

Oral History Interview
with
DONALD HANSEN

Special Assistant in the White House Office, 1951-53, on the staff of Charles S. Murphy, Special Counsel to the President.

Washington, D.C.
April 5, 1963

by Charles T. Morrissey, Harry S. Truman Library

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MORRISSEY: Let's start, Mr. Hansen, simply by letting me ask, when did you join the White House staff?

HANSEN: I went on the White House staff about November 1, 1951.

MORRISSEY: And how long did you stay?

HANSEN: I remained there until the administration changed in January, 1953.

MORRISSEY: Why did you join the White House staff?

HANSEN: Well, Mr. Murphy needed some help. He apparently asked Steve [Stephen] Spingarn for a recommendation as to a lawyer. I understand Steve Spingarn recommended me and another attorney, both of us at that time being in the office of the General Counsel of the Treasury Department. The other attorney, whose name was John Carlock, and who is now Fiscal Assistant Secretary of the Treasury,

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went over to see Mr. Murphy first and Mr. Carlock was then Assistant General Counsel of the Treasury Department. He didn't want to make the switch to the White House staff very bad and the General Counsel of the Treasury Department, for whom he worked, didn't want him to go, because he was an extremely valuable man. So I went over next and saw Mr. Murphy. I remember I was on vacation at the time and the General Counsel called me one Thursday afternoon. He told me to come in and see him the next day. I went in to see him the next day and he told me that the White House was looking for a man and to go over to see Mr. Murphy. So I went over to see Mr. Murphy that day and Mr. Murphy asked me how I would like to work at the White House; and I told him I didn't think I had any particular qualifications for the job, although I'd be glad to do whatever it was desired that I should do. After some talk, he told me to come over and start work the following Thursday, and I think that was the first of November, 1951.

MORRISSEY: Had you known Mr. Murphy beforehand?

HANSEN: No, I had not.

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MORRISSEY: Had you known Stephen Spingarn?

HANSEN: Yes, I had worked for him at the Treasury Department.

MORRISSEY: I see. And when was that?

HANSEN: Steve Spingarn was in the legislative section of the Treasury Department when I first went to work there in June of 1940. After the war he was Assistant General Counsel in charge of legislative matters and I worked under his supervision for several years until -- up until the time he went to the White House, as a matter of fact.

MORRISSEY: Could you give us a little biographical information prior to the time you joined the White House staff?

HANSEN: I was born in Caney, Kansas, a small town of 2500 in southeastern Kansas. I completed public schools there; went to college at the College of Emporia, Kansas, which is a Presbyterian school; after graduating there in 1935 I went to the University of Kansas Law School and graduated there in '38 -- completed my work in January

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'38; worked for a law firm at Hutchinson, Kansas, from January until September, 1938; then went to the University of Minnesota on a public administration fellowship which was under the Rockefeller program at the time, a two-year fellowship which called for one year of graduate academic training and then an internship for a year; and after completing the school year of '38 and '39, I came to Washington on the intern program of the National Institute of Public Affairs and served my internship at the Bureau of the Budget; then I went to the Treasury -- General Counsel's office in June of 1940 -- at the completion of that internship.

MORRISSEY: You say that you worked for Charles Murphy on the White House staff.

HANSEN: That's right.

MORRISSEY: Did he have a large staff?

HANSEN: Mr. Murphy had a very small staff. Mr. Murphy's staff consisted of, at the time I came there, of David Lloyd, David Bell, Richard Neustadt, and Kenneth Hechler.

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MORRISSEY: So you were the fifth member of that staff?

HANSEN: That's right. And immediately before I went there Charles Irelan who had been an attorney with the Department of Justice was working with Mr. Murphy. I think he went there in August of 1951 and then he left to become United States Attorney for the District of Columbia, I guess, in October of 1951 or immediately before I went there; and I succeeded him.

MORRISSEY: What was your specific title as a member of the White House staff?

HANSEN: Special Assistant, White House Office.

MORRISSEY: And was that the title of your colleagues -- the four other gentlemen you just mentioned?

HANSEN: I believe it was although Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Bell later became Administrative Assistants to the President.

MORRISSEY: How did Mr. Murphy conduct his staff business? What were the procedures between himself and the staff members?

HANSEN: We all, of course, were over in the Executive

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Office Building, the old State Department Building, and usually his secretary would just call and say he wanted to see me, or the others, and we'd go into his office, or I would go into his office, and he would give me assignments. Sometimes he'd send correspondence or memoranda or things like that over with a little note for me to review and I wouldn't have to talk to him about it; but on many things he would call me over to his office. He always operated in a very, very

informal manner and it was really a pleasure to work for him. He's a very informal man, and a very wonderful man, I think.

MORRISSEY: Did he hold regular staff meetings or deal mostly on a person to person basis with his staff members?

HANSEN: Well, I wouldn't say he held regular staff meetings, but in the nature of the work he did, which sometimes involved speechwriting and messages to Congress -- major veto messages and that sort of thing -- several of us would be working at the same time and we would just meet in his office and maybe spend practically a day there working on something.

MORRISSEY: You mentioned the informality of the way that

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he conducted his staff business. Did you think at the time that this was a successful way to do business, let's say more successful or less successful than more formal arrangements between a staff director and the people working for him?

HANSEN: I thought it was very effective; in fact, I thought it was wonderful. I've worked in several agencies of the Government: General Counsel's office of the Treasury, the Internal Revenue Service, Budget Bureau, Department of Justice; I've seen operations in many branches of the Treasury. I think you gain a great deal by the informality with which he operated there. And of course, the whole White House staff, to my amazement, operated practically the same way, and I thought it was wonderful. Boy, you could get things done a lot faster than I had ever seen it done in Government before. Things could be done rapidly and effectively. I recall that John Steelman once expressed his admiration at the way Matt Connelly handled a difficult situation. Late in the afternoon Matt would give about thirty names to the White House telephone operators to call. These were the names of people who would be unable to get in

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to see the President because time was not available. One by one Matt would tell these people they couldn't see the President. He did this in such an effective way that he was able to lessen the disappointment each one must have felt. Steelman was quite impressed with Connelly's success in handling this problem. It required a lot of tact which Matt was able to express to each person.

MORRISSEY: This informality evidently surprised you when you joined the White House staff?

HANSEN: Very much.

MORRISSEY: You expected the opposite?

HANSEN: Very much so. In fact, I was very formal in memoranda and getting initials on things, you know, and setting things up just right, and I was amazed at how fast something could slip into the President. Something that used to take maybe weeks or months to get to the Secretary of

the Treasury or even to the Chief Counsel of the Internal Revenue Service, could get to the President very fast I found.

MORRISSEY: Do you remember any specific examples of this

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sort of thing?

HANSEN: I remember, for example, we had problems on reorganization plans and we had many problems on the so-called Government's loyalty program and this was the day of the McCarthy era; McCarthy was riding high and he was hitting the State Department day after day and it seemed to me that there was one crisis after another as far as the State Department was concerned, because their appropriations subcommittee, as I recall, of the Senate Appropriations Committee, included Senator McCarthy, Senator McCarran, and a third senator whose name I don't remember, but it was a real murderer's row. And of course, McCarthy was always delving into loyalty-security operations and so on and I can remember times that they'd call over and say, we've got to have a Presidential directive to back us up on refusing to turn over information or give an excuse for not giving information, and so on, and things like that can get written up very fast and get cleared very fast and so on. In fact the Secretary of State or any other Cabinet officer could call the President and ask that the staff of the department meet with somebody on the White House staff to get

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something taken care of and Presidential approval and it could be done very rapidly.

MORRISSEY: Did you deal directly with any of these senators that you just mentioned?

HANSEN: No I did not.

MORRISSEY: Or any members of that senate committee staff?

HANSEN: No I did not.

MORRISSEY: I'm wondering whether the difficulty between the White House and the senate committee centered on appropriations for the State Department or promotions or maintaining certain personnel within the State Department or if the problem...?

