

Oral History Interview
with
MAX LOWENTHAL

Former consultant of the Senate Banking and Currency Committee, 1933-34; former counsel of the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee, 1935-41; and unofficial consultant in the White House from time to time during the Administration of President Truman, 1945-52.

New York, New York
September 20, 1967
and
November 29, 1967
by Jerry N. Hess, Harry S. Truman Library

The Harry S. Truman Library
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HESS: I usually start off, Mr. Lowenthal, by asking the people I'm talking to to give me a little biographical information -- where they were born, where they were educated and what positions they held.

LOWENTHAL: I was born in Minneapolis in 1888, February 26th; educated in the Minneapolis public schools; University of Minnesota; Harvard Law School, and by life in public and private affairs, I have worked in all three branches of the government, and my guess would be that in 35 years, from 1912 to 1947, about half the time

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was in government service; usually official, sometimes unofficial.

HESS: Thinking back, sir, could you tell me about your first meeting with Mr. Truman?

LOWENTHAL: Well, I can't remember that specifically, it was, I know, or I assume, in 1935. He had been appointed by Senator Wheeler, a member of the subcommittee for the inquiring into railroads and holding companies, under Senate Resolution 71, passed by the Senate in '35.

HESS: That was the one on February 4, 1935. Could you tell me the background to that resolution? What prompted Senator Wheeler to come up with that particular resolution at that time? That was the inquiry into the financial difficulties which were affecting the nation's railroads, correct?

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LOWENTHAL: Yes, and he had selected a subcommittee from the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee, with himself as chairman. One of the men so selected was Senator Robert Wagner of New York State, who was so pressed by other work that he had to withdraw from that subcommittee. I do not know, of my own knowledge, how it was that Senator Truman became a member of the subcommittee in place of Senator Wagner. Senator Wheeler might remember, all that I can remember is that he told me that Senator Truman had indicated a desire to serve on that subcommittee. And sometime after he was appointed I met Senator Truman, that was the first year as a senator.

HESS: In his *Memoirs* Mr. Truman mentioned that the subcommittee that was selected was composed of Alben Barkley of Kentucky, Vic Donahey of Ohio, Wallace White of Maine and Henrik Shipstead of Minnesota. He said, "Wheeler was the chairman

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of the subcommittee. Max Lowenthal and Sidney J. Kaplan were named as counsel, and assistant counsel to the subcommittee." And this is the way he said he became a member, he said, "I was not a member to begin with, but I asked Wheeler if I could attend the meetings; he said he would be delighted to have me, and when some of the members lost interest he put me on the subcommittee."

LOWENTHAL: So that would bear out what I had heard.

HESS: Is that one of the documents put out by the subcommittee?

LOWENTHAL: Yes, it is one of the printed volumes of the hearings. This is a hearing in May of '37. Actually there were a number of assistant counsels. The man at the head of the New York office of that investigation was Telford Taylor. At various hearings various of the assistant

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counsels conducted much of the questioning, and their names appeared.

HESS: Who were a few of those?

LOWENTHAL: Telford Taylor, Sidney Kaplan, George Rosier, Lucien Hilmer, John Davis -- and many others.

HESS: During those hearings were any of the senators usually present?

LOWENTHAL: Yes, usually it was Senator Wheeler but sometimes when he was out of Washington, he would ask Senator Truman to preside, I would recommend to you if you can get, or perhaps you have, a set of the hearings, and glance through them and see on which occasions Senator Truman was present. One of the assistant counsels was Lucien Hilmer who is now practicing law in Washington, D.C., Telford Taylor, whom I mentioned a moment ago,

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is occasionally practicing law in New York, he is a professor at the Columbia Law School. You might want to interview him sometime.

HESS: Are there any other gentlemen who served on that committee who might be available for interviews, that come to mind -- that served on the staff?

LOWENTHAL: If you will run through the volumes of hearings, you will see, as for example here, the names of the men who were most active in those particular hearings. There were a good many on the staff who were exceptionally brilliant men, such as Mr. Taylor and Mr. Hilmer.

HESS: Who chose those gentlemen to be members of the staff?

LOWENTHAL: They were appointed by the chairman, Senator Wheeler, but to some extent he relied upon me to make recommendations to him. It was not easy to find men who could work for the rather

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limited salaries paid the staff.

HESS: What qualifications were you looking for when you were hunting for people like that?

LOWENTHAL: Able men.

The man in charge of the Washington office was Robert K. McConnaughey. Alas, that able and sweet man has since died, just as Mr. Kaplan has since died.

HESS: How did Mr. Truman get along with the members of the staff -- a few of the men we have been talking about -- yourself and Mr. Kaplan and Mr. Hilmer? What was the relationship between Mr. Truman and yourself and the other gentlemen?

LOWENTHAL: I would say excellent. The more we got to know him, the better we liked him.

HESS: Were you surprised when he was put on the subcommittee, or not?

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LOWENTHAL: When Mr. Truman came to Washington, the publicity had been, not in connection with this inquiry, but with him as a prospective and then actual senator, that he was a political selection by the Democratic political leader in the Kansas City area whose name was Pendergast. As we worked for Mr. Truman we were very rapidly undeceived. He was not only a very conscientious member of the subcommittee, he never asked anyone on the staff to go easy on any subject. He said to us, for example with respect to persons and companies in his own state, "Deal with them as with all other subjects you take up."

HESS: There was an investigation that hit pretty close to home -- the Missouri Pacific investigation.

LOWENTHAL: Well, there were people connected with that and other systems who were Missouri people. He never asked for any favor or favorable

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treatment or favoritism by any member of the staff with respect to any person or company.

HESS: Do you recall if Mr. Pendergast, or someone in his office, might have attempted to place any pressure on Mr. Truman during this time?

LOWENTHAL: Well, if he did, I don't know that he did, but if he did, it had no effect, as far as the staff was concerned and the work they did, the records that they made, and the inquiries that they continued. Mr. Truman was a wonderful man to have on the subcommittee, and that wasn't the picture we had of him before any of us knew him, before he had gone on the subcommittee, but it was a picture we rapidly developed in our minds as soon as we got to know him. He was modest. He was untouchable.

HESS: How did Mr. Truman get along with some of the other senators that served on that particular

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committee? Now Alben Barkley served on the subcommittee too. How did he get along with Mr. Barkley?

LOWENTHAL: He got along very well. He was a very "gettable along" man.

HESS: His name came to mind since they were so closely associated at a later point. I just wondered how they got along in the early days.

LOWENTHAL: Of course, as time went on, when Mr. Wheeler wasn't in Washington, and some of the time he wasn't, during recesses and at other times, Mr. Truman was much more at the hearings than any of the other senators.

HESS: Were his relations fairly good with the other members?

LOWENTHAL: I'm sure they were first-rate.

HESS: One question that scholars can get from the

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printed hearings, but I just wanted to mention it, how were those hearings conducted? Were the questions usually put to the people that were being investigated by the staff members or by the senators?

LOWENTHAL: When Senator Wheeler was presiding, some of the questioning was by himself, but he got into the habit of having the staff do the questioning and I think that was generally the practice when Senator Truman presided.

HESS: Now a question back on the staff. When we were naming the men a while ago, did we name most of the professional staff members -- not counting the stenographers?

LOWENTHAL: No. And you can get them from the title page, or next to the title page, of each printed volume, and even more as you glance through the hearings themselves.

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HESS: I was just wondering are there any that come to mind, any outstanding staff members whom we have not mentioned?

LOWENTHAL: They were all pretty outstanding men. This was a search for top quality people. We were always on the lookout for more.

HESS: In 1939 Mr. Truman introduced the Wheeler-Truman Bill proposing changes in the interstate commerce laws regulating the financing of the railroads, and as he said in his *Memoirs*, that became the Transportation Act of 1940. Did you help with the drafting of that particular legislation?

LOWENTHAL: Very little if at all. That drafting was to a large extent done by the staff of the Interstate Commerce Commission, Maybe some of the staff of the subcommittee did help in some way or other, but I believe that while Senator Truman tended to give credit to the staff of the

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subcommittee, I think his doing so was rather on the kind of generous side.

HESS: Most of the work was actually done in the ICC, is that correct?

LOWENTHAL: I think so.

HESS: Do you recall anything about Mr. Truman's role in the handling or the writing of that legislation?

LOWENTHAL: Well, I think you could depend more on the *Congressional Record* in that period for that. And the 1940 Act was, as I remember it, to a large extent, a codification of earlier statutes.

And let me say here, this goes back a quarter of a century. Necessarily, my recollections should be checked.

HESS: That's one of the things about oral history, when we come along so many years after the fact.

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The historians realize that they have to check what the man is saying here in 1967 against the records and against the documents that were contemporary at that time. This is an understood, realized fact of oral history. Actually we're getting into this at a little later date than perhaps we should have, and to be done right there should have been someone talking to you in about 1942, but since the introduction of the tape recorder came sometime after that, we have to do the best we can.

Do you recall anything specific about Senator Wheeler's relationship with Mr. Truman?

LOWENTHAL: It was a good relationship. It was excellent

HESS: When did they first become friends, do you remember that?

LOWENTHAL: I don't know whether they had met before Senator Truman came to Washington in 1935. I just

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don't remember. Perhaps Senator Wheeler or some of his senatorial office staff would recollect.

HESS: In Mr. Truman's *Memoirs* he states, "The chief domestic issue with which I was occupied during the last few years of my first term was the regulation of the major modes of transportation. The hearings in which I participated and the work which I did in this area resulted in three major pieces of legislation -- the Civil Aeronautics Act, the Transportation Act of 1940, and the Bus and Truck Act." Now we've already mentioned the Transportation Act. Did you have anything to do with the Civil Aeronautics Act or Bus and Truck Act?

