

**Paul Southwick Oral History Interview—JFK #1, 4/6/1970**  
Administrative Information

**Creator:** Paul Southwick  
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**Biographical Note**

Paul Southwick (1920-2012) worked as an assistant to Senator Oren E. Long of Hawaii (1959-1962); as coordinator of the public works program under the Area Redevelopment Administration (1962-1963); and as special assistant to the President (1963). This interview focuses on Southwick's role in the Area Redevelopment Administration (ARA), his responsibilities as special assistant to President John F. Kennedy (JFK), and his evaluation of JFK's presidency, among other issues.

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Oral History Interview

with

PAUL SOUTHWICK

April 6, 1970  
Washington, D.C.

By Ann Campbell

For the John F. Kennedy Library

CAMPBELL: Mr. Southwick, perhaps we could begin by my asking you if you recall when you first came in contact with John Kennedy or some facet of John Kennedy's career?

SOUTHWICK: This was during my time when I was a United Press reporter covering the House of Representatives, sometime between 1949 and the time he left to run for the Senate successfully in Massachusetts. And I knew him then as a young, bright member of the Congress. Having come from Boston myself, where my father had been a newspaperman, I had more than a routine interest in people from Massachusetts, especially in the political area.

CAMPBELL: Did you plan an active role at all in the political campaign of 1960?

SOUTHWICK: A few things happened in between there. By 1960 I was with Senator Oren E. Long of Hawaii, who invited me in view of my Washington experience to help him set up his Washington office as one of the two new senators from Hawaii. That was late 1959. Hawaii became a state in the summer of '59, and he set up an office later in '59. And Senator Fong [Hiram L. Fong], who was the other senator, brought almost, I think, all of his people -- possibly one lady who was from

Washington, but the rest of them from Hawaii. And Senator Long felt that he wanted to have somebody that knew the Washington machinery, and my name was suggested and he invited me to come with him, and I did. And I became his administrative assistant. In 1960, Senator Long was working very closely with Senator Lyndon Johnson, who was given a great deal of credit for statehood for Hawaii, and rightfully so. And come convention time, Oren E. Long felt that Mr. Johnson would make a good candidate for the Democratic party and supported Mr. Johnson at the convention. My sympathies were elsewhere. It wasn't any disagreement or personal problem, but I did not go to the convention. So that's where I

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stood as of 1960.

Prior to that, as I recall, it must have been somewhere around October of 1959, I did have quite a conversation with then Senator Kennedy about what I expected would be his forthcoming campaign; and discussed with him some of the observations I had made as a reporter covering both Adlai Stevenson and Estes Kefauver in the '56 campaign, and my appraisal of some of the mistakes that I thought Mr. Stevenson had made and some of the advantages that Mr. Kefauver had and capitalized on. And the senator asked me to prepare a memorandum for him which I did -- sort of advice to a would-be presidential candidate on some of the pitfalls, as a reporter who had covered a presidential campaign saw them, particularly from the Democratic side. And for this I think he was very grateful and I hope maybe had some effect on his campaign and some of the things that Pierre Salinger later did.

CAMPBELL: Did you say this would've been in '59?

SOUTHWICK: I remembered it was either September or October of '59. It was just before I went with Oren Long. I was at that time on the staff of the House Information Subcommittee working for Congressman John E. Moss. So I was doing this with Senator Kennedy on my own time so to speak and moonlighting or whatever you want to call it.

CAMPBELL: Did you feel that there was any question at all about his candidacy in '60 at that time in the fall?

SOUTHWICK: There wasn't any question in my mind. And he made it quite clear that Pierre Salinger was going to be the fellow to run the press relations without telling me in fact he was, you know, running yet at that time. But it was pretty obvious and I certainly enjoyed talking with him. I was impressed at that time again by the intense concentration he was able to bring to bear on whatever subject we might be discussing. I suppose you've heard this many times from many people, but this was another, I guess, typical example where there's great chaos in his office and people coming and going and great evidence of what you might think was disorganization, and he and I crawled off in a corner some place and had quite a long discussion about press relations on a presidential campaign.

CAMPBELL: Then you stayed on with Senator Long. After the inauguration, did you have the occasion to work closely with the White House on any issues during that time you were still with Senator Long?

SOUTHWICK: Yes, we tried to work, particularly on my initiative, with every issue we could where we could be effective or where it would be effective for us. Remember this was a brand new Senate office and a new senator. He was an elderly man, but thought young and was very, very vigorous. And one of the things that this led to was an organization, very informal and unofficial, of western Democratic senators' press secretaries. I served, among other things, as Senator Long's press man. And one

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of the obvious problems we had in those early days after the inauguration was to turn around the administration's information policies as far as notifying senators was concerned and to make sure that Democratic senators heard about things promptly, hopefully first; that is things in the administration -- decisions, grants and whatnot.

We had a group of western senators' press secretaries as I say, and we used to meet maybe once a week at luncheon and we'd have people in to have a little pep talk to get people -- particularly from the administration -- we had Pierre Salinger there once. And this I thought was highly effective in two ways: I think it brought the administration closer to the workings of the senators and also served as an effective nucleus of western interests. Hawaii wasn't always involved in every one of these western interests, but because of our geographical location, obviously, we were part of it. And this was quite a group. I think we did a lot of good work for the party and for the administration. And among other things, I got involved in the fight over ARA [Area Redevelopment Administration], which I guess everybody knows was twice vetoed by President Eisenhower [Dwight D. Eisenhower], so it was an important issue for us. And Oren Long was in the Public Works Committee and worked hard for the enactment of this bill and I helped him. And we promoted it, as much public relations as we could on behalf of the administration in Hawaii. And it was a popular issue. This is how I first got involved in that.

CAMPBELL: Was Senator Long involved at all in the sort of trading off of ARA going into Commerce Department and that original bill and backdoor financing, yes or no?

SOUTHWICK: I don't recall that part of it. This was, as you know, Senator Douglas [Paul H. Douglas].

CAMPBELL: Yeah, Senator Douglas was the main actor of these. An article in a recent commentary I just suppose reminded us again that the Kennedy administration has been charged with great problems with congressional relations. In this case, the author said that the Kennedy administration made a shambles of

White House congressional relations. As a person who's had substantial experience in town, how would you react to a statement like that? Could you see significant problems with the White House working with Congress?

SOUTHWICK: Well, I think.... Yes. I think that one of the things I just pointed out, the problem of reversing the availability of information. Now information is bread and butter for politicians. And I can cite an instance just to illustrate what this problem is. We had been working very, very hard on a project in Hawaii which involved a new federal building. As I remember, it was a twenty-three million dollar building, which is a big project, especially at that time. And it was hung up on the availability of a little plot of army land, army-owned land, in the middle of Honolulu. And we had been trying to get this thing worked out, to get the army to trade this land for something else so we could get this post office

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and federal court building built in the middle of Honolulu. And we had correspondence; we met with the deputy secretary of Defense on it, and all the way up and down the line. And this was under Eisenhower. And SENator Fong got in the act late, and it was just about inauguration time, maybe a little before, maybe even just before the election. He wrote a letter to be on the record that he wanted to clear this thing up, too. So Mr. Kennedy appointed a new assistant secretary of defense who was Mr. Tom Morris [Thomas D. Morris]. And the first thing that Mr. Morris saw on this issue happened to be Senator Fong's letter which was the latest thing in, you see. So they cleared this thing up right away and they notified SENator Fong and it was big banner headlines in Hawaii. So I remember calling Mr. Morris and he said that, gee, he'd just gotten in the job and he's awfully sorry, but this was the first letter he had seen on it, and he was unaware of our interest before. Well, this is congressional relations, and it takes time for any administration. The Nixon [Richard M. Nixon] people have been having the same problem too, I'm sure. So to answer your question, you can always paint a picture of shambles, I think, in a new administration because you're talking about hundreds and hundreds of people in key positions. AND to have each of them realize the importance of the congressional angles takes a lot of time and a lot of patience and a lot of understanding.

