

Exit interview with S. Bruce Herschensohn
conducted by Susan D. Yowell
in Room 164 of the Old Executive Office Building
on September 9, 1974

SDY: These will be also valuable if there is a Nixon oral history project, covering the presidential years,...

SBH: Sure.

SDY: ...which has been a tradition, I guess, since the [Harry S] Truman Library,...

SBH: Great.

SDY: ...for the National Archives to conduct a more in depth project. We're not trying to go in depth now, but hoping to pinpoint some of those areas which...

SBH: Good.

SDY: ...you people will want to talk about. So, we just start with some very, very basic questions.

SBH: O.K.

SDY: You first came to this staff right after the election...

SBH: No, no, no.

SDY: ...in '72?

SBH: No, before the election.

SDY: Before the election.

SBH: Yeah, I was a consultant to the Republican Convention. Then, after the convention, I was asked to become a part of the White House Staff. I think it was September the eleventh, 1972, that I became, officially, a part of the White House Staff.

SDY: What was your assignment at that time?

SBH: Speechwriting, and general sort of idea-giving communications, particularly.

SDY: Were you assigned to the speechwriting staff?

SBH: No, I was not. No, I worked for Bob [H. R.] Haldeman. Actually, I worked for Dwight Chapin and Bob Haldeman. But, uh, in a, uh, in a, I guess, in what you'd call an organization chart pattern, I would report to Bob Haldeman. I generally did it through Dwight.

SDY: Could you just give a general description of what your activities were...

SBH: At that time?

SDY: ...at that time?

SBH: Yeah, well, speechwriting. Anytime the President was going to give a speech, I'd submit suggestions for it, in terms of ideas and text. Any other ideas that I had, I suggested, generally, dealing with communications. And, uh, particular events, like the Statute of Liberty appearance that the President made, I was involved in.

SDY: How did this coordinate with the speechwriting staff?

SBH: I coordinated with Ray [Raymond K.] Price. Ray was sort of the coordination point. At times he would brief me on things that the President was possibly going to speak about. At other times, if I heard it from any other source, I'd generally discuss it with Ray.

SDY: Were there any particular subject areas that you were covering, such as, even as general as just domestic policy, or...?

SBH: No, I really shouldn't put any particular label on it, because it wasn't done with that kind of emphasis.

SDY: Were you submitting speech drafts at the same time that there were others being submitted from...

SBH: Yes. Yes, I was. Exactly right.

SDY: ...the speechwriting staff?

SBH: Exactly right, yes. I'd generally give it to Ray.

SDY: How did your input differ from what was being produced in that office?

SBH: Well, generally, I wouldn't have the same research that they did. I'd sort of go off on my own and do it. It was really sort of a search for other ideas more than anything else. So that I wouldn't, either in a positive or negative sense, be swayed by anything else that was being done.

SDY: So you did not use the facilities in the research unit?

SBH: No, unless I called for them myself. Unless I said, "Yeah, I'd like to find out about so and so. Could you send over some material?" But, generally, I didn't.

SDY: Under what circumstances did you do a draft for a speech? Who assigned a particular speech to you?

SBH: The strange thing, it just wasn't really my assignment. It would be something that I would be interested in. For instance, the Statue of Liberty address. I was involved in the decision regarding the Statue of Liberty appearance, so I then drafted a speech. It wasn't used [laughter]. But, uh, I'm just giving you that as sort of a typical example. I'm positive that, at the same time, Ray and his staff were

doing exactly that. As a matter of fact, I know they were, because I showed him my draft and we sort of compared notes. I think, in the end, the President did an extemporaneous address. In fact, I know he did, because I was there. And, uh, I don't think he really used any of the material that was prepared for him. Maybe he used some of Ray's, I don't know.

The Inauguration speech, I was asked to do a draft of my own, which I did. Which, to my delight, I found about one half of one sentence in the speech [laughter].

SDY: What, were you, in any way, connected with Ken [Kenneth W.] Clawson's staff...

SBH: No.

SDY: ...when you first came?

SBH: No, I was never connected with it. In the later days, I worked very closely with Ken Clawson, but still, staffwise, it was very much the same as the way that I was hired. When Bob Haldeman left, the organization chart continued in the same pattern. So that, in effect, I reported to Alexander Haig, although the contacts were rarely as uh, rarely as personal as in the prior days.