LOWENTHAL: I think not.

HESS: Mr. Truman states in his *Memoirs* that he and Senator Warren Austin of Vermont wrote the bill setting up an administrative director for the

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Civil Aeronautics Board who would be under the appointive power of the President. The bill was finally passed that way but only after some maneuvering by Senator McCarran.

LOWENTHAL: I wouldn't know about that.

HESS: In the book *Harry Truman: A Political Biography*, by William P. Helm, it is stated that you and Senator Truman wrote Mr. Truman's first report to the Senate and it dealt with the corrupt use of power by the large financial interests. I wonder if that was the speech that was delivered on December 20, 1937, in which he said, "No one ever considered Carnegie libraries steeped in the blood of the Homestead steel workers, but they are. We do not remember that the Rockefeller Foundation is founded on the dead miners of the Colorado Fuel & Iron Company and a dozen other similar performances." Is that the particular speech that Mr. Helm referred to? Mr. Helm said it was

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his first report, In going through the *Congressional Records* hunting this I found that to be Mr. Truman's first report to the Senate mentioning the large financial interests -- he mentions Carnegie and the Rockefeller Foundation -- and I just wondered if that is the speech Mr. Helm was referring to.

LOWENTHAL: I don't recollect this speech; I have just glanced through the pages that you have shown me. I might possibly have been talked to by him when he was preparing this speech, but I just don't remember, and I would be inclined to think "no", rather than "yes". But I can't say.

HESS: This is quite some time after the fact. What Mr. Lowenthal has just been going through are Xerox copies of the report by Senator Truman on the railroad finances found in the *Congressional Record*, seventy-fifth Congress, second session, volume 82, part 2, December 20, 1937.

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LOWENTHAL: What you call by the designation a "report" was a speech by the Senator. Some writer of a book may have, inaccurately, used the word "report" in referring to that speech but it was not a report, of course, by the subcommittee of which Senator Truman was a member. It was simply his individual statement to the Senate.

HESS: That is this particular item?

LOWENTHAL: That document that you just showed me.

The reports by the Senate subcommittee as a whole were usually, if not always, submitted by Senator Wheeler, the chairman. You might want to look at those reports. There were quite a few of them, they were fairly small in bulk, each one with a separate subject. I have somewhere, probably at my home in New Milford, Connecticut, a bound volume of the reports; I don't think I have it here, This has been more or less a temporary place for me to come to.

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HESS: On a slightly different subject, what was the relationship between Senator Truman and Senator Bennett Clark, the senior senator from Missouri, during those early days? Do you recall anything in particular on that?

LOWENTHAL: I do not.

HESS: In Mr. Truman's site of offices in the Senate Office Building, they had a particular room called the "doghouse". Did you ever visit that "doghouse"? Did you ever have any meetings in there?

LOWENTHAL: I wouldn't remember.

HESS: Did you ever have occasion to work with any of the people who were on Senator Truman's personal staff during those years -- Harry Vaughan, Victor Messall, Mildred Dryden or any of the others?

LOWENTHAL: I saw them from time to time, of course. My memory is so inadequate that until you

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mentioned Messall's name, I had forgotten that name.

HESS: Who else was on Mr. Truman's staff at that time? Do you recall any other professional staff members?

LOWENTHAL: Did Bill Boyle work for him as senator?

HESS: He was a member of the Truman Committee staff. I believe he started in there in 1941.

LOWENTHAL: I just can't say.

HESS: When did you begin your work on the Hill, sir?

LOWENTHAL: Wells with, this subcommittee in '35. Previously I had been a consultant to the Senate Banking and Currency Committee in '33 and '34. I can't remember that I had worked for any congressional committee before that, but this I would not want to affirm categorically.

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HESS: Were you still employed on the Hill during the years of the Truman Committee -- that started in 1941 running through '48; of course, Mr. Truman left in '44?

LOWENTHAL: I think that until we went into World War II, I may have been doing some work for the Interstate Commerce Committee. I was for a number of years, in that category which was referred to as dollar-a-year men, but when we went into the war I had a talk with Senator

Wheeler and suggested that probably I ought to be available on some wartime work, and Chairman Wheeler thought that was right.

HESS: Well, the Truman Committee got under way in March of '41, Did you have any dealings with any of the members of the Truman Committee during those early years? Now Hugh Fulton was the first general counsel. Do you recall anything in particular about Hugh Fulton in those early years?

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LOWENTHAL: No.

HESS: Charles Patrick Clark also started in at an early date.

LOWENTHAL: No.

HESS: And Matthew Connelly. Do you recall, anything about Mr. Connelly during those early years? He was chief investigator on the Truman Committee?

LOWENTHAL: I don't recall. I got to know Matt when he was at the White House. I didn't get to know him, as far as I can remember, when he was working for the Senate committee, but I can't say that categorically either.

HESS: He worked with Mr. Truman from 1941, and then when Mr. Truman was Vice President, Connelly was his executive assistant, and then he served as appointments secretary, as you

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know, in the White House.

I have read that you introduced Mr. Truman to Mr. Justice Brandeis, is that correct? What do you recall about that?

LOWENTHAL: Well, as we had gotten to know Senator Truman -- we the staff members -- more and more, we came to admire him more and more. We were impressed by his extraordinary fine qualities, as a public man, and as a human being, and we were very much attracted by his modesty. One day in the course of talking I happened to ask him whether he knew Brandeis. He said no. I asked whether he would like to talk with him, because I had known him for a good many years before that. He said yes he would. And when we were going up there, he said, "You know, I'm not accustomed to meeting such people as Justice Brandeis." He didn't mean to decry the fineness of his senatorial colleagues, that he took for granted, of course, he simply meant that here

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was a figure somewhat remote from his own congressional activities, and apart from his daily life. I think he meant to indicate that he had a very strong feeling of admiration for Brandeis, who was more or less in a position of a seer or a prophet. This was sometime, certainly, within the last four years of Brandeis' active duty on the court, and within the last six or seven

years of Brandeis' life. And by that time Brandeis, to younger men, was a very great figure.

HESS: After they became acquainted and got to know each other, did you hear Mr. Truman say anything about Brandeis -- give his opinion of Brandeis -- and also did you ever hear Mr. Justice Brandeis give his opinion about Mr. Truman?

LOWENTHAL: I don't recollect. I'm sorry. I wish I could remember.

HESS: They got along fairly well, did they?

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LOWENTHAL: Yes, I'm sure that any remark either would have made of the other would have been something to treasure.

HESS: Mr. Truman in his *Memoirs* states that President Roosevelt had offered "in a roundabout way" to put him on the Interstate Commerce Commission at the end of his first term in the Senate. Do you recall anything about that?

LOWENTHAL: No, I don't.

HESS: What do you recall about the relations between A. F. Whitney and Mr. Truman during the 1940 campaign? Jonathan Daniels had it in his book, *The Man of Independence* that you obtained the first contribution for Senator Truman from Mr. Whitney that year. Is that correct? Can you tell us anything about that? Mr. Truman was having a tough time in 1940 -- particularly in the

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primary; I believe it was Stark, Milligan and Mr. Truman who were the three that were running for the Democratic nomination in the primary, and Mr. Truman's finances were rather limited.

LOWENTHAL: I wouldn't know about his finances, but I would guess without any firm feeling as to recollection of it, that I might have had a talk with Whitney, and I might have suggested the support of Mr. Truman. By that time, if I may use an American colloquialism, I was deeply sold on Mr. Truman's usefulness to America. I haven't been a hero worshipper but I have had deep affection for some men in public affairs whom I got to know, and that was certainly true in the case of Mr. Truman. So I would have, if anybody asked me, certainly have spoken that way about him in 1940, and much earlier than 1940; and would surely, if asked, or even if I volunteered, have said that a man couldn't do better

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with his money than to try to get in a contribution to that campaign. And probably I did this with Mr. Whitney, but I can't remember.

HESS: This is a late date.

Thinking back on to those days, did you perhaps think that Mr. Truman's stand on labor matters might have put him in good stead with Mr. Whitney at this time?

LOWENTHAL: That is possible, but I can't recollect.

HESS: Looking back on those days of the 1940 election, the 1940 campaign, does anything in particular come to mind about Mr. Truman's efforts to be re-elected in 1940 to serve his second term in the Senate?

LOWENTHAL: I cannot recollect that I thought in those terms, or in that framework. For me, personally, what stood out, with respect to him as a public servant, was his character. Of course, as I look

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back I have the feeling that he was making his way in a world of which he had not been a part until 1935, and he did it very well.

HESS: What seemed to be his degree of awareness of his responsibility and duty in those early days in 1935? Here we have a man from Missouri who has never held high office and all of a sudden he is a United States Senator. What seemed to be his awareness of his duty?

LOWENTHAL: He was, of course, constantly reading, as you know, carrying books home night after night, reading history a great deal -- European history as well as American history. He was getting acquainted with the way things were done, you know that's an art in itself, and getting acquainted with the doers. It's that side of him that would deserve a full-length book; I don't know whether it would be possible to recreate or recollect the incidents. One would have to

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consult many of his colleagues, many of them are no longer active or alive.

HESS: What was the usual degree of preparation that Mr. Truman usually seemed to have done for the various hearings, or for the various functions that he was called upon to do?