CAMPBELL: How about the White House liaison operation per se, O'Brien's [Lawrence F. O'Brien] operation, how did you find them to work with?

SOUTHWICK: You mean in those early days?

CAMPBELL: Yeah.

SOUTHWICK: The one I remember best -- it pops to mind when you ask that question -- is Sargent Shriver [R. Sargent Shriver, Jr.], who at that time was running



the Peace Corps. And SHriver, I remember, visited every single member of the United States Senate when the authorization bill was up, personally, every single one of them. And that is the epitome of good congressional relations. I was just flabbergasted, and he took the time and did it. And that was quite a -- I don't know how many senators there were then -- I guess we had a hundred senators. But this included Republicans, the Democrats, whether you're on the committee involved, or not. Oren E. Long was included I know. On the other part of the early days, nothing pops to mind at the moment, Ann. I could probably think of a few things.

CAMPBELL: During your time with Senator Long, how useful did you find the Democratic National Committee? Were they useful at all to you?

SOUTHWICK: I'm not sure we had an awful lot to do with them, Ann.

CAMPBELL: First it would've been Butler [Paul M. Butler] and then Bailey [John M. Bailey]. Roche [Charles D. Roche] handling congressional relations.

SOUTHWICK: See, Long came in in '59 and drew the short term which made him --

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his term ended at the end of '62, and he did not run again, so that we weren't too involved. See there wasn't a presidential election looming yet either. So we really didn't have any use for them. I don't mean to downgrade them, but that wasn't the right time for us.

CAMPBELL: Did the Kennedy administration get involved at all in Senator Long's decision not to seek reelection?

SOUTHWICK: Not that I'm aware of. I think that was his intention, yes.

CAMPBELL: From the start?

SOUTHWICK: Although he.... I wasn't sure of it. I always worked on the basis that he would run, you know. He didn't say one way or the other, but it's obvious to me now that he did not intend to. And this strained relations, perhaps, a little bit with Dan Inouye [Daniel K. Inouye], who is a very good friend of mine and a very fine guy, and of course is now senator. I'm glad of it, but you know, he was making noises, or people on behalf of him were making noises, of a primary fight, which would've been a messy situation, especially for Long, who's -- I've forgotten how old he was then, but it was seventy or so.

CAMPBELL: Is there anything else we should cover up quickly going over your service with Senator Long, anything else of significance in this period?

SOUTHWICK: Well, one of the most difficult congressional relations problems that the senator had with the Kennedy administration, of course, was over the judgeships. Hawaii, being entitled to two federal district judge appointments -- the President makes the appointments -- two new judgeships. And I wasn't fully involved in this because it was Hawaii politics which was not my bailiwick to begin with. But I know Senator Long was very upset by the treatment he received from the Justice Department. They ended up, as I recall, after pulling and hauling for an endless time it seems, they ended up with one Republican and one Democratic appointment. I think, as I recall it, there were two Republicans appointed to judgeships at that time, and Hawaii was one of them. And this was a very difficult problem for Senator Long because he knew many of these people personally, and he had the responsibility for representing the Democratic party in the state.

CAMPBELL: What factor would've led to the appointment of the Republican?

SOUTHWICK: Oh, I think it was now this is just an assumption but I think that the president and his advisors wanted to have some Republicans to keep some bipartisan balance. And I've forgotten where the -- it seems to me there was one in Illinois, but I'd have to recheck that. But these are the real hard, nitty-gritty problems you run into. And this was a difficult one for Senator Long I know.

CAMPBELL: Do you know if he negotiated directly with Robert Kennedy on this

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or with one of the staff.

SOUTHWICK: Well, mostly it was -- gee, I can see his face now. His name slips from my mind. He was Bobby's administrative assistant later. Whom am I thinking of?

CAMPBELL: Seigenthaler [John Seigenthaler], Marshall [Burke Marshall]?

SOUTHWICK: No, no, no.

CAMPBELL: Dolan [Joseph F. Dolan].

SOUTHWICK: Yeah, Joe Dolan. Joe Dolan was kind of the messenger boy on this one, but I think he [Senator Fong] must have talked to the President, I'm quite sure he did about it. There were many, many conversations back and forth.

CAMPBELL: Did you go directly from Senator Long's office over to Commerce, to ARA [Area Redevelopment Administration]?

SOUTHWICK: Yes.

CAMPBELL: Who recommended you for this position?

SOUTHWICK: Well, I can't say for sure, but it occurred this way. The day that the public works bill, the ARA bill was to be signed, Senator Long's chauffeur, the man who drove his car, was not available, and he asked me would I drive him down to the White House. SO I said, sure. So when I drove in, I got out of the car with him and went to the signing. IT was just as simple as that in those days. And of course, I knew everybody at the administration end there, Kennedy O'Donnell and all the rest. This was in the morning, and I don't know what happened, but I came back after the signing of the bill to the Hill and I received a telephone call from Ralph Dungan, and he said, "Could you come down and see me today?" And I said, sure. So I went down and he said, "We have all talked this over, motioning to the President's office next door, "and we would like you to run the accelerated public works program." That's how I got the word. Now where the recommendation came from first, I don't know. Senator Long, I know, had already made it clear he was not going to run again, and he had called Larry O'Brien's attention to me and some other people in the White House, I'm sure, so that they were aware of my availability. But who made the first suggestion, I don't know, it might've been Kenny.

CAMPBELL: So then when you came on, this was your mandate, the accelerated public works program?

SOUTHWICK: I'm sure you know from other people that in this tug of war over where the program should be administered, Congress ended up by not placing it anywhere. I think I'm correct in saying that. The authorization was for appropriations directly to the President, so that

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legally and technically, I guess, this was the President's program. Now if my memory serves me well, what the President did was to take a supergrade job out of the pool, put it in Commerce and assign it to ARA because the program was so related. And much of the personnel that I had originally were, you know, Bill Batt's [William L. Batt, Jr.] people from ARA.

CAMPBELL: Then what was the status between you and Batt? Were you operating your own shop, or was he clearly still in charge of your operation also?

SOUTHWICK: I was pretty much running my own shop, but he is a very sweet guy and was very considerate and very, very helpful and understanding. And there really wasn't any.... There was no difficulty there whatsoever. Now I don't know -- the reason I asked you about personalities in the beginning. When Ralph

Dungan first discussed this position with me, he said, I could talk to anybody about it, meaning the President or Kenny and so forth. And after deciding that I was interested and it sounded like a challenge and I could help the President and the administration, I thought, "I'll do it. So what's the first step?" And Ralph said, "Well, I suggest the first thing you do is go down and talk to Secretary Hodges [Luther H. Hodges] because this'll be in his department." So I called Hodges' office, and he was out of town. So I thought the next best thing, since this was like "we want you down there tomorrow" type of thing, would be the under secretary. It was Gudeman [Edward Gudeman], I think. I'll have to correct this and put that name in, who used to be a vice president of Sears-Roebuck. Oh, I talked to Bill Batt and I guess Ralph maybe had already prepared Bill. Bill's attitude was: "Anything I can do, Paul, come on down any time and get started and we'll do anything we can to help."

So when I went to see -- Gudeman was his name -- Gudeman, Bill Batt went with me. And there were -- I think he brought one other person along. I think it was Bill Bozman [William H. Bozman], who was kind of an administrative assistant to Batt at that time. And so as I recall, there were the four of us in that room. And Gudeman challenged me -- he thought I was applying for a job -- and it was a very uncomfortable situation. And I was totally unprepared for this because I'd gone over there under the assumption, which was true, that the President had chosen me for this job, and here I am. He was challenging me. Obviously, he had somebody else in mind, and he was attempting to make me justify my qualifications for the job. So it was a very, very uncomfortable position. I mention this because when Hodges finally came back to town, and I did meet him in connection with this new job, it was very smooth. And Luther Hodges and I are good friends and we get along very, very well because he understood what the situation was. I was there to operate a program for the President and I operated through Luther Hodges to the President. And this is the way it was, and I had this understanding from the White House before I accepted it. And we got along very, very well although I understand the relationship between Mr. Hodges and some of the White House staff, at least, was not the best at times.