SDY: You mentioned that you made a recommendation on the Statue of Liberty appearance.

SBH: Hm hnm.

SDY: Did you also make recommendations on appearances that the President might make?

SBH: Hm hnm, hm hnm.

SDY: This was a routine activity for you?

SBH: Yeah, it wasn't given as an assignment. As I say, when I was hired, it was to do speeches and any ideas that I came up with. I'd submit them on, and just see where they fell.

SDY: These ideas that you mentioned, were they particularly around a media, since your background...

SBH: Yeah, right.

SDY: ...was in communications?

SBH: It was really very carte blanche, but, generally, they focused on media, since that really was my area, prior to the time I came into the White House.

SDY: And could you give a few examples of type of...?

SBH: God, I forgot them. I can't, not because I don't want to, I just forgot them. I know I was terribly busy between.... Also, there was the question of, between the time I came on, and the election, what should be done through the Re-elect Committee [the Committee to Re-elect the President], and what should be done through the White House. By and large, I was, not by and large, I was indeed, White House. Now, the only time that I varied from that, was something I did very much on my own time. I recall that because they were twenty and twenty-two hour days. I would go over to Re-elect after work and produce a show called, "The Nixon Network," which was on during the campaign. I think it was seven or eight days in sequence, just prior to the election. Then, I'd come back here in the morning. That was an idea that I had initiated.

SDY: Did you work, by and large, either with the press office, or with the rest of the communications staff on that?

SBH: No, I was very independent, very independent. As a matter of fact, I was, after the Inauguration, I thought that would probably be the end of that, and then I was asked to stay on.

SDY: What, at the time that you did come over here, what was your staff? Did you have anyone working with you?

SBH: A secretary. That's all.

SDY: Just a secretary?

SBH: Yeah.

SDY: Has Carmel Giancola been your secretary for this entire period?

SBH: No, no, no. At that time it was another girl, who went off somewhere. A very nice girl. I forgot her name. Gee, that's terrible, I did forget. But it was just for a short period of time. I had one secretary come in for a week, and then another one. I was getting them from the...

SDY: Correspondence section?

SBH: ...correspondence section, yeah. Then, finally, when I was on to permanent, because, each time I was on, it kept on being lengthened. It was like, till after the election, then till after the Inauguration, and then, as you know, after the election, everyone wrote off their resignations. Then, it was held over to the Inauguration. Then, after the Inauguration, it was, well, it would be permanent. Then I got Carmel as my secretary.

SDY: Until that time you didn't anticipate an indefinite tenure in the White House?

SBH: No, I didn't. No, I really didn't. It was sort of, there was always sort of a stop point. Just for a particular period of time. Then, it was, right after the Inauguration, I think, that I was asked to stay on indefinitely.

SDY: Was there any significant change in your responsibilities after the Inauguration?

SBH: No, the significant change came, probably, in the Autumn of '73. That was when a number of people had started support movements for the President when all of the charges were being levelled against the President. A number of people were phoning me and saying that they wanted to place a newspaper ad and they didn't know where to do it. Or, they did place a newspaper ad and they wanted the President to know it was placed. Or, they had a tremendous amount of petitions that they wanted the President to see. So, I became sort of a White House focal point for all the support groups.

SDY: Did that, really, just evolve,...

SBH: It just evolved.

SDY: ...or was it any kind of a conscious effort?

SBH: No.

SDY: [Unintelligible] to assign the....

SBH: It evolved because the White House operators were getting calls for the President, or Ron [Ronald L.] Ziegler, or Ken Clawson, or me, or some name that they heard of, or just no

name at all. They just wanted to leave a message with the White House operator that they supported the President. So, someone had to do it as time went on. I was the guy.

SDY: Who did you coordinate with on these activities?

SBH: Again, it was very independent. I just sort of took it over. It started out, in the Autumn, I certainly wasn't giving it full time. It was just whenever something happened. Then, as time went on, into Winter and early Spring, from that time forward, it was really a full time job. I was still doing other things, but mainly that.

SDY: Right. Could you describe how this did evolve, as far as what...

SBH: As a full time job?

SDY: ...types of activities you ended up doing?

