## Harold Reis Oral History Interview – RFK#2, 11/11/1975

Administrative Information

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## **Biographical Note**

Reis, attorney, Office of Legal Counsel, Department of Justice (1961 - 1965), discusses disagreements between J. Edgar Hoover and RFK and controversies over wire-taps, among other issues.

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# Oral History Interview

Of

### Harold Reis

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# Harold Reis – RFK #2

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# Second Oral History Interview

with

### HAROLD REIS

November 11, 1975 Washington, D.C.

By Roberta W. Greene

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

REIS: ... on this whole wire tapping business....

GREENE: What do you mean by that?

REIS: I just remember very little.

GREENE: I found it a very complicated subject, and....

REIS: Joe Dolan [Joseph F. Dolan] once said to me—Joe Dolan's obscure

now—he said, "With respect to wire tapping we were very much like

the Germans. We didn't know what was going on."

GREENE: Yes. In fact, I'd really like you to expand on that a bit. I was going to

ask you that at the end, just what your feelings are about that whole

thing, unless it's really the same impressions. Why don't I begin by

asking you, at what point in the planning of wire tap legislation in 1961 does the Legal Counsel's office [United States Department of Justice Office of Legal Counsel] get involved?

REIS: I really don't know. I was involved in it probably before '61, before

the Kennedy [John F. Kennedy] Administration. I remember working

with some of the stuff, I think before the Kennedy Administration

came in. I think there was a Republican administration wire tap bill.

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GREENE: Well, I think, my impression is that the '61 bill is, to a great extent, a

carry-over from Eisenhower [Dwight D. Eisenhower] Administration.

REIS: The basic drafting was done in the Criminal Division [United States

Department of Justice Criminal Division], and I guess the basic

drafting was done by a guy named Harold Koffsky [Harold Kofsky].

Thereafter, sometime along the way, a guy named Jim Morrison [James L. Morrisson], who worked in the Office of Legal Counsel, and I, got into it. Could you turn off that recorder a minute?

GREENE: Sure.

REIS: [Interruption] You were asking about who worked on that....

GREENE: Yes. When the '61 bill last came over to the Legal Counsel's office....

REIS: The basic work was first done in the Criminal Division, and I think I

said by a fellow named Harold Koffsky. Thereafter, I was then first

assistant in the Office of Legal Counsel, and I worked on it with one of

the lawyers there named Jim Morrison. What I'm about to tell you about Morrisson is material that I would like not publicly revealed without my consent, or subject to such other conditions that I specify in writing after this is transcribed. Morrisson was an extremely brilliant lawyer who had been editor-in-chief of the Columbia Law Review and law clerk to Chief Justice Stone [Harlan Fiske Stone]. He had a quite distinguished government career. However, I guess when he hit middle age he became subject to very severe depressions, and had to be institutionalized. As a result he had to give up work, and had spent some time in St. Elizabeth's [St. Elizabeth's Hospital]. While he was in the later stages of his treatment, although he was a patient there, he was able to leave Saint Elizabeth's and work during the day, and although we knew that because of his illness he might be undependable, in some respects--that is, in terms of performance, or not being able to work at times--Nick Katzenbach [Nicholas deB. Katzenbach] hired him in the Office of Legal Counsel. He later became ill again, but during the year or two he worked there he worked on important legislation, including the wire tapping legislation and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. As I stated before, [INTERRUPTION] I would like this information about Morrisson maintained in confidence.

GREENE: He would have picked it up after the Eisenhower

Administration, because he didn't come on until the Kennedy Administration.

REIS: That's right. No.

GREENE: How much work was actually done on this bill in '61 before it was

sent over to the committee? Were there many changes made, and what

was the nature of them?

REIS: It's hard for me to....I just can't recall. I assume that there was a lot of

changes, but a lot of changes can be a lot of fiddling. I don't remember

whether there were any big changes.

GREENE: You don't remember any discussion either you sat in on, or perhaps

were reported to you by Mr. Katzenbach [Nicholas deB. Katzenbach]?

REIS: No, I really don't. The only thing I do remember is, Morrison [James

L. Morrisson] and I concocted a provision, I believe it was in '61

legislation, which said nothing in the act is to be construed as

depriving the President of any constitutional authority that he may have, which was the.... We always considered that, kind of a CIA [Central Intelligence Agency] provision. I don't remember whether we discussed that with Mr. Kennedy [Robert F. Kennedy], for example, or even for that matter, I don't remember if we discussed it with Mr. Rogers [William P. Rogers].