CAMPBELL: And it has been suggested that he was less than totally

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enthusiastic about ARA and HEW [Department of Health, Education, and Welfare].

SOUTHWICK: It may have been, but he didn't -- at least in my phase of the program. Now what he and Bill Batt may have done before I got there, I don't know. But I always had his support and understanding, and we went through some very interesting fights together on the same side.

CAMPBELL: Then did you bring in a substantial number of entirely new staff members to help you administer the new program?

SOUTHWICK: Yes. As I recall, I hired about sixty people while I was there, which was

something less than a year.

CAMPBELL: And what sort of problems did you face just getting this going? Could you look at ARA as kind of a guideline for beginning your work then?

SOUTHWICK: Oh yes, I think so. Bill Batt's people were very, very helpful with, you know, no jealousy or feeling of competition although the contrast was an embarrassing one for Bill Batt and his people because my program had the money that was available in grants and cash on the barrelhead, if you will, whereas his program was far more difficult. His assignment essentially was to make loans to struggling business enterprises that nobody else would touch. And then you're expected to produce results and you're also expected not to jeopardize the taxpayers' money. And this is a very, very difficult assignment. And I came along -- johnny-come-lately -- with this billion dollar program, which is money, you know, a flat grant in most cases for very politically sexy projects like sewer and water projects that everybody can see, and politically, you know, you can show all kinds of things quickly. And there were supposed to be done quickly. In fact the law specified that the major part of the project should be completed, I think, in one year. So that it was a pump-priming project, whereas his was a slow economic development on the loan basis for the riskiest firms. And it was very difficult.

CAMPBELL: How, in this project that had numerous political implications, how were projects chosen?

SOUTHWICK: When Ralph first told me that the President was interested in having me take this job, I immediately checked on the status of the program. Then, as I recall, the first appropriation for it was just then moving (through Congress). So I sat as a spectator in the room during some of the appropriations hearings. That must have been the Senate because the House had closed hearings then. I do remember it was the Senate appropriations room. And I remember very clearly that the similar question was asked and the answer was that these projects would be handled on a first-come, first-served basis. Now this sounds very fair, very

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obvious common sense. And you ask what problems I ran into. The first problem I ran into: if in fact you approve these projects on first-come, first-served basis, you would find that the cities with the best professional help in preparing forms or preparing plans would get all the money, and in most cases, these would be the cities with not the greatest need. So it was obvious to me immediately that a few major cities could sop up all of that four hundred million dollar appropriation just like nothing if you did it literally on that basis. Now the law did require that a third of the total would have to go to rural areas, but that other two-thirds you could sop up in Detroit or some place like this in no time at all.

Another little observation in that connection with first-come, first-served, I remember that the Oklahoma people -- and Ed Edmondson sticks in mind particularly -- were strong

supporters of this program. And they had been in the legislative fight from the beginning. Ed, of course, was on the public works committee in the House. And I can remember even at the signing of the authorization, when I went down with Oren Long, after the President signed it, Edmondson came forward, and he had applications already, you know, as a public relations gesture. But this is how eager they were and how far advanced they were: here we are from Oklahoma; we're ready to go; we want this program. Now that was true of some other areas too, particularly where the congressmen or the senators had been involved in this program and they knew what was coming and they'd gotten their local people involved. There were some other areas where this wasn't true and where we were trying desperately, Eastern Kentucky, some of the Appalachia areas. I don't mean to say that the congressmen or senators were any less alert, but the local people were not prepared. Sometimes because they were poverty stricken they couldn't hire a guy who was a professional planner or an engineer or whatever was required.

So in answer to your question, first-come, first-served would've been political suicide and unfair, and it wouldn't have carried out the purposes of the program. So I had to reverse that. Then the next question was, well, now if you don't do it first-come, first-served, then how to you do it? Well, this led into what I privately to myself called a quota system. The accelerated public works program was aimed at certain areas which met certain criteria set out by law -- so many unemployed, or a certain percentage of unemployment, or median income at such and such a level would make an area eligible for the grants. So what I did, as I recall -- it was a very simple thing -- I just took the four hundred million dollars and divided it by the number of districts so that...

CAMPBELL: Congressional districts?

SOUTHWICK: No, no. These were the eligible districts which do not necessarily coincide with congressional districts. I'll tell you that later. So this wasn't a quota system in the sense that it was anything legal or binding or the intent of congress even. It was just to serve as an alarm for me if I saw that in some area, Oklahoma or whatever it was, was getting money so fast that they were getting more than

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what I would call their share if it were all divvied up by then. Then I'd have to see what this might mean, you see. And eventually the danger point or whatever you want to call it was double the quota. Obviously, some people at this point were never going to get prepared to get these grants.

I did not keep it on the basis of congressional districts until much later. Let's see, it must have been... I went down there in '62 while I was still on the Senate staff. In fact it was some weeks I worked on the program before I was officially taken on the executive branch. And the difficulty I ran into after we got the four hundred million dollar appropriations and we began to process these projects in vast numbers, hundreds and hundred of them, I found that there was a great difficulty in answering congressional requests on, "Well, what have you done in my district?" It wasn't always asked that way, but that is what

it boils down to. So finally I did put in an information service on a congressional district basis, using the Census Bureau computer service, which we paid for. As I guess happens to everybody in this computer business, you have bugs in it to begin with, which just cause you endless grief until you finally get it worked out.

I can recall that before I left to go over on the White House staff, there were already some Republicans making remarks that the money's all going to the Democrats. And I honestly did not know. I did not have a score sheet on Democrats versus Republicans. And when we did finally get this information on computers and it was working well and somebody did ask us -- I think it was somebody in the House Appropriations Committee -- we did a run out and it turned out to be almost exactly in the same proportion as the representation in Congress -- Democratic districts versus Republican districts -- which is kind of interesting. We didn't hear very much about that afterward. But this was, I hope, a tribute to fairness.

There was one other problem I'd like to mention before -- and that is, you have to keep in mind that this was a pump-priming program, which meant spend the money as fast as you can, but be careful. So I went through the four hundred million dollars in about six months, that is obligated it. And just by way of background briefly, the program involved money which was available to finance other federal programs which didn't have enough money to go into these areas. For instance, water and sewer projects from the facilities -- what the heck was the name of that.... Of course, it's now part of Housing Urban Development Department -- Community Facilities Administration. That was their program, but it was my money that was being used to finance projects such as theirs in addition to what they could handle with their own funds. Hill-Burton hospital construction -- we would add money to that. We didn't get into highways at that time. Let me see, what else? There were courthouses which was another problem. That came under Community Facilities also. What happened was that sometimes I found we would finance half a total project without knowing it. In other words, if you have a waste treatment plant, and you don't have the pipelines, and the community honest-to-God can't afford the pipeline, your waste treatment

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plant looks pretty silly out there all by itself. Now this is a slight exaggeration, but this illustrates the problem. We called these "tandem" projects. And the waste treatment plant came from under Public Health, and the water lines would come under Community Facility Administration. These were two entirely different departments, not only two agencies, but two departments. And I remember Senator John Stennis is the one who pointed this out to me very, very politely and getting, but very emphatically, and that this is just an intolerable thing, if you approve one and not the other when the community truthfully can't afford the second. So there I had to make an exception to my informal quota to take care of what I called the "tandem" projects. And this was a problem unforeseen. There were cases where I was concerned, for instance, that you might have two projects in the same town and one of them might be a water main and the other one might be street paving. And you approve the street paving before you approve the water line, and I could just see the Washington bureaucracy hung in effigy, and rightfully so, if we did that -- tear up the new street to put in the new

water line, and I could just see the Washington bureaucracy hung in effigy, and rightfully so, if we did that -- tear up the new street to put in the new later line. Now these are things we just had to develop. It sounds simple, you know, when you look back on it. But when you think of that, we were talking about thousands and thousands of projects, and half a billion dollars almost in six months. So these things could happen.