SBH: Well, there were, literally, hundreds of people who called in and wanted to talk about support, or said that they had petitions that they wanted the President to accept. And, what I tried to do over the phone, particularly with those who wanted to visit with the President and have him accept the petitions, what I tried to do was feel out their sincerity, and how much work they did. There's a lot of people who just wanted to come and shake hands with the President. Sometimes it was difficult to determine who was the most worthy of coming to the White House. So, if someone called and said they went door to door, night after night, and got these petitions signed, and they didn't mention that they wanted to see the President, I was more

inclined to think, "Well, that's probably a person who should," rather than the person who started out a conversation saying they wanted a visit with the President. It was tough, and it was unfair, at best. But it was all I could do.

SDY: Did someone begin to direct the White House operators and the Mail Room to...

SBH: Yeah, the White House operators, that if they didn't, yeah.

SDY: ...direct this correspondence and communication to you?

SBH: Correspondence, no. The only correspondence I got was those that were directly addressed to me. The phone calls, yes. The White House operators knew to turn them over to me. At the same time, simultaneously, I was doing a great deal of speaking around the nation. And, uh, also, a good deal of article writing. Because of the speaking engagements, and because of the article writing, a lot of the mail and phone calls just naturally came my way.

SDY: You said you did not have the correspondence...

SBH: No.

SDY: ...of support the President groups directed to you?

SBH: Only the ones that were addressed to me. A lot of them were, most of them were addressed to the President, and I didn't handle them.

SDY: Where was that handled?

SBH: Correspondence.

SDY: Did you--I know that, for instance, Anne Higgins coordinated...

SBH: Hm hmm, that's right.

SDY: ...some of the activity in this same general area.

SBH: That's right, exactly.

SDY: Did you work with her?

SBH: Yes, I did. At times I did. Just depending on if there was something that she could help me with, or I could help her with. But it was, generally, as a pretty steadfast rule, all of the mail that was addressed to me, I answered. All the mail that was addressed to President Nixon, she took care of. In terms of those that were.... The way in which we coordinated, often I would get a letter that I thought was worthy of a response by President Nixon, rather than just me. So, then I would hand it over to Anne, who would then take care of filtering it.

SDY: Did you respond to correspondence under your signature?

SBH: Oh, yes, always, always, yeah.

SDY: And then, would you also help suggest drafts of letters for the President's signature?

SBH: At times, at times, hm hmm, yeah.

SDY: You mentioned the speaking. What type of speaking were you most involved in?

SBH: It was generally support the President kind of speaking. A lot of television engagements, some radio engagements, and clubs, private groups, wherever I was invited I went.

SDY: How did you schedule that...?

SBH: Colleges and universities. Pardon?

SDY: Did you schedule those yourself, or...?

SBH: Some myself. Most through John Guthrie's office.

SDY: Is that Alvin Snyder's office?

SBH: No, John Guthrie's is sort of a speaker's bureau for the White House. At times Al Snyder's office for TV and radio engagements, that's right. But most of the TV and radio engagements, it was just a matter of someone calling me up and asking me if I wanted to do it.

SDY: You just responded then independently?

SBH: Sure, sure, yeah, hm hmm.

SDY: You had free reign on what to accept and what not to accept.

SBH: Yeah, obviously, I wouldn't do something clear across the country unless it was a pretty important thing. Or, sometimes when I had a speaking engagement that was a pretty fair distance away, that John Guthrie lined up we'll say, then I would then go to Al and say, "I'm going to be in Kansas, or in Kansas City. I'll leave it up to you if I should be doing something else there." They'd say, "Yeah, there's a radio commentator, or television show that's wanted a White House spokesman. Why don't you do that while you're there." That kind of thing.

SDY: Did you speak on specific issues, other than the Support the President?

SBH: Practically all of it, almost all of it, was related to charges against the President or the administration. What we call "Watergate."

SDY: And what kind of briefings or background,..... Where was your input, or information regarding these things?

SBH: A lot of it through, I found the best source of information through Ken Clawson's office, really.

SDY: Was that in the form of just keeping track of what they were putting together?

SBH: Exactly, yeah, exactly. Yeah. I would coordinate a lot with Ken as well. I would certainly tell him when I was going off on a speaking engagement. Then there were times when he would say, 'cause I did a good deal of article writing, "That particular subject (Watergate related, generally) was coming up, or was in the offing, or was here. And why didn't I try a piece on it, and see if he could place it." Which I did, and which he did.

