

**Timothy Naftali**

I'm Tim Naftali. I'm Director of the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum. It's November 19, 2007, and I'm delighted to be sitting here with Bobbie Kilberg, who has gratefully agreed to participate in our oral history program. Ms. Kilberg, welcome.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Thank you, I'm delighted to be here.

**Timothy Naftali**

Tell us about how you came to the White House. When did it happen? What were the circumstances?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

I came to the White House as a White House fellow, which was a wonderful program that John Gardner had instituted under -- who was Secretary of HEW -- had instituted under President Lyndon Johnson, with the help of Jack Delany. And it was a program designed to bring bright, young people -- at that point in the early stages of their careers -- to Washington for leadership program that involved being assigned to a Cabinet member or senior White House staff member. And the idea of the program was to take 14 to 18 young people, have them do that for a year, and they go back into their communities and make a difference. And it was -- it was remarkable. I mean -- to get the exposure and the experience you could get at an early age into the highest levels of decision making in a White House or Cabinet agency couldn't be done any other way.

**Timothy Naftali**

How did you find out about the program?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

There was a fellow in my class at Yale Law School named Mike Walsh, and, he then became -- are you catching me?

**Male Speaker**

No, you're fine.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

How did I find out about the program? There was a -- I take it you can edit this stuff, right?

**Timothy Naftali**

We will let this all be available for scholars.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Okay, but I'm saying -- you heard me, that's what I'm saying.

**Timothy Naftali**

Oh, sure.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

There was a fellow at my class at law school named Mike Walsh, and he had been in the first class of fellows in the class of '64 right out of Stanford, and he told me about it. And I said, "What the heck, I'm going to apply." And the dean of the law school at that point in time was a guy named Dean Poole [phonetic sp], just said to me, "You can't do that." I said, "Why not?" He said, "You're right out of school." I said, "Well, they may take some people right out of school." He said, "No." And he said, "They really won't take women." I said, "Well, I think they might. I'm going to try." So I tried, and I was lucky enough, became a White House fellow, met my husband, who was also a White House fellow, and wound up working for John Ehrlichman and Ken Cole.

**Timothy Naftali**

To set this up, tell us a little bit about women at the Yale Law School. How many -- what percentage -

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**Bobbie Kilberg**

Of a class of 144, there were nine of us who were female. We had nine women, and two left during the first year, after the first year, one to go into TV, Renee Pueson [phonetic sp] whose father had been a very famous education professor at Harvard, and she wound up down here in Washington being a local anchor, and another gal left. There were seven of us in a class 144. Not many, but we had a wonderful time.

**Timothy Naftali**

So you're accepted. You come to Washington, and you're put in Ehrlichman's office?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

I was put in Ken Cole's office.

**Timothy Naftali**

Ken Cole's office.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

And Ken was the deputy assistant to the President, and he had a wide portfolio, including a lot of the administrative things, and so I was actually initially put into the Cabinet secretary's office that came

under Ken. And the Cabinet secretary's office, the Cabinet secretary was a fellow named John Brown. And our role was to process through literally every piece of paper that went to the President, whether it was administrative thing, whether it was a proclamation for the American Heart Association, or whether it was major policy initiatives. And so you could wind up getting a bird's eye view and actually having an impact on a tremendous cross section of public policy. We didn't do -- I never did any of the foreign affairs ones. It was always the domestic. But you get a typical memo that came into the President and or -- it was addressed to the President, and it would say it's issue X, and the Cabinet member wanted this issue to be brought to the President. So the system was you would then send it back out to all the other relevant Cabinet members, as well as to all the relevant offices in the White House. And if it was something that you could get a consensus on, or they were clear black and whites, and there wasn't a real reason to take it to a study or working group, you'd draft up the memo, and you'd give it to John Ehrlichman, who would edit it or not, and send it into the President, and basically it would say, subject matter, arguments from each of the different relevant Cabinet members and White House staff, and then approved, disapproved, see me. Not me, but see me, meaning John Ehrlichman. And you'd send it in, and it would come back out the other end. And a lot of domestic policy that was not the key crucial initiatives of the day were decided and vetted through the President in that manner. And so it was an incredible bird's eye view, being there two weeks, sitting there doing this stuff, that you can imagine. So that's how I started. And then the Domestic Policy Council -- or the domestic policy, which really involved the Domestic Policy Council after they passed legislation that changed Bureau of Budget into the Office of Management and Budget, I kind of migrated over to that shop and worked for John Ehrlichman.

**Timothy Naftali**

You were there when actually this system was shifting?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Was shifting, and I'm not sure I was even there when we officially were the Domestic Policy Council. I'm not quite sure, but I was there during the shift.

**Timothy Naftali**

When exactly did you start?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

I started in September or the end of August, beginning of September '69. And I stayed until June, '71, and clearly, the Domestic Policy Council was created in that period of time. But during my White House fellow year, which was just September '69 to August 1970, I think we really were kind of in the transition.