CAMPBELL: Where did you look for guidance -- or to choose Senator Stennis's state -- where did you look for guidance among competing requests, for instance, within a state, within a district? Then did you look to congressmen to help you decide?

SOUTHWICK: I didn't have to look.

CAMPBELL: I'm sure you didn't. How did you withstand that sort of guidance?

SOUTHWICK: I'd have as many as -- on the average in an average week -- maybe about thirty calls a day from congressmen, some of whom would come down personally and visit me. So that I wasn't looking for any more guidance. What we were trying to do was to balance this program so that it wasn't all concentrated in the same place. I was very concerned with others that the neediest places might be last and they might be left out if we didn't deliberately slow down some of the earlier requests, which were valid because there were very few criteria in the law. It was wide open.... You had to have it quick; you had to have it in an eligible area; it was confined to certain programs, but many, many programs, so that it was a difficult thing. And I think one of the things when I went in was to see if we could measure the effects of it. I could anticipate a year from then, what will I say? If I have to go up to the appropriations committee and somebody says, "Well, now what have you done?" And I'll say, "Well, I've spent four hundred million dollars." And they say, "Well, what have you got for it?" Obviously what I wanted to be able to say is we've employed so many people; their income has been increased so much; so many of these jobs have turned out to be permanent, and so on.

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And Bill Batt and I -- I talked to Bill about this, and of course he was very enthusiastic because this is the way he thinks. And we went to see Kermit Gordon who was on the Council of Economic Advisors at that time, and put it to him simply like that. Can you find a couple of economists that can take a couple of these places as a sample and study this and come up with some kind of a yardstick? Well, I was very disappointed that we just couldn't do it. The basic reason, as I recall, was that even if you're talking about four hundred million dollars, which was the first appropriation and then another four hundred million dollars, which was the first appropriation and then another four hundred million dollars, which was the first appropriation and then another four hundred and fifty which was the second, which comes close to a billion dollars, spread over the country, over a period of time, it has very little statistically measurable effect. Obviously you know the number of



people who are working on the project while it's under construction. I'm talking about accelerated public works projects now, not Bill Batt's end which is a little different. But to try to show the impact on the community of a water line, street, or waste treatment plant becomes almost impossible under those circumstances, which was very disappointing to me.

CAMPBELL: There were some figures coming out of that shop eventually, weren't there?

SOUTHWICK: Yes.

CAMPBELL: How were they arrived at? I think there was some criticism involved in that.

SOUTHWICK: As I remember, the figures that we used were arrived at by a rule of thumb which I think was acceptable, that if you pump a certain amount of money into an area under certain conditions it will create buying power. Now on the accelerated public works projects -- of course, you could count the number of people who were put to work on the project itself, then you use what they call the "multiplier." In other words, the man on the job then has maybe a hundred, hundred and fifty dollars, a week he didn't have before, and he spends that with the baker and so on, and thus the "multiplier" effect. This is how those figures were arrived at. I know they were controversial.

CAMPBELL: And contradicted in come cases.

SOUTHWICK: Yes. I remember later when I went over to the White House staff, the president of the Chamber of Commerce, whose name I've forgotten now, but it seems to me he was a banker from Delaware, made a speech at the National Press Club in which he was severely critical of ARA in particular and most grant programs of the federal government in general. He made some drastic assertions which were just too far from the truth. And even the local chambers of commerce in many cases protested, which I thought was interesting. I remember particularly there was one in Kentucky -- which the Speaker had picked as an area where the taxpayers' money was being wasted on "boondoggle" projects and so forth and so on. The local chamber wired the president of the U.S. Chamber to point out that they were involved in this, and that ARA the local chamber had worked hand in

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glove to try to get these projects going. So I think although there was a lot of political talk about it, I think in the main, these projects were helpful and they were appreciated. And I'm pretty proud that as far as I know that there was never any thievery or misadministration of funds that I was aware of, in spite of the fact that the GAO [Government Accounting Office] probably investigated that program more than anything else at that time. Of course, now they've got a few other things like C-5A and whatnot to look into, but at that time the

accelerated public works was a prime target (for investigation.) A lot of congressmen asked the General Accounting Office to investigate and see what happened, and as far as I know, we came out with a clean slate as far as any misuse of funds was concerned.

CAMPBELL: Was the national committee ever involved in assigning your project -- you hear suggestions once in a while that perhaps Jerry Bruno [Gerald J. Bruno] or Paul Corbin or both or something were involved in selections of projects?

SOUTHWICK: I don't recall, but...

CAMPBELL: Or would it've been the sort of thing that would've, in some cases, been cleared through DNC [Democratic National Committee] apparatus at all? This could've been after you left.

SOUTHWICK: It could've been after I left. At the time I was there, I worked very closely with the White House, Henry Wilson [Henry Hall Wilson, Jr.], in particular, who had responsibility for the House which was just an awful assignment. You know, congressional relations in the House was just overwhelming. I don't know how he stood it for all the time he was there, but he just enjoyed it, I think. The Senate, mostly we heard from the Senators directly. The House was the main problem.

The one pressure that I had which really upset me was for courthouses. And I know that I wasn't the congressman, and I didn't write the law, or make the (legislative) policy, but it seemed to me that a courthouse was least productive or effective as far as the purposes, as I understood them, of the law were concerned. In other words, the law was supposed to help the economy through an economic development program. And a courthouse, in my opinion, is primarily a monument to some politician. Now this may be a little drastic, but this is the way I felt about it, and I resented the pressure for courthouses when there were other areas that needed a water line or a sewer connection or something which would mean that a business could operate or that people could have clean water for the first time, and this kind of thing. Some of these areas in Appalachia, it's just incredibly primitive, and some of them still are. You put that side by side with somebody's pressuring you for a fancy new courthouse. This is just one of the human things that were involved.

CAMPBELL: Within the agency, who then finally, in consideration of the competing pressures, did make decisions regarding allocation of funds?

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SOUTHWICK: You mean to specific projects?

CAMPBELL: Yeah.

SOUTHWICK: I believe I did.

CAMPBELL: You did...

SOUTHWICK: Yeah.

CAMPBELL: ...basically alone. A considerable amount of guidance from the White House?

SOUTHWICK: I knew of the White House preferences if there were any. I knew which congressmen had registered their interest at the White House and then what degree of urgency. I knew in some cases what else might be involved, that is, how badly the President might need this guy for a vote. And with all those things in my mind, I went ahead and ran a program.

CAMPBELL: Was Wilson your main concern in the White House with this sort of information?

SOUTHWICK: I think so. He had the toughest job I think, as I said before, covering the House. And so he was more frequently interested perhaps than anybody else.

CAMPBELL: Any recollections of a story of particular political pressure of any sort that just might be illustrative of the sort of thing that you coped with or did they run together week after week?

SOUTHWICK: Oh, it was continuous. Looking back on it now, I think my feeling at the time was that there was so much involved -- I mean there were so many people involved and there were so many pressures that you just put your head down and you run and you try to do the best job you can. Now if it turns out you do what looks like a favor for a guy, you make darn sure, at least I did, that the White House would get credit for it with the guy. In other words, Henry Wilson would notify me, and I'd see that he knew when we had approved this project. If it weren't a project that would fly, I would take the heat and then just dig in my heels and say we've got to try this again, or do it a different way, or it's too much money, and so forth.

Now the exceptions were for instance, the Stennis problem with the "tandem" projects, and this was just where I think our administration was faulty. I think he was right, and he wasn't the only one. He just happened to be chairman of the appropriations subcommittee that was going to handle my next appropriations. He called me up in a very gentlemanly

way and didn't make any threats or anything, just pointed out that he thought that this was an absurd bureaucratic situation, and I agreed with him. And it was. And I already could see this developing, and I had realized that we'd have to change somehow.

CAMPBELL: Was the Commerce Department the right place for our operation, the right place for ARA? Do you think benefits would have accrued had you just been independent, an independent agency?