HANSEN: Well, I would say this, that the State Department, of course, had to justify its appropriations and it wanted to give testimony before the appropriations committee without offending the senators that it had to deal with; but nevertheless, Senator McCarthy and Senator McCarran would persist in delving into loyalty and security operations of the State Department which the Executive Branch of the Government considered

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confidential and classified and secret information, which they didn't think that the Senate committee should be going into; because if the Senate committees did go into that sort of thing,

they in effect, would be looking over the shoulder of people who made security clearances and loyalty boards and security boards and they would be second-guessing them and that sort of thing. And this is a very delicate operation, of course, and it involves not only the abilities of the people who sit on these boards but also their feeling that to do an honest job and to do a proper job, they shouldn't have the feeling that somebody's going to be looking over their work, over their shoulder at a later time and either criticizing them or asking them why they did certain things. And, of course, you have the reputations of individuals involved too, which is a very serious affair. So some of the senators, some of the senate committees as I recall, would write the State Department or ask them at hearings for certain information about certain persons and whether they'd been investigated, whether they'd had loyalty clearance and security clearance and for information as to FBI reports on those people, and things like that. That was in an era when the Republicans were proclaiming that the

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Democrats had lost China and that sort of thing, you know, and there were people like John Service and -- oh, I can't remember the names now, but there were many individuals that were very much talked about in the halls of Congress. That's a sort of illustration of some of these things that occurs to me.

MORRISSEY: And this sort of thing would come to the President's attention via the State Department?

HANSEN: Sometimes the State Department people would call Mr. Murphy directly or sometimes, as I understand it, the Secretary of State would talk to him about things and I or some other White House staff member would get together with State Department staff people and work out a letter which the President would sign directing the Secretary of State to do or not to do certain things in his relations with Congress. That would take the heat off the State Department to a certain extent as far as helping them not offend people they had to get appropriations from.

MORRISSEY: This sort of business took a lot of time then?

HANSEN: It took quite a bit of time, that's right.

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MORRISSEY: Would you say more so than any of the other people who worked on Mr. Murphy's staff?

HANSEN: I was about the only one that really worked on that phase of things, in the first instance at any rate.

MORRISSEY: Was there anybody at the State Department that you worked particularly close with?

HANSEN: I remember a boy whose name was Kidder, I think it was, Kidder Meade. I remember working with him. He's the only one I remember now.

MORRISSEY: Did you have any friends on the Hill who tried to help you out? People on the opposite side of this business from McCarran and McCarthy?

HANSEN: No, you see I didn't do any liaison work with Congressmen at all except once in a while I'd take something up for Mr. Murphy to Les [Leslie] Biffle or to Congressman Celler, who was chairman of the Judiciary Committee or somebody like that, but by and large, I didn't have much contact with them. In connection with the Internal Revenue Service reorganization plan, I had some contacts on the Hill, but I didn't do very much.

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That was actually Mr. Murphy's bailiwick or his problem. That raises an interesting question too. At that time, there was a man on the White House staff named Joseph Feeney, who did Congressional liaison work. And shortly before I went to the White House there was a brigadier general whose name I cannot now recall who was doing Congressional liaison work; but I remember that that was one very serious defect in the White House staff structure. My opinion, especially as I look back, that they did not have adequate Congressional liaison at all, and Mr. Murphy was so terribly overworked that he just couldn't possibly do all these things.

MORRISSEY: And yet if some member of the staff did take it upon himself to make contact on the Hill, it usually would be Mr. Murphy giving himself the assignment?

HANSEN: Well, that I can't answer exactly because Mr. Feeney did do liaison work and of course, the President would tell him things to do I suppose and he would discuss things with Murphy and other White House staff people, I suppose. But as far as actual legislation was concerned, from a policy standpoint, or from a drafting standpoint, that was Mr. Murphy that handled that.

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MORRISSEY: Why do you think that this problem, this weakness, wasn't corrected?

HANSEN: That I don't know; I just don't know why it was, but there certainly was a tremendous need for it at the time, I think, particularly since the President was having a lot of difficulty with Congress at that time in getting parts of his program through.

MORRISSEY: Can you remember any specific cases where you think this problem made itself especially felt?

HANSEN: No, I can't at the moment.

MORRISSEY: Going back to what you said a few minutes ago, you commented about the informality of the procedures of the White House staff, and from a personal viewpoint this interests me because anyone who studies White House staff procedures is struck by the complexity in the number of different tasks going on at the same time; and one might think that informality would lose more than it would gain. If because of informality, something got

overlooked or someone contacted someone else orally, but didn't put it in writing so that the memo would be there on his desk to read over a second time if he

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forgot about the phone call -- do you have any comment on this?

HANSEN: Well, I was struck by the same thing when I first went over there. I had been reared in the Government tradition of making a memorandum for the file every time you got a phone call or every time you crossed swords with somebody or every time you were afraid somebody else was going to make a memorandum for the file of a conversation you had with him, it might be a little bit different from what your recollection was going to be and which you thought might be important sometime. So I was reared in the tradition of writing memorandum for the files. Well, they didn't bother with that over there; there were too many other things to do; they didn't have time for it by and large and I suppose it's unfortunate that there weren't some people there writing memoranda at that time to record a little more of the history, but I would say they didn't have time for it and they just didn't bother with it.

MORRISSEY: Would you also say they didn't "get caught," as a consequence of not writing these memos for the file?

HANSEN: What do you mean, "get caught?"

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MORRISSEY: Oh, "get caught," in a sense of something being overlooked or forgotten?

HANSEN: I have no specific instance of it. It very likely happened, but it never happened to me at any rate.

MORRISSEY: You also mentioned a few minutes ago, the ease with which things would come quickly to the President's attention, and this is part of the informal relationships among staff members and between staff members and the President. Who would carry these things informally to the President? Would this be Mr. Murphy?

HANSEN: As far as I'm concerned, it would be Mr. Murphy, yes.

MORRISSEY: He would carry them in and he would deal face to face with the President?

HANSEN: Oh yes, as I recall, he'd go into the President's office many times every day. Of course, the President always had a staff meeting at 9:00 o'clock in the morning, as I recall, for his administrative assistants and principal officials of the White House. I didn't attend any of them.

MORRISSEY: Let me move on to two other things that you've

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mentioned in the last couple of minutes. One, if you were writing a letter for the President's signature, would the President usually accept the draft as it would come to him or would he make

changes? In other words, would the President impress his own personality and his own thinking on the letters that were prepared for his own signature?

HANSEN: No sir, I never saw any case that I worked on, any indication, that the President changed any letter at all; but let me say this, I think there was a reason for that. And that is that the President, President Truman, in my opinion, insisted on and received excellent staff work. I'm convinced that nothing went into him that wasn't very carefully looked over before it got there. Now there were some times when he went outside of his staff channels and he made some mistakes in doing so, I think; but by and large, he had excellent staff work. Now, for example, the Bureau of the Budget did a lot of staff work for the White House, but even so, we looked over their things -- their papers too -- and I've known -- I can remember a number of instances in which staff recommendations or staff papers, from the Bureau

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of the Budget were either wrong at some standpoint, or had to be corrected and we changed them in the White House before they got to the President, of course. But I do think as far as Mr. Murphy's operation was concerned, at any rate, that the President had very good staff work. And of course, those were three brilliant men he had there: namely, Lloyd, Bell, Neustadt, and Hechler -- those were four brilliant men.

MORRISSEY: Do you remember any specific illustrations of difficulty the President brought on to himself by going outside the staff channels you referred to?

HANSEN: Well, I don't specifically. I'm just sort of harking back to such things as this famous letter to Paul Hume, I guess, and the fact that sometimes he would say things at press conferences which were not entirely accurate and would get him in trouble. Then Roger Tubby or some information people -- press people -- would have to scratch or search and get the State Department or some other department over and really work on things. But as far as the business routine of the White House itself was concerned, I think the President insisted on very good staff work and I think he received it. I just have

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the impression in my mind that there were times when he departed from that staff clearance on a few things and those were the times when he got out on a limb sometimes, I think.

MORRISSEY: You also say that you wrote speeches for the President to deliver as well as letters for him to sign?

HANSEN: I was not a speech writer; I was supposed to be a speech writer, but I'm a terrible speech writer. The greatest agony in the world, to me, is trying to write a speech because I can sit at a table for two hours and the first thought doesn't come to my head. I wrote a couple of minor little speeches that he'd give for some conference or something, I don't know. I can remember a time he went over to the Department of Commerce and addressed some conference and one or two things like that. I helped write some whistlestops of course -- I did write some whistlestop stuff -- and I helped draft some things, but I didn't have the facility for speech writing, I'm sorry to say.

MORRISSEY: These were whistlestop speeches in the '52

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campaign?

HANSEN: In the '52 campaign, that's right.

MORRISSEY: Do you remember offhand which ones?