LOWENTHAL: He would come to those hearings generally with a quite open mind. He wouldn't try to have conferences with staff members to see what was going to be taken up, except if there was a question of how long the hearings on certain subjects might run. There would be occasional but quite rare sessions in his office. I remember one occasion which stands out in my memory fairly clearly, I think, not of the kind you have asked about -- I mention this now because it seemed so important to me. But one hearing at which he presided, when Senator Wheeler wasn't in Washington, the counsel or the assistant counsel was

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doing the examining and finally got a particular witness to admit that a particular document was not accurate -- it was perhaps misleading -- a document put out by a company. At the next hearing the witness more or less retracted the admission, and spoke very severely about and against the subcommittee and its staff.

HESS: Do you recall the name of that individual?

LOWENTHAL: What I remember is that it was the kind of accusation, the kind of attack which would have angered any man who was attacked, and there Mr. Truman was the presiding officer at the hearing. You will find the words, undoubtedly, in the printed hearings.

HESS: What was his general attitude at that time?

LOWENTHAL: Well, he said, "I will suspend the hearing now. The subcommittee will not be able to deal justly with this witness at the present moment --

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today." He wasn't going to let his anger be in him while presiding at a hearing. I always thought it was a very fine attitude and action on his part.

HESS: I should mention, please don't limit yourself just to the questions I ask. Anytime you have anything to add it's quite all right. It's better than all right, that's what we're here for.

What would you say was Mr. Truman's major contribution during his first term?

LOWENTHAL: I don't know.

HESS: Does anything else come to mind before we move on to Mr. Truman's second term -- when he was elected in 1940? Now Mr. Truman's principal interest, of course, during his second term was the Truman Committee, the Committee to Investigate the National Defense Program. Did you have any

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connection with Mr. Truman in that matter?

LOWENTHAL: I think not, because...

HESS: Did you ever discuss matters with him relative to the Truman Committee? Did you ever hear him make any statements about the Committee?

LOWENTHAL: I attended one or two hearings out of interest, but I was completing work for the Interstate Commerce Committee at that time and then I was involved in some work in the war effort which was pretty absorbing -- it was day and night work. I did see Senator Truman from time to time because I had developed such an affection for him as a human being, and there were some matters that came up other than, strictly speaking, the matters of the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee's investigations and other than inquiries which were made in connection with the Truman Committee's work, costs and procurement,

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and so on, and there came up during '41, and '42, a subject which had been coming up before, and that was the subject of whether to legalize wire tapping by any Government agency. In the statute that had been enacted in the '30s and in the Supreme Court rulings on that statute, all persons and organizations, including all government agencies, were forbidden to wire tap. The original statute had been in the jurisdiction of the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee; it was part of the Federal Communications Act of 1934, I think, but I'm not sure. Senator Wheeler appointed a subcommittee of his Interstate Commerce Committee, of which he was chairman, to consider any legislation that might be proposed in the subject of wire tapping. I think that was in '42, and he appointed Senator Truman chairman of that subcommittee, and I think that subcommittee held one executive session in which they took some testimony, and

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Senator Truman wrote letters to the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, the Secretary of Navy, the Federal Communications Commission, to ask whether they thought that to authorize wire tapping by a Federal agency would be good or bad. He received an answer from Secretary of State Cordell Hull, to the effect, as I remember it, that it would endanger the war effort to authorize wire tapping by any agency. Mr. Truman himself didn't like wire tapping, and was strongly opposed to it.

HESS: Did you ever hear him give a reason for that? Express a reason?

LOWENTHAL: I think, in general, his attitude was somewhat like that which he expressed, perhaps in 1947 when the Mundt-Nixon Bill was introduced to punish sedition. As I remember the public statement in vetoing that bill, it boiled down to his saying that it was unnecessary and

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dangerous. I think he felt that way about it. Now those letters that he wrote, he was good enough to let me see, and let me have copies of, and I shall try to find them and let you know. He also was good enough to let me have a copy of Cordell Hull's reply. In trying to find material that Dr. Brooks has asked me to send to the Truman Library collection, and at which I have been rather laggard...

HESS: We would appreciate them anytime we can get them.

LOWENTHAL: I found copies of the letters that I have just mentioned, except the copy of the letter from Secretary of State Cordell Hull to Senator Truman, which I must have put away to make sure of its safety -- so safely that I couldn't find it.

HESS: Did Mr. Truman have a very active interest

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in matters regarding the Interstate Commerce Committee of the United States Senate during his second term? In the first term it seemed to be his major interest -- the railroad matters and things of that sort.

LOWENTHAL: Of course, he did serve on that subcommittee on wire tapping.

HESS: Other than that.

LOWENTHAL: I can't remember just now. Something occurs to me that I should mention: In some talk or talks that I had with him -- from time to time we would have talks that wouldn't relate to some committee work or other -- and on this my recollection is clear as to purport and not otherwise clear, that when he came back from service in the Army in the First World War, he was disgusted with the hysteria that prevailed in some quarters in 1919 and 1920, and I think he never forgot that -- that

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disgust that he had acquired. You may remember -- I don't mean to say that Mr. Truman mentioned this specifically -- there was a magazine published by a man named Guy Empey. He published that magazine in that post-World War I period for a year or two maybe, I can't say, perhaps the Library of Congress could yield some copies and you could learn from that. The name of the magazine was *Treat 'Em Rough*, and it was a carryover of the excitement -- you see our nation had not been in a major war since the Civil War and suddenly we were in a war in Europe two or three generations after the war of '65. A good many people were greatly excited and there was a good deal of "treat them rough stuff" during World War I and for a year or two or three afterward. I think that burned into Mr. Truman, who had been engaged in active fighting in France during the war, that such things should go on.

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HESS: Was it a right wing publication?

LOWENTHAL: I don't know if that kind of phrase was used at that time. I think the term right wing and left wing at least -- I don't remember but I think that came along years, if not decades later, in any kind of use.

You know, there was during World War I bitterness against the Socialists and against the I.W.W., not against, to any extent, the Bolsheviks; that came later. You read about that period. They threw Victor Berger, the Socialist, out of the Congress. Mr. Truman was disgusted with such excitement, and I think that may have been part of his make-up from childhood onward, but I'm only guessing.

HESS: What do you recall, sir, about Mr. Truman's nomination as Vice president in 1944, and his selection on the Roosevelt ticket? Did you go to that convention?

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LOWENTHAL: I was not a delegate, but I was in Chicago at that time, and I thought it would be a great thing for the United States if he held such office,

HESS: Did you talk to Mr. Truman before this time about the possibility of his accepting the vice-presidential nomination?

LOWENTHAL: There was considerable talk by persons much more highly placed than I was or ever would be about that, and I talked to a great many people about him. Before the convention I had a talk with him and he said that he had been asked by Jimmy Byrnes whether he, Truman, would nominate him and he had consented, and so he wasn't going to run. He told me, before the convention that he had a phone call from Alben Barkley, wanting to know whether he, Truman, would nominate Alben Barkley, and he said that he'd already consented to nominate

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Byrnes, but he was very sympathetic with Barkley's aspirations.

HESS: Did Mr. Truman at this time make any statement regarding the possibility that he might be a candidate?

LOWENTHAL: He definitely told me he wouldn't because he had promised to nominate somebody else, and also told me he couldn't afford to be Vice President. And I said that Mr. Wallace had been Vice President. "Yes," Mr. Truman said, "but Mr. Wallace was a well-to-do man."

I had been talking with Mr. Truman but I was one of the very, very minor persons who talked to him on the subject, and I had nothing to do, as far as I can remember, with the efforts of highly placed people to induce him to run...who started the talk.

HESS: Who were those people? Do you recall?

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LOWENTHAL: Well, I have heard that Hannegan had a lot to do with it.

HESS: He was in charge of the Democratic National Committee at that time.

LOWENTHAL: And I had heard also that Les Biffle was interested in that. And I was talking with Bill Boyle and Mr. Truman a little bit and on the day when Mr. Truman was going to drive out to Missouri, which was some days before the convention was to meet, I happened to call Bill Boyle, and he told me that Mr. Truman was going out to Missouri, that he was going to drive himself, and that he wasn't going to run for Vice President, for the nomination, and he told me when I asked where Mr. Truman was, he said he was in his office, so I phoned down to Mr. Truman's office and asked him if I could come to see him if he would wait for me, before he started driving to Missouri, and he said he

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would. And I jumped into a cab -- I couldn't take my own car, I just wanted to be sure to get there quickly, and I had a long talk with him, some of it was on the amusing side. I don't know whether you want this or not but I think it tells a story. He was wearing his hat, and I said, "Well, you remind me of that story I heard about the porter in the bank in South Carolina who was asked by the president of the bank to" -- you know this story -- well, I recited this story...

HESS: Is that the one where the bank president had his hat on and the porter...

LOWENTHAL: It was the cashier, he was bald and always wore a straw hat...

HESS: The porter didn't think that was a safe bank to put his money in, is that right?

LOWENTHAL: He always went up to the window to deposit his little savings. He saw a man there

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with his hat on.

So Mr. Truman took his hat off and he was very nice about it, but he said no, he'd promised to nominate Jimmy Byrnes and he couldn't afford to be Vice President, financially, and we got to talking about Wallace, whether it was on that occasion or some other occasion, he said to me that Wallace was a very aloof person and he doubted if more than a few senators had ever been in Wallace's office as Vice President.

HESS: Did he say anything else on the subject of Mr. Wallace?

LOWENTHAL: By that time it had become very clear that Mr. Roosevelt didn't think that Mr. Wallace should have another term as Vice President, but in talking about it he said, "You know, when Mr. Garner was Vice President, almost every member of the Senate of each party was in Mr. Garner's office, at least socially,

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several times a year" -- Truman was pointing out the contrast.

Then Mr. Truman said to me, "No, I just had a long talk with the madam" (he referred to Mrs. Truman that way), and she seemed to think that he shouldn't run either.