SDY: Did you ever have occasion to do drafts for other people?

SBH: No, I never did that. I never did that, no.

SDY: Or helped handle any of the mailings that might have been coming from the communications office?

SBH: No, no, never. Un uh, no.

SDY: Is that true, also, of speeches...

SBH: That's true of speeches, yeah.

SDY: ...other than the President's?

SBH: Yeah, that's right. I never did anyone else's.

SDY: Were there any other activities that you coordinated with any of the Departments or Agencies?

SBH: The only thing is, during early '73, I guess, into the Summer of '73, I worked on a lot of press conferences for Virginia Knauer.

SDY: On consumer affairs?

SBH: Yeah. Just because we got along very well, and I like Virginia very much. I enjoyed it. Oh, also, I was the White House coordinator with the Honor America Day committee. And for awhile I did coordination with USIA [United States Information Agency], because I originally was with USIA.

SDY: What type of work were you doing with USIA from here?

SBH: Well, at that time, I was coordinating with Gordon Strachan, when he was there. Then, after he left, I didn't coordinate at all. By coordination, all I did was give them my opinion about things that were going on in the agency, and what I felt should be going on in the agency. Also, the American Film Institute, I coordinated with them. George Stevens, Jr., because I was once on the board of trustees, and because I'm a good friend of George's, and because motion pictures was also my background.

SDY: [Unintelligible].

SBH: One large thing....Excuse me. There was one rather large event, which I didn't mention before, was the John Ford dinner in Los Angeles at the end of March of '73. I was very heavily involved in that.

SDY: In what capacity?

SBH: Arranging, from inception, on. I had recommended that John Ford be given the Medal of Freedom. John Ford had done a great deal of work for me when I was at the United States Information Agency. Then, the American Film Institute wanted to have a dinner for him, so I sort of coordinated

the two, and it became one event, in Beverly Hills. I went out there and worked on the program for the dinner, and all the necessary White House coordination. Who was going to do what. Who would entertain, and how the program would be set up, and that kind of thing.

SDY: Did you coordinate with the Social Office, also, on that?

SBH: No, I didn't.

SDY: Did they have anything to do with that?

SBH: No, not really, no. It was an American Film Institute event. But, because the President was going to be there, and because the President was going to give the Medal of Freedom, it sort of became a joint effort. But it was an American Film Institute event.

SDY: Oh, I see.

SBH: In other words, they were sending out the invitations, it wasn't the White House sending out invitations.

SDY: Right. You mentioned the coordination with USIA, and I was wondering if that was in the form of more technical coordination, or whether this was a matter of making recommendations on their programs?

SBH: Yes, it was the latter, not the former. More recommendations on their programs.

SDY: You had been there just before coming to the White House.

SBH: I resigned in April of 1972 from USIA. For a short period of time, or a number of months, I was doing miscellaneous consultant work. I then wrote a letter of suggestions of what I thought should happen. Events that I thought should

happen at the convention. I sent them out to Dwight Chapin. He, in turn, apparently discussed it with Bob Haldeman. I don't know precisely what happened after that, except that a number of days later, Dwight called me and asked me if I wanted to be a consultant to the convention. I said, "Yes," and that started the whole thing.

SDY: I know you had one activity in the past couple of years coordinating with the National Archives. When you participated in the program that they had with Charles Guggenheim.

SBH: Oh, yeah, yeah, that's right. On propaganda. On films and propaganda, that's right, yeah.

SDY: Of course, that's our parent.

SBH: Sure, I know it is. Yeah, that's right.

SDY: Presidential Libraries fall under the National Archives.

SBH: Right.

SDY: Were there any other projects that just came as a result of your being here? I know so many people on the staff do things that they never anticipated doing,...

SBH: Sure, sure.

SDY: ...or that it wasn't in their job description. It's not like....

SBH: Well, I don't think my job description ever said anything about what I eventually ended up doing. Which was the support group coordination, speaking, and in fact, I don't even know if there was ever a job description written.

SDY: Well, there usually are--the White House [unintelligible].