HANSEN: I went on one short trip. We went to -- I went on a trip into Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, I believe it hit part of West Virginia on the way back. It was a three or four day trip, I think. But then before the President made his other campaign trips including the ones out to the West Coast, all of us pitched in and wrote little speeches for the various stops that were scheduled.

MORRISSEY: When you say all of us, you mean Bell, Lloyd, Hechler, Neustadt, Hansen and Murphy?

HANSEN: That's right.

MORRISSEY: I assume from what you say that the whistlestop speeches, for the most part, were written on the train, at least on the one trip that you went on?

HANSEN: Some of the writing was done on the train, but they had a lot of material for specific stops before they

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went on the train. In fact, I remember when the President took his Western trip, went all the way to the West Coast and back, that the Department of the Interior furnished many drafts of whistlestop speeches, particularly for the Western states where the Interior Department had projects and major Western areas were involved; and they did a wonderful job on it too.

MORRISSEY: You say the Department of the Interior. Was there any one or group of people in the department that were doing this?

HANSEN: Yes, it was the office -- I can't remember the name of the office -- I can't remember the man's name. He left early in the next administration, I know. I can't remember his name now, I should. But it was sort of a research office in the office of the Secretary of the Interior. I can't remember the name of it now.

MORRISSEY: Do you remember any specific speech-writing sessions with some of your colleagues on some of the major speeches that the President delivered?

HANSEN: I really don't. I remember writing sessions on some major veto messages and that sort of thing, but I don't

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remember speeches particularly.

MORRISSEY: Can you remember what veto messages?

HANSEN: Yes, that I do remember. One was the submerged lands legislation -- the so-called tidelands -- that the President himself was quite interested in. It is an interesting thing, I think, because it's an illustration of how the President has to use and rely upon his White House staff sometimes. The Department of Justice and the Department of the Interior submitted a very short draft of the veto message on the submerged lands legislation which wasn't considered adequate at all. So, I recall, then, trying to take care of the problem of merely simply acquainting or familiarizing some of us on the White House staff with the problems involved, that Mr. Murphy had the Secretary of the Interior, Oscar Chapman, and the Solicitor General of the United States, Philip Perlman, come to Mr. Murphy's office at the White House; and I remember we sat around that office almost all one day along with -- I don't remember who else was there -- maybe Lloyd or Bell, but we sat around there all day and just discussed this thing to try to familiarize ourselves with it. I wrote a first draft of a veto message and

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then Dave Bell wrote the final draft. But after the final draft was written, I remember that Oscar Chapman and Philip Perlman came back to Mr. Murphy's office again and we sat around much of one day chewing it up and fixing it up and so on.

Another illustration is, as I recall, it's called the Walter-McCarran Immigration Act of 1952 which includes the Internal Security Act and so on. That was an instance in which something got away from the Administration before they knew what was going on, because the Immigration Service and the State Department had experts, as I recall, working up with staff committee experts of the, I believe it was the Senate Judiciary Committee, for three years or so. And they came up with this tremendous revision of the immigration laws which closed all the loopholes they could possibly find on this, that and everything else, I think. It was a gigantic thing. And then there was a great deal of furor about the legislation in the press and in the halls of Congress. A lot of people were opposed to it; they were mostly people who were concerned about civil rights and were concerned about having a more liberal immigration policy and not offending other nations with small

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quotas and that sort of thing. So, I remember that the President received a lot of messages, a lot of letters, a lot of personal calls from many people who were opposed to this legislation and I guess, others who were in favor of it. But there again was a situation in which the White House staff at the time, or shortly before the time that the legislation was enacted by Congress, didn't know very much about it. And again, as I recall, Mr. Murphy -- oh yes, we called in State Department people to discuss it with us; we called the General Counsel of the Immigration Service in to discuss it with us; we called in various people from -- I don't recall now -- oh, I think there was a former chairman of the Board of Immigration Appeals who was in private

practice in Washington came in and so on. So, I remember the President said, "Write this up both ways and let me take a look at it."

So I wrote a draft of a veto message which would say that he was signing the bill -- approving the bill -- and giving some material on what he liked about the bill, and then going into a mass of things that he wouldn't like about the bill and asking the Congress to correct those in the next session. I remember it was pretty long and it came back to me with a note

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scribbled in the President's handwriting on about page 20 or something like that and it said, "From here on, this is an excellent veto message." Then the big veto message was written up by Dave Lloyd and he and I worked days and nights together literally for, I think, it must have been a couple of weeks or something like that before we finished the thing. If you ever read that veto message, it's one of the most moving documents from the standpoint of beauty of writing that I've ever seen and Dave Lloyd was responsible for that, of course. He was a beautiful writer. And we had the staff members of the McCarran committee down, too, and talked to them about the thing. But there was a situation in which the administration had let its own people get out of hand from the standpoint of doing work up on the Hill; they hadn't been controlled back in the departments or from a policy standpoint from the White House or the Bureau of the Budget and it's an illustration of how you can get a monster on your hands without half trying sometimes. Then you don't know what to do.

MORRISSEY: Why do you suppose that happened?

HANSEN: I think what happened was that the McCarran committee,

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which I believe, as I recall it, was a subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee, although McCarran was the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. I believe that they became interested at some time in the general revision of immigration laws, many of which were obsolete and certainly could very well have been revised to make them a lot better. So I think they just solicited the Department of Justice and the State Department to furnish personnel that could help them work on this thing. I think they did work on it for about three years, as a matter of fact. It was a very comprehensive piece of legislation.

MORRISSEY: Why do you suppose the President would ask you to write up two messages, one a veto and one an approval?

HANSEN: I don't think I wrote the one on approval; I think somebody else wrote it in initial draft. I'm not sure the President asked that. It was Mr. Murphy that actually told me to do it and I assumed that the President had discussed it with him.

MORRISSEY: The reason I ask, I wonder if the President hadn't decided in his own mind whether he was going to veto or approve McCarran-Walter?

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HANSEN: Oh, McCarran-Walter? I don't think he had as a matter of fact. I don't think the decision was made until a very late stage and the veto message -- I think the veto message went back to the Congress the last day it was open. Of course, it was overridden in the Senate by a couple of votes I think.

MORRISSEY: Was there anybody you recall who was urging the President to approve this legislation?

HANSEN: I do not recall specifically except that the Department of Justice recommended it be approved, and I think the State Department recommended it be approved. None of the agencies of the Government below the White House recommended any veto of it or anything like that. But it was a job that was done in the White House.

MORRISSEY: Was this an unusual situation for the White House to "overrule" the recommendations of departments on legislation?

HANSEN: I'd say it was quite unusual, yes. I would say so.

MORRISSEY: In regard to both tidelands legislation and Internal Security legislation, you emphasize how yourself

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and other members of the staff would give a great deal of time to hashing over the elements in each piece of legislation. Was your problem one of trying to get information, or one of trying to evaluate the elements in each bill?

HANSEN: Both.

MORRISSEY: Both?

HANSEN: And it was a matter of having to get information rapidly and being able to understand it rapidly, because both these bills -- the immigration bill was a gigantic thing. Of course, the submerged lands bill wasn't very big. But there were legal issues; there were policy issues; many minority groups in the country were very concerned about the immigration bill. As you know, several Southern states were very concerned about the submerged lands legislation and of course, that had been in the Supreme Court -- the submerged lands legislation had been in the Supreme Court twice I think before this came up.

MORRISSEY: Then you would say that the President's viewpoint on both these pieces of legislation and perhaps

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more on tidelands than on internal security had a political dimension to it? I'm thinking particularly of the claim of some people that a veto of tidelands would lose Texas for the Democrats in '52.

HANSEN: My recollection is that the President was personally very concerned and had been for many years about the submerged lands problem, because particularly since the Supreme Court had held that the submerged lands were the property of the United States. He felt that those properties should be retained for the United States and maintained by the United States and that the revenues from the rich oil lands should be a national asset rather than the asset of certain states; and he thought there were many billions of dollars involved in this thing and he thought that since it was national property and the Supreme Court had so declared, that those assets could be converted to national use. I think he had thought that for years. On the immigration matter, I don't know. I had the feeling that the people doing staff work at the White House -- we didn't know ourselves until just about the last moment, I think, which way it was going to go; and I don't think the President did either, but I think,

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based upon conversations he had with people and with the White House staff people, he finally came to the conclusion that in general it was not fair legislation and that it just violated certain principles he believed in.