I was then living just beyond Chevy Chase Circle and he drove me out to my home, on his way to Missouri.

Well then, I wasn't a delegate, but as an American citizen, I had a right to go to Chicago. A good many people go to these conventions who aren't delegates. I had quite a few friends out there to whom I had been talking about Mr. Truman for years, ever since I got to know him well, and I met some of them in Chicago who had some weight. And by that time it had become clear that Mr. Byrnes wouldn't be nominated, so the field was open and you know about the letter and so on and so on, and I had some of

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my friends meet him.

HESS: Do you recall any names?

LOWENTHAL: Some of the labor people who were out there who were of importance; Mr. Whitney was one; others from the railroad unions, with whom I had worked on various matters for some years, with whom I had good relations. And I was sharing a room in Chicago with John Carson and he knew a great many people, he had been in Washington from the early 1920s and was very, very highly regarded by all sorts of people, both those in government and put of government, in the Senate and in the House and the executive branch, and among the press.

HESS: He later became a commissioner on the Federal Trade Commission.

LOWENTHAL: That's right. He's still living but hasn't been well lately.

HESS: He lives in Washington doesn't he?

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LOWENTHAL: Yes, he does. A wonderful, wonderful official of the public service for many years. And we used to talk in the mornings before we went out on our rounds to see our friends, and at night we'd tell each other what we'd been doing. There are many, many people like that at convention time in the convention city. I read Mr. Truman's *Memoirs* about that convention and it struck me that my recollections, as to some sequences of events, as to what took place, were different to a considerable extent from Mr. Truman's.

HESS: What were your recollections?

LOWENTHAL: Of course, in the meantime he'd been President of the United States, and has had his mind filled with much larger matters than the minutiae of the activities on the convention floor and off the convention floor.

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HESS: What differences do you recall? Do you recall any particular ones at this late date?

LOWENTHAL: Well, I shall find sometime a memorandum or a letter that I'd written to my wife and when we find that that will be my understanding of what took place on that very day. When I read the Truman Memoirs and found that my recollections were somewhat different than his, all in the same direction, of course, but different as to the sequence of events, I asked John Carson for his recollections, and his and mine were at considerable variance, both with Mr. Truman's and with each others. Let's see, I think that book came out after Mr. Truman had left the White House.

HESS: '55, I believe.

LOWENTHAL: I remember him saying to me one day, "I hadn't wanted to run but now I'm in it, and I'm in it to win the nomination," and he told

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me that he had said to various senators, and for what reason I don't at the moment recollect, "Of course, if you want to foul your own nest go ahead," but in just what way that came into the story I don't remember, but you've heard of it so that you know better than I do.

Well, there were others who were being advocated for the nomination, just as there were others who were in 1948 advocated for the presidential nomination.

HESS: Do you have any other recollections of the convention in Chicago in 1944?

LOWENTHAL: I must have lots of them.

There were several candidates proposed that had earned the chance to be nominated, but Mr. Truman told me that President Roosevelt had included his name in the two or three that he had indicated that he would be willing to have, but that he...

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Mr. Truman and I went up to see Phil Murray, to call on him, he was then the head of the C.I.O., but I think that someone in his organization had been urging another name on Phil Murray, but I believe in time he swung behind Mr. Truman, or was glad to have him, whether he had swung over or not. The railroad union people were for Mr. Truman. We called on several people, whom I suggested, but I want it clear to you that I was the smallest participant in that whole situation. I wanted to do all I could, but all I could amounted to almost nothing.

HESS: Do you recall anything about the campaign in 1944, if that's all on Chicago? Do you have anything else on Chicago? Taking things chronologically.

LOWENTHAL: I am sure I must have worked my head off, but I don't have a recollection. I don't have much of a recollection about that campaign

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as I do about '52.

HESS: Well, Mr. Truman and Mr. Roosevelt were elected in November, and the following April 12, 1945, Mr. Roosevelt died. What were your thoughts on April 12, 1945, upon hearing of the death of Franklin Roosevelt -- looking back on that period in history?

LOWENTHAL: My own thoughts were, of course, something like the thoughts of most people, I wasn't thinking of Harry Truman then. If you interview John Carson, you might want to remind him of what he told me, Lew Schwellenbach of the state of Washington -- you know that story, or at least you can get it from John at firsthand. I would only be telling you what John told me that Lew told him.

HESS: Give me a little bit to go on so I can...

LOWENTHAL: Lew told him that he'd been asked to come East by Mr. Truman -- he was then a Federal

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judge in the state of Washington -- and Lew told John, so John told me, he said that Truman was going to be his own master and people were going to be surprised who had under-judged him, misjudged him, undervalued his personality, as Truman showed. I saw Mr. Truman thereafter from time to time, not very often, in the early part of his presidency. In fact there was a war job, or a wartime produced task to be performed in Berlin and I was directed by the War Department to work on that matter and go over to Germany. I had known Bob Patterson, and I remember that Bob Patterson and I used to walk uptown from the Wall Street section to where we could eat a very good, filling meal of first-rate food for a very, very small price. So we knew each other all those years, and he asked me to go over. I called on the President before I went but it was a job on which I was sent by somebody else altogether, and I think without President Truman's

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prior knowledge that I was to be sent. I called on him just to tell him that I was going, but I did, as time went on, see more of him -- I think that was the last official position I held in government.

HESS: What kind of a President did you think Mr. Truman would make looking back on those early days?

LOWENTHAL: I can't remember that specifically now, but I was a very biased person by that time. [See supplemental statement made by Mr. Lowenthal to the interviewer on November 19, 1967, page 116]

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Second Oral History Interview with Max Lowenthal on
September 20, 1967.
By Jerry N. Ness, Harry S. Truman Library.

HESS: At the conclusion of our morning session, Mr. Lowenthal, we were discussing what kind of a President that you thought Mr. Truman would make at that time. Did we fairly well cover what you wanted to say on that?

LOWENTHAL: Yes.

HESS: Now we have got Mr. Truman up through the nomination of '44, through the election of '44, and through April 12, 1945, and we have discussed what type of President that he would make; before we get to the 1948 convention, and any questions we might come up with on that, did you have any dealings with Mr. Truman, or with the White House staff, in those first four years? Tell me about that.

LOWENTHAL: I can't remember the day on which I

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had gone -- my guess is that as the years went on, he had '45 to '52, I probably saw more of him, or saw him more often, as time went on. Except for the one official job that I had in being sent over to Germany in '46, I don't think I had any other official job.

HESS: What was the task that you had in Germany?

LOWENTHAL: In the fall of 1946 I was asked to go to Berlin. At the time Berlin was under a three or four nation army administration. The American military authorities in Berlin wanted to have a decree on the subject of restitution to owners of property which had been stolen from them by Nazis -- by the Nazi authorities. The War Department wanted me to go over to advise them on that subject. I called on President Truman just before I flew to Europe on that job. It was more or less a courtesy and friendship call. The idea of having such a decree had not originated,

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so far as I had any knowledge, with him, although it might have. Nor had the idea of having me go over originated with him. I had known Secretary of War Robert Patterson for a great many years. The authorities in Berlin had asked for the submission for their consideration of several lawyers with some experience in the corporation finance field. Well, only one name as it turned out was submitted, and that was mine. I had been out of government effort by that time for perhaps two years, but that wasn't a request to which I was in a position to say no. And while you might say that that job -- the framing of a decree for restitution of stolen property -- was performed during President Truman's time in the White House, I don't think one could attribute whatever was done to him expressly, though his influence in general would be likely to turn to that as one of the desirable corrections made. Secretary of State Dean Acheson sent a very kind telegram to the State Department adviser in Berlin, Mr. Robert Murphy, and so

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on. I spent quite a lot of time going over papers relating to the subject -- people in the State and War Departments. It's possible that President Truman may have had some word passed around, I am not sure.

The real problem there was what did you do about property of people whose families were utterly wiped out, what was called, or could be called "heirless" property. And while I don't know that I discussed this in any detail with the President, either before or after that trip, I am confident that that would have been of considerable appeal to him.

I had a good deal of work on that subject after I came back to this country.

Now, when the Attorney General's office submitted a program in one of those years -- the first administration, I think it was, it might have been at the beginning of the second, I don't know. I was out in Minneapolis and I

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noticed a list of recommendations and there was one on relaxing the universal ban on wire tapping. I wrote the President a letter from Minneapolis and made mention of the fact that I noticed that that was in the list. I didn't hear from the President except at occasional times. I

think I did -- I think the things that I did believe in, coming from the Middle West, were the sort of things that he believed in. Now, for example, a man can be trapped. We had a case when I was working for a war agency where a woman and her husband who -- the man was working for our agency and the husband for the agency that Rockefeller was the head of, the Inter-American -- or whatever it was called -- agency. They were both ordered dismissed by the Civil Service Commission on the basis of private investigative reports. The Rockefeller agency didn't heed the order, they just kept on employing the professor who was working for them, who had come from Oklahoma, but the wife

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who knew foreign languages and our particular bureau had to have a good deal of translation of agricultural and other professional journals for our work, she knew French very well and she was hired out there, but she was ordered fired and she was fired. We were short-handed, and we made our own inquiries and held our own hearings in our bureau, and appointed three of our top-flight lawyers and some other people to be the board, and the assistant general counsel of our board conducted the inquiry and it was evidently all, a mistake. There was a nut -- I was told this by the head of the Alumni Association of the University of Maryland, and by the people we contacted in that part of the suburbs called College Park. And this professor and his wife had happened to entertain a Negro at tea, a man named Ralph Bunche, who wasn't then known, but who was in the same university work as this professor, and the assistant general counsel of

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our board said, "Well, let's look at the case." And the first thing that made us doubtful was that once we had seen the record on which she was convicted: It was on the grounds that a neighbor had seen sexual promiscuity in the kitchen of this house, and had seen it from his bedroom window. And our assistant general counsel said, "Well, let's go out and look at the building." So we went out, and it turned out that the kitchen was on the other side of the house. He was evidently a -- everybody we contacted out there, of any important position, said he was a crackpot. He had some minor job in the Government, and probably was scared by Negroes appearing there that it might reduce his property values. I don't know. And then another thing that came along was that the investigative agency reported that this woman, who was a wealthy San Franciscan, and had inherited a lot of money, that when she phoned the grocer out in Oklahoma where this

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professor was at the university, she didn't ask how much prices were.