**Timothy Naftali**

Yes, that was just the period when you had the struggles between Burns and --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

That's right. That's right. And Ehrlichman just kind of wound up the winner of those struggles. And it may have been a very good thing, because he was an extraordinary person.

**Timothy Naftali**

Tell us a little bit about him.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Well, he became a very, very close friend and almost father figure to me, but he was, I think, a unique individual. From my personal perspective, and it's something my daughters kind of look at me and say, "Did that really happen?" But back in those days, one of the reasons I went to law school was not that I particularly wanted to be a lawyer, but I wanted the rigor of a legal education and the analytical thinking that it would provide. And I wanted to have my ticket stamped, because I saw too many of my friends from Vassar, who went on to get master's degrees and got their master's degree, and they went up on the Hill to work -- you know, the Hill on legislation. They wound up being executive secretaries, where the guys who got out of Yale and Princeton with no graduate degrees would be legislative assistants. And you saw that throughout this town. And I said, "That's not going to happen to me. I'm going to get a law degree. If I have a law degree, my ticket is stamped, you can't put me -- you can't slot me that way. You have to slot me as a professional." So I come down to the White House, and I'm a White House fellow, and I'm a lawyer, and Ehrlichman assigns me very simple tasks of calling Cabinet -- you know, Cabinet, call Volpe at transportation or call Hickel at Interior, and get an answer to this or that. They'd never call me back. They'd call the guys back, but they'd never call me back. And I couldn't get through, actually, the female secretaries in the offices or the special assistants, chiefs of staff of the Cabinet member who were men, I could never get to the Cabinet member. So Ehrlichman went and he sent individual letters to each Cabinet member saying that Bobbie -- at that point, Bobbie Greene, I got married in September of 1970, so that point, Bobbie Greene is a White House fellow. She's a Yale law graduate, and she's a member of my staff. And you will return her phone calls. And it was that kind of thing. I mean, he was always looking out after me. And both Bob Haldeman and Pat Buchanan had really, I think, grave concerns about whether I belonged in the White House. They viewed me as not fitting in, and as being -- I was a Rockefeller Republican. I was, in their views, too moderate for the group. And Ehrlichman -- I found out later and through friends, and it just confirmed everything I knew -- just spent an awful lot of time protecting me.

**Male Speaker**

[unintelligible]

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Bob Haldeman and Pat Buchanan evidently felt pretty strongly that I really didn't belong in the White House, that I was much too moderate. I was a Rockefeller Republican, which I was, for this group.

And I found out later, and it just reinforced a number of things I saw in John Ehrlichman, that he spent a lot of time protecting me, and saying, you know, she's good, she's smart, she's bright, she's loyal. She doesn't have an agenda, she's here to work for the White House, and she's my person. And so I just have an extraordinary love for John Ehrlichman. He then got very involved, as we maybe will talk about later, in Native American policy. And when he went to jail, I would -- I was one of the people that he would regularly call. We would have these long conversations. And I -- my husband and I convinced him to come to Santa Fe when he got out. And actually, he tried to -- we tried very hard to get the Pueblo tribes, since he had done so much for Blue Lake, to be willing to sponsor him for community service instead of jail time. Now, the judge didn't buy that. And interestingly, the tribes weren't willing to take that political risk. So they wouldn't do it, and I don't think the judge would have bought it any way. But anyways, so he was in jail for 16 -- 18 months, I think, in Arizona. When he came out, he moved to Santa Fe. And he, then, met his second wife, Christy [phonetic sp], in New York City, and actually brought her here for a party we had with the old Nixon staff, and we all became very close. And her -- his second family, his son, Michael, was the same age as my older kids. We have five kids, and our four are all very closely tied together, so our kids kind of grew up together in Santa Fe, because we have a house there. So we'd spend summers together. And he, then, divorced Christy or she divorced him, I'm not sure which, and he moved to Atlanta, and I spent a fair amount of time with him when he was dying. It was a very sad time, but he was somebody who got caught up -- he got caught up, and I'm not sure what was his fault and what wasn't his fault, but they really broke a very wonderful man, so at any rate...

**Timothy Naftali**

The experience broke him?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

I think so, I think the experience of being turned on, or his perception that he was turned on by the President, and then --

**Male Speaker**

Is that a phone I can turn off?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

[That's the phone I couldn't turn off that I tried to.

**Timothy Naftali**

We're talking about John Ehrlichman and his sense that people had turned on him, the President, maybe.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yeah, I think -- though he would never really talk about it per se, he alluded to just feeling that the President had left him out to dry, that people weren't there for him, that he was a pariah. And I don't think he thought he had done anything wrong. And I think he thought that he probably had tried to

ameliorate things, but that just didn't work, and he got really caught up in -- you know, he got caught up in just a really bad situation. And I just found him to be the most, wonderful, loving, teddy bear type of guy. I mean, everybody else in the administration when he was in the height of his power thought he was this gruff guy, and there wasn