MORRISSEY: After the staff would gather information and evaluate it on either or both of these two pieces of legislation, would the discussion then move over into the President's presence and would he participate and listen to it? Or would it be thrashed out first and then taken to him as the considered judgment of his staff members?

HANSEN: It was all thrashed out first; all the staff work was done first except while I did not participate in any of the discussions, I'm sure these things were discussed at a staff meeting with the President in the morning; he always had a staff meeting as I recall about 9:00 o'clock in the morning.

MORRISSEY: Let me go back just to ask one question about the relationship between yourself and Mr. Murphy. How would he choose to assign tasks to his staff members? Was

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it mostly a matter of who ever had the most time would get the next thing that would come up? Or did he tend to specialize to some extent?

HANSEN: Lloyd, Bell and Neustadt were all speech writers and I think any one of them would handle a speech project from time to time, and sometimes, of course, they got drafts of speeches from the department, but usually they were completely rewritten at the White House level. Hechler was the political scientist, the historian and the research man. If there was any research to do on anything, why he did it and was very good. If there were legal problems that came up that Mr. Murphy wanted some help on, I would do it, of course, because I was -- let's see Lloyd was a lawyer, but I don't think he did any legal work, not in the White House that I know of. I did handle miscellaneous legal problems.

MORRISSEY: You mentioned some minutes ago having some work to do with the Bureau of the Budget. Could you enlarge on that? Do you remember specifically what matters came up to your attention, what the problems were?

HANSEN: Oh yes, many executive orders would come to the

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Bureau of the Budget, in fact, all executive orders clear through the Bureau of the Budget before they go up to the White House. I reviewed a number of those. I also reviewed a number of recommendations of the Bureau of the Budget on enrolled bills. Sometimes on private relief bills -- petty little things like that -- and some others too. Sometimes, Mr. Murphy would catch a problem in the write-up of the Bureau of the Budget on some legislation and ask me to take a look at it. That happened frequently.

MORRISSEY: When you say you reviewed some of these recommendations from the Bureau of the Budget, exactly what do you mean? What would you do?

HANSEN: Well, on executive orders, there would be a question sometimes not as to legal form certainly because they were always in proper legal form, but perhaps as to some policy. I can remember a couple: the President issued a proclamation or an executive order for Christmas of 1952 which granted amnesty to a number of people -- gee my memory is very bad now -- to a number of former members of the armed services who had -- what was it...I can't remember now whether it was dishonorable

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discharges or something -- I don't know. Anyway, the executive order was prepared in the Department of Justice, I believe. No, I guess it was prepared in the Department of Defense; prepared in the Department of Defense, cleared through the Department of Justice, came to the White House or to the Bureau of the Budget, was reviewed there, was sent to the President, and when it came to my desk, it wasn't inclusive enough. There was a class of former military personnel who should have been covered and who weren't covered. I don't remember the circumstances now; I just can't remember the details, but I remember that we had to complete the thing that day. So I called Roger Jones who was in charge of legislative reference at the Bureau of the Budget and he called the Defense Department people, their -- I think it's the Assistant General Counsel in charge of legislative matters to the Secretary of Defense -- to get some language and to get approval of the three military services with respect to suggested changes. I called the Department of Justice and talked to the Office of Legal Counsel which clears all executive orders and got some language from them. I know it took most of the day to get this done and get it typed;

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I took it to Mr. Murphy, as I recall, about 6:30 in the evening and I think he had the President sign it the first thing the next morning. It was an instance where you have to move very fast.

I remember another instance where we had to move very fast too. We had three reorganization plans for United States Attorneys, to put United States Attorneys under Civil Service; to put Collectors of Customs under Civil Service; to put United States Marshals under Civil Service, and the promise had been made, or the arrangement had been made with leaders on the Hill that the three messages would go up together and be there at 12:00 of a certain day. They were

presented to the President about 10:00 that morning and he looked at the one on Marshals and he said, "This is going to throw my old friend so-and-so of Kansas City out of work, I think. You better make a little change on this." So boy oh boy, did we ever scramble around for a couple of hours getting that straightened out, and the messages went up at 12:00 on time, but oh, man. We had to call the Bureau of the Budget, the Department of Justice, and by virtue of the change that was made

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in the organization plan for the United States Marshals, we had to make similar changes in each of the other two reorganization plans also. So that meant calling the Treasury Department, the Bureau of Customs with respect to Customs and calling certain offices in the Department of Justice concerning U.S. Attorneys, U.S. Marshals and getting the Bureau of the Budget in on the act. I'm amazed sometimes how fast things can happen when they have to.

MORRISSEY: Can you date that approximately, when that came up?

HANSEN: That must have been late in '52, because I remember the President said, or so it was related to me by Mr. Murphy, that he wanted to get some things cleaned up before he went out of office. I think this might have been after the election even. That doesn't sound right either though -- I can't remember. It was when Congress was in session -- I can't remember. I know they, all three of them, were defeated, I think. I can't remember the exact time.

MORRISSEY: Was there anyone in particular in the Bureau

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of the Budget that you would work with?

HANSEN: I worked quite a bit with Roger Jones who was assistant director for legislative reference; I worked quite a bit with William Finan, who was assistant director for administrative management, particularly on reorganization plans such as the plan for the reorganization plan for Internal Revenue Service, the three reorganization plans I've just mentioned to you; I worked a lot with Fred Levi, who did a lot of work on executive orders and reorganization matters and was a real expert. I think he worked for either Roger Jones or Bill Finan, I can't remember.

MORRISSEY: Would you say that relations between the White House staff and the Bureau of the Budget were good?

HANSEN: Excellent. They were as far as the White House staff was concerned at any rate. The Bureau of the Budget is the right arm of the White House staff. That's, by far, the most efficient government agency per capita that there is in the whole United States Government.

MORRISSEY: You say the right arm of the White House staff. Could you enlarge on that and specify in what ways this

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is so?

HANSEN: Legislative problems that came up -- you'd ask the Bureau of the Budget to get the views of all the agencies of the Government, even prepare legislation. They were the coordinating arm of the President; they would coordinate the views of various interested agencies of the Government on legislative matters, on executive orders, matters like that. Even when the Civil Aeronautics Board would submit recommendations for approval of airline routes, they had somebody on the Bureau of the Budget that would review all that stuff even. They were terrific on everything. I never saw anything occur that you couldn't find somebody in the Bureau of the Budget that wasn't either an expert or a semi-expert on the subject.

MORRISSEY: And yet in your own experience there are instances in which you would revise a recommendation from the B.O.B.?

HANSEN: Well, I can remember a couple or three instances when something would come to Mr. Murphy from the Bureau of the Budget and he would call me over and say, "This

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looks to me like an instance of inadequate staff work by the Bureau of the Budget. Take a look at it." And in two or three instances that they were off-base on something, possibly due to the rush that they encountered. Sometimes a mass of enrolled bills would come in, you know, and they'd only have a few days in which to process them to the President.

MORRISSEY: Going back a bit, I gather there were some instances in which a private relief bill already approved by Congress would come down for the President's approval or veto and on the basis of your own research and recommendation it would be vetoed, is that right?

HANSEN: We would always get a memorandum from the Bureau of the Budget either recommending approval or recommending a veto and if it recommended veto, they would attach a veto message and draft. But there were times when -- I think there were a couple of times -- I may be wrong -- I think there were a couple of times when the Bureau of the Budget recommended a veto and we changed it. I can remember a few times when people in Roger Jones' office would come up and say, "What do you think the

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President would want to do about this?" For example, there might be occasions on some bill where the Department of Justice would take one view and the General Accounting Office would take another view, maybe the Treasury Department would take another view; and sometimes if you have some insight as to what the President's feeling on a thing would be from a policy standpoint, you can be helpful in relaying that information to them.

MORRISSEY: Do you remember any of these cases specifically? Or is that asking too much of your memory?