SOUTHWICK: I hadn't really thought of that before.

CAMPBELL: Or to put it another way, did benefits accrue to you being in the Commerce Department? Did you have much to do with the other agencies there?

SOUTHWICK: I didn't have time. No. I worked with Bill Batt and with Luther Hodges, and that was about it. Now I hadn't really thought of this question before, but just thinking off the top of my head at the moment, for instance, one of the political battles I got into involved the use of my funds for the building of small post office buildings. Now that in turn raised the question of whether the money would go for the purchase of the land. And I felt strongly and Luther Hodges felt strongly that our money should not be used for the purchase of land. On the other hand, Mr. Bernie Boutin [Bernard L. Boutin], who was head of the General Services Administration at that time, saw a great way to get a lot of post offices to his credit with my money and he convinced Mr. Elmer Staats that this was a way to beat the budget squeeze. And they teamed up on me and we had some very lively sessions, and Luther Hodges backed me up. And it was kind of a wild situation there and you have to remember that this was new and it was moving fast and some of these things may look silly when you look back on them. But with the help of the -- or, I guess, with the assent of the Bureau of the Budget -- Boutin went ahead and sent up what they call a prospectus to the Congress. Prospectus is sort of like an authorization bid. For post offices and other federal buildings, they have to get the approval of the House and Senate Public Works Committee. It doesn't take a bill, but it just takes committee action on each side. And for the committee to act there's a prospectus that goes up and it says, "We want to build these." Of course, this was done over my objection and over Mr. Hodges' objection. In fact, we didn't even know they were doing it.

So I was faced with going before the House Public Works Committee and testifying on the basis of an administration request with which I disagreed. And this was one of the most unpleasant tasks that I've ever been through. I'd forgotten about this until I got to talking. But I had to play -- I had to be evasive. I had to be stupid. And it was a very, very unpleasant situation because some of the congressmen, including some of our best friends like Bob Jones [Robert E. Jones] in Alabama, thought that there was something here that wasn't apparent. He thought I was betraying the administration or betraying the Congress or something. I don't know what was in it. But he was absolutely, absolutely furious at me. And because of this bubbling little controversy when the full committee was there, the

Republicans were just having a heyday. I was trying not to -- I didn't want to say that the prospectus was wrong, but on the other hand, I didn't want the committee to approve it, you see. It turned out that -- and I probably should've caught it earlier -- but it turned out that Bernie Boutin who was supposed to have some political savvy had selected post offices in mostly Republican districts of the most conservative types. And I suspect that these were dredged out from the ones that had been standing there for a long time. If I'd discovered this soon enough, I probably could've worked through Kenny O'Donnell or something to get this thing killed off. I've forgotten how that fight was ever resolved. I think we won. I think Hodges and I finally prevailed, and I think the committee just didn't take any action and the prospectus was eventually changed. But the issue was not whether it was in a Republican district or anything like that. It was a question of whether economic development funds should be used particularly for the purchase of land, and if in fact they should be used for construction of government buildings anyway. You know how I felt about the local courthouses. Well, this applies, too, to a post office, although a post office, I suppose, can be an aid to business and could be better justified. But that was one of the in-fights we've had which I cite because Luther Hodges did back me up. And after all he was a member of the cabinet and this helped some.

Now, if an independent agency, I don't know what would have happened. I suppose I would've had to bow to anything Elmer Staats said at the Bureau of the Budget; I'd probably have to go along. But one thing I did not do and I regret, looking back, and that is not keeping in touch with Kenny O'Donnell more closely. I think this was a mistake. I had the feeling, rightly or wrongly, that I was assigned to run this thing and take care of it and as far as the White House was concerned it should be, "Don't bother us." Now they didn't say that, but I felt this was the way to do it. And the fewer problems I take back to that end of the avenue, the better. Now this one on the post offices, I probably should've alerted Kenny right away. I'm sure he would've ended that one quickly, but....

CAMPBELL: Let me turn this over before it runs....

[BEGIN SIDE II TAPE I]

CAMPBELL: Let's skip to the White House if there's not anything else we should put on about APW. Did you work with local officials much at all? Did you get involved with governors, mayors?

SOUTHWICK: Some. It varied. The governor of Kentucky, whose name escapes me right now, was very, very active. And this is logical because of the problems in eastern Kentucky. The mayor of Newark -- is it Mr. Addonizio [Hugh J. Addonizio]? He was an ex-congressman. That's probably who it was. We had a big problem there on whether that was an eligible area. I've forgotten what the deep technicalities were, but the decision had to be made and an interpretation of the law had to be made whether they were eligible, and this meant many millions of dollars one way or the other to them. And he would come down and have conferences with

me and discuss this. So in some cases, yes. They had a flood in Appalachia and I went down, well, at the President's request as I recall, as one of the agencies to see what we could do to help. And the governors were there. West Virginia -- I went down to a conference that the governor had of all the municipal and county officials of the state to explain our program and to get their views and so forth. There was some of that. There wasn't time really to go out and seek this. You know, we were flying by the seat of our pants most of the time, but there was some of it.

CAMPBELL: What occasioned your leaving this and going to the White House in 1963?

SOUTHWICK: I had a call from Dick Maguire [Richard Maguire] in the spring of '63. As I recall, it must have been around March. And he asked me to come over and see him at the national committee, and I did. It was one evening, as I recall. And he told me that he had discussed this with some other people at the White House, and that they felt there should be better coordination of information between on what the administration is doing. Now, I would like to say by the way of background that I'm a former newspaper reporter. I've lived with politicians almost all of my working life. And politicians are not the only ones who think this way; businessmen sometimes do too, often do, that there's a way to manage the news or that if you just tell reporters or tell editors, you can straighten these things out, you see. It's perhaps unfair to use the word "manage the news." It depends what the circumstances are when you hear or read what I'm saying, you know, but manage the news was the favorite expression at that time.

Dick thought that the story of the administration was not getting out and he wanted my opinion on whether there shouldn't be somebody at the White House that would literally have what he saw as a city desk operation. Now, from a politician's point of view, the city desk is where all the signals are called. And to see if you couldn't get this material to the newspapers -- the newspapers in whatever state it is, Indiana or wherever. Here we're doing these things, and the President is making these accomplishments, and nobody's recognizing it, and that's because they're not getting the information. Now, this was part of his concept. There were some other angles to it, too. I can't remember at the moment the whole conversation, but it was quite comprehensive and fascinating to me. And he asked me if I would be willing to take over some such assignment. I guess he said out of the White House. I believe he probably said that in the first conversation. I told him I would think it over, which I did. We had another conversation.

Ultimately we had a conversation with Kenny O'Donnell, Larry O'Brien, and I think Chuck Roche was there, probably. It was in the White House, the fish room. And we talked mostly about other things. I was amazed. My position was that they had asked me whether I was interested, and I said, yes. So I showed up and we all sat around the room and mostly we talked about other things. And looking back now, I guess they expected me to come in and say, "This is how I think it should be done, you see." So finally Kenny looked at me and he said, "Well, Paul, are you with us or not?"

And I said, "Yeah." And that was the extent of the conversation more or less.

So they put me on the White House staff under the special projects section, ostensibly working out of Pierre Salinger's office. Kenny made it very clear that the President wanted this done very quietly, that I was to "stay in the woodwork," which is understandable. We're still talking about the spring of '63. I don't know whether come to think of it now, I'm not sure whether anybody mentioned campaign or not. But it was so obvious to me it was all part of the same thing in my mind. Here we'd been in office -- '63 was what -- two years, so what have we done? I've forgotten who it was who complained, Kenny, Dick, everybody. It was a common consensus that they couldn't find out. The Bureau of the Budget keeps track of dollars, and that's about it. But what have you really done? SO it was made clear to me that this was to be done quietly. I saw my assignment not so much the management of the news -- in fact, I discounted this entirely in my own mind. I felt the way to go about this is to find out what the facts are, and if we've got some good facts, the facts will take care of themselves. We'll find a way to get the story out. The main problem was to find out what have we done in two years, which I took to be my major assignment, and I think that certainly Kenny understood that, and I'm sure the President did.

