

Barbara Ward Jackson Oral History Interview – JFK#1, 06/28/64
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Jackson, economist, author; friend, associate, and economic adviser to John F. Kennedy (JFK), discusses American relations with Africa during JFK's presidency, aspects of JFK's personality, among other issues.

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Barbara Ward Jackson

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Barbara Ward Jackson – JFK #1

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Oral History Interview

With

BARBARA WARD JACKSON

October 28, 1964
Washington, D.C.

By Walter and Elspeth Rostow

For the John F. Kennedy Library

E. ROSTOW: Do you recall the first time you met Jack Kennedy [John F. Kennedy]?

WARD: Yes, I recall it very vividly indeed. It was in the middle of the 1945 general election, and President Kennedy's sister, Kathleen [Kathleen Hartington Kennedy], was an acquaintance of mine, and she said, "My young brother Jack just wants to see something of the electoral campaign. Please, can you do anything about it?" Well, as it happened, that night I was going out to talk to Herbert Morrison [Herbert Stanley Morrison] in Wandsworth no... in Lambeth, I think it was, and so it was arranged that Jack should pick me up, and I think Helen Miller [Helen H. Miller] came along with us. We all crowded into a tiny little Austin 7, and out we went to Lambeth.

The President—or the President-to-be, rather—was fascinated by the political process. He asked every sort of question of what were the pressures, what were the forces at work, who supported what, what was Mr. Morrison's significance in the London scene; and you could see already that this young lieutenant [jg.] was political to his fingertips. So my chief first memory is of a very young man, still hardly with the eggshell off his back—he seemed so young—but with extraordinarily, I would say, well-informed interest in the

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political situation he was seeing. That was my first meeting.

E. ROSTOW: Did he at this stage.... Well, he'd already written *While England Slept*; he had this sort of familiarity. Did you feel that he had a sense of what the outcome of the election might be? Looking back at it, did he predict the result?

WARD: No. No, I don't think so, no. In fact, he wasn't predicting; he was just asking questions. He already showed that quality which one noticed right through life in later contacts, that is, he wanted to know, he wanted the answers. He was of an absolutely unbeatable intellectual curiosity.

E. ROSTOW: Barbara was saying that the first time she met the President was during the election in '45 and that he was at that stage a very good listener. When did you see him next?

WARD: Next time, I saw him very briefly on the Queen Mary, I think in '47 or '48, when he'd been felled by an attack of malaria. And he was lying in the Queen Mary's Hospital flat on his back, yellow as a pot of honey, cheerful as all get-out, and again asking questions. This time it was about development of the Labor government, it was about social change in Britain, the medical health scheme. It was just the same extraordinary intellectual vividness, though coupled in this case with a fever that had him absolutely strapped on his back. So that was my second meeting with him.

E. ROSTOW: Did he seem any older then?

WARD: No, just yellower. [Laughter]

E. ROSTOW: When next did you see him?

WARD: Well, now we have a big gap because I didn't come to America for about four or five years, and I next met him, I think, now, it must have been about 1958—when the India resolution was beginning to be discussed.

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W. ROSTOW: It was the same time that, the same year in which I got to know him and work with him.

WARD: Yes. Now, two memories of that year; the first was meeting at the dinner party in Washington—I think at Florence Mahoney's—and it was a “fun dinner,” if you like. But the young Senator was hard at work throughout. I'd just come back from India at the time—what was going on....

W. ROSTOW: That's the time you did the supplement in *The Economist*?

WARD: Yes. Yes. Well, it was little after that, but he'd read the supplement and he wanted to follow up, what had happened since, what was going on, what were the chances of the Indian plans, what was the influence of the various politicians. Again, I suppose he was really a sort of "show me" politician in the sense that he was a "tell me" politician, that one had the feeling that this intellectual curiosity was overwhelmingly strong and utterly disinterested. That's the thing that always struck you about him was that whatever of himself was engaged, it was never engaged at the intellectual level, that he simply wanted what was accurate, what reflected the truth, and what could be given to him in a completely unbiased way. And I saw that even more vividly a few weeks later when I attended a meeting of Max Millikan's [Max F. Millikan] small group at lunch—I think at the Harvard Faculty Club. Walt, you weren't there that time. It was...

W. ROSTOW: We were in England on sabbatical.

WARD: That was it. That was it. And Max conducted—I don't in fact recall. I think Wilfred Malenbaum was there, anyway, a group of MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology] people. He did not appear a young aspiring politician carefully asking for help, advice, and information of a group of sage academicians; it was a fellow academician putting them through the hoops. I've never seen anything like it. It was a brilliant performance from the point of view of his grasp on the subject and the kind of things he wanted to know. The nuances introduced were fully as subtle and fully as well-informed at the time as anything the true academics were discussing and it was an enormously impressive performance on the India resolution.

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E. ROSTOW: During the period before he became a candidate, how did you find the reaction to him in England? Did they take him seriously?

WARD: No, I don't think really they'd particularly heard of him. I don't think he had yet made a strong impression. He did suffer from some disadvantage, undoubtedly, from the fact that his father [Joseph P. Kennedy, Sr.] had been very unpopular. No, I think that on the whole, he was not yet a public figure in Britain.

W. ROSTOW: You know, Barbara, I think in a strange way his work on the India resolution was the beginning of the time the British Establishment took him seriously. I know this because we were on sabbatical at that time, and I came to talk to the Treasury about this gambit, talked with Leslie Rowan, and I went and had lunch with Oliver Franks [Sir Oliver Franks] at Oxford. He asked me questions about why a young politician would go after the India issue. But obviously it was impressive to the most thoughtful observers in England that this fellow, at a crucial time in his career, would take on the India Consortium issue. I think they began roughly in '58 at this time to...

WARD: To take him seriously, yes.

W. ROSTOW: ...take him seriously.

WARD: I must say that he was very largely responsible, of course, as is well known, for the sending out of the Bankers' Mission, of which Oliver Franks was the head, but I would agree with Walt that this was more an Establishment thing. But then the general public had perhaps not really taken him on board yet; I would say. And there was this sort of shadow of his father...