HESS: That's not much to go on is it?

LOWENTHAL: Well, you know things of that sort, and so a report was written by our own board's panel, and I took a copy of it up to Senator Truman. He brought it back the next morning and he said to me, "That's right down our alley." That was in 1943. In 1946 he wanted to provide for hearings for Government employees who were charged being this, that and the other thing.

HESS: That's the establishment of the President's Temporary Committee on Employee Loyalty.

LOWENTHAL: And in 1947 he signed an order. When I was there the next year and working in the White House unofficially on various things, I happened to be on the telephone with one of the staff, I hadn't known, much about him, or anything about him before that. He was just there for a short

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time. He had been an alternate on the interdepartmental committee, to draft this order.

HESS: Who was that?

LOWENTHAL: I can't remember. He is not in the Government any more. And I said, "I wonder how you came to provide that any organization blacklisted by the Attorney General would ipso facto be considered subversive, without trial?"

He said, "Well, we didn't provide there should be no trial."

I said, "But you didn't provide there should be one," and I pressed him on this a little bit.

Finally, he said, "Well, you see, in the Department I had been working for, for which I was acting as alternate on that committee, I was already considered somewhat radical, and if I had stood up for that sort of thing in the order, I might never have gotten this job at the

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White House."

I never discussed this with the President, but I could almost picture that order. The order was a long, intricate, detailed, single-spaced affair; even if the President had been a lawyer, he couldn't have taken the time off to study the thing from A to Z, and he was really caught in a fix there. Here was this high-grade interdepartmental committee submitting a draft for him, and he signed it. It was unfortunate. The order was very much criticized, and properly criticized, I thought. But poor Truman -- it's a backbreaking job to be President anyway, it takes all of your time, more than your time, you don't get enough leisure, you don't get enough rest, and then the long detailed orders are submitted to you, you might think you're providing for trials for accused Government employees and not realizing what you're providing for is the branding of organizations as subversive

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without trials. I was deeply sympathetic with his position -- what should he do? If there is an interdepartmental committee that submits a draft, what do you do? Study it? Well, I'm not sure, I think I never mentioned that to the President, but I know where his heart lay because of that experience back in 1943, and he'd never had law training as far as I can remember. And there were other times, I think, like that -- things came up by chance. If I could be of some use I was, but I think I was more so in the next administration. I talked too long on that.

HESS: No, that's all right. I understand that there was an operation that was conducted under your general supervision to prepare answers to the charges that Senator McCarthy was making in the 1950s.

LOWENTHAL: Oh, yes, I'd completely forgotten about that. He had charged that a certain number of

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people in the State Department were -- that reminds me of another job that I was given in connection with the charge that in the Government that men were taking positions in the Government who had private investments. And now this business of McCarthy: We had the job - and I didn't know anything about those men, I had never heard of those people in the State Department and I'd heard of him, but he was just a name. Well, let's see what there is in the record in the State Department, when these people were added to the staff of the State Department, and if necessary talk with any of them. Well, McCarthy had submitted a list, under some pressure, I don't know whether it was made public at the time or not, but it was made available to the State Department. McCarthy had been given a bum steer by somebody. You know how these things are. And on checking this stuff we said, here was the record on this and here was the record

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on that, and so on. You know, some of the old hands in the House had done a similar job in that same decade, not with respect to the State Department, but I don't know whether you remember the Dies Committee, and they had charged thirty, forty, fifty, I don't know how many, people with being reds, somewhere in the Government. And some of the older hands in the House didn't like the Dies' procedures, and the House Appropriations Committee appointed a subcommittee to check on all of those names, and as I remember there appeared in the -- and it was under the chairmanship of a congressman from North Carolina, I forget his name, but he was one of the old -- there were a lot of old-line Democrats in the South, who didn't like the Dies Committee from the beginning, and one certificate after another was published in the *Congressional Record*. They had found nothing to justify this charge, so that really the House Appropriations Committee, with the approval

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of the House, had done this sort of thing before this came up about the McCarthy charges, and the cases followed the same technique -- checking the story; what was there to the story.

And there was this other thing I told you about, what was it, oh, finances. There was this big hullabaloo about people taking jobs in government who had investments that would be affected by proper regulation -- governmental regulation. You may or may not remember the time when Charles Hughes, Jr., the son, of the Chief Justice, was to be named Solicitor General. I think his father was still Chief Justice. I knew about this because Charlie was in my class at law school. He was a very nice fellow. And it came up before the appropriate committee of the Senate and they said, "Don't you think you ought to sell such and such securities that would come within your jurisdiction as Solicitor General?"

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Of course, they really made him a lot of money and that was just before the market break. Now, of course, he might have bought some other securities with the money, I don't know.

So again there was a precedent -- it would have been a good thing to do even if there hadn't been a precedent -- to check on who was being appointed to high office: Does he have such and such a character? And there were one or two cases that I was asked to look into, and I recommended in one case I remember that it might be just as desirable to sell such and such securities, Well, that is the sort of incidental job I would do when called upon, and often I didn't know whether the President himself had suggested that I go in, or knew what I was doing, but I think probably he did.

HESS: At the time you were working on the answers for Senator McCarthy, who helped you in that

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operation? Do you recall?

LOWENTHAL: There was a young man there...

HESS: Was it Herbert Maletz?

LOWENTHAL: Possibly. There was another fellow -- there was a fellow named...

HESS: Was it Lowell Mellett?

LOWENTHAL: Lowell Mellett? He was connected with the Scripps-Howard papers. There was a young man, a very nice young man and very competent. Matt would know his name. A very good fellow, I think his name was Frank..I think he was practicing in law.

HESS: Not Franklin N. Parks?

LOWENTHAL: I think you might be getting close to it.

HESS: I'm calling out a few of the names of people I have run across.

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LOWENTHAL: That might have been the name -- a very nice fellow and a fellow I could rely on that when he said something, that he had really checked adequately, and I think he also worked on that State Department job, but whether it was Parks -- Matt would know.

HESS: This is one of the ways we narrow it down.

LOWENTHAL: I think it might be.

HESS: Now did you have an office in the White House at that time, or the Executive Office Building -- have some working space there?

LOWENTHAL: Oh, when I would come on a job of that kind I was in and out of the -- you see, I usually stayed at the Cosmos Club, which was then at Lafayette Square, is it? It was just across from the building, and I didn't have to have an office, but sometimes they would give the desk space and sometimes they didn't, and it really

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didn't matter. I was long past the time when I was interested in big offices and such trappings.

HESS: At the time you would be called in to the White House to help on these various matters, did you get very much assistance from the members of the White House staff?

LOWENTHAL: Oh, I could go around and talk to them and so on, and every once in a while I would have to...

HESS: Who was the most helpful?

LOWENTHAL: There were several. I myself think the most helpful was Matt Connelly. I want to tell you, I want to put myself on record with this, I think he was not dealt with sympathetically. I think he suffered from -- if he'd been a non-entity, if he'd been an unknown figure, if there wasn't a background of hatred of

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Harry Truman himself in that situation, he would probably never have been bothered. It's one of those things -- I don't know what happened in those trials out there -- I never saw the record, or I didn't read it, but I heard enough about it to know how the jury, or the grand jury, was selected, how they had moved the case from where Matt was supposed to have done anything improper way out to St. Louis, which wasn't where he had acted, and the jury was drawn not from city people but from farm folk who wouldn't understand the complexities. I found him -- I'd never known him before he came down to the White House. I thought he was a most useful man -- most useful -- not a lawyer as far as I know, but he worked hard. And he had a fine assistant, Roberta Barrows. She had a desk off to one side from his and a little bit farther back. She was wonderful, as was Matt Connelly. Now others who were first-rate, the counsel to the President...who was that?

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HESS: Well, the first one was Sam Rosenman. He left in 1946.

LOWENTHAL: I never saw Sam Rosenman there, that is to speak of.

HESS: And then Clark Clifford was counsel, and he left in 1950.

LOWENTHAL: Clark Clifford was excellent.

HESS: Then Charlie Murphy was from 1950 on.

LOWENTHAL: He was also very good.

HESS: What was your evaluation of Clifford and then Murphy?

LOWENTHAL: That would be very hard to say, my guess would be -- I liked both of them very much so that I'm biased. My guess was at the time that Clifford had had more private experience, more trial experience in private matters, more law practice in private matters than Charlie had --

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I may be wrong now -- but I got that impression which may not be wholly correct. Actually I saw much more of Clifford -- I didn't see a great deal of any of the White House staff -- more of Clifford than I did Murphy.

HESS: I have a list here that I was going to run through a little bit later, but we might as well do it right now. The first one on my list is Rosenman, and we've covered...

LOWENTHAL: I didn't see him in action any. I don't remember if I did.

HESS: And then Clifford and Murphy.

How about Charles Ross and Joseph Short, the two men who were press secretaries.

LOWENTHAL: Charlie Ross -- I am so biased in his favor.