The ground rules were that each member of the cabinet was informed of my activity and requested to cooperate with me except for State and Defense for foreign policy reasons, security reasons. We don't want any taint of politics there, and obviously Justice Department, which is run by the President's brother was kind of a special category. I was given a suite of offices in the executive office building, which is right across the street from the White House, with an understanding that I could call on any cabinet member for assistance including personnel help. I told Kenny from the very beginning and told him several times later, that I did not want to build up a staff of my own in the White House, that I think that would be a mistake. It's better to sue the people who were in the operating agencies and bring them over, find out what it is that they can do and put them to work on a temporary basis. Then, let them go back (to their agencies) because they get an idea of what the President wants better than any memo you could write and rather than having a White House staff stuck on top of agencies and departments, use the people who know what they're doing. So I borrowed people on a rotating basis. I'd have somebody from HEW [Department of Health, Education, and Welfare] for maybe six months, somebody from Treasury, somebody from interior, somebody from wherever.

The first problem I tackled was what have we done for people, not how much money have we spent or how many projects we have approved or how many bills we've go through Congress or how much the authorization was, but now how many people have we put to work in jobs, for instance, that we can claim legitimately, and where. How many kids have been helped with college loans? All the programs in terms of the people involved, not the dollars necessarily or the projects. And this was an enormous job. I found that most agencies don't keep track of things this way. They think in budget terms.

We complained that they lose track of the human element, and I think there's a lot of truth in this. And it was an enormous effort, an enormous effort. In the housing agency -- what was it -- the home and housing... I forget, HHFA [Housing and Home Finance Agency] it was called.

CAMPBELL: Yeah, HHFA.

SOUTHWICK: The forerunner of the Housing and Urban Development. I wanted to give somebody some credit over there, and, I've forgotten his name now.

CAMPBELL: There's Semer [Milton P. Semer] there.

SOUTHWICK: Yeah, Milt Semer. Largely as a result of Milt Semer's efforts, they put on computers all their programs so that ultimately when Milt finally got this thing in being -- it took a year or more to get all the bugs out of it so it would work -- you could find out what was being accomplished, and you could compare it with two years ago or four years ago, which is what we wanted to do. And such a simple, obvious thing took a great deal of effort. And Milt was largely responsible for that. That was an example.

I don't want to prolong this, but what evolved out of this was a periodic status report, which I did in two ways: one, by programs grouped, like economic development programs, space programs or wherever, different subject matter; and then another one by departments. Now actually, I may have cheated a little bit because I went into some of the military stuff and some of the State Department stuff too to make it a complete picture. And of course, Justice, I developed my own contacts over there. I think it was -- what was his name -- Seigen...

CAMPBELL: Seigenthaler?

SOUTHWICK: ...thaler. And I think Jack Rosenthal [Jacob Rosenthal] later was very helpful. And of course, when Bobby found out about this thing, he was helpful too. What I did was eventually, about every six months, I'd have a loose-leaf notebook and it would say "Progress of the Kennedy Administration 19-" -- what was it, '63. And I'd compare it with some of the Eisenhower years, either two years ago or four years ago or six years ago or whatever seemed to be meaningful. And the time of the assassination, I was just beginning to get this material so that it was beginning to flow. In other words, instead of pulling this out like teeth, most of which was already outdated by the time I got it, it was beginning to come in and the cabinet members' staffs were beginning to realize what we wanted and in what form we wanted it. And it was beginning to work, and President Kennedy was beginning to use this material in his speeches. And I got involved more and more in the speech writing operation. And on his trip to Florida he used some of this material, and his trip to Texas he had some of the material to be used, so that it was just beginning to pay off from my viewpoint. And then after the assassination, when Johnson was



president, he was just delighted with this because I had a year-ender at about that time, which summer up all the accomplishments of the Kennedy-Johnson administration as compared with the previous administration. I remember he made a trip to New York to visit with the editors of the *New York Times*. In fact, I went along. I didn't attend the session with the *Times*' editors, but he used my black notebook. And it was just great. It was in his, you know...

CAMPBELL: His style.

SOUTHWICK: Yeah, his style, brief and to the point. But anyway that's getting a little bit ahead of the story.

CAMPBELL: Let me get back to the beginning of this part and ask if your coming on and in the plans, did you sense sort of implied criticism of Salinger's operation in this, in the need for you to come on and do this?

SOUTHWICK: Oh, probably. Everybody was implying a criticism of Salinger. Any press secretary's criticized by everybody. I didn't think of it that way. In spite of what I just told you about what Dick Maguire's concept was as I recall, I didn't agree that it could be done that way. I thought we had to have fact-finding first. I think he agrees too, but I think he was carrying it much further than I could ever take it probably. But, no, this wasn't a real criticism of Salinger; I didn't see that it was involved with Salinger really. A presidential press secretary is a spokesman for the President. He's not a news manager of other things. He doesn't have time to get into those things. Now, the typical error that a presidential press secretary will make is, let's see everything that's going out from the government before you announce it. George Reedy did this once, and George is an old friend of mine and we've worked together for many years. He's an old newspaperman. I was appalled that he would be sucker enough and probably Mr. Johnson told him to do it. So what happened, all the government announcements for a period of time that were to be issues were stacking up on George's desk, and no man can physically go through that much stuff.

Now Pierre may have tried something along the line at one time, but I think the most effective thing that Pierre did in this context was the preparation for presidential press conferences. And he had -- like I had key people to dig out facts for me, he had key people like Jimmy Greenfield [James L. Greenfield], for instance, from the State Department, who was very good at anticipating questions that the President might receive at a press conference. And Pierre would always have one or two of these sessions before every press conference. And they were very, very helpful and very effective, I think.

CAMPBELL: How about your relationship with the national committee? The sort of thing that you did was not unlike the sort of thing that

they should've done all the time.

SOUTHWICK: Well, the relationship with the national committee, I'm not sure how it started. There were a lot of false starts in pulling and hauling. I got into a lot of things I found I was wasting my time on that I shouldn't be involved in. And what finally evolved was that the material being used by the national committee was developed in my office, almost all of it. In fact, all of the campaign -- of course, this is later under Johnson, I guess -- but almost all of the campaign material, the raw material, came out of my office in one form or another, if not in a finished speech form, at least in its basic format. Now, I've forgotten whether I had done the state breakdowns before the assassination or not. I was certainly work...

CAMPBELL: I've seen some state breakdowns that are statistical.

SOUTHWICK: Yeah.

CAMPBELL: I've seen those and I think they did come out before the assassination.

SOUTHWICK: Oh, did they?

CAMPBELL: I believe so.

SOUTHWICK: Now, this was intended to show, again in human terms and not so much in the dollars, what had been done state by state. And in some cases, we tried to get it city by city. But this was an enormous job to stick on anybody. It should've been something you could do in three or four months, but it took a long, long time.

CAMPBELL: Did you get a sense for how the DNC operation was viewed by the White House? There are suggestions that they were less than pleased with a great deal that went on over there, perhaps, first of all with the...

SOUTHWICK: I think this is typical and I think most people at the White House kind of say: "What are those boobs doing over there now?" I don't want to over-emphasize this, but I think it's.... I just took it with a grain of salt. I mean the national committee has real problems and they're dealing with the politicians all over the country, and they have to take a lot of the heat for things that the White House or the President does that don't please the politicians back home. The thing of it, when your party has the presidency, you want to make sure that he gets all the credit. And this means somebody's got to take the heat on the unpleasant stuff and can't take credit for the good stuff. And this leaves congressional liaison men and cabinet members and people of the national committee kind of exposed as far as their personal popularity is concerned.

CAMPBELL: Did you find the research effort over there very useful at all.

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I think a man named Bill Keel [William A. Keel, Jr.] was running it.