SBH: Whatever it was, it was probably pretty loose. Also, writing articles for magazines and newspapers, which I did. It was sort of a, as it was explained to me when I came in, and it certainly retained exactly that status, it was sort of a drifting position. Wherever I felt I could be of use, or someone felt that they wanted to call on me for something.

SDY: I know that most of these support groups, obviously, because of the nature of their activity, they were voluntarily coming in and asking for some kind of an audience in the White House, in one form or another.

SBH: Hm hm.

SDY: I don't mean, necessarily, asking for Presidential visits. They just wanted to be heard.

SBH: Yeah, right.

SDY: Did you have any form of soliciting this kind of activity, or...?

SBH: No, no. Even if we wanted to, which at times we did, we wouldn't do it, because it would be so criticized and it would ruin all the efforts of everyone who was doing it on their own. So, my feeling on it was never to solicit anything. Never to even call anyone up unless they called you first and I was returning their call.

SDY: Did you have any kind of program for publicizing the kind of activity that these people were promoting?

SBH: No, none. None. The only thing that would happen, if I'd bring them into the Oval Office, we'd invite the White House

Press Corps to photograph, or sometimes have those people talk to the people after they had gotten out of the Oval Office. Something like that. But that's all I could think of, in terms of publicity.

SDY: Did you call upon, or did it naturally occur that there were other people on the staff that you worked with in greeting these people, and trying to set up some kind of...?

SBH: Well, some things just come naturally. Like, obviously, if I'm trying to work an appointment into the President's calendar, I worked with Dave [David N.] Parker on it. Sometimes I'd write memos to Alexander Haig. Generally, I'd be working with Dave on lining up the President's calendar. He'd say, "Look, he hasn't got any time for the next two weeks to see anyone." So, I'd just forget it. Then, in two weeks time, I'd say, "There's Mrs. So-and-so, who I'd like to visit with the President." We'd work it out.

SDY: Did you make recommendations to other people on the White House staff, trying to greet some of these supporters who were coming in?

SBH: Very rarely. If they couldn't see the President, I'm afraid they were stuck with me [laughter]. So, that's the way that it went, generally. Or, if I was out of town, I'd ask someone to do it. John Nidecker, Dave Parker, Terry [Terence] O'Donnell, Guthrie. But, I'd say, by and large, it was either the President or me. Most of them were much happier to visit with the President.

SDY: Did you coordinate with any other people on the staff when

writing articles?

SBH: No, unh uh.

SDY: Do you have any idea what percentage of your time was spent with the Support the President groups?

SBH: Probably, towards the last half year, I'd say, eighty-five percent of my time, maybe ninety, was either spent with them in one fashion or another.

SDY: Right.

SBH: Here, on the phone, or out speaking, or,...

SDY: That's what I meant.

SBH: Right, yeah, yeah. Probably ninety.

SDY: And, I was wondering if you, by any chance, have a, any kind of a log of all of the articles that were published.

[Unintelligible].

SBH: Yeah, I do, but it's just, I haven't written it out, I just.... Why don't I just say what it is, O.K.? Well, no, there's too many of them.

SDY: Would it be in your files?

SBH: No, I didn't keep files on it. I've had them in the Washington Post--I'll just very briefly read this off--the Evening Star.... The Washington Post, Evening Star, Newsweek magazine, New York Times, Human Events, Saturday Evening Post, Newsday, Newsday, New York Times, Chicago Tribune, Washingtonian, Chicago Tribune, Evening Star, Human Events, and then Publisher's Hall Syndicate. That's basically it, yeah.

SDY: Going through the index of any of those for the past two

years would certainly come up with all of the articles
[unintelligible]....

SBH: Yeah, I can even give you dates real quick because I have them written down here. For Human Events, no some of the Human Events ones I don't have, but let me.... 7/29/73 for the Evening Star; 11/10/73 for the Washington Post; 11/11/73 for the Evening Star; 12/24/73 for Newsweek; 1/13/74 for the New York Times; June and July issue, 1974, the Saturday Evening Post; February 7, '74 issue of Newsday; March 15, '74 issue of Newsday; March 15, pardon me, March 5, '74, New York Times; March 9, '74, Chicago Tribune; April '74 issue of Washingtonian; April 15, '74 issue of Chicago Tribune; May 19, 1974 Evening Star; and then August the eighth, 1974 of many newspapers. It was the Publisher's Hall Syndicate. It was a guest column for Vic [Victor] Riesel. That does it. I think I left out a couple of Human Events, but that's all right.