HESS: Tell me about him.

LOWENTHAL: He was an old-line newspaperman with very

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high standards. If he said something to you, he might remember incorrectly -- he might have been told incorrectly, but you could rely on him. And he was an old friend of Mr. Truman's, he was from Missouri, and for Mr. Truman; I'm sure, it was a great, great comfort to him to have Charlie Ross there.

HESS: As you know he was press secretary, but did he also make policy recommendations?

LOWENTHAL: I wouldn't know. I wouldn't be present, except rarely, at any talks on policy matters, and that would be when there were others of the staff there. What went on between Mr. Truman and Mr. Ross because of the rapport between the two men, the deep sympathies between the two men -- you know how Mr. Truman was devoted to Missouri and the fact that he was from Missouri made that so much stronger -- I just wouldn't know. But I can't believe that he wasn't the greatest

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help to Truman -- just his presence, but his assistant that you speak of, Short...

HESS: Well, he came in later, Mr. Ross died in December of '50.

LOWENTHAL: I don't remember...

HESS: Joseph Short.

LOWENTHAL: I remember writing to Mr. Truman, or speaking to him orally, to express my sympathy, and said what a loss it was to him personally to lose Charlie Ross. He was first-rate, and there may be some others on the staff whom I forget for the moment.

HESS: Well, Mr. Truman's principal assistant for minority affairs was David Niles.

LOWENTHAL: Now David Niles was inherited by Mr. Truman from Mr. Roosevelt. He had a very nice manner. I'm sure I don't know very much about minority affairs -- listen to him or try to help

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out or try to conciliate -- it was a job where you weren't always right and you weren't always wrong. I think he was a very good man, but I wouldn't know as much about that. He wasn't in the White House building.

HESS: That's right, he was in the Executive Office Building.

LOWENTHAL: What other names do you have?

HESS: Well, before we get on with his assistant, of course, one of the main things Mr. Truman is recognized for is his recognition of the state of Israel in 1948.

LOWENTHAL: I know a little bit about that. I heard this secondhand from someone in the White House, I can't say for sure who told me, but I was told there was a run on and against Niles from some of the people in the State Department, trying to discredit him during that period. I was also

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told, but I wasn't present to see them, that there were frequent meetings of people from the State Department with Mr. Truman -- not the upper-up top -- not George Marshall. Now how much David Niles had to do with this is very hard to say, because he was not in that building -- and the drive against Niles which was really not simply to blacken Niles, but, in a sense, I would suppose was to block Mr. Truman's freedom of action, probably made Niles much more cautious about going into the White House. I think that -- now for instance I saw Mr. Truman fairly often, my guess is -- one of my friends who is now in his nineties once asked me to tell him whether I had any part in that business. My guess is that I wrote to that friend that I never discussed the subject

with Truman in that period at all. I thought it was good policy for him to make that decision. It was all a confused picture. I think Mr. Truman did a very smart thing. I myself

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think that he will be remembered for that; he beat the Russians to the punch -- he beat them all to the punch -- because as I remember when they had declared the State of Israel, it took him about...

HESS: A very short time.

LOWENTHAL: ...a few minutes or a few seconds, so he'd made up his mind.

HESS: In this matter did you ever hear the name Eddie Jacobson mentioned? Mr. Truman's former business partner,

LOWENTHAL: I cannot remember ever meeting the man. I knew he was -- that's the name of the man who was Mr. Truman's business partner in the haberdashery? I might possibly have been introduced to him some day in the White House and I'm almost certain that I never was, because I would have remembered that name. You know the way

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you go along, for example, in the corridors of the Senate Office Building where I worked for a number of years -- not every day but two days a week, three days a week, "Mr. Lowenthal, meet Mr. Jones." I wouldn't remember the face and I wouldn't remember the name the next moment, and there would be innumerable introductions -- it's just the commonplace of life, and you always had to be gracious, you had to be courteous, and if anybody wanted to see you, I would usually have some space in the Senate Office Building when I was down there, no matter who wanted to see me -- I might think it was a nut. I was in a position high enough in the staff so that either it was me or some member of the committee -- I couldn't have a member of the committee feel that I was hoity-toity to folks, it's bad business. But I would have remembered Jacobson I'm sure, but I don't think I ever saw him. Is he living?

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HESS: No, he's been dead for several years.

LOWENTHAL: Didn't he have a heart condition or something?

HESS: I'm really not sure.

LOWENTHAL: Did he have children or a wife?

HESS: I think so, but it's just a guess I'm not sure. All right now, David Niles' principal assistant was Philleo Nash. Did you have any dealings?

LOWENTHAL: I may have met him, I was going to say a moment ago, I never met him so far as I can remember, but I'm wrong on that, I must have met him, but I met him so in passing, so

casually, as far as I can remember, that I virtually never did meet him. But I even begin, as I sit here, to almost get a picture of him but I don't quite get what he looked like. But that's the way my memory serves me, or doesn't serve me.

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HESS: Now George Elsey was in the White House at the time.

LOWENTHAL: George Elsey I met. He was an assistant to Clifford. I didn't meet him very much or very often, but I thought he was a very good man, and a very nice fellow. And my impression of him was favorable, not favorable only because he was in the White House, but he had ability.

HESS: Stephen J. Spingarn.

LOWENTHAL: I never met him. I think I may have talked with him on the phone.

HESS: In the book, *The Truman Presidency*, Cabell Phillips has it that Stephen Spingarn worked along with you on the anti-McCarthy matter, but I understand that that is not true, is that correct?

LOWENTHAL: Not correct. I'll tell you something that I'm reminded of; this is off this line.

One day, I believe it was in the second administration -- it was either after the '44 Democratic convention or after the '48. You know in the '48 there was an attempt made to nominate Eisenhower for the Democratic nomination.

HESS: I understand the Americans for Democratic Action were even behind that for awhile.

LOWENTHAL: And then, they switched and wanted to have William Douglas but neither of those men is in the story I am going to tell you -- a brief story. I said to him: "Do you know who it was that said such and such things against you -- privately circulated certain rumors adverse to you?"

He said, "I don't know, but I suppose it was someone I had appointed to high office." He said it with a tone of resignation, that that is what happens to you in high office.

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Oh, I'll tell you another thing. I was down there one time -- now this is not known to his staff and one of the members of his staff will be very unhappy if he hears that I had interfered. I happened to be down in Washington on some other piece of work for Mr. Truman altogether, and he said, "Say Max, I'm going to let Howard McGrath out." I didn't say anything. I had known McGrath as a senator and liked him, but that wasn't any of my business. I think it's too bad that McGrath had done what so many others had made the mistake of doing of taking a Cabinet job when they were senators. They last longer as senators. And he told me the man of whom he was thinking of getting for the job. He said, "What do you know about him?"

I said, "I don't know anything about him, but I'll check." So I put out calls to various people: "What do you know about so-and-so?" And I found that he had submitted a report as a lobbyist or

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the head of the lobbying organization, condemning something that Mr. Truman had sent up to Capitol Hill as objectionable, or something of the sort. He may have used the word merely as a lobbyist, of course, he never meant anything personal about it. I said, "Now this is what I have picked up, and I find that most of the people are generally opposed and some of the labor groups." So, I said, "Here's all I have got."

He sat back in his chair and laughed. Now it was too bad for that man that he had that kind of a record, making that kind of a charge. He was the head of a lobbying organization and maybe that was the way you proceed and it didn't mean anything, but it would have been embarrassing to Mr. Truman to have appointed this man to the Cabinet and then to have some newspaperman say, "Well, this is what that man has said about Mr. Truman a year ago -- five years ago," Oh, yes, the

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story got around that I'd been inquiring about that man, and so the story was circulated to a congressman on the Hill, and I suppose he was given the very speech he was to make in which he said that the architect of the plan to get rid of Howard McGrath was myself. Later on, I think, that Don Dawson -- oh, and by the way, you asked me about staff. I think Don Dawson was a very useful member of that staff -- very useful. I think Don must have told Howard McGrath that I -- it was to the very contrary with respect to McGrath, at least I had stopped that -- the consequence of what I reported to the President after checking, was that he wasn't removed at that time. But you know how these stories get started and what rumors are like in Washington. And later on I was lunching with Senator Wheeler at the Carlton Hotel on 16th Street, and Howard came in, with one or two others, and said that he had heard from, I think he said from Don Dawson, but I'm

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not sure, that that story wasn't so, but he believed the story at the time, It's like my little town of Bridgewater. It has two churches and one store and a firehouse. You get gossip like that going around, and Washington isn't any different. Isn't that right?

HESS: That's right.

LOWENTHAL: Now I've gone way afield but I think I've given you some other stories. In fact, that's the way it is, I can't remember until I start talking,

HESS: That's the way it is with most people. How about David Lloyd?

LOWENTHAL: David Lloyd seemed to me to be such a decent fellow. I don't remember ever working with him on anything or consulting him on anything that I was told to do. And don't get the idea that I was told to do things very often.

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I was not there much around Washington; it's just when I was there, and there was a chance to drop in on the President, I would, and then he might have something on his mind.

HESS: Mr. David Bell.

LOWENTHAL: A tall fellow.

HESS: Yes.

LOWENTHAL: Was David Bell from the...

HESS: He came over from the Bureau of the Budget, I believe.

LOWENTHAL: Yes, I don't know whether I met him or not.