SOUTHWICK: I thought Bill Keel was good. His resources were limited. They were me, you know. But he was an ex-newspaperman from Tennessee. He worked quickly and effectively.

CAMPBELL: They depended on you for his raw material.

SOUTHWICK: Yes, oh, yes, almost exclusively. I might say that we devised -- I think it was largely Bill -- a very, very effective lobbying operation. Which, there again, you see, you're getting away from what you commonly think of as the role of the national committee. When I was there the national committee was involved in supporting the President's legislative program. And it worked like this. For example: what does this proposed bill of the President's mean to Paducah? Now if the Republican senator or congressman from Kentucky or from Paducah vote against this bill, what does it mean to the people of Paducah? Now my job was to find that out. And this isn't easy because the agencies and departments traditionally don't think in these terms. I'm not talking about the dollars again, I'm talking about the import on people. Now once you get that information, if you can get it in time, you can use a beautiful kind of cross rough operation where you get the local Democratic political leader involved in a national issue, which I think is the name of the game, by providing him with this information, perhaps providing him with a draft statement, brief, so anybody can understand it and so he can do it on a thirty-second television program or a one-minute radio, or whatever. And then the paper will print it because it's understandable. Congressman Joe Blow, Republican, is voting against what the President wants and this is what it means to you.

Timing, of course, is essential, and this is where we worked closely with Larry O'Brien. This was very effective; number one, to get the facts -- what does this bill mean to Joe Blow in Paducah, or wherever it is. Number two, to get it in a form that a local guy can use on the run. He doesn't have to become a student of the social security law or some such thing. Well written, punchy, in a form that you can send by telegram and have the guy use it immediately, worked in with the timing on the Hill, which is Larry O'Brien's domain. And this was very, very effective except for one very, very dreadful development, which I'm sure you've probably heard from other people.

CAMPBELL: Well, what was this? This in the first place was Operation Backlash, wasn't it?

SOUTHWICK: That's Operation Backlash. That's right. I'm glad you reminded me of it. It was, I thought, very effective. The backlash on Backlash was when some Democratic senators thought that this was being used on them and this...

CAMPBELL: Gore [Albert Gore].

SOUTHWICK: Yes, this was Albert Gore. I, for one, had requested that this

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not be done in that state and one other, specifically. And I don't know why, but I guess Bill thought he could trust a few friends down there. And of course, you can't trust anybody in this operation, especially in the newspaper business. You know, that's a pretty good story, and it made a good story. And Bill, as you know, had to go up and testify. But you got that story from somebody else, I guess.

CAMPBELL: Yeah, well, it was well publicized.

SOUTHWICK: Yeah, that's true.

CAMPBELL: Did you have any sense at all for how the Kennedys planned to use John Bailey in '64? First of all, it was assumed he was going to stay on through '64, I suppose.

SOUTHWICK: I'd assumed it, but I didn't ask anybody, and that really wasn't something that...

CAMPBELL: That wasn't your bailiwick.

SOUTHWICK: I... No. I knew John, but Dick Maguire was the key guy as far as my operation was concerned. Dick was a fantastic organizer, I think.

CAMPBELL: Did you have a sense for how Steve Smith was working out over at DNC? He was over there, I think, beginning in January of 1963, being there most of the time. Did you have anything to do with him?

SOUTHWICK: Gee, I can remember... Yeah. He was familiar with my operation, and we had contact from time to time. I can't remember the details right off the bat, but my memory is that he was very effective and that this was a good addition to the operation over there. Gee, that's a long time ago now. I've forgotten why it was he came and what happened, but my general memory is that he really put some life in there and some vigor and was effective and...

CAMPBELL: I think that was one of the ideas.

SOUTHWICK: ...and made use of my material and was aware of what I was doing. I have a pleasant recollection of it, but I can't remember all the details without....

CAMPBELL: I've heard a line that reads to "maximum utilization of federal power for political purposes." Is that your line or somebody else's?

SOUTHWICK: No, that could apply to a lot of different things. Power.

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CAMPBELL: I've just heard of that -- I think used to sort of describe your effort to gather material and then mold it into something useful. That wasn't a catch line just used every day.

SOUTHWICK: No, it's hardly a catch line. That's pretty much of a mouth breaker it seems to me. No, I think the dilemma that I saw was that the average housewife or breadwinner doesn't know what a bill in Congress really means to her or to him. And I don't think this is anybody's particular fault. You know, some people say it's the fault of the press or this or that, but I think things move so quickly these days and they're so many issues and they're so complex, the legislation gets so complex that even the congressmen and the senators themselves, even if they're good politicians, sometimes they get so involved in the details that it's difficult to explain to the voter what this means to him in terms that he can understand. And this I felt was a very important thing. And I think we made quite a breakthrough in getting some material which I think was effective.

CAMPBELL: Were you at all involved in an operation that Bernie Boutin seemed to manage which was designed to kind of gather political intelligence out in the hinterlands, a questionnaire for people to fill out?

SOUTHWICK: I was involved in some of the planning on that, and this is one of the things that I had in mind when I said that I got into too many things and some of them were a waste of time. This is, now that you remind me, was one of them. I think the idea had merit, but this again takes a lot of time and a lot of judgment all up and down the line on what this material -- what it really means and how valid it is, and how up to date it is. And you know, it's an enormously complicated procedure. But I wasn't personally involved. I had some comments on the type of material we should be getting and the form the questions should be, and this sort of thing. I don't know whatever happened to that. I didn't get much feedback from it.

CAMPBELL: You didn't stay in the woodwork very long. I think in May of 1963 the *New York Times* covered your presence at the White House rather extensively.

SOUTHWICK: Who told Wicker [Thomas G. Wicker] that story? Do you know?

CAMPBELL: No.

SOUTHWICK: Because I was in the woodwork, and I suspect Kenny probably told Wicker for some reason which is totally unrelated to anything else. I don't know where that story came from.

CAMPBELL: It was in the same story that covered...

SOUTHWICK: Stephen Smith.

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CAMPBELL: ...Smith.

SOUTHWICK: Yeah. Oh, I remember the story very well because I had not said anything to Tom. My presence at the White House was kind of glossed over, you know. Pierre would.... In fact, I went back once to see what he had said about me so that I wouldn't contradict him some day. And it was absolutely nothing. Of course, Pierre was good at this. He made it sound like he had already explained this. In fact, at one point somebody did say, "Well, what's Southwick? Is he working on this?" And Pierre said, "Well, I've explained what his assignment is," which passed it off for the moment. Well, to answer your question -- if that was a question, I don't know where that started. I was surprised.

CAMPBELL: I was just going to draw a few things out of that, one of the duties that was given you in that article was you were to analyze important issues the President had to cope with in '64. Did you? And if you did, what were they?

SOUTHWICK: Oh, boy! Well, I think we were analyzing issues all the time, Ann. I didn't sit down and say, "Well, now there're going to be six issues," and I wrote a memorandum to the President and said these are the six issues. I think this was going on all the time. I met with Ted Sorensen [Theodore C. Sorensen] constantly on this. I don't know whether it was ever written down or not, but there were certain issues that we had uppermost in our minds, and they had priorities. And Bill Keel and I would sit down with Sorensen and we'd discuss, "Well, now what can we do?" For instance, the President had a talk with, I think it was Dick Russell [Richard B. Russell], strange as that may seem now. It was one of the old southern club. And I remember the President said that as Democrats we are not telling the South what the Democratic party's done for the South. And I remember this -- maybe this isn't a major issue, but it was an issue. We were working with Sorensen on this and we drafted a whole series of speeches. I know we had a couple for Alabama, for instance, by states and by regions, and we had people give these over a period of time. "Don't forget it was the Democrats who got farm subsidies and the REA [Rural Electrification Administration] and all the rest of these things." The party of the people angle. And that's the way issues developed.

CAMPBELL: Ad hoc basis rather than...

SOUTHWICK: Yeah, and they change, you know, especially in the international field.