SDY: Were they particular groups of supporters with whom you worked more frequently than others?

SBH: Excuse me. Here, let me give you a couple from Human Events. Got them. March 10, '73 and April the twenty-first, '73.

SDY: O.K.

SBH: I'm sorry, go ahead.

SDY: I'm kind of skipping around, I guess, but were there particular groups of supporters with whom you worked more frequently?

SBH: Yeah, Rabbi [Baruch M.] Korff's Citizen's Committee to
Defend the Presidency.

SDY: Did you coordinate on that dinner also?

SBH: Yeah, on both dinners. He had a dinner, excuse me, he had a
luncheon and then he had a dinner. I did the coordination
on both of those events. Practically anything that Rabbi
Korff got involved in. He did a book and I worked on the
book with him. I think you'd call it editing, probably.
Yeah, that would be the name for what I did. Chapter titles
I did, and the book title I did, and those kind of things.
I wrote a thing in it too, about the author, on the back
cover. The book was called The Personal Nixon: Staying on
the Summit.

SDY: It was the one they had at the dinner.

SBH: Yeah, that's right, that's right, yeah, yeah.

SDY: Then you probably also coordinated his meetings with the
President.

SBH: I did, I did, that's right, that's right.

SDY: Were you involved in his decision to write the book?

SBH: Well, it was something he wanted to do. I certainly didn't
try to discourage him [laughter].

SDY: O.K. Where would a record of your activities be found? I
know that you have your office files.

SBH: Yeah.

SDY: But in addition to that, are there other files in which...

SBH: No, I don't think so.

SDY: ...significant amounts of material from you....

SBH: Not really.

SDY: Did you use Central Files?

SBH: No, no. Just packed up everything after the President resigned, and wherever those mysterious people took it.

SDY: Those mysterious people...

SBH: Were you [laughter].

SDY: ...were archivists that were trying to collect this material so that when it was shipped out, we got it all packed up and ready to go, we hope.

SBH: Hm hhm.

SDY: We sometimes wonder if we'll ever get it all. Were there any areas that you feel that you would like to talk about in more depth in an oral history project, if there is one conducted on the Nixon administration? Either in more philosophical areas, or specific events that you may have participated in?

SBH: There's a great deal. But, I guess, everything would probably be in the articles that I wrote 'cause what I generally did, when I had some kind of thought regarding the administration, or the charges against the administration, or the charges against the President, I either wrote it in a speech, or in an article. I don't even know if you have them all. If you don't, I'll see that you do. So they're preserved for [laughter]....

SDY: Sure. One thing I didn't ask you, you were talking about speech drafts for the President. How were those submitted to the President, and where would they have ended up in the

files?

SBH: My God, they're all different, at all different times. Some of them to Ray Price, some of them to Bob Haldeman, some of them to Dwight Chapin, some of them to General Haig, some of them to President Nixon. Depending upon the mood of the time.

SDY: Are there copies of all of them in your files?

SBH: There will be. I don't know if there is, I don't know if there is. Every time I found out that he didn't give a speech that I had written, I rewrote it to give myself, changing the tenses. So that, I wouldn't be saying "me," I'd be saying, "the President". So, generally that's what happened with my speeches. I would write them for him and then give them myself [laughter].

SDY: Would they be identified in the file?

SBH: I don't know. Do you mean my files?

SDY: In your files, even, as to which ones were submitted...?

SBH: You know, I honestly can't answer that. I just don't know. If there are those that are written that so obviously are "presidential,"...

SDY: Sure.

SBH: ...first person, that's it. If it isn't, it probably came from a speech that I wrote for him, that I cut up and changed around after I discovered he didn't give it.

SDY: Did you have any opportunity to have contact with the President--I know that you did escort some of these supporting groups in.

SBH: Yeah, unh huh.

SDY: In addition to that, did you have frequent contact...?

SBH: Not really, except, well.... The day prior to his announced resignation, I had a meeting alone with him. About a half hour, I suppose, something like that. Then, of course, all of the general support meetings.

SDY: Well, I think [unintelligible]....