HANSEN: I remember an instance in which some sort of an immigration bill had gone through Congress (I don't remember whether it was a private relief bill or what) and the Immigration Service recommended that it be vetoed, and the Department of Justice passed that

recommendation on up to the Bureau of the Budget with its approval. I think there may have been some phases in the bill that were of interest to the State Department. It probably said it had no objection to the thing, and I can remember that Ed Bowers, who worked

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for Roger Jones came up and said, on the basis of the Department of Justice recommendation they were going to prepare a veto message, but before they did so, they wanted to check and see if I had any views on the thing and I said, "Sure, I have some views. I know perfectly well what the President will do with this; he wouldn't think of vetoing this bill. As a matter of policy, it liberalizes immigration to a certain extent -- he'd want to approve it and it's not an inequitable thing; it's a fair thing." So they went back and wrote up a memorandum of approval. But then there were -- I can't remember exactly -- but there were sometimes when I had to rewrite, when I actually had to write veto messages, as a matter of fact. In that case, maybe a private relief bill or some sort of legislation would come up from the Bureau of the Budget with a memorandum saying they saw no objection to approval of the measure; but something didn't look just right about it and I would go to the Bureau of the Budget file and look over it and possibly discuss it with Mr. Murphy, but I did write some veto messages as I recall -- we did write some on our own. That's very unusual though. Mostly the Bureau of the Budget does a wonderful job on those things.

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MORRISSEY: Would you characterize your function then as something of a "devil's advocate?"

HANSEN: I was a sort of a jack-of-all-trades and a master of none. That was about the size of it. I did legal research on a variety of problems that I didn't know very much about.

MORRISSEY: I was thinking particularly of private relief bills which could very easily slide by and get the President's signature and then afterwards somebody would discover that there was something wrong in the legislation that should have been caught before it was signed by the President. I assume you were the man who would check this out?

HANSEN: Sometimes, sometimes. Usually those things were all caught before they got to the White House. But I can remember times, for example, when the General Accounting Office would strongly disapprove certain types of fiscal measures and there would be conflict of views within the Administration; and sometimes only the White House could decide it although the Bureau of the Budget would recommend what they thought should

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be done.

MORRISSEY: Did you have much to do with the Democratic National Committee in any of your duties?

HANSEN: Quite a bit.

MORRISSEY: Anyone in particular that you dealt with?

HANSEN: Well, the Director of Research, who was -- I can see his face -- Bert...

MORRISSEY: Gross?

HANSEN: Bert Gross, yes. Bert Gross and there was another young man over there I worked with quite a bit; he's a practicing attorney here in town now. I can't remember his name. Many times they wanted information about something or other and I'd call the proper agency of the Government and get the information and pass it on to them. In a lot of instances they didn't feel like it was appropriate for them to call directly. I did that quite a bit.

MORRISSEY: Do you remember any particular issues that you were concerned with, and which the Democratic National

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Committee was also concerned with?

HANSEN: The whole picture of the 1952 campaign, I would say, for one thing. I remember too that they were very interested in the Internal Revenue reorganization. Of course, at that time, the Republicans had made a great issue of corruption in the Government, you know, and that was a matter of great concern to the Democratic party as to what to do about it -- what could be done about it. The Internal Revenue reorganization was one phase of that -- of doing something about it -- and setting up a new inspection service in Internal Revenue. Unfortunately, this concern also led into the Newbold Morris fiasco of which you may have heard something which was a very sorry, sad affair in my opinion.

MORRISSEY: Did you have much to do with Morris or with the reorganization planning?

HANSEN: That I did, that I did.

MORRISSEY: Could you tell me about it?

HANSEN: Yes, sir. On Newbold Morris, there was a great deal of concern about the President or the Government

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doing something about this issue of corruption in government, and there were a lot of headlines those days. Somebody else in Internal Revenue Service had been found to have taken a bribe or something and they had fired, as I recall, three collectors of the Internal Revenue. Revenue agents were in trouble and so actually, I guess Newbold Morris came first, didn't he, before the Internal Revenue reorganization? Anyway, the President wanted somebody to head up a campaign or a program of some sort to do what ever could be done and nobody seemed to know just exactly what could be done to root out this so-called corruption in the Government. Actually, the Government was doing a wonderful job of rooting out the corruption, but they were getting all the headlines that made the thing look adverse to the Administration. So, I understand the President asked J. Edgar Hoover to take on the job. Said he would give him full authority -- full

powers; he could write his own ticket. And I understand that Hoover turned him down. I don't know on what basis or how he did it, but I understand he did. Then I understand the President asked Thomas Murphy, who was a district judge in New York, and who had been a very well-known prosecutor in the United

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States Attorney's office in New York, to take the job. Murphy turned him down for reasons that I do not know about. I do not know how the name Newbold Morris came in. Newbold Morris was a son-in-law of the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals of the Second Circuit, whose name again evades me. He died recently -- one of the greatest jurists of our time, Learned Hand. I don't know how the name Newbold Morris arose, but he was quite a guy and apparently the President or somebody made an approach to him and he asked his father-in-law what he should do about it and Learned Hand said, "Go ahead and do it." The trouble with the thing was that it was impossible, because it wasn't a matter of organization as to how to root out corruption; it was a matter of the manpower to do it and the Department of Justice had the Federal Bureau of Investigation; they had a good Criminal Division down here and they were doing what they could. So anyway, an executive order was issued setting up Newbold Morris as the top guy in this program and instructing all agencies and officers and employees of the Government to advise him of any evidence of corruption and so on, and started to set up a little staff for him, but this was really an

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impossible thing. He just couldn't do a job like this because a job like that couldn't be done. You can't set up a new separate agency and recruit some people for it and all of a sudden get onto the job of rooting out corruption in Government which is a job that the FBI and some of the other investigative agencies of the Government and the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice had been working on for years. So anyway, Morris or his top investigator finally made a mistake by deciding they'd start their investigation by investigating J. Howard McGrath who was the Attorney General of the United States. Morris' chief investigator went to J. Howard McGrath the Attorney General and asked him for all his diaries, his office logs, records of phone calls, and so on, and indicated they were going to start the investigation with Mr. McGrath, just in general. So Mr. McGrath said he wanted to think about that a little bit and so he apparently did think about it a little bit and apparently talked to some of his colleagues in the Department of Justice. Then, as I recall, he declined to comply with that request and since Mr. Newbold Morris technically was under the jurisdiction of the Attorney General, it was very soon after that -- maybe

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just a couple of days or so, that the Attorney General fired Mr. Newbold Morris; and on the same day that the Attorney General fired Mr. Newbold Morris, the President fired the Attorney General. So there was a great deal of excitement in Washington that day. Mr. Morris tried to get in touch with the President later but wasn't successful and he went back to New York and wrote some articles in the newspaper about his experience in Washington on cleaning up corruption.

MORRISSEY: Which, I assume, you don't put much value to?

HANSEN: To Mr. Morris'...? Well, he never got off the ground, actually, he never got off the ground at all. He didn't accomplish anything; he never had a chance to. The organization was impossible; it couldn't have worked; he didn't have the personnel; he didn't have the experts; he didn't have the lawyers; he didn't have the investigators; he tried to start off with a coordinating job and it just wasn't the right setup.

MORRISSEY: Did you have any face-to-face dealings with him?

HANSEN: Oh yes, oh yes. We met with him at the White House several times and talked to him on the phone several times.

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MORRISSEY: Any impressions of the man?

HANSEN: Well, he's a very lovable guy. I liked him tremendously. I think he's a very able fellow, but I think he had more enthusiasm than judgment when he started off on this operation. He's a perfect gentleman; he's a perfect gentleman; he's a fine man.

MORRISSEY: Do you remember any specific topics that you discussed with him in relation to this investigation?

HANSEN: Oh yes, we had him at the White House after he said he would take the job of heading up the program and we asked him how we could help him; what we could do for him; what he wanted; we told him we'd do everything we could for him in the departments and agencies. We wrote up an executive order; we prepared a memorandum that went to the heads of all departments and agencies telling them to give him complete cooperation and assistance. We arranged for him to get experienced people in Government that were trained in administration and personnel to help him set up his office and get going -- many problems like that.

MORRISSEY: I would assume then that the White House staff

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and the President were sincerely behind his efforts?

HANSEN: That certainly is right.

MORRISSEY: Do you remember anything about this famous questionnaire that he drew up and circulated?

HANSEN: I just vaguely remember that now. I don't remember very much about it though. I do remember there was a questionnaire.

MORRISSEY: The reason I ask, I wonder if there was any doubt on the part of the White House staff members about the value of tackling the problem this way?

HANSEN: By questionnaire?

MORRISSEY: Yes.

