Dwight D., 10, 15, 29, 36

F

Fehmer, Marie, 52
Freeman, Orville L., 62
Frost, Robert, 28

G

George, Walter F., 6
Gillette, Michael L., 45
Goldwater, Barry M., 43
Gore, Albert, Sr., 6
Green, Theodore Francis, 6

H

Hayden, Carl T., 6
Hill, Lister, 6
Hogg, James S., 25

J

Johnson, Josefa, 4
Johnson, Lyndon B., 1-14, 16-18, 20-22, 24-28,
30-37, 39-42, 45, 47-55, 58-62

K

Kefauver, Estes, 4, 5
Kennedy, Ethel Skakel, 59
Kennedy, Jacqueline B., 2, 5, 19, 20-22, 26, 27,
35, 41, 47, 49, 50, 55
Kennedy, John F., 1, 4-9, 11-14, 16, 18, 20, 25,
26, 28-31, 35, 38-40, 42, 43, 48, 49, 59
Kennedy, Joseph P., 3
Kennedy, Robert F., 16, 51, 52, 58
Kennedy, Rose F., 5, 27, 52
Kerr, Robert S., 6, 17, 35, 56

L

La Follette, Robert M., 8

M

MacArthur, Douglas, 60
McHugh, Godfrey T., 48, 50, 51
McNamara, Robert S., 62
Manchester, William, 44
Mansfield, Michael J., 36
Marcus, Stanley, 23
Meredith, James H., 43
Mesta, Perle, 35
Moyers, William D., 49

N

Nixon, Richard M., 17, 25

O

O'Brien, Lawrence F., 49, 62
O'Donnell, Kenneth P., 38, 49, 61

R

Radziwill, Caroline Lee Bouvier, 20
Radziwill, Stanislas Albert, 20
Rayburn, Samuel T., 9, 15, 17, 34, 56
Robb, Lynda Bird Johnson, 16
Roosevelt, Franklin D., 10, 22
Rusk, Dean, 55, 62
Russell, Richard B., 5, 6

S

Smathers, George A., 2
Smith, Alfred E., 4
Sorensen, Theodore C., 61
Stevenson, Adlai E., 5, 10, 22
Swindal, Colonel, 50

T

Taft, Robert A., 7
Thornberry, Homer, 15, 17
Tower, John G., 27
Truman, Harry S., 10

V

Valenti, Jack S., 49

W

Webb, James E., 30
Webster, Daniel, 7
Williams, Gene, 35
Williams, Helen, 35
Wirtz, Mary Jane Quisenberry, 62
Wirtz, William Willard, 62
Wright, Zephyr, 35

Y

Yarborough, Ralph W., 45-47