GREENE: So it was just on your own initiative, really.

REIS: Well, I suspect it wasn't on our own initiative. We were vaguely aware

that there was a CIA problem, and that people were doing things

overseas that we didn't want affected by the legislation.

GREENE: This is sort of a procedural question but, how could you tell if Robert

Kennedy, or any Attorney General, I guess, was personally interested

in a piece of legislation, as in this instance? What was the difference in

the way the legislation was handled in the Office of Legal Counsel? When it was routine, and when it was policy for the Attorney General's office? Is there some generalization you can make on that?

make on that.

REIS: Well, I think you're under a misapprehension. The Office of Legal

Counsel was not the Legislative office [United States Department of

Justice Office of Legislative Affairs]. It was the Deputy Attorney

General's office that was the Legislative office. What you call routine legislation which might, say, be appropriations

legislation, or legislation on which we were routinely asked to comment by committees, was all handled out of the Deputy Attorney General's office. To the extent that we got into legislation, at all, it was ordinarily because the Attorney General asked us to.

GREENE: Well, that really answers it. [Interruption] In late '61 when it became

apparent that the Department was shifting into its position on wire tapping legislation, the press was inquiring why, I believe it was Ed

Guthman [Edwin O. Guthman] issued a statement, or at least told, again I think it was Tony Lewis [Anthony Lewis], that the Department.... [Interruption] When they were asked why they had changed their position, they claimed that the Department's new leadership simply hadn't had enough time for deep discussion over the extremely difficult problem before it had to take a position, which gave the impression that there was pressure on them to act on this more quickly than they might otherwise have done. Do you remember that being the situation?

REIS: No.

GREENE: No. It was kind of an excuse?

REIS: Yes. You're asking about my memory. My impression is that

Kennedy's attitude toward wire tapping evolved, and I don't think it

evolved very far, frankly.

GREENE: How clear of an impression did you have at that point, or do you

remember having at that point, of just what he wanted, what he had in

mind, and how much was kind of going with what you had, unless you

had word that that was not acceptable?

REIS: I don't have a clear impression. I think almost anything I would say is

misleading, because I don't really recall discussing this stuff with him

directly.

GREENE: Or through Katzenbach?

REIS: Well, that's the point. I don't have a clear memory of what orders I

got.

GREENE: Okay. Do you remember much concern in your office about the

constitutionally of this type of legislation or particular concern about

the right to privacy? Was it a matter of debate at this stage?

REIS: Well, I don't think it was only a matter of

debate. I must say I took a far more right wing attitude toward it than a lot of other people. In view of some of the....I did not have any reason to believe there were excesses of type [Unintelligible] I did believe that nobody took it very seriously that judicial control was not too meaningful, that there were better means of controlling it, and that they should be involved, but nobody ever took it seriously.

GREENE: There was no real discussion of it?

REIS: No, not in any administration.

GREENE: What kind of alternatives did you have?

REIS: A full report to a congressional committee, limitations on wire taps in

terms of absolute numbers, a complete post audit by some independent

agency, that kind of thing.

GREENE: Why do you think they weren't interested? They just didn't share your

concerns?

REIS: Well, I think, for one, most people thought about it in terms of a search

warrant, and they always thought about judges as being the kind of people who issue search warrants and control things, and keep things

from becoming excessive, and that was a good way of doing it. I just never thought it was. It seemed to me that wire tapping was something that should be centrally controlled. You shouldn't be able to go to a favorite judge....

GREENE: When you say that you were more right wing in this, or at least more

conservative, can you remember where other people stood on this matter? How much actual debate there really was at that time?

REIS: Well, I can't specify people, but I think that some of the people around

Kennedy did not share his views that....There were some that shared a

position that he originally too, he felt that wire tapping was a bad

thing, and that it should be judicially controlled, and it shouldn't be done with exceptions. I don't know anybody who thought we should never have it.

GREENE: Do you remember Mr. Katzenbach's feelings in '61, or how strong

they were?

REIS: I honestly don't.

Anyway, in September of '61 the Senate Subcommittee on GREENE:

Constitutional Rights rejected the

[-33-]

unconditional authority for state wire tapping. [Interruption] And it approved a restrictive bill in December of '61.

REIS: Who was the chairman of that, Long [Edward Vaughn Long]?

GREENE: Yes.

REIS: Okay.

GREENE: Do you remember whether this was expected?

REIS: Yes.

GREENE: Yes.

I have a vague feeling that it was expected, that we didn't expect to get REIS:

any place with it.