HANSEN: I don't recall that there was any doubt about the matter. The Internal Revenue Service had also used a questionnaire very widely in connection with their attempts to unearth any corrupt revenue service personnel by virtue of the public clamor at that time for a clean-up in Government. Actually, I don't think a personnel questionnaire such as that is very helpful or very

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effective. People in Internal Revenue have told me that in general, they don't think it's effective. Except in their case, it does one thing: they can make an investigation and through investigation they can ascertain if a person (sometimes they can ascertain), that a person has accumulated funds in excess of his known sources of income and his known amount of income, which then raises a question for him to answer as to where this excess came from. Sometimes those questionnaires have been helpful from that standpoint and they also have been helpful from the standpoint of establishing a net worth starting point in the net worth case -- a tax investigation case.

MORRISSEY: Did you have any dealings with J. Howard McGrath during this time?

HANSEN: Yes, sir. Mr. McGrath came to the White House, to Mr. Murphy's office, one Saturday afternoon on his way to a wedding. I remember he was wearing a homburg hat, a magnificent coat, I think he was carrying a cane; it was the first time I had met Mr. McGrath face to face and he was a very impressive man. He was immaculately dressed. I think he had a cutaway or something on that

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day. Previously, I think, Mr. Murphy had sent to him a draft of order with respect to Newbold Morris and as a matter of fact, I had previously discussed it over there with Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Criminal Division and with the Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Office of Legal Counsel, which wrote executive orders and so on, and at this time, Mr. McGrath came over to the White House and indicated, as I recall, that the program had his approval and that he would cooperate with Mr. Morris and would help him in any way he could. I think Mr. McGrath was not enthusiastic about the thing at all, but he did accept it. I subsequently had conversations with Mr. McGrath on the telephone too about getting the thing set up.

MORRISSEY: Was Mr. McGrath, at this time, still chairman of the Party, or he had left and become Attorney General?

HANSEN: He wasn't chairman of the Party when he was Attorney General, as I recall.

MORRISSEY: What I'm thinking of, was there any discussion of the possible difficulty of having Newbold Morris, whom I remember had registered as an Independent (he wasn't

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a Democrat in other words) dealing in a very touchy situation and one that was proclaimed in headlines throughout the country, with a former chairman of the Democratic National Committee?

HANSEN: I never heard the subject brought up at all. I do remember now, it comes back to me, that there was a time, a time when we had a meeting in the Cabinet Room at the White House which the President attended and I believe Mr. McGrath attended, and I believe the Solicitor General of the United States attended, and I believe the Chairman of the Civil Service Commission attended. And it's my recollection that this meeting was about this problem of corruption in Government and certain names were discussed. One name was that of a former president of the American Bar Association, a lawyer from Tampa, Florida (I can't remember his name now), and as I recall, there were certain names that were brought up and either at that time or subsequently, were rejected as not being suitable persons for the job; but I can not remember now how Mr. Morris came in, except he had been a crusader in New York for good government and he was a very honorable man and was respected and

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well-known, but he wasn't an investigator.

MORRISSEY: What is your basis for saying that J. Edgar Hoover and Mr. Murphy (I can't remember his first name -- from New York) had been offered this job and had turned it down?

HANSEN: Well, that was common knowledge at the White House. I didn't hear it from the President, certainly, but I think I heard it from Mr. Murphy -- from Charlie Murphy. And the Murphy in New York was Judge Murphy -- Judge Thomas Murphy.

MORRISSEY: Where did the idea about reorganizing the Internal Revenue Service begin? Did it begin in the IRS or the White House staff or...?

HANSEN: It began in the Internal Revenue Service. It was a matter that had been under study for several years by people in the Revenue Service who were in the management field. It had been worked on very quietly in the Internal Revenue, nobody knew anything about it over there except a few people, but the administrative secretary of the Treasury, Bill Parsons, was very interested

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in the thing and they brought it up to the White House. I remember going over to the Office of the General Counsel of the Treasury Department on a Monday morning on a day that was a holiday -- can't remember what holiday it was -- and the General Counsel was there and Bill Parsons, the administrative assistant secretary was there; Irv [Irving] Perlmeter of the White House staff was there (he had been with Internal Revenue previously and a man from the Internal Revenue was there who now teaches at -- someplace in Virginia. The General Counsel said this reorganization plan (which hadn't been completely worked out at that time) is going to be a controversial measure for some reason or other -- for various reasons, and we need sort of a handle to hang the thing on.

We'd had conversation a little bit, I think the preceding Friday, on that. On Sunday I'd been down at the White House at the office and I'd worked up a skeleton draft of a message on that thing, and I said, "Here's the thing to hang it on; hang it on corruption in Government." That's what it was hung on and that's the only thing that passed it, as a matter of fact.

MORRISSEY: I assume then that the Democratic National Committee

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was in favor of this procedure?

HANSEN: They were, and they were very interested in the thing, I know, because of the corruption issue.

MORRISSEY: Do you recall any major difficulties or major accomplishments in your dealings with the reorganization of the IRS?

HANSEN: Well, I remember it was a real fight in Congress. The reorganization plan was rejected by the Senate Committee -- was that the Senate Finance Committee? Probably so and Senator Humphrey and Senator -- the United States Senator from Michigan...

MORRISSEY: Vandenberg?

HANSEN: No, no. He was a man who had been a newspaper man other than Vandenberg?

MORRISSEY: Homer Ferguson?

HANSEN: No. He'd been a radio commentator...Moody, Blair Moody. Senator Moody, Senator Humphrey and some others prepared a minority report and I had written a first draft of it at the White House. I think we got

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some assistance on it from the Democratic National Committee. It was submitted up to the Congress and then Senator Humphrey and Blair Moody got into the thing and it was completely re-drafted with personnel of the Treasury Department. It was a beautiful job when it was finally finished. Then there was a fight on the floor of the Senate about the thing; and the only reason that reorganization plan went through was because of the issue of corruption in Government and a lot of senators didn't want to vote -- didn't want to vote for sin, so we got some Republican votes on that that probably wouldn't have come along otherwise. There were some very influential people who were very much opposed to that reorganization plan.

MORRISSEY: For example?

HANSEN: Senator McClellan of Arkansas made the principal speech on the floor of the Senate in opposition to it. Oh...this plan was before the Government Operations Committee, not the Finance Committee -- sure it was before the Government Operations Committee. Senator Nixon was very much opposed to the plan, fought it. He trapped the Commissioner

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of Internal Revenue into an admission before the Committee on hearings that corruption wasn't the real issue in this thing and used it very effectively against him after that. That was Commissioner Dunlap.

MORRISSEY: Any other difficulties or accomplishments that come to mind in relation to your dealings with the IRS reorganization?

HANSEN: I don't remember any more. I know that there was a tremendous fight on the floor of the Senate about the reorganization plan, and the Internal Revenue Service had to do a tremendous amount of work in getting research materials up to people on the Hill and I know there were some senators that would call me from time to time or call Charlie Murphy. I did a lot of work -- some work with Senator Humphrey's administrative assistant who was very, very active in the thing. He is practicing law here in Washington now. He's a magnificent guy. I'll think of his name pretty soon. He's a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota. I think he went to law school after he got to Washington. He's a smart guy...Max Kampelman, who is a very, very able man.

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MORRISSEY: And you dealt closely with him?

HANSEN: I did. In fact, he was on the Senate floor when Senator Humphrey led the fight for the reorganization plan against the recommendation of the Government Operations Committee.

MORRISSEY: When the White House staff is concerned with a matter that's getting headlines, big headlines all over the country, I would assume that this fact influences your objectives, your procedures and what not?

HANSEN: I would say just as a quick ready answer to that, that the White House, like the office of a Senator or a Congressman, is influenced tremendously by all the political currents and that everything they do, by and large, is taken with a view either to political publicity that can flow from it, or it's taken in consideration of political consequences that can occur from it. I don't mean by that to say that politics makes the decisions at all, but nevertheless, it certainly is always a matter for consideration.

MORRISSEY: Earlier in this interview you referred to the fact that the election coming up in 1952 was a dimension

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to a lot of the decisions made and the thinking done by the White House staff. Could you elaborate on this somewhat and tell me just how strong a dimension this was or how it affected certain things you were dealing with?

HANSEN: Well, the President was off on...I think he made three campaign trips: one was a trip to the West Coast that lasted about two weeks. There was another trip that went up into

Minnesota that must have lasted a week at least. There was one trip I went on that lasted about three or four days, but the preparation for trips like that and for speeches, for greeting politicians along the way and so on, the preparation is just tremendous. At the risk of over-exaggerating some, I'd say that it paralyzes the White House staff operations to a certain extent in just getting prepared for that sort of thing.