Something else occurs to me. One of the Hoover Commission's recommendations was to split up the Interstate Commerce Commission -- do you know about that -- to put railroad safety problems in one agency and rate-making in

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another. One of my friends in the railroad union field got in touch with me and said, "It won't work," and that the people who are most concerned about safety, aside from the passengers, are the employees of the railroad, and that's not the way they've now got it set up whereby they reduce accidents and things of that sort. He would hate to see, and they would hate to see, a labor dispute. And they were very powerful on Capitol Hill, at that time, and they may still be, for all I know. So many of the unions have branches in the states with small populations, where the local railroad unions are very important in the total electorate vote, so that through those senators and otherwise, but particularly through those senators whose states have small populations, they had a voice. Well, I found I couldn't get the Bureau of the Budget -- it wasn't Bell. I spoke with the Budget suggesting a talk with the railroad union people about this,

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"Oh," the man at the Budget said, "We never do that on the reports proposed by the Hoover Commission." That struck me as very odd. It was bureaucratic paralysis. The one thing that I have always learned in Government is talk to anybody who wants to talk to you -- make the time -- and if it's the representative of the employees whose lives are at stake...

I had to get back in touch with various people, who were feeling a little sore, and I told them quite frankly. They replied: "There is no need for you to be alarmed, no need at all; we'll stop this on the Hill," and it was stopped. I don't think I even talked with the President about this. And all I was trying to do was to arrange a meeting.

And, of course, every President needs as many lubricators for the machinery as he can physically get hold of, and that are reliable. These are jobs that can make the executive

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branch of Government function, all apart from re-elections. If there is dissatisfaction on the Hill, or throughout the country, or in important groups, and you can catch it before the dissatisfaction forces any change -- if you can prevent the error from being made, you want to do it, if you are a President. It's a killing job anyway. But I'm taking coals to Newcastle when I take your time to talk about such things.

HESS: Did you have any dealings with Dr. John Steelman?

LOWENTHAL: Some, but not a great deal. He had, or was supposed to have, I don't know which, a close relation with John L. Lewis of the mine workers, and I met Dr. Steelman from time to time. But I do think of one thing: In '48 there was a strike of the machinists on the west coast. The machinists union told me -- the national office -- that after all, the projects on which the companies in charge were working were projects in which, all the

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money was put up by the Government. They were just intervening managers representing corporations, and they have had no -- but they just wouldn't deal. Well, I'd had some experience in the field of labor relations, although I was myself what you might call a capitalist, and I had seen that there are always ways and means of solving most problems. The machinists were an important organization throughout the United States -- important for production. All that was needed was a telegram to the west coast, "Fix this up in this way." It's simple. It's odd how many things in disputes are as simple as an electric bulb looks to you after you've had it invented.

John Steelman had an eye infection and had gone to the hospital; this would have fallen in his jurisdiction.

I didn't want to have the situation hurt Mr. Truman because some manager of a plant had put his back up.

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The man in charge of the official papers which went to Mr. Truman for his signature, a man named Bill Hopkins...

HESS: He was Executive Clerk, I believe.

LOWENTHAL: I don't know for sure if he is still there.

HESS: I don't believe he is there any longer.

LOWENTHAL: A very nice fellow. He told me that the President had gone over to the residential wing and probably wouldn't come back that Saturday afternoon. When he told me that -- I'd been waiting for him to tell him the story -- Hopkins phoned over to ask him if we could come over there, and he said, "Yes," I said, "Bill has the draft of a paper on his, desk, and

it would be a good thing if you could sign it. John was gone to the hospital with an eye infection. I do know the machinists people, and they are good people." And that cleared that up, I think.

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And my younger son was helping me in '48. In '48 he was 23 years old, he was a grown man, but I hadn't been well, and I had been making trips, so he went down to Washington with me and so he came along with me. The President saw him. It was in his study in the White House in the residential part. He gave John some things out of a closet that he had that you would give to a child. John took them. John wasn't as dumb as I was at the time that Herbert Hoover had me down back in '29, and he opened a fifty-five minute talk that I had with him -- I know because I timed him -- by reaching down by his side to a box of cigars and bringing out two cigars cellophane wrappers, and he put one in front of himself and one in front of me. I said, "No, thanks. I don't smoke." I have kicked myself for almost forty years that I didn't take that cigar. Well, and John took these

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things; then Mr. Truman said, "Let me show you the White House, the residential part," and so he took us around. And he said, "When a King and Queen were visiting here, the Queen was in that room, the King was in that room, and there was an equerry in front of each door, and the King and queen would communicate with each other through their equerries," and he said, "I wonder how they had children."

HESS: That's very good.

LOWENTHAL: It may have been at that time that Mrs. Truman's mother was staying with them, and she was rather pleasantly acidulous of tongue, and she kind of -- she'd been sitting out on the porch there before she came in, it was outside the study in the residential part -- I liked the relation between him and the old lady. It was just a pleasant human thing that you wouldn't read about in the newspaper columns, and it endeared Mr. Truman all

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the more to me.

HESS: Does that pretty well conclude that?

All right, how about Kenneth Hechler? Did you have any dealings with Kenneth Hechler? He was special assistant along towards the last. He's presently the congressman from West Virginia.

LOWENTHAL: Whose place did he take?

HESS: I'm not sure.

LOWENTHAL: I can't say. It doesn't ring a bell.

HESS: How about Richard Neustadt?

LOWENTHAL: I think he came in toward the end. I saw him there once or twice but I didn't have any dealing that I can remember.

HESS: That's all of them that I have written down. Of course there were more people that worked on the staff -- we haven't gone over all of them.

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Is that the majority of them, do you think?

LOWENTHAL: I don't know. You know what the White House staff was like.

HESS: I have a question about the 1948 campaign and the nomination.

LOWENTHAL: That was in Philadelphia.

HESS: What comes to mind about that? Did you go down to Philadelphia that time?

LOWENTHAL: Yes.

HESS: Tell me about that.

LOWENTHAL: I had gone around up on the Hill, mainly among the senators, for weeks before that convention -- talked with my friends in the Senate body, getting their reaction. It was almost a universal certainty that the Democrats would be beaten. It was amazing how gloom had settled down on them -- and remind me to talk to you when

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I get through with this about the Truman and Dewey race,

Well, I got to Philadelphia and the gloom was there -- my what a gloom. Early in the morning -- there had been a delay because of some subject that came up at the last minute, but parading in front of the convention hall in Philadelphia was "Eisenhower for President," you know about that, and "Douglas for President," you know about that, but not Truman. He would be a sure loser. I was sitting in the hall, and I was tired -- I didn't get quite so tired then as I do now -- and either at one or two or two thirty in the morning, I forget when, the newspapers would tell, he finally came on the rostrum, he'd been waiting in a room by the side. He electrified the tired, dispirited, gloom-filled, sure-of-defeat crowd; he just had them on the ropes. It was one of the most electrifying things that I had ever been present at. Oh, he was simply

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the cream in your coffee and the cat's whiskers, and everything else. He had them standing on their chairs, he had them on their tiptoes. I had never thought of him as an orator. And then during the campaign...

HESS: One question on that speech. He ended his speech by saying on "Turnip Day" that he was going to call the Eightieth Congress back into special session, which he did. How important,

in your estimation, was that to call them back and to present them with what amounted to their own Republican platform?

LOWENTHAL: I don't know. I think it was a smart thing to do. I don't see what he lost by it, and he was pushing, he was on the offensive. He was driving, he wasn't sitting back. "These things needed doing, and they have got to be done, and I'll call them back, and let's do them." Those are not his very words, but they convey his ideas. During that campaign I heard

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a man who was not far removed from Dewey, maybe two or two and a half weeks before election day, say that Dewey had said to somebody who was urging him to do something, "No, I've been advised that I don't need to do anything. I should just let the election slide in." I wasn't entitled to be told that, but I picked it up, the way you do in public affairs, so I got in touch with the President. I told him that this is what Dewey said,

Mr. Truman said, "I want him to think it. I want him to think it. That's what I want him to think."

HESS: He wanted him to be complacent, didn't he.

LOWENTHAL: But it was with that finger thrust at me -- eager, insistent. I'll never forget while I have got a memory. And he had it sized up too.

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HESS: Did he tell you at that time how he saw the outcome of the election?

LOWENTHAL: I can't say that he did or didn't. I'm inclined to guess no, but I have at my farm, in my study, the photograph that you've undoubtedly seen, of Mr. Truman holding up the *Chicago Tribune*.

HESS: The "Dewey Defeats Truman" issue.

LOWENTHAL: He gave me a copy of that photograph with his inscription on it.

That was an election that took steadfastness and courage,

HESS: Did you think Mr. Truman was going to win that election?

LOWENTHAL: I can't say what I thought, I don't remember. I'll try to reconstruct, I certainly wanted him renominated and I wouldn't have been

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so keen to have him renominated if I thought he was licked. But he showed unexampled resources. But after all, he had started in politics in precinct work. I'm not going to mention the names of the senators who were beaten in those weeks before the convention, who were going along with...

HESS: Without much hope.

LOWENTHAL: ...and they thought -- well, of course, it was a hot summer and they were tired, and it was a hot summer in Philadelphia and the people were tired there. And where were the rays of hope? The ray of hope was Harry S. Truman.

HESS: That was the item on Mr. Dewey that you wanted me to remind you about, is that right?

LOWENTHAL: Yes.

HESS: All right. Anything else come to mind on the

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'48 campaign? Anything about the campaign or the election -- anything else in general?

LOWENTHAL: I know I was working my head off. But if you ask me...

HESS: I have some questions about some commissions that I have heard about, or read about, that never got off the ground. Can you give us any information about the following: I understand that there was a proposed commission on the exercise of the right to vote. Did you ever hear anything about that?

LOWENTHAL: No.

HESS: And I have read that the President was thinking about having a commission on crime in the early '50s. Did you ever hear anything on that?

LOWENTHAL: No, I don't believe so.