I have a list of the subcommittee's recommended restrictions, some of GREENE:

which were adopted more or less in the '62 bill. Do you remember

using that as some kind of guideline?

REIS: I don't remember. I'm sure we must have, but I don't remember. As us

lawyers say, "I have no independent recollection." [Laughter]

**GREENE:** I can think of something that the Nixon [Richard M. Nixon] people

used to say....I can't remember, they had a cliché, too, that they used.

REIS: Okay.

How do you feel about Navasky's [Victor S. Navasky] statement that GREENE:

> Robert Kennedy's description of this bill as restricted or limited was not fully honest? Since his expertise and experience in the McClellan

Committee [United States Senate Select Committee on Improper Activities in Labor and Management] had exposed him to the fact that state and local wire taps were available to federal authorities. Does that seem like a fair statement to you?

REIS: I think, I'm afraid so. GREENE: This may seem too....Do you think this was deliberate, that they

advertised it as something that it was not, as a means of....

REIS: I don't know. I really don't know.

[-34-]

GREENE: Do you recall any discussions in '61 about whether or not to extend

these restrictions to the state and local levels? Or that doesn't come up

until later?

REIS: I certainly couldn't put it in terms of time. As a matter of fact, I don't

recall the later discussions either.

GREENE: Well, the '62 bill did...

REIS: I know. I just don't recall the discussion.

GREENE: ...don't know how it got there. Okay.

REIS: And it may be that I didn't have much to do with the '62 bill. I don't

recall whether I did or didn't. Are you sorry you're wasting your time?

You look awful taken aback.

GREENE: Well, I went over the end of the last tape, and this was one of the

things that you had suggested that you would have something to say

on.

REIS: Oh. I'm terribly sorry.

GREENE: Oh, that's all right. I mean, we can axe the questions if we don't have

the answers.

REIS: All right.

GREENE: In any case, do you remember when you started to revise the bill and

when you got involved in it?

REIS: No.

GREENE: Katzenbach, as I recall, said that he never liked that '61 bill, and told

Robert Kennedy that right off, and almost immediately began to

redraft. Does that sound....

REIS: I just don't recall.

GREENE: Okay.

REIS: Gee, I'm really sorry about that...

**GREENE:** That's all right. It could be that we're just on the wrong path. Do you

remember the discussions as far as the '62 bill, about national security,

which became such a broad....You know, that was eventually used for

the Martin Luther King [Martin Luther King, Jr.] tap, and it became

[-35-]

almost to be used for almost anything.

**REIS:** No. I honestly don't

Okay. That supposedly came from beaver.... GREENE:

**REIS:** Yes. Sounds like it.

GREENE: Maybe you could give me some reaction to the Navasky criticism on

the pages that I showed you, remember? Do you want to look at them

again? [Interruption]

REIS: As far as criticism of Kennedy's casual attitude in terms of

enforcement I think, I'm afraid, that criticism was earned. So far as the

public relations campaign is concerned, I just am not familiar enough

with it to make a judgment.

GREENE: How do you interpret his casual attitude? Is it a lack of concern?

**REIS:** I think so. I think probably a feeling that that's just the way you do

> things. It was part of the atmosphere. And also, I guess, a real feeling that there's probably no other way to catch bad guys. But, obviously,

in this area, there are people who know more about it than I do, and people he would have talked to more frankly than I. I suppose you people have talked to those people.

GREENE: Yes. Do you remember any involvement at all, by the way, in

preparing his testimony on that bill in '62?

**REIS:** I do not recall.

**GREENE:** You don't. Is that something your office would likely have gotten

involved in?

REIS: Yes. But I just don't recall that. [Laughter] Terrible.

What about Navasky's criticism of the whole area of bugging? Do you GREENE:

feel that that....

**REIS:** The basic thrust of Navasky's criticism is, here's a whole big area of

methods of law enforcement, which the chief law enforcement officer

of the nation made no effort to determine who it's done, or to police

what his subordinates were doing. Now, of course, there's another explanation that I don't see there, and that is that

[-36-]

he's talking about the period '61, '62 when Kennedy was in the public eye. The brash, young, aggressive trigger man, for his brother, who shouldn't be Attorney General. And that involved mixing with Hoover [J. Edgar Hoover] in an area where perhaps Kennedy didn't want to, or feared to, or whatever. If you want to speculate about motives that's one that Navasky should have speculated about. I don't remember whether he did.

GREENE: You know, he does a very lengthy chapter on this area. He

documents—the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] very clever, he

calls it "bureau speak"—how they covered their tracks at every single

juncture.