SBH: I was trying, [unintelligible] make this mysterious, but I don't want to say what he said, because I don't think that's ethical.

SDY: Oh, no.

SBH: But I'll say what, the thrust of the conversation was, I was trying to talk him out of resignation. As future historians will be able to find out through the record, he didn't agree with me, apparently [laughter].

SDY: I think there was an article commenting on that.

SBH: Was there? That I had tried to do that?

SDY: I believe so, but I can't think of where it was.

SBH: Hm hm.

SDY: Maybe it was in the Post.

SBH: In the Post?

SDY: [Unintelligible].

SBH: Oh, really?

SDY: I'll check on it and get a copy for you.

SBH: Gee, I'd love to, yeah, I'd love to know, yeah. It was an absolutely marvelous meeting and there's no question in my mind that he resigned for what he believed to be the good of

the country. But it was something that I felt the other way about. But, I lost.

SDY: How long do you plan to remain on the staff, or do you know at this point?

SBH: Well, four days after President Nixon resigned, I sent my letter of resignation to President [Gerald R.] Ford. Within it, just looking at the stack of material that I had on my desk, and the supporters I had to call back, and so on, I wrote in my letter that I'd selected the arbitrary date of September the fifteenth, and I'd leave earlier if he wanted me to, or a little later if he wanted me to. Something like that, I said. Then, I received a letter back, and no date was specified, but I want to keep to the original intent of September fifteenth. So, I figure this coming Friday is the thirteenth (Friday the thirteenth), and since Sunday's on the fifteenth, so, I plan on Friday being my last day.

SDY: Let me ask you, too, just for the record, do you have a permanent address where you might be reached over a long period of time, even the next ten years? If we want to contact you about a more in-depth oral history project [unintelligible]....

SBH: Yeah, well, because I don't know where I'm going to be moving to, I'll give you an address where they'll always be able to get me. That's in Los Angeles, my parent's. Which is 10616 Kinnard Avenue, K-I-N-N-A-R-D Avenue. That's Los Angeles, California 90024. The only reason I give you that one rather than the one here, is that I'm not really sure if

I'm going to stay in Washington, or go to New York, or L.A., or what. I'm just not positive.

SDY: Well, we find that most people here, family addresses are much more secure [laughter].

SBH: Yes, you're so right, you're so right.

SDY: It's a very mobile group of people.

SBH: Yes.

SDY: What's your father's name?

SBH: Dr. Herbert L. Herschensohn, and my mother's name is Mrs. Ida E.

SDY: I know that we were talking about all of the articles that you have written.

SBH: Hm hm.

SDY: Are there any particularly good articles or, for that matter,...

SBH: Oh, they're all terrific!

SDY: ...innaccurate articles, which were written about you?

SBH: Oh, about me?

SDY: Yes, about you.

SBH: Yes. Yeah, there were.

SDY: Your activities. Which you feel are....

SBH: Yeah, there were a number of them. None of them accurate, but [laughter]....

SDY: Well, would you like to dispel any inaccuracies?

SBH: No, it's O.K. That would take much too long. Wall Street Journal had a very large article about me. It was this year, it was 1974. I just don't remember when.

SDY: Was that relatively accurate [unintelligible]?

SBH: In parts yes, and in parts no. I would really have to look it over and say, "This was, and this wasn't". When they used quotation marks around my phrases, yes, it was accurate.

SDY: O.K. So they did talk with you [laughter].

SBH: Yes, yes.

SDY: That's a key to whether it has any credibility.

SBH: There are a number of other articles, but that was probably the lengthiest and the one that caused more of a stir, I guess. I'm probably overestimating its importance, but it was probably the lengthiest one.

SDY: Do you know where you'll be going when you leave the staff?

SBH: Not positive yet, not positive. No.

SDY: If we need a forwarding address, we'll have to send it to your parent's, I guess.

SBH: Hm hhm, hm hhm.

SDY: Well, I think that's about all I have. If you have a biographical sketch, or resume, we'd like to include those in our file.

SBH: Yeah, I do. I can give it to you.

SDY: If you already have one handy.

SBH: I can give it to you right now.

SDY: Then I'll talk to you a little bit about your files. I think there were some things that you....

[End of interview]

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S. Bruce Herschensohn
September 9, 1974

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