CAMPBELL: Now, you came on a month or two before Rockefeller [Nelson A. Rockefeller] remarried. I wonder if you recall, for example, who was viewed as the most likely opponent when you came on, and then, how that began to change.

SOUTHWICK: Oh, gee, I wish I'd keep notes on this, Ann.

CAMPBELL: Was Rockefeller the prime target for a period of time?

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SOUTHWICK: Yes. I'm sure he was, but my sense of timing is lost at this moment. I'd have to sit down and really rack my brain on that, but I do remember the time when we all decided Goldwater [Barry M. Goldwater] would be the best candidate, but don't tell anybody. Of course, this might've been later, come to think of it.

CAMPBELL: Well, shortly before the President's death an operation was set up, I think, in your shop run by Wayne Phillips characterized as an anti-far-right thing or something.

SOUTHWICK: Oh, yeah.

CAMPBELL: I assumed that that surely must have been set up perhaps with Goldwater in mind.

SOUTHWICK: That wasn't set up as part of my shop but was at the committee, and I was fully aware of this. It included compilations of statements made by people like Goldwater.

CAMPBELL: Did you get involved at all in the tugging back and forth on the appointment of campaign coordinators for the various states, things like that?

SOUTHWICK: Very little. Occasionally, I'd begin to get involved, and I'd try to stay out of that because I had enough problems.

CAMPBELL: You had enough. What could you see -- in Theodore White's book about the '64 campaign, he suggests that it was very difficult for people like

yourself and other political people to get the President really interested, really vitally concerned in plans for '64. He points out I think there was only one meeting that the President was actively involved in. I think in November of '63 he was evaluating a few people. What could you see about President Kennedy's attitude in '63? Was he vitally concerned?

SOUTHWICK: Well, the impression I got was that he was trying to be a good president. Now this sounds corny, but I think this is true. I think in '63, you see -- even at the end of '63 -- you're what, ten months, eleven months away from election then. I'll cite an example. One time I had prepared a statement for the President to make the labor unions on Labor Day. The people in the unions who run their newspapers and publications had complained that the White House was notoriously late in getting the President's Labor Day message to them so they could get it out in time to all the unions. Each union has a different paper, and they have early deadlines. So I decided the best way to do this would be to write it myself, and base it on some of our material: "What Have We Done for Labor," which I did. I didn't title it that, but the message was pretty clear. And I remember I went in to show it to the President because I wanted to get it okayed so I could give it to the publications a month in advance.

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I think Andy Hatcher was with me. And I went in, and the President read the draft, and he made a few changes here and there. I remember he had that funny blotter, that round blotter thing. And of course, you get this thick White House paper which doesn't absorb any ink. Anyway, he got through reading this. After making some changes, he still wasn't satisfied. And he said, "This looks like a campaign document." And I remember he looked at me and I looked at him and I said, "Well?" And he laughed. "Well," he said, "I'll get Schlesinger [Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.] to take a look at this." You know, this is a little thing, but it... I don't think he was thinking in those terms. I mean, obviously, he had some thoughts about it, but I don't think he was concentrating on it at that time. I think he left that to the Kenny O'Donnells and the Dick Maguires and if Larry O'Brien had time for it, too, but mostly Kenny and Dick, I think at that time was...

CAMPBELL: Are they the White House people you worked with, were Maguire from the DNC, are they the people you worked with on a very regular basis?

SOUTHWICK: From the political angle I worked with Maguire. Maguire was the one that approached me, as I said. And he was, as far as I was concerned, he was running the national committee and he was the President's man at the national committee. And if there were any important decisions to be made at the committee, he was the one that would make them for me. I worked with Kenny on some things, with Larry O'Brien on some others, with Sorensen on many things continually, since he was a speech writer and this material was being developed. That was my job.



CAMPBELL: I have a note here that sort of regular meetings began in September, I think, which included yourself and Sorensen, Feldman [Myer Feldman], Gwartzman [Milton Gwartzman], Lee White, Keel, perhaps others. Do you recall those as a formal thing?

SOUTHWICK: Fairly formal. I don't remember Gwartzman being involved.

CAMPBELL: What was the purpose here, better coordination sort of?

SOUTHWICK: I would say this was a propaganda effort. In other words, what we got, or at least what I got out of that, was a, hopefully a clear indication of what the President was thinking as of this morning. It seems to me these meetings were often right after meeting with the congressional leadership.

CAMPBELL: I don't know. I believe so.

SOUTHWICK: And so this is where this thing I just mentioned about Russell. But this is the type of thing, yes. And lots of things developed out of that. In fact we'd program our work on the basis of those meetings, that is the work in addition to my regular duties, which was to keep the facts flowing, what we have done, and to keep this status book up to date.

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CAMPBELL: Did you have problems with some agencies generating the sort of material you needed even given months of trying?

SOUTHWICK: Yes. You mean the delay? Yes. Oh, it was very frustrating, very difficult. And there again, you can't fault any individual person because the responsibility is so diverse. I remember Udall [Stewart L. Udall] had a fellow at Interior helping me and he was so conscientious -- I've forgotten his name, but it'll come to me.

CAMPBELL: Beaty [Orren Beaty, Jr.]?

SOUTHWICK: Well, Orren Beaty, yeah, and Daniel M. Ogden used to just work like mad. Often times it meant sort of rearranging information from agency people by translating it in different terms. And they weren't used to this. Their attitude was we never did it that way; maybe if we just lay back now, the White House interest will subside, and we won't have to do it. You know, you have to keep going back, and you have to keep raising hell and have to call Orren Beaty, build a fire under the secretary. Yes, to answer your question.

CAMPBELL: Were there problems with some agencies more than others? Were some

very good politically and some very poor?

SOUTHWICK: Oh, yes, it varied. Agriculture was superb. Under Milt Semer [Milton P. Semer] the housing agency improved immensely. Let's see. Interior was good. They worked very hard at it. Labor was very disappointing, which is surprising under Bill Wirtz [W. Willard Wirtz] who's such a good writer and so articulate, but it was very difficult there. Justice was.... Jack Rosenthal -- I've forgotten when Jack, at what point he came in, but he...

CAMPBELL: In '63 maybe.

SOUTHWICK: Was it? He was good. He was a real live wire. And there were a couple of other Bobby Kennedy types there that were excellent too.

CAMPBELL: Did you get involved at all with Robert Kennedy who was a very active political adviser, at least behind the scenes?

SOUTHWICK: No, not directly. Of course, I had known him in college and I really didn't get involved with him directly until after the assassination when it was my unfortunate assignment to get his permission to use some of the family films for the movie about Jack at the convention. And this was one of the most excruciating ordeals I've ever been through, second only to the assassination itself, I guess.

CAMPBELL: Was it a question of his not wanting to look at the films or not wanting to even think about it?

SOUTHWICK: It was a question of not wanting to talk about it I guess. I'm

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sure you've had many, many versions of how he was. Also I viewed the USIA [United States Information Agency] film with Bobby over there with Fred Dutton [Frederic G. Dutton]. That was a very difficult experience for me.

CAMPBELL: Was he able to sit through a lot of it?

SOUTHWICK: He did sit through it.

CAMPBELL: Do you recall any comments he might have had about it or anything?

SOUTHWICK: He didn't say a thing. I walked to the elevator with him. And Fred and I went down with him. And Fred, I understand later, walked the streets with him outside for a while.

CAMPBELL: We've done a small oral history program about Robert Kennedy's subsequent career in between '63 and '68.

SOUTHWICK: See, among the other odd jobs I got assigned were making of films. And I got involved in this, you might say, across the board, getting agencies to make films to illustrate progress of the Kennedy administration. And from this, I went into the preparation of the films for the national convention, and then I worked very closely with the photographic set up in the White House. They had the navy motion picture photographer there who I felt was just great. So I got heavily involved in pictures, both stills and motion pictures.

CAMPBELL: Well, is there anything else that we should.... It's been a long afternoon for you.

SOUTHWICK: It sure gets fun to talk about some of these things. Some of them terribly sad, but....

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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