REIS: Well, that's precisely this business of being the Germans, the German

people. I admit that it took me—perhaps I'm not admitting, perhaps

I'm pleading—a long time before I realized that a highly reliable

source was not a human being. [Laughter]

[Interruption] The point is that Hoover is a very tough, if you can use GREENE:

that word, adversary, in that he got it all down to a science after so

many years of experience. None the less, Robert Kennedy himself,

being as curious and as good an administrator as he was, if he'd really wanted to know, he would have known more. And he doesn't use the term, because it wasn't fashionable then, but I think he's sort of making a case for Kennedy and deniability, or what's since come to be known as the doctrine of deniability. Is that sort of your theory?

**REIS:** Well, I really don't know. It's just silly to speculate about it. If the

suggestion is of a conscious....If there's a deliberate course in order to

be able to deny it—that's what I mean by deniability—then I think

you'd have to [Unintelligible] quite a few attorneys general, because none of them fit this. None of them did anything else.

GREENE: Of course, Navasky would say to that, or at least part of his answer

would be, Kennedy was in a better position to monitor this whole thing

than anybody else, because of his unique position. He was the only one

who ever really could control Hoover, among the latter....

REIS: Well, and I would suggest that he wasn't.

GREENE: If you don't have any other recollections as far as this legislation

goes...

[-37-]

REIS: No. No point.

GREENE: ...then why don't I ask you a couple of questions about the bugging

controversy that came up in 1966. You were still at the Department

then, I believe...

REIS: Yes.

GREENE: ...and you mentioned on the phone that you'd helped Katzenbach sort

of mediate, or attempt to mediate...

REIS: Attempt to mediate is a lot better.

GREENE: ...this dispute. What do you remember about that? How you got

involved, and what the questions were, and....

REIS: You'll have to jog my memory on that. I was heavily involved, I do

recall. But, for exactly, I do not remember what triggered the

controversy now.

GREENE: Well, the initial trigger was a letter that Hoover wrote to Congressman

Gross [Harold Royce Gross], H.R. Gross from Iowa, in response to

queries, specific questions, that Gross put to Hoover on wire-tapping

and bugging. And, of course, the conclusion you have to draw, I think, was that it was a setup, at least there is a very good indication that it was a setup, that he was too well-versed in his questioning for it to have been spontaneous. And then Hoover became extremely

critical towards Kennedy.

REIS: Yes.

GREENE: I think I have, even though I never got the full text, the summaries that

might help. [Interruption] It says that all wire-tapping and electronic eavesdropping done by the FBI while Robert Kennedy was Attorney

General, was done with Kennedy's approval. And this was in a reply to a letter to Gross.

REIS: Yes.

GREENE: And Kennedy's office told that Hoover was misinformed. Oh, and

Hoover produces as his evidence two things: Kennedy, a document

signed by Kennedy which discusses the use of leased telephone lines

in New York. Remember that?

REIS: Yes. Un-hunh.

[-38-]

GREENE: And also a letter to Senator Ervin [Sam J. Ervin, Jr.] from Jack Miller

[Herbert J. Miller, Jr.] reporting how many wiretaps....

REIS: Yes. And which referred to bugs or something.

GREENE: Right. And that it had sixty-seven bugs in operation.

REIS: Yes.

GREENE: Now I've heard that those statistics in the Miller letter, for one thing,

could only have come from the FBI.

REIS: Yes.

GREENE: Miller would have no incentive....

REIS: Un-hunh.

GREENE: Anyway, then Kennedy responds by saying he's misinformed, and

then he produces Courtney Evans' [Courtney A. Evans] letter.

REIS: Yes. What was Courtney's letter?

GREENE: Well, it stated that Kennedy was not told of electronic bugging

because Hoover needed no specific authorization for such

eavesdropping, and he said that individual requests in serious national

security cases were sent to Kennedy by the FBI for approval. And this goes back and forth, and then Katzenbach gets involved, and Katzenbach sort of takes that "they're both right" position, which angers everybody.

REIS: Yes. Right.

GREENE: I assume that it's somewhere in there that you get involved.

REIS: Yes. Me and Jim Flug [James F. Flug] kept drafting and re-drafting

those letters, and looking at the evidence, and relooking at the

evidence, and so on.

GREENE: What do you remember Katzenbach saying anything about this whole

thing? I know Kennedy was very angry that he didn't come out more

strongly in his favor, I guess. And Hoover, on the other hand, was

angry because he had not more firmly supported him.