MORRISSEY: How early or how long before an election does the White House staff become cognizant of this political dimension to its doings?

HANSEN: As soon as the President says he's going to go out

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and campaign and directs them to make arrangements for it in collaboration with the Democratic National Committee; and it, of course, makes up the agenda with the President's approval and where they want the whistle stops and speeches -- major speeches and so on; and then the speeches have got to be prepared and there are just an awful lot of things to do -- a lot of arrangements. The Secret Service has to make preparations all through the country and there are just thousands of things to be done, literally.

MORRISSEY: Is this political dimension evident before this time? To rephrase the question, when you joined the White House staff, in November, '51, were people thinking of November, '52?

HANSEN: I don't specifically recall that they were. I was so busy doing things that weren't concerned with that that I don't know. Of course, President Truman had come out for Adlai Stevenson before Stevenson received the nomination, but I don't remember what stage it was that he announced he was going to campaign for Stevenson. I think there was a question for a while as to whether he should campaign for him, whether it would be

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helpful to Stevenson, whether Stevenson wanted him to, whether the Democratic National Committee thought it would be helpful and so on.

MORRISSEY: Did you have anything to do with any of these questions?

HANSEN: No, none at all.

MORRISSEY: Were you aware when you joined the White House staff that Mr. Truman according to his *Memoirs* had decided not to run in 1952 although publicly he didn't say so until late March of '52?

HANSEN: I don't think any man on the White House staff knew the decision until the President himself announced it at the \$100 a plate dinner at the National Armory.

MORRISSEY: Was it a surprise to you or did you know it was coming?

HANSEN: I assumed it was coming. I didn't think he'd run again, but I didn't know.

MORRISSEY: Why didn't you think he'd run again?

HANSEN: Well because he'd been in office close to two terms

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and he was getting up in years. Actually, my personal view of the thing was that he probably couldn't get elected again. I don't think he was popular enough in the country to have been elected again.

MORRISSEY: Do you think he was aware of this?

HANSEN: I don't know, I just don't know.

MORRISSEY: Were you a witness or party to any of the relations between Stevenson and Truman before the convention or after the convention?

HANSEN: No, none at all. I remember that Stevenson came to the White House after the election. They brought him in the side door, I think -- I don't think the press even knew he was there. He was in Joe Short's office and Charlie Murphy told everybody to come around and talk to him. I didn't go over; I was working on something -- I can't remember what it was now -- but I had a deadline on it and I didn't go over at all. So I never met the man.

Another funny thing, the same thing happened to me when the Queen of England was here. There was a ceremony for her in the rose garden, you know, and the President called her "my dear," and so on, and I wanted

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to see her too and I was working on something else that had a deadline then; I didn't see her either.

MORRISSEY: As one who rode the campaign train, at least very briefly, in the '52 campaign, how did it look? Did it look like the Democrats might win another election or was the outlook disappointing?

HANSEN: I really couldn't tell at all. I thought personally (and I'm certainly no expert), I think if Taft had been nominated, that the Democrats might have won, but I figured long before Eisenhower was nominated, that if he were nominated, he would probably win; that was my personal opinion on the thing. So it was certainly no surprise to me at all.

MORRISSEY: In some of these whistlestop speeches that you were concerned with, was there a problem of trying to establish before the public the relationship between Truman and Stevenson? The reason I ask this question is that a lot of Republicans made much of the claim that the Democrats had two candidates and the one who was leaving office was campaigning as if he was the one running for re-election. Much was made of the fact that

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the candidate, Mr. Stevenson, had his offices in Springfield, Illinois, not in Washington, D.C. Was this sort of thing a problem for those of you concerned with the whistlestop speeches?

HANSEN: Well, I don't recall that it was. Actually, there was this separation, of course, but the White House was doing whatever it could for Stevenson; in fact, they gave him Dave [David] Bell who was the most competent man they had when it came to organizing speech material and so on. In fact, Dave worked so hard he had a collapse on the Stevenson campaign. I think some other people were assigned to help Stevenson too (I don't remember who); I know Dave Bell was. As I recall, on the whistlestops, the President would devote himself -- oh, he would praise Stevenson a lot, of course, but he'd keep saying he made a mistake in ever thinking Eisenhower could be a good President. He said, "Look back at history; look at the Presidents that have been generals and they were the worst in the history of the country," and so on.

MORRISSEY: Were those of you writing these whistlestop speeches concerned about the General's popularity.

HANSEN: Oh sure.

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MORRISSEY: ...and trying to deflate it?

HANSEN: That's right.

MORRISSEY: How?

HANSEN: Well, I would say by saying, "he's a great military man; that's all he's been all his life -- a military man; he's not schooled in the arts of Government; history shows that military leaders who become Presidents are not good Presidents; they're not successful Presidents," and that sort of thing.

MORRISSEY: Were you concerned in your speech-writing with the vice-presidential candidate on the Republican ticket?

HANSEN: I don't think we ever mentioned him at all, I don't believe so. We were all concerned with him when he made that "Checkers" speech. That occurred, as I recall, when the President was on a campaign trip to the West Coast -- some campaign trip, and we thought it was a fraud and a phony but there was nothing could be done about it.

MORRISSEY: Do you recall any response by the President or

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by other staff members to the General's "I will go to Korea," statement?

HANSEN: I think President Truman made some comment at a press conference to the effect that it was a grandstand play or he made some comment, somewhere, to that effect. It was a telling thing, no question about it.

MORRISSEY: Were staff members fairly hopeful up to election day, 1952, that the party might carry the election?

HANSEN: I would say so.

MORRISSEY: You were in the White House during the transition from November, '52 to Inaugural Day, January 20 (I guess), 1953? What were your duties during this period?

HANSEN: I continued to be a jack-of-all-trades and a master of none and I remember that there were a lot of people coming in wanting pardons -- good Democrats wanting pardons for criminal offenses that they had committed; and others wanting executive clemency and all kinds of people wanting favors before the Democratic Administration went out, because apparently there were some people

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that thought they needed favors real bad and were quite sure they would not get them when the Republicans came in.

MORRISSEY: And this sort of thing took a lot of your time?

HANSEN: Yes it did.

MORRISSEY: Were you concerned with some of the studies and preparations for the new administration coming in?

HANSEN: No, actually I had nothing much to do with that. There were questions about -- oh, I remember Mr. Murphy did a lot of work in connection with the President's papers, and as I recall, we were somewhat concerned about papers of some of the staff members of the White House and whether they might be subject to subpoena if the Republicans wanted to start a congressional investigation -- or a Grand Jury investigation.

MORRISSEY: Were you concerned with this?

HANSEN: Yes I was to a certain extent.

MORRISSEY: Could you tell us more about it?

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HANSEN: I think Dave Lloyd was the greatest expert on that, but of course, all Presidents have always taken their personal papers with them from the White House; they've always just cleaned out the White House files. But there was a problem as to some papers that should be left, namely some papers relating to National Security Council matters and some others (I don't know exactly

what) but then, as I recall, while it was considered that a President's papers were his own, I know there was some concern in which I shared that "suppose these papers are subpoenaed by Congressional committees or by grand juries -- what do we do; is there a privilege that can be invoked for them? They being personal papers, there would be no privilege unless there was some sort of a governmental privilege which I doubt if it has any place in the law." Then of course the Truman Library was being worked on, a corporation being set up, being organized, and a boy from New York did almost all the work on that...Jim...?

MORRISSEY: Loeb?

HANSEN: No, no. It's a man -- the boy who succeeded the Democratic leader up in New York a couple of years

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ago -- Jim Lanigan.

MORRISSEY: Let me ask you how you handled all these favor seekers who came in after the '52 elections were over?

HANSEN: Well, some people came in and asked -- had written in or a state Democratic chairman had written in, or concerning persons who had been written in, or concerning persons who had been convicted of Federal offenses and who as a result had lost their civil rights and they were interested in obtaining Presidential pardons, in order that their civil rights in the state could be restored; and in some instances there were applications for executive clemency with respect to people who had been convicted and had been sentenced and were serving their sentences. But these things usually arose, as I recall, by usually these people writing in and asking for consideration or a Democratic state chairman writing in and asking for consideration or possibly sometimes a reference from a senator or a congressman. Usually it was some sort of a buck-passing proposition and so when they came to my attention I would -- we would get the recommendation first, of course, of the Department of Justice, the Pardon Attorney, but we would always give

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these people a hearing. In other words, I would hear them and be as gracious as I could to them. I don't remember any instance in which an application either for pardon or for executive clemency of an individual was granted. I remember several that were turned down, based largely upon recommendations of the Department of Justice; but we did hear them. There was at least one instance I remember that was investigated quite a bit at the insistence of the White House staff. A young man had stolen a car down in Texas, I believe, and had gone over the Mexican border with it. He came from a very fine family and he had a nice wife and several children and some political connections, but it was just more or less a time-consuming thing.

MORRISSEY: It sounds as if during the transitional period that you were extremely busy, not only you as an individual, but the staff generally, with very important issues at a time in which, of course, people were thinking, "what are we going to do after the 20th of January."

HANSEN: Actually, my feeling on the matter was that the wheels of Government, at least from the White House level,

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had pretty much rolled to a stop except for just a clean-up operation after the election: getting things in shape for the President to leave and for the White House personnel to leave and making arrangements for tiding over the administration. But it didn't seem to me that anything very important really was happening in that time from the national standpoint.

MORRISSEY: Tell me about Hiram Bingham and his relationship to yourself and to the staff.

HANSEN: Well, Hiram Bingham was a former senator from Connecticut who, I think, had been an old friend of the President's -- I don't know. He was a Republican senator; he was a very staunch Republican. I think he was made chairman of the Loyalty Review Board because he was a great conservative and a great Republican because they wanted bi-partisan support for the Loyalty Review Board operations; because, I guess, he was a respected man among the Republican branch of the party as well as the Democrat. He wanted more authority. As I recall, he wanted the loyalty program expanded and a change -- it seems to me he wanted a change made in the standard. I may be wrong about this, but it seems to me he wanted a

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change in standard from the standard of reasonable grounds to believe that a person was disloyal to the United States to the standard of a reasonable doubt as to a person's loyalty. Well, a reasonable doubt is something that is not only a vague standard but it's just the obverse of the standard in criminal jurisprudence. A man cannot be convicted of a criminal offense unless the jury determines beyond a reasonable doubt that he's guilty; but when you determine that there is a reasonable doubt as to a person's loyalty to the United States, a reasonable doubt can hinge on many things that are difficult really to express in terms. I think it's a very dangerous standard, but it was adopted by an executive order of the President in 1951; but it was before I went to the White House. As I recall, too, Mr. Bingham wanted more jurisdiction over the loyalty operations -- but he was put off on that. I recall the State Department was almost entirely security -- which didn't come under the Loyalty Review Board except in rare cases -- security risk regulations. I think the Defense Department is the same way. Several of the agencies of the Executive Branch had adopted security regulations such as the Defense Department had. As I

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recall, even the Office of Price Administration had one and I frankly confess that I think a lot of innocent people were getting hurt and getting hurt badly -- losing their jobs, in fact, being denied employment and even severed from employment on the grounds of anonymous informants, so-called confidential informers on the basis of associations with people ultimately ascertained to have had some suspected Communist or subversive connections and I had the personal feeling that the principal success of the loyalty program was to dig out some employees of the Government who had been foolish enough to act overtly with respect to their Communist affiliations or Communist front affiliations. It was only on the basis of their signing documents or having their names on membership lists -- things like that, that you ever picked them up on and a lot of these were liberals who were interested in liberal causes, in favor of peace and

associations connected with that objective. Whereas, the real dangerous people, in my opinion, were the underground people that weren't identified and couldn't be identified except by getting somebody like Elizabeth Bentley who would break with the party and come in and tell a story. I didn't think the loyalty program worked

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too well. One, because it's awfully hard to say what are grounds to believe a person is disloyal to the United States -- awfully hard, I think -- it's a very difficult standard to apply. I don't know what better standard there would be. Of course, that's the reason the defense agencies and some of the other agencies set up their standard of security risk -- reason to believe that a person can't be trusted with confidential papers or confidential information. I think a lot of people were hurt and hurt badly that shouldn't have been hurt for that reason.

MORRISSEY: Were White House staff members concerned about these people getting hurt?

HANSEN: They were. I would say, based upon my view that some of the White House staff people including myself, thought that the Administration had probably created a monster in this loyalty program; that they'd got the bear by the tail and there wasn't much they could do about it. As I recall, I think, John Service of the State Department was an example of that. I think he had been cleared several times in the State Department. But the time

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came when his case was reviewed by the Loyalty Review Board and it reviewed all agency decisions and there came a time when the Loyalty Review Board arrogated to itself the authority to direct dismissals of people if it disagreed with the agencies. And that's what happened with John Service and there was quite a bit of furor about that. It was one of those things that you can't do much about. I remember Service's lawyer came in to see me and talk about it. He said he hated to have to spend the time and money in carrying this through the courts but he did eventually and finally he won; he won in the Supreme Court as a matter of fact. Service went back to work for the State Department.

MORRISSEY: Did White House staff members discuss anything which could be done to protect these people's reputations?

HANSEN: They discussed what could be done; that was the question -- what could be done -- and I don't think anybody knew just what could be done. They thought about it some and they didn't know what to do. If President Truman had revoked the loyalty program, there would have

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been a real storm among the Republicans in Congress, a lot of the Democrats too I suppose. There would have been a storm all over the country. It was set up in the first place because of allegations that there were Communists in Government. It was a program that was involved in politics all the way up on the Hill. McCarthy and McCarran and other senators really made a big thing out of it from a political standpoint. As a matter of fact, in 1952 McCarthy gave Senate speeches viciously attacking two White House employees -- Dave Lloyd and Philleo Nash -- charging them with Communist associations and sympathies. We learned later that a woman

employee of the Loyalty Review Board had sent FBI reports on Lloyd, Nash, and scores of other Government employees to a man named Kohlberg, I believe in New York, who I believe was head of the Institute of Pacific Relations, and he passed the reports on to McCarthy. McCarthy used the reports to make speeches attacking Government employees on the Senate floor, but comparison of the FBI reports with McCarthy's speeches disclosed that he was deliberately, intentionally, and viciously distorting and falsifying the facts.

There was a grand jury inquiry condemning the leaks

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from the Loyalty Review Board. As I recall, it was ultimately determined that the woman leaking the FBI reports and information was of unsound mind. She was discharged from her employment but was not prosecuted.

MORRISSEY: Do you have any recollections of meetings or conversations with Mr. Truman?

HANSEN: I had none personally myself. About this?

MORRISSEY: Well, about this or about anything.

HANSEN: Well, I remember one conversation we had about setting up some kind of a program to do something about corruption in Government which ultimately led to the Newbold Morris setup. That's about all I remember except just some routine things that...

MORRISSEY: Did you meet Mr. Truman on your first day on the job?

HANSEN: I did. I reported to Mr. Murphy and he told Dick Neustadt to take me in to see the President, which he did; and the President told me a story which I cannot remember about his 90 years old red-headed grandmother, I do remember he told me this. He said, "There is a

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kleig light of publicity spotted on my desk," and he said, "I want you to stay out of the kleig light." He said, "I'm the man who makes the decisions; I'm the man that takes the heat. You do your job faithfully and conscientiously and you can be assured you'll have my full support and protection." And he said, "I've been criticized a lot for standing up for my friends and my associates, but I always have and I always will and you can be assured that that's what I'll do for you." "But," he said, "I'm the man who takes the publicity; that takes the heat and I want you to stay out of that area all together. You're to be a staff assistant." He said, "You're to help make decisions; to make recommendations on decisions; the decisions are mine and I do the talking about them." That in substance is what he said, which I thought was very good.

MORRISSEY: Was he or Mr. Murphy or anybody else on the staff concerned about staff members talking to the press, "leaking" I guess is the...

HANSEN: Not that I recall. I never heard anything about that.

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MORRISSEY: What did you do after January 20, 1953?

HANSEN: I went over to Internal Revenue Service, Office of the Chief Counsel. I went on their payroll in January before the administration changed. Then I remained in the Chief Counsel's office, Enforcement Division until August 1, 1961 when I came here to the Department of Justice.

MORRISSEY: I think we've just about covered it, Mr. Hansen, unless you have anything else that you want to submit as a closing gesture to posterity.

HANSEN: Thank you very much.

MORRISSEY: Thank you very much.

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