W. ROSTOW: His father and memories.

WARD: ...and the question of whether anyone who was Irish could possibly like the English, you know, this sort of question mark, insofar as anyone thought about it at all.

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E. ROSTOW: When do you think he began to be taken seriously?

WARD: Oh, by the time we got to 1960, as his star rose in America, the interest rose in England. It was as simple as that.

E. ROSTOW: Did you see him during this period?

WARD: Oh, yes, I saw him in 1960. In fact, I went...Walt had had lunch with him one day—do you remember?—and as Walt went away I think I arrived. And what he wanted...

W. ROSTOW: That's right; that's quite right.

WARD: Well, we had a long and pleasant talk, in fact, mainly about the President's views on his presidential prospects. At that time, which was the spring of '60, he talked about the Catholic weight, whether he would, in fact, get defeated on this in Minnesota and West Virginia.

W. ROSTOW: Barbara, is it right, the primaries had begun then?

WARD: No, he was about to go to Minnesota, I think—to Wisconsin.

W. ROSTOW: Wisconsin. That wasn't between the two halves of the Wisconsin Primary?

WARD: No. It was before Wisconsin, I think. And he discussed all with his usual complete objectivity, whether, in fact, the Catholic issue would weigh, how it would weigh, and so on. And then he said, "I know you know Adlai [Adlai E. Stevenson] very well, I do wish you could perhaps find out what his views are, or, better still, find out what his attitude to me is because clearly he has immense influence in the

party at this point, and if he was, in fact, able to swing his followers to me, it could make a decisive difference.” So I said I’d try and find out.

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Well, I was out in Illinois, I think, a week later and I saw Adlai and discussed with him Quite frankly whether, in fact, it would not be infinitely better for him in his present situation to come straight out for Kennedy in return for something which he dearly wanted, which is to be Secretary of State...

W. ROSTOW: He could have negotiated then.

WARD: Yes, at that time he could have negotiated and all I can tell you is that Adlai said, “Look, my difficulty is that I don’t think he’d be a good president. I do not feel that he’s the right man for the job; I think he’s too young; I don’t think he fully understands the dimensions of the foreign dilemma that are coming up; and I cannot in conscience throw my support to someone whom I do not really think is up to it.” He said, “I admire him; I think he’s a fine young man; I don’t see him as a president. I can’t in conscience suddenly say, because I want to be Secretary of State, ‘Okay, I have changed my mind.’”

Then he went on to talk about his own prospects. He said no, he didn’t....He wasn’t sure; he would not refuse a draft, the usual thing. But then he went on to say that he felt pretty certain that he could beat Nixon [Richard M. Nixon] and that he wasn’t going to exclude himself on the grounds that he couldn’t. He said, “Some people say I can’t; I don’t agree on this. Against Eisenhower [Dwight D. Eisenhower], well, okay; running against George Washington, the usual thing, but I don’t feel that if Mr. Nixon is the candidate, I can exclude myself on the grounds that I won’t win, because I don’t believe it.” And that’s as far as the conversation went at that time.

W. ROSTOW: Kind of honorable conversation?

WARD: Yes.

E. ROSTOW: You reported this back to Senator Kennedy?

WARD: I did not, no, because it seemed to me that the hope of good relations between the two depended upon not passing on comments that were

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totally personal, and certainly it wasn’t going to do any good to anyone for me to go back and say to President Kennedy that Stevenson didn’t think he had it in him to be president. I mean, this is all I said (I think) to Kennedy was that the Governor was not at the moment considering any kind of political intervention—I think it was something on those lines But certainly it wasn’t a situation in which laying bare what each thought of the other would have done any good whatsoever.

W. ROSTOW: Exactly.

WARD: So that was the exchange in the spring before the election. Oh, anyway, the Gov went off to Latin America at this point, and so there was no more communication anyway.

E. ROSTOW: What about you? Were you here during that summer? I forget.

WARD: No. No, after that I went away; I didn't come back.

E. ROSTOW: You weren't here at the elections?

WARD: No. No.

E. ROSTOW: Where were you during the '60 elections?

WARD: Oh, in Ghana, as usual. So it was all fairly remote.

E. ROSTOW: You were pleased?

WARD: Oh, pleased! Thank God, how relieved. Hardly knew what to do! There was dancing in the streets in the Jackson family.

Well, I might say, quite apart from anything else, quite apart from my own sense that this was a very remarkable young man, which I'd had for a long time, that was the utter, utter contempt one felt for anything faintly resembling integrity in the character of Mr. Nixon. I mean, one just felt it wasn't there. And if there's one quality you need in a president of the United States it's the ability to recognize the truth, to seek the facts, and to have a certain profound element of disinterest in it.

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It seemed to me that as far as Mr. Nixon was concerned, disinterestedness was not there—I mean there was nothing there but Mr. Nixon's own interest—whereas the great continuing impression you always had of Mr. Kennedy was that although he had a driving ambition and a tremendous drive to get to the top spot, never at the cost of objectivity, ever, ever, ever.

W. ROSTOW: That's right.

E. ROSTOW: Was there any considerable reaction in Ghana to the election?

WARD: Not at that time, no. I mean, people were mildly pleased, but none of the Ghanaian leaders knew either of them. Yet, there was a certain relief because they did know Mr. Nixon and had not been impressed.

W. ROSTOW: Has he been out there?

WARD: Oh, he'd been out there. Oh, if I may just put one little footnote in, which is one of the funniest things that ever happened....Well, two things happened—one apocryphal and the other true. The first thing was that the story goes that when Mr. Nixon...

W. ROSTOW: This is the old chief, isn't it?

WARD: Yes. This is true; now the other one is not, maybe. Mr. Nixon went to a reception, went up to a group of Negro citizens and took them by hand and said, "This is the most wonderful day. I'm so glad to have this great day of freedom and independence (this was Ghana's freedom celebration), and you don't know what it means to me as an American to be with you on this day of liberty." And they said, "Gee, boss, we don't know anything about liberty. We're from Alabama." [Laughter] Now that may be apocryphal, but it's significant that the story went right around Ghana the moment the....This was, of course, dated from an earlier period because independence was, what, '57 or '58, and Nixon had been Eisenhower's representative.

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But the other one that is perfectly true was that he was taken out to see the nearest chief, like all distinguished visitors, who was the Adontahene of Akwapim, who lived at a place called Aburi. And when he got there, to the absolute silent horror of the entire multitude, he seized the chief and hugged him. Now in Africa the chief is a sacred person, and you approach him on your belly—you certainly don't hug him. So as the chief emerged horror-struck from Mr. Nixon's embrace—and there's a picture actually show this in *Life*, and a more surprised chief you never saw—the chief said, in his excellent English, "Well, Mr. Nixon, we are delighted to welcome you here. You're not the first distinguished visitor to honor us in Aburi. In fact, only eighteen months ago Mr. Adlai Stevenson paid us a visit." "Um, um, um," said Mr. Nixon, "Him Democrat, me Republican." "Yes, said the chief, "so I gathered from my son at Ann Arbor." [Laughter] So given this background, there was a certain built-in prejudice in favor of Mr. Kennedy, shall we say. [Laughter]

E. ROSTOW: When did you come to Washington next?

WARD: Well, my next visit was 1961. Two things I think of interest came up then. The first was by this time the whole report and all sorts of situation papers on the scheme for the Volta River dam were pretty well ready. They were completed; a scheme had been declared economically and commercially feasible. But from 1960-61 onward Dr. Nkrumah [Kwame Nkrumah] had started yet another round of flirtation with the Eastern block, had gone off and got the red carpet treatment in Russia, and was locking up quite a number of his opposition and was beginning to show totalitarian tendencies and surrounding himself—not completely, but to some extent—by people with strong Eastern sympathies. So a sort of deterioration of the political situation...

W. ROSTOW: Well, you also had Geoffrey what's his name.

WARD: Well, Geoffrey Bing had been there for a long, long time.

W. ROSTOW: But he's a member of the apparatus.

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WARD: Oh, sure, sure. But Geoffrey Bing I don't think in this context is anywhere near so important as some of the Africans because in the long run Geoffrey Bing has a white face, so white it wouldn't true. But, I mean, Geoffrey Bing is also a constant.

What had happened in '60 was a concentration of more African-type bloc sympathizers, should we say, getting nearer the seat of power, a man like Adamafio [Tawia Adamafio] or Kwaku Boateng. Well, Adamafio, of course, has been put in prison since because we preserve some impartiality in our African system. But at that time a political deterioration, from the Western point of view, did coincide with the completion of all the preliminary work on the Volta River scheme. So the question which began to be discussed on my visit to Washington in 1961 was, was it at all in the American national interest to go ahead with what would in fact be not aid, because it was all on commercial terms, but nonetheless a pretty big dedication of capital to scheme which, outside an aid context, probably wouldn't be done, let's put it that way.

W. ROSTOW: Now, was the American government guaranteeing them?

WARD: They were guaranteed, yes, but there was no direct giving of DLF [Development Loan Fund] money, I think, as far as I remember. It was the World Bank money, British money, Ex-Im Bank [Export-Import Bank] money—but a government guarantee. And the question is would the guarantee be given? The very active and extremely sympathetic and knowledgeable Kaiser [Edgar F. Kaiser] people were in on this, and Edgar Kaiser—who I think became very fond of Nkrumah, as most of us do, because he's a beguiling creature even though unstable, I mean, you love him the way you do a seven year old son. You take an awful lot of the difficulties for granted. And Edgar had that feeling too.

He and Chad Calhoun and I—God knows, I wouldn't call it the lobby on this because this wouldn't be true—were trying to put to the officials who were interested the degree to which Nkrumah was a wobbler, in other words that you could not, as had the Senators Albert Gore [Albert Gore, Sr.] and Maurine Neuberger [Maurine B. Neuberger], you couldn't just wipe him out as a Communist dictator—it was much more complex than this. But if the scheme didn't go through you had

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a very good chance then of pushing Ghana over the edge into the Eastern Bloc for sheer lack of alternative pressures. This was the case. One luncheon with President Kennedy at which Ken Galbraith [John Kenneth Galbraith] and Kitty [Catherine A. Galbraith] were present we did talk to some extent about this, but the talk was very, very much more at that time, of course, about the situation in the Congo, which had become a major anxiety to the American administration because Gizenga [Antoine Gizenga] was at that time, I think...wasn't Lamumba [Patrice

Lamumba] still alive? No, no, Gizenga was the problem.

W. ROSTOW: That's right.

WARD: And the question was: did you absolutely, 100 percent as Arthur Krock and others wanted, support Tshombe [Moise Kapenda Tshombe] in Katanga and allow a breakaway or did you back the UN in the attempt to keep a united Congo? I must say that with my Ghanaian background, I very strongly supported the idea that you did what you could at this stage to keep the united Congo simply because if you had a breakaway taking the finest resources—the larger copper reserves, all under the control of Western interests, the cry of neo-colonialism and the cry of imperialist intervention would be so strong that the pressures on people like Nkrumah to swing to the East would be very, very dangerous and possibly irresistible, and that, therefore, the only sane policy at this point was to support the UN action and to try and keep Congo united.

And at this luncheon at the White House this was discussed with very, very great attention and detail. But the President, as usual, absolutely after the facts, wanted to know what were the pressures, what was Nkrumah's attitude, what was our judgment upon the pressures that were coming in. It was just one more illustration of the President's overwhelming desire to get accurate unbiased, dispassionate information at his disposal before he made any decisions.

As far as I've been able to follow since, it did become American policy, naturally, I suppose in the course of that summer, to support this. And although, God knows, the Congolese situation is still pretty unclear, it seems to me that to have Tshombe back as a national leader is very much preferable to having Tshombe depart with the entire national exchequer, which was what

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threatened in 1960, with all the difficulties that involved.

I suppose somebody else will recall one of the most delicious of the President's witticisms, but in this case they don't I'm going to put it in now. And that is that at the next Gridiron Dinner, after a period when Mr. Arthur Krock had been pressing to get a visa, and entry visa for Tshombe, and at the same time, I think, Robert Kennedy [Robert F. Kennedy] and a bunch of others had resigned from the Metropolitan Club because it would not desegregate, the President said that he was perfectly ready to offer Mr. Tshombe a visa if Mr. Arthur Krock would give him a dinner at the Metropolitan Club. [Laughter] So just in case that doesn't get in, I think it should be remembered.

W. ROSTOW: Oh, it's a lovely story. I've heard that.

WARD: Again, another product of this exquisitely wry wit which played across the President's mind and made him such an extraordinarily stimulating and delightful companion. I mean, lunch at the White House was really a feast of wit.

Now, dear Rostows, what did he talk about the evening we had? I think it was again Africa and Tshombe, wasn't it, quite a bit? Do you remember, what did we talk about? Do you remember, we all had supper there.

W. ROSTOW: No, I didn't make it.

WARD: Oh, dammit, you didn't make it. You arranged it, didn't you?

E. ROSTOW: Yes.

WARD: Because you rang me up—I was having the flu up at Radcliffe—in the middle of the afternoon you rang up and said, "This is it, dear."

W. ROSTOW: But the point is that...

WARD: Arthur [Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr] was there, Arthur and Marion [Marion Cannon Schlesinger].

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W. ROSTOW: That's right, and I was supposed to come, and Elspeth was supposed to come. We had committed ourselves to the seventieth....Or was it a wedding anniversary of the Dulleses [Allen W. Dulles] or something?

E. ROSTOW: Birthday.

W. ROSTOW: It was birthday, and they'd made a big fuss about this. And I told the President it was one of the very few times I think they've ever been turned down.

WARD: Yes.

W. ROSTOW: And I learned then all afterwards.

WARD: Yes, I talked to Marion.

W. ROSTOW: But it was Arthur and Marion's.

WARD: But the dinner was the talk about Nkrumah, wasn't it, as I remember?

W. ROSTOW: I think it might have been.

WARD: I think it was, yes.

W. ROSTOW: Yes, it was, it was just this time.

WARD: It was just this time.

W. ROSTOW: It was that time.

WARD: ...and what I've already put in the tape about his approach on this. And you see, again and again, I think when one looks back, the same pattern emerges, and that is, the President was a stimulant; he wasn't a communicator. He was making up his own mind, but he wanted to use...

W. ROSTOW: Everybody.

WARD: ...everybody to the full. I mean, not exploit them, but just get everything that was in their minds, get it absolutely clear to himself.

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W. ROSTOW: There were three... You might be interested in the climax of this, the day he made the decision on Nkrumah and his loan, I don't know whether it was a formal BSC [National Security Council] meeting, but it was a very full-dress affair, and it happened to be the first time that John McCone [John A. McCone] ever performed at the cabinet table. And John McCone came in and delivered his evaluation of Nkrumah, you know: Is he a Communist or isn't he a Communist? He came out flatly and said, "He is not a Communist," and sort of gave the intelligence community go-ahead. That was the first thing that was amusing.

The second thing that was amusing about it was that Bobby sat right behind the President, he didn't sit at the table, but right behind him—and when the President was first moving over towards a decision to go ahead with this Volta thing, he made a most sort of graceful gesture behind. He said, "I assume we're all against this pressure behind me here." Bobby was very much against it. But it was the most graceful.... It was a sweep of his arm and an acknowledgement that his brother was there and that his brother disagreed. It was one of the most charming.... I don't know, I mean, the acknowledgment that there was Bobby, that he was against this thing, and...

WARD: He was being overridden very hard.

W. ROSTOW: He was being overridden, but it was done affectionately.

WARD: But it was done affectionately.

W. ROSTOW: It was, I think, sort of a moment in the history of that table which couldn't have been....

WARD: And, of course, if I may put in there... Well, I think perhaps I will just jump straight to that point because Clarence Randall [Clarence Belden Randall] had been sent out as a kind of Republican cover. It hadn't worked at all because as far as I was able to tell Clarence Randall came flatly out against it, the old so-and-so, in spite of all the above we blandished on him when he came, but never mind. So, in fact,

the President was acting without his cover.

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W. ROSTOW: Well, this relates to the third element in that meeting which, as Mr. Rusk [Dean Rusk] said, "Don't you think we ought to discuss this with some of the congressional leadership?" The President sort of said, "Well, I appreciate the thought," he said, "but this is one we've got to take on ourselves."

WARD: Interesting, yes. And fitting in with that was that Maurine Neuberger, Albert Gore, and one other—I can't remember—had really gone to town on Nkrumah. And to me there was something, I must confess, a little distasteful about the fact that when Albert Gore went to see Nkrumah, he lectured him on the evils of racial government. And I thought, coming from a southerner, this was something which did not go down well and which the American cause great harm in Accra. I mean there are—il y a des resticences and Albert had missed them on this occasion.

W. ROSTOW: Well, the decision was made partly, I think, because the big expenditures didn't come along until about eighteen months after the decision was made, so you had a little bit of time before your big commitments came in. But on balance the President decided to go along with the Ghanaian people rather than Nhrumah for the long pull.

WARD: Yes, for the long pull. And also with the undoubted fact that Nkrumah cannot be dismissed as a charismatic leader in Africa. People get very annoyed with him, but the fact remains that he's a power in the land and he's a wobbler, but he only wobbles if you've got some pressures working on both sides. So I think that even part from the Ghanaian people there was a very sound diplomatic reason for doing it. Just closing that, I had a charming little note from the President at Christmas at the end of that year saying that, "The loan's gone through and I'd like you to know that this is the darkest horse we've ever backed." That was all. [Laughter]

W. ROSTOW: That was exactly the way it looked. Lovely.

WARD: Which I must say was very charming.

E. ROSTOW: Did you write the President often during this period when you weren't around?

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WARD: No. No. No. Once or twice I sent him a note about....I went to Nigeria in the summer of '61 and did a supplement on their plans and wrote to him afterwards about the, really about the dam, the Nigerian dam [Kainji Dam] and whether, in fact, that this wasn't rather a good country to give some special backing for. But I mean, it was note a very detailed or interesting letting; it was just an impression. That's one I

recall. No, I wasn't on corresponding terms with him. At least, he said, "Write when you have something on your mind," but....

W. ROSTOW: He meant it.

WARD: I know, but there wasn't anything on my mind, that's the trouble.

W. ROSTOW: You saw him in the....This was the spring of '61, was it not...

WARD: Yes.

E. ROSTOW: ...that you were down here? Then you went home in the summer; you didn't see him again then until the following—early '62, I would imagine.

WARD: Yes. In '62 I saw him a couple of times. I went to coffee at the White House. I think we had lunch but...

E. ROSTOW: Still mostly Africa?

WARD: Oh no, let me....No, no, no, I've missed something. That is that in September '61, or early October '61, when they were coming up to the crunch, I came over to go to a convocation at Brandeis.

W. ROSTOW: You mean on Nkrumah and all that?

WARD: Yes, now this is still Nkrumah. Let me...

W. ROSTOW: Because your dating....This was after Allen Dulles had left and McCone was in, that's how I can date it.

WARD: Yes well, this is October '61.

W. ROSTOW: That's about right.

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WARD: ...and there was a Brandeis convocation to which I went, and the President said would I come and speak to him. I was going to down, and then he had to go to Sam Rayburn's funeral. So I was summoned to come and have breakfast with him and so I returned after, and we had breakfast on trays, and he came in. And it was the only time I've ever seen him when he was tired—I think he'd been traveling around—and, in some strange way, for once discouraged. And the thing that discouraged him...And he talked, in fact, more about this than about Nkrumah. I had the impression then that he'd pretty well made up his mind about Nkrumah, that this was no longer a problem. He did want to know what the latest things were, he wanted to know whether the Queen's visit...

W. ROSTOW: Had helped.

WARD: ...you know had gone well, or was about to go well—I just can't quite date the moment, but it was in the time of the Queen's visit. But then he began to talk about his dealing with de Gaulle [Charles A. de Gaulle] and how difficult it was to find any kind of point of rapport, how it was all very well to talk about his grand design—he was sure that this was the right concept—but that dealing at this moment with Adenauer [Konrad Adenauer] and with de Gaulle (I'll always remember his analogy) he said it's like trying to run a race across a plowed field, every time you move, your feet get heavier. And so the breakfast, instead of being about Nkrumah, was largely a moment, I thought, of sort of real discouragement. However, by the end of breakfast he snapped out of it and said, "But don't—you mustn't think because of this that we're not going to go on trying."

W. ROSTOW: He was a slow starter in the mornings I mean, people have different rhythms in the morning. He would gather speed in the morning, and he'd have lunch and rest up. The best time of the day was at the very end before he went back to the mansion, after all the business was done with but sort of in between six and seven. He was unlikely to have appointments then, and then the place was like Liberty Hall. You had the feeling there were almost an infinite number of doors leading into that office; in fact there were only three. But people would wander in and ...[Interruption]

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W. ROSTOW: ...a part of this, I think, might have been just early morning.

WARD: Just early morning yes. You know, it was interesting just the thing that he brought up at that time was that, honestly, with de Gaulle and Adenauer he felt the impossibility of communication and further action. Incidentally, I've got some notes about all these talks that I'll send you.

E. ROSTOW: That will be fine.

W. ROSTOW: Do that.

WARD: Somewhere...

E. ROSTOW: We'll make photostats of anything and send them right back to you.

WARD: I don't know where they are. That's the trouble about our kind of life is that we never know where anything is; it's usually packed in Maples (repository). But if I can find them I will...

E. ROSTOW: Please.

WARD: ...because obviously if you note down at the time then what you remember is 90 percent there than you do if you rely on good old recall.

E. ROSTOW: You recall, though, the impact that he had on you as a human being in the beginning in '45. What changes did you see, if any, when he became president? Was he much the same human being that...

WARD: Don't think he changed at all. That's the astonishing thing about him. I remember thinking...

E. ROSTOW: He's no longer yellow, anyway.

WARD: Well, he's no longer yellow, no. But I thought at the time that it would be impossible to think of a man to whom office had made less difference.

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W. ROSTOW: As a human being.

WARD: As a human being. Mind you, it is true that office doesn't necessarily make any difference to you; it does make a difference to other people so that the relationship must change, I mean, the "Mr. President" is very different from Senator Kennedy, I'm not saying that. But your feeling, nonetheless, that the man himself had not changed, he had precisely the same characteristics—intense intellectual curiosity, unbelievable objectivity about himself—I mean, the way he could talk about his prospects almost as if they were a third person, astonishing. And I think his passion beyond—I imagine there must have been passion in his ambition, I'm not saying that—but his passion did seem to be to get a grip on what he had to deal with, I mean it was a kind of intellectual passion, you know. I found him a cool personality; I relished it; I enjoyed his wit; I didn't find I warmed to him—that's something else again. I think he was a person, at least as far as I was concerned, a person you admired very much and respect very much you would never have a particular feeling of being in anyway close, whereas with some people you can feel close quite quickly. But with him I think there was always a distance, at least that's my impression, and the distance perhaps came from this objectivity carried to the point of genius.

E. ROSTOW: Extraordinary qualities in a politician.

WARD: Yes, yes. Another thing which fits into this is, as far as I can remember, I think he was continually without rancor...

W. ROSTOW: That's right.

WARD: ...and all my times of talking to him. I never heard him criticize anyone or even refer to difficulties and defects except with a kind of wry comprehension, "We know the way people are, this is the way they behave, and I'm not mad at them." and this again is a very remarkable characteristic in a politician. I never saw him or heard him mad ever, ever, ever.

And maybe this links up with something that you've talked about, Walt, and that is it may have come from something much deeper and that is the understanding that the human situation is tragic, that all human beings are limited, that everyone will make mistakes, that we tend to be blinded by passion, and it's no good pretending that we're ever going

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to be any different. He didn't pretend it about himself, and he didn't pretend it about other people. So he ended up with an absolutely astonishing—how shall I put it?—it was a kind of cool compassion, not a warm compassion. And it goes back, perhaps, to the acceptance of facts.

W. ROSTOW: That is beautifully said. I've tried to talk about it mind you, a little. It's extended to Khrushchev [Nikita Sergeyeovich Khrushchev]. You know, I remember at the time of the wall [Berlin Wall], before the wall was put up, he understood that Khrushchev was in terrible trouble...

WARD: Incredible trouble.

W. ROSTOW: ...and he knew he'd have to do something, and he knew that he couldn't go to war about what Khrushchev was going to do. But he understood this man's situation, and...

WARD: And there was something.

W. ROSTOW: ...and when he got Mikoyan [Anastas I. Mikoyan] after the Cuban Missile Crisis, his line with Mikoyan was not sanctimonious one. He said, "Look, fella, this is very dangerous. You know, you obviously misunderstood me, and I didn't expect you to do this thing. We can't afford this kind of misunderstanding with these weapons around." And it was not—there wasn't a bit of santimoniousness.

WARD: No, and no crowing, no nothing.

W. ROSTOW: No crowing, no.

WARD: We're involved in this terrible human situation and...

W. ROSTOW: That's right. And we just cannot make these misjudgments about each other.

WARD: I know, I know.

What was the convocation he addressed in the summer of '63? Do you remember, he made that speech on, "We're all human, and the bomb must fall on the just and the unjust." It was one of the most beautiful speeches he ever made. It was a university convocation the summer of '63.

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W. ROSTOW: Not the American University speech?

WARD: Was that....

W. ROSTOW: The one that led to the.... Yes, that was the one.

E. ROSTOW: The June tenth speech.

WARD: The tenth of June, that's it.

W. ROSTOW: Yes, he'd been waiting since the Cuban Missile Crisis to give it. Well, when else did you see him?

WARD: Well, I saw him socially, you know, a couple of times in '62, but as far as I can remember, this was just meeting to chat as old friends and there was nothing of any particular historical significance, and yet it's always nice to see him.

E. ROSTOW: Had you known Washington sufficiently before the Kennedy period to contrast the general tone, feel, and taste of the town?

WARD: Heavens, yes. I began coming regularly in the spring of each year in 1958—'57, '57—so from '57 to '60 I had the Eisenhower atmosphere.

W. ROSTOW: Whom did you know in the Eisenhower administration?

WARD: Well, I was very fond of Christian Herter [Christian A. Herter]; I used to see him. I can't think who else; I didn't know any of them very well. No, I can't.

W. ROSTOW: Did you know Doug Dillon [C. Douglas Dillion] well?

WARD: No, no. I don't think I saw any of them. In those days...

W. ROSTOW: It was a different time, yes.

WARD: I'm afraid I've always been a convinced Democrat, as you know, and the people I used to see were darling Hubert Humphrey [Hubert H. Humphrey] and senators and Adlai—not Adlai as much in Washington. No, it was mainly a very

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Democratic team that I used to see. Even in the Eisenhower days you would have great fun with the Senators; I must say I remember some very gay occasions. Nonetheless, the overwhelming

feeling in Washington was that Washington was not a city that was interested in politics. I mean, the degree to which the Eisenhower administration created an unpolitical atmosphere is something which one looks back on with extraordinary surprise.

Then, of course, I saw two faces, I think, in the Kennedy administration—saving your beloved presence, Walt, I think you did have a moment of over-euphoria at the beginning and I had the impression...

W. ROSTOW: When?

WARD: You know, my impression between January and April of '61 was of an excitement that was so intense that I doubted if anyone could keep it up.

W. ROSTOW: Oh, you don't mean me personally, you mean the whole gang.

WARD: No, no, not you personally. No, in fact I think you, on the whole, hadn't.

W. ROSTOW: No, because I had Laos and Vietnam.

WARD: No, no. God, no. Do you remember we had lunch just after the Laos thing, and I can't remember who else was there.

W. ROSTOW: It was May of '61.

WARD: No, no, no, no. This was....

W. ROSTOW: After the Bay of Pigs?

WARD: No, no, no this was March '61, and we had lunch, and you told me then about what the choices in Laos were and how if you didn't stand, the whole thing....Oh no, I wouldn't include you because I thought that you were very, very serious.

W. ROSTOW: No, but you're right.

WARD: There was a kind of "Congress dances" feeling about the town, do you know?

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W. ROSTOW: Until the Bay of Pigs.

E. ROSTOW: A series of articles on the Kennedy style, and this was the phrase.

WARD: That's it, you know. The Kennedy wives. Everybody was sort of effervescent.

W. ROSTOW: Yes, I'll tell you that the fellows who weren't were the President and me, I mean in the gang, because I had Laos and Vietnam, and from the beginning I knew there were going to be miserable.

WARD: Horrid. Yes.

W. ROSTOW: And the President was watching this thing, and he knew that he had inherited—and still went on—basically a disintegrating situation. And when we'd come in, you know, he'd say, "All right, let's look at things." He was quite objective in the sense that the things still not moving against us.

WARD: Yes. Oh, I recall now one thing, and that is as we left this dinner with Arthur in which we had talked again about Nkrumah at great length, just as we got up to go the President suddenly cocked an eyebrow at Arthur and me and said—and maybe we had talked a little about Cuba—he said, "What do you think if there were an invasion by ADA [American for Democratic Action] type Cubans?"

W. ROSTOW: When was this now?

WARD: This was in...

W. ROSTOW: This was before the Bay of Pigs.

WARD: Oh, wait.

W. ROSTOW: This was March.

WARD: This was March, yes. I don't know what Arthur said, but I think I said, as far as I can remember (as I thought it was a joke), I said I didn't think that any invasion was likely to be much good. You know, something very casual and not...

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W. ROSTOW: What you should have said is: "I never knew any fellows of that ADA who'd do anything but make a hash out of an invasion."

WARD: God, if only I'd thought of that, yes.

W. ROSTOW: That would have been the right answer, too.

WARD: I know. I'm afraid my answer was a very feeble one. I must say that I couldn't think of anything that would amount to much. So I say there was a euphoria at the beginning—Bay of Pigs finished that completely. And then for eighteen months a very, very—how shall I put it?—a kind of sober, but enjoying mood. It had settled down to a working level, but there was immense enjoyment.

W. ROSTOW: That's right.

WARD: You know it really was very, very zestful.

W. ROSTOW: When did you last see him?

WARD: The last time—it was again, a purely social lunch, I think—the last time I had a talk with him was when he went up to get his degree at Georgetown—not at Georgetown; what am I talking about—at Boston College. I was in Washington also before getting a Boston degree, and he gave me a lift in the presidential plane. And then thing we talked about nearly all the way up was whether Africa could become an issue in American politics on the par with the Israeli issue with the Jewish vote. And I was saying that I wasn't sure, but it seemed to me that at some point, with the affirmation of Negro rights in America, that it was possible at least.

W. ROSTOW: Who would be the Arabs, though? You really couldn't have a good Israeli issue without the Arabs.

WARD: Well, I suppose the Arabs are the Boers and the Portugese. In other words, you can in fact have it, and I was arguing that I didn't think it was going to be soon, but that in the long term prospective of the administration the possibility of the African struggle for independence in Southern Africa could hit back at some point. And he was saying—well, he only said then he

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didn't think it would be so soon because he didn't have the impression that the Negro leadership at the moment had much time for anything but the internal American struggle, but that, of course, it was something one would have to bear in mind. And he showed himself then very aware of the range of issues that would come up on Southern Africa and, like many other people, considerably confused as to how you dealt with them. But that was the last time I had any kind of long talk with him.

W. ROSTOW: That would have been '63, June.

WARD: No, this is '63 April. But, you see, I was only in America for just under four weeks in early '63, so I didn't really see very much.

E. ROSTOW: Where were you when the President died?

WARD: Well, it's a very curious angle, which probably not many people can put in. I was in the Northern Rhodesian Copper Belt, and when the news came through, Kenneth Kaunda [Kenneth D. Kaunda], the about-to-be-Prime Minister, was first going to address a large election meeting in the Northern Rhodisian elections which were just going on. When the news came through he stopped; he led all of them in a hymn

and a prayer; and they all went home. I think probably this is absolutely unprecedented. The same evening, in Lusaka, all the bigwigs of politics and the Chamber of Commerce were dining with the governor. And the news came through just as they finished dinner, and there were no toasts; they all stood up silently, and they all went home. And I think that this—it's so, in a sense, so remote that it's perhaps an interesting example of this worldwide impact of shock and horror and great, great sense of loss.

When I saw Nkrumah only a fortnight afterwards, he had just beside his table the picture of the family which Mrs. Kennedy [Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy] herself had given him. She had taken him upstairs to meet the children and had given him this picture, and he'd always had it just by his desk. He looked at it, and he said, "You know, I've written to her, and I've prayed for them both." He said, "Nothing shocked me so deeply as this." I think he meant it; there were tears in his eyes; he had a great tremendous feeling for Kennedy. He also felt that whenever there were misunder-

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standings between America and Ghana. If he could just get to Kennedy, it would be all right. I think he was quite wrong in this, but I mean he had this tremendous feeling that Kennedy was his friend, the friend of Africa.

W. ROSTOW: Well, they had communicated honestly; that was a period when they really had communicated.

WARD: Oh sure, yes.

E. ROSTOW: You said earlier that you had an admiration for him, but in a sense of "cool" admiration. Did you feel any different reaction to the President after his death?

WARD: No, exactly the same. I think he was a great man, I think he was a great intelligence, I think he was an admirable leader, and I felt a great sense of loss, the sense of a vacuum, and so on. But I don't think that changes; I mean this is my impression of the man, and the man in death is the man in life. All you have in death is the measurement of what he meant in his broad spectrum of influence, of sort of nascent ideas. I mean, for the world to lose Pope John [Pope John XXIII] and Kennedy in the same year, when both of them had been articulating something quite new in the human dialogue, seems to me an example of what we were talking about; that is, the Lord does occasionally—pace Dr. Einstein [Albert Einstein]—he occasionally weighs the dice.

E. ROSTOW: You raised the question, how would you assess him in history at this stage? If that is what we are left with, with what are we left?

WARD: I think it happened much, much too soon to say. I think he's going to have a place in history, without any doubt at all a reversal of trends, an opening of new opportunities, above all a bringing back of intelligence to bear upon the American government, which is a starting point of such importance that probably only

twenty to twenty-five years from now we'll be able to say what the mobilization of intelligence—trained, concentrated intelligence—behind the operations of American government are going to do for the world. My view is that this is incalculably important. All you can say is that within six months of his death you can't yet fully measure what it will mean. But I think the trend is irreversible because so many of the

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problems can't be dealt with without trained intelligence, and by once getting the intelligence into position, you so define the problems that the problems then impose intelligence. In other words, I don't think you can ever go back to haphazard government once the problems have been articulated by intelligent people because they are seen to demand certain forms of administration, certain forms of approach. So I think he made a break.

W. ROSTOW: Well, I can name two places where this is true, maybe three. Once, in the management of the Pentagon, Pentagon budgeting and management; two, in the management of the domestic economy, which I think is a tremendously underrated Kennedy achievement, the balance of payments, expansion; and three, possibly some of it in aid. But where would you identify the places where you feel an increment of intelligence has been added irreversibly?

WARD: Well, the ones you mean, but I think I mean something a little different from this, and that is that the presence in the White House staff and scattered through the administration of people of high intelligence means that in numbers and places problems have been picked out that people weren't even aware of, by formulating them. I mean, I don't think, for example, they're ever going quite to think about the urban problem in quite the same way, we have people like Slayton [William L Slayton] knocking about with them. It's the interaction between the formulation of politics and people to do the formulating. Instead of it being a sort of gray area, a mush area, as it was previously, it's now pinpointed, and the problems have emerged. And the moment a problem emerges, the chances are people will do something about it, so I think this probably historically will be one of the great changes he brought about.

W. ROSTOW: Now let me put this problem to you. Most of us who worked very closely with Kennedy are all driven finally to say that this is one of the few people we've ever loved. I remember John Steinbeck asked me what the atmosphere was around the White House, and I said, "There's a tremendously suppressed affection on both sides." It was very much like the atmosphere of a unit at war, it was very close.

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WARD: But you see, I think that this would be something, quite frankly, which would come up much more in a male group....

W. ROSTOW: Well, this is the point I wanted you...

WARD: ...and this I think is very important. My impression of President Kennedy is that on the whole, he had little empathy for the trained, intelligent woman—he may have, but my impression is he hadn't. I think the coolness was mutual.

W. ROSTOW: This is what I wanted you to articulate because I think it's true, I think it's really true. There was...

WARD: I think it's true. I don't think he would have felt happy in a team that had included women at an operating level, I mean the fact is there were none, and this is not just—this is temperamental affair.

W. ROSTOW: It was Elspeth's insight during the first Cuba crisis that we were really the sort of junior officers of the Second World War. It was very much that style, humor, and manner.

WARD: Yes, sure. And again, understatement, the throwaway line.

W. ROSTOW: The throwaway line.

E. ROSTOW: And women don't belong in a ward room.

WARD: Absolutely, yes. I never felt that people of my type would ever have much influence or play much part.

W. ROSTOW: Well, then what was the question about having influence because I'm sure when he talked, he talked with dead seriousness. It was just that...

WARD: Well, not in the team.

W. ROSTOW: ...in the command post you know....

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WARD: Yes. In the command post you only have vivandieres; you don't have any colonels from the WRENS [Women's Royal Naval Service], dear. Well, Elspeth and I not being vivandiere types, we swallow our disappointment as best we may.

E. ROSTOW: What have we left out?

W. ROSTOW: You ticked it off at the beginning rather well, the headings there.

E. ROSTOW: We've done enough, more or less together, except possibly the impact outside, aside from Africa. You mentioned Rhodisia, Ghana, but when you got... You've been in England, of course, since you've been in Australia?

WARD: Less in England, undoubtedly. I don't think Kennedy was ever...I mean, one extraordinary contrast is that Johnson [Lyndon B. Johnson] has already got a much—for some reason that I find very difficult to fathom—he's got a much better press in England than Kennedy ever had, and I think it's old Joe—the British have long memories. I think he was popular, he was popular with young people; but it was nothing to the impact one's seen in the developing world.

W. ROSTOW: Or in France or Germany. The impact on the continent was very deep after Kennedy's death. That's most interesting.

E. ROSTOW: Have you been in Australia since the President's death?

WARD: No. No, I haven't.

E. ROSTOW: I think we've covered most of the points that we raised originally unless you have anything.

WARD: No, I can't think of anything I can add.

E. ROSTOW: Well, one footnote: you've been in Washington...

WARD: Oh, there's one tiny footnote. When you said what was the last time I saw him, I've just remembered it isn't so, it wasn't this trip. It was when I went over to Williamsburg in June 1963, which was later. At the end of a state dinner for

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Radhakrishnan [Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan], he was outside—they'd had a bit of *The Magic Flute* or something—and as we came out he was talking to Mac Bundy [McGeorge Bundy], and he said, "Come over." So I went over, and he said, "Look, I've just read the little piece you wrote in *Encounter* about the advantages of Britain joining the Common Market in terms of better house-keeping for the world. Would you write me something like that? I think perhaps I ought to say this in Germany." So I wrote him a little piece on this theme, but I have no idea—I never knew whether it was used or not. But that was, interestingly enough, the first time he ever asked me to do anything. And that was the last time.

W. ROSTOW: Just before he went to Germany.

WARD: Yes, just before he went to Germany.

E. ROSTOW: Does Washington now—now, in a sense, your third administration—does Washington in the spring of '64 more resemble the Kennedy period than the earlier period?

WARD: Oh, yes, definitely.

E. ROSTOW: The continuum is still there?

WARD: Oh heavens, yes, for the very simple reason that most of the people who were providing the intellectual drive are still where they are. What's more, to me it seems perfectly clear that it isn't that Mr. Johnson I only inheriting a Kennedy position, I think there are a great many fields in which he is passionately eager to drive it forward and to drive it into new fields. No, I can say the style has changed, but I'm damned if I see the substance has changed all that much. Well, that's my impression, anyway.

W. ROSTOW: You shouldn't believe parochial Democrats; you really have affection for your party. I mean, the impulse to try to do these things is so deep in the party.

WARD: Precisely, precisely. But in addition to this, I can say perfectly obviously that Mr. Johnson has not the intellectual stimulus and so forth of Mr. Kennedy, but you have also to admit the certain fascination to seeing another form of intelligence operating at the top level....

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W. ROSTOW: Absolutely.

WARD: ...and the manipulation, the skilled playing on this congressional orchestra is in itself an intellectual achievement, I mean it's something to watch with awe.

W. ROSTOW: Well, you know, the first time I remember hearing anything solid about Johnson is something I doubt that Arthur would recall. It must have been either just before '52 or '56—but in any case, you'd have to check it with Arthur—but I think it was before '56, Johnson invited Arthur Schlesinger down. Arthur came back and reported this to Cambridge. He said he'd never heard such a tour de force. He knew that Arthur was bellyaching about the Democratic leadership not pushing more constructive legislation, and apparently, as Arthur described it, Johnson took every member of the Senate, every key member of the Senate, described his political background, the limitations, what he could get from him in terms of liberal political support, and marched through them with absolute brilliance in his characterization both of the man and his political setting, out of both, you know, how much he could get for the liberal cause. And Arthur came back really much impressed.

WARD: Yes, I remember that.

W. ROSTOW: And I don't know whether Arthur recalls it...

WARD: Made a of that, yes. But I remember it was what? About '50...

W. ROSTOW: He wanted Arthur's—the ADA support for the nomination. It must have been close to '56, I would say, rather than '51.

WARD: Oh yes, it was definitely because I remember.

W. ROSTOW: It was during the Eisenhower administration.

WARD: Yes, during the Eisenhower.

W. ROSTOW: I should say it was '55 or...

WARD: Or even later, leading into '60.

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W. ROSTOW: Maybe it was later in the '50s.

WARD: Because you see it was, it was when Lyndon wanted the '60 nomination.

W. ROSTOW: It could have been then. We'd have to check it. But the point is that there is an extraordinary sensibility of people, situations, and technical virtuosity which you saw in the transition because he didn't make a false step in terms of taste.

WARD: And, of course, another thing that I would say he appears to me to have, and that is this extraordinary instinct for the crowd as an instrument of policy. I think Kennedy had it, too, but this man certainly has it, and I have the impression too that he relishes it. Just as de Gaulle, in his rather nasty way, gets support from the feeling of being "with it," the President in a much more respectable context, does. Well, loves.

E. ROSTOW: Thank you very much.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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