[-39-]

REIS: Well, Katzenbach's instinct were to paint as favorable a picture as he

could of Kennedy. His instincts also were to try to avoid [Laughter]

fighting with Hoover to the extent possible. It was not avoidable. That

couldn't be done. Obviously the two goals couldn't be met. He ended up in a fairly honest position, that is, to paint a fairly equivocal picture, and I think the facts were somewhat equivocal. He had dreadful fights with the FBI and, of course, at that point the principals were the admirable DeLoach [Cartha Dekle DeLoach], and....What's the other guy's name?

GREENE: In the FBI?

REIS: Yes. Mohr [John P. Mohr] I believe was his name. I always think of

the two as characters out of Dickens, DeLoach as Uriah Heep, and Mohr as Bill Sykes. Really, I don't remember the details, but it was

very, very rough.

GREENE: Do you remember Katzenbach being particularly concerned because

he had access to the files, and he knew what the FBI had in the way of

evidence that they could pull on Kennedy if he....

REIS: No. He never expressed that.

GREENE: Because it was my understanding that that was his big concern then,

and he tried to convey this to Kennedy in an effort to moderate his

anger.

REIS: Un-hunh. Maybe.

GREENE: You don't remember having to deal with that aspect of it?

REIS: No.

GREENE: Did you say Jim Flug was working on this with you?

REIS: Yes. Jim would have a far better recollection that I do. Did you talk to

him about this at all?

GREENE: No.

REIS: I would suggest you do.

GREENE: Okay. Do you have any clear recollection or impression of what

Katzenbach's perceptions of Robert Kennedy were in this whole

thing?

REIS: I recall thing that he thought that Kennedy had

[-40-]

not authorized the stuff. He realized that the picture was not clear, but from my discussion with him my impression was that he felt that Hoover had not established that he had informed Kennedy, and Kennedy had not authorized it. The point was that if Kennedy was guilty of what Navasky says he was guilty of, nobody from the FBI came forth and said, "Now you're the Attorney General. This is what we are doing, and we want your approval." To the extent that Hoover was suggestion that to Gross, it was just not true, and the record didn't establish it.

GREENE: Yes. Well my understanding is that these things were handled so

casually, and they were sort of slipped in and Kennedy signed them,

half the time not really even knowing what he was signing, and then

they were quickly withdrawn, but they were placed in files as evidence for a later day.

REIS: Yes, yes. Whether he knew or didn't know I don't know, but he did

handle them himself.

GREENE: Maybe a final question on this, if you don't have anything else is after

it's all said and done, what questions remain in your mind about this

whole controversy? You know, is it something that you've mulled

over since?

REIS: The only question was that I didn't think you could ever assess the

precise role of any of the authorities, and the question was that the

Attorney General had not done what he should have done.

GREENE: That even if you believed that he really didn't know...

REIS: Yes.

GREENE: ...it doesn't excuse the fact that he should have known.

REIS: No. It's on a different level, but he should have known. I also go back

to the fact that we're talking about a different atmosphere, a different time, and up to then no other Attorney General had done much about

time, and up to then no other Attorney General had done much abou

it, either.

GREENE: Do you think almost any of them could have been caught in the same

kind of predicament?

REIS: Sure.

GREENE: In these questions that you....

[-41-]

REIS: As a matter of fact, some of them would have liked to be caught in

it....Some Attorney General would regard a letter from Hoover saying,

"I never did anything without the approval of the Attorney General,

and everything I did had his approval," I can think of a couple of attorney generals who would have been pleased. Even if it was wiretapping. [Laughter]

GREENE: It shows some control.

REIS: Yes.

GREENE: Did you have any of these reservations towards the end of the

Kennedy administration yourself, or are they things you've come to

since?

REIS: About the....

GREENE: The whole wire-tapping, bugging. The whole area.

REIS: Well, as I was forced into this dispute, looking for the facts—I don't

know whether that's already past the end of the Kennedy

Administration...

GREENE: Oh, yes, '66.

REIS: ...it became pretty clear to me that the matter had not been handled

properly. I must admit, however—and that's really what I meant, that I

was kind of right wing about this—I didn't have any great reservations

before.

GREENE: There's one other thing in this whole area, and that is in July of '66,

the Justice Department had to respond to the Supreme Court craze on

FBI behavior in relation to the Black [Fred B. Black, Jr.] case.

REIS: Yes. It was in that context the fight between Hoover and Kennedy

became so difficult for Katzenbach. I'm glad you reminded me of that.