HESS: And I have run across references to a man by the

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name of Pat Coyne in regard to internal security matters. Does that name mean anything to you?

LOWENTHAL: I don't recollect. I don't say that any of these aren't so, I just don't know.

HESS: Did you have anything to do with the decision to establish the President's Commission on Internal Security and Individual Rights, the commission that Admiral Nimitz headed? You know they couldn't get it off the ground because the Senate wouldn't approve the conflict of interest statute?

LOWENTHAL: Pat McCarran wouldn't approve. I heard about it, but I don't think I had anything to do with it.

HESS: As a man whose political interests extend back quite a few years, I'd like to ask you a question concerning the New Deal and the Fair Deal. Some historians say that the Fair Deal is a continuation of Mr. Roosevelt's New Deal, and other historians

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say that that is not correct. What is your view?

LOWENTHAL: I don't know. It may be that at the time I would have given you some kind of an opinion, but I'd have to begin to reconstruct and then I would be confusing what happened -- I don't know.

HESS: Where would you place Mr. Truman on the scale from a liberal to a conservative, to use terms that some people don't like to use?

LOWENTHAL: Well, I don't like the terms. I find that there can be woolly-minded people among liberals and among conservatives both, and among radicals and among reactionaries. I think of him as an old-fashioned American, of the time, let's say of Jefferson, not that the issues are the same, but the basic instincts; and for his honesty, there were times when you could describe it as hard-hitting. People used to say that, well, he

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shouldn't talk that way -- why not, you know, why not? I think he endeared himself to the general public. Now put together some of those, and that time at the hearing of the Senate Interstate Commerce subcommittee when he presided, and after he and his colleagues being viciously insulted, saying we shouldn't continue this hearing at this time, as we couldn't deal justly with this man.

HESS: What would be your definition of a liberal or liberalism and a conservative or conservatism? What's your general definition of the terms?

LOWENTHAL: Let me see. I'd much rather use the word "old-timer." I have seen woolly-minded people, or weak people, who would call themselves liberals, and thought of themselves as liberals, and I could only pray to goodness that they shouldn't be on my side. People who, sometimes without realizing it, would sell a basic principle down, the river.

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My wife's parents were Republicans, and my parents were Democrats. When my mother was eighty-five or eighty-eight, she asked me about a politician back in Minnesota. "Son," she said, "is he an honest man, or is he a Republican?" That is what she was taught to believe, just as Senator George Norris' mother always thought of Democrats as the people who had murdered her son who died in the Civil War. But you know in my time I have supported financially, and in going around talking to my friends in Washington or outside of Washington, both Democrats and Republicans. I have known some wonderful men who were Republican, and some of whom I didn't think were so wonderful. I guess -- these labels -- I hope you don't mind my failing to answer your question right.

HESS: That's all right. Some people prefer not to.

LOWENTHAL: No, it isn't that I prefer not to, I don't like to think in those terms. I knew a man who was

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a Republican on Wheeler's committee, whom even the Republicans in the Senate found difficult. I helped him on that job.

HESS: Who was that?

LOWENTHAL: Clyde Reed of Kansas. He was Governor of Kansas. He was chairman at one time of the Public Services Commission, or whatever it is called in Kansas. He was a very hard worker -- day and night -- strong. His manner was difficult for many people to take. I found him a good man. I was sorry when he died.

There was a man up in New Hampshire named Charles Tobey, I supported him with money in his campaign even though he was a Republican. I worked for Republican senators and Democratic senators, where I'd be in their office and they'd tell me what they wanted done, or they would tell a group of us what they wanted done, and so on. I knew some very good men.

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HESS: What was your estimation of Mr. Hoover?

LOWENTHAL: Herbert Hoover? I told you, and I repeat, I have always said, he was a man with almost religious zeal to do good. But he came to politics too late in his life.

Harry Truman was not only in poverty, he had had many reverses, and when he went into politics he started on the ground floor. Herbert Hoover hadn't had that.

HESS: What is your estimation of Mr. Truman's place in history? A hundred years from now how will people think of Mr. Truman?

LOWENTHAL: I think they will like him, but I am a biased fellow. How are you going to trust my opinion? He was a fine man.

I have one point of view that I can best illustrate by citing what I was told by Tom Stokes. Tom Stokes was one of the staff of the Scripps-Howard newspapers and then he became a

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columnist, he was from Georgia. He was one of the finest newspapermen I have ever known -- wonderful. And he said to me, speaking of some so-called liberals, "You know you can vote with them nine times out of ten and the tenth time you don't, and they will want to cut your throat. Whereas Jim Farley, who was then Postmaster General, he would go to a man and say we would like to have you with us on this, and the man would say, 'Well, I can't. It would murder me in my district.'"

Jim would say, "That's all right. Seventy percent of the time you are with us, and that is all that I can ask."

That also figures in my thinking about Harry Truman, the fact that he was so honest that he would not be polite at all times, that he would seem to get angry when it wasn't necessary, or blurt out something. Like the letter about the criticism of his daughter singing. I don't

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think that hurt Mr. Truman then, or will hurt him in the future. I think it will make him a somewhat endearing person. I have read of people who speak of him as "That little man." Physically he wasn't a little man, he just was a modest man, he was a homespun man. I think those things count. But you are talking to a highly biased, overcharged in memory, man.

HESS: Is there anything else relating to Mr. Truman or the Truman administration that comes to mind?

LOWENTHAL: Not now, I don't know whether it ever will. There will, be times, but you know, I need to be stimulated, and there are very few stimulations anymore. When I look through my papers, if I ever do, things may occur to me, but now...

He had his anger, he was also a politician from the Southwest where they can put on the

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molasses when they try. How many politicians do you know, or of, who are above paying private games, and whose expressions, therefore, you didn't feel confident about or comfortable with. I remember one time -- putting out these hearings, we always made it a practice to send the galley proofs of the hearings to the persons whose testimony was to be included. We were delighted when they would get the typewritten transcripts, but that would cost them money, we didn't have the funds for that. We were glad to receive their corrections and changes, and their additions, anything they wanted to put in there. But it happened about the second volume, we had received a typewritten transcript, I forget what it was, something about the printing office getting something in the wrong column. I don't know, I don't remember. But we were attacked for making that mistake, it hurts us, and one of the principal banking houses which was involved

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in that story, was objecting to something that had been said in one of our hearings, and we were on our guard, what kind of stuff were they going to throw in. And they went to Mr. Truman, who was then presiding. They asked Mr. Truman, and I told Mr. Truman that we were going to have to be on our guard, as we didn't know what they were going to try to spring that would make the headlines, Mr. Truman said, "Give me the paper, I'll read this into the record myself."

Now, that was a very practical solution to the problem. If there was anything wrong in that paper, anything scurrilous, he wouldn't have to read it, he was simply giving the point of view of the banker, however wrong that point of view might be. They wouldn't have to read it, they

could add it to the record that we printed, or it could be read. Just a practical, businesslike, efficient way to handle an emotional situation.

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I'm sure that in the letters I wrote my wife I must have ten or fifty or a hundred incidents which I have completely forgotten.

HESS: If when you get those and it jogs your memory, you just make a list of them and let me know and I'll be back, and then we can add any new material onto the end of this transcript.

LOWENTHAL: The reason that I don't want to commit myself to do this is that I am at an age now, and I've been trying to make a comeback physically.

HESS: We certainly don't want you to overexert yourself.

LOWENTHAL: But I have another situation now, just about the time you got in touch with me somebody wrote me a letter and wanted me to write a biography of a man whom I loved, one of the many wonderful men whom I have known. I said to myself, what can I tell him, what do I know, how can I recapture...

HESS: If in the future you do go over those papers and have something else you want to put down, I can be right back. We certainly don't want you to overexert yourself.

LOWENTHAL: I will try, I don't exert myself. I am the laziest man this side of the next world.

HESS: I don't believe it.

LOWENTHAL: I am.

HESS: Shall we shut off the recorder?

LOWENTHAL: Yes.

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Supplemental statement by Mr. Lowenthal
November 29, 1967

HESS: Mr. Lowenthal has informed me that since we held our interview in September he has been reminded of something he would like to say regarding his thoughts at the time that Mr. Truman became President. Would you tell me about that, sir?

LOWENTHAL: I have some evidence because later that same day that you put the question to me, I was talking to a doctor friend who gave me evidence of my views within two or three days after the news came over the wires that President Roosevelt had died. My wife and I were calling that evening on a husband and wife medical team -- old friends whom we had known for two

decades, or perhaps I should say one decade. They were people who had been born and reared in the Austro-Hungarian Empire before World War I, and

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although they had come to this country in the 1920s, they were not deeply versed in Washington affairs, and possibly I was more a source of information on that subject to them than anyone else would be. And just incidentally in the course of social -- our talk was much more about medical progress and the medical profession, and I told one of this -- married couple how I was stumped the other day when we were together and you put me that question, because I had no clear recollection of what I thought at that time when President Roosevelt died. This doctor said to me, "I can tell you how you felt, because you were at our house within two or three days after President Roosevelt died, and we were all grieving over the death, and then we said to you, 'And then President Roosevelt is succeeded by someone who nobody knows, and who isn't a person, as far as we have ever heard, of any stature.'"

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"And you said, with a good deal of vigor, 'You're wrong. You're going to see very soon how wrong you are. He's a person of large stature, and you will see it demonstrated.'"

That in substance is my secondhand account of what this doctor told me would serve as the answer to how I felt at the time, and this doctor remembered it quite vividly, and it stood out, because this doctor didn't often talk about Washington personalities or affairs or people, and remembers so vividly. Now, for whatever it is worth, there is my answer.

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