GREENE: Okay, but that didn't surface in the crest to the same extent as it did

later on, I don't think. I know Kennedy was very offended by the way

that his role was portrayed in the Supreme Court brief.

REIS: Yes, yes.

GREENE: Were you involved in the drafting of that brief? Do you remember

discussion about that?

[-42-]

REIS: Yes. Yes. Oh, boy. [Laughter] Yes. Katzenbach practically wrote it

himself. It was really in that context that Mohr and DeLoach were so

unpleasant.

GREENE: In what respect? I mean, why were they....

REIS: Well, they wanted it much more clearly to say that it was all done by

the Attorney General.

GREENE: And in that respect Katzenbach was protecting Kennedy to the extent

he felt he could?

REIS: Yes.

GREENE: I know that Katzenbach contacted Robert Kennedy and showed him

the brief, and he went through the ceiling. Do you remember talking to

Katzenbach after that, and whether there was any discussion of

changing it before it went out to the court?

REIS: I don't remember. I remember talking to....That document was

changed so much I can't remember at what stage we made what

changes. I wouldn't be a bit surprised, knowing Katzenbach. But if

Kennedy was mad, he might have tried his hand at still another change. I just don't

remember.

GREENE: But he was doing a lot of the writing himself?

REIS: Yes. I don't mean to absolve myself. There are a number of people in

the Department who....

GREENE: Who else would have worked on that team?

REIS: Well, Jim did. I don't remember who did in the S.G.'s Office [Solicitor

General's office]. Who was Solicitor General then?

GREENE: Thurgood Marshall.

REIS: Was he still Solicitor General?

GREENE: I'm pretty sure he was. I'm almost positive because I've seen his

name. [Interruption] It was Marshall. I'm almost positive of that.

REIS: Yes, okay.

GREENE: Is there anything else in this area?

REIS: No.

[-43-]

GREENE: Okay, then. I know we talked generally about the area of civil rights as

being another one where you were, ostensibly....What specifically do

you think you'd have useful or interesting recollections?

REIS: Didn't we talk about civil rights?

GREENE: No, we've only talked about talking about it. I know I have your friend

from Oxford [Oxford, Mississippi]—not your brief, but your report

that you wrote. And I can use that as the basis for some questions. And

I know the office was advisory. This is off the record.

REIS: Yes, I know. Oh, yes. So many people worked on it. I worked pretty

hard on the '64 and '65 legislation, but so many people did that....

GREENE: But did you work on it while Kennedy was still in?

REIS: Yes.

GREENE: Yes.

REIS: Have you talked to Harold Greene [Harold H. Greene] at all?

GREENE: No. I don't think so.

REIS: He's a judge in the superior court.

GREENE: Oh, I know who he is. Actually, we may have an interview from the

John Kennedy project [John F. Kennedy Oral History Program]. I'm

just not too sure, but I can look it up.

REIS: I would suggest you do that.

GREENE: Is there anything about that that you think might be sort of a unique

view, or you had a particularly good chance to observe?

REIS: Well, I would say it was in that area that I saw most of Robert

Kennedy, and probably more than when I was executive assistant. On the other hand I don't think anything unique. Unfortunately, I didn't

the other hand, I don't think anything unique....Unfortunately, I didn't

keep a record, and there were all kinds of developments then, compromises, [Unintelligible] that kind of thing....

GREENE: Those things are very well documented now.

REIS: Yes, yes. That's really....

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GREENE: On the Oxford thing, because maybe we really don't even have to get

into this, do you feel that you put down pretty much your whole

experience in that?

REIS: Yes, yes. The only thing I have to add to that is, and I might do this on

the record, I wasn't consulted, but at the time it happened I thought

that the President had taken a chance he shouldn't have taken. He

should have sent in troops. Immediately. And the political decision not to was based on criticism of Eisenhower and Little Rock [Little Rock, Arkansas] and I never could understand why he did take the chance he took. It was a terrible....

GREENE: Did you actually ever ask those questions? Afterwards?

REIS: Yes, I think so.

GREENE: Do you remember the answers? Was it [Unintelligible] or political?

REIS: I think that very basically, one that it was political, and two, that

Bobby thought he had a deal with the Governor. And, in fact, he did

have a deal, of sorts, with the Governor.

GREENE: As much as you can make with someone like that.

REIS: Yes. That's about all I have.

GREENE: Is there anything else in your association that you think we ought to....

REIS: No, I don't think so. I didn't like rumors.

GREENE: [Laughter]

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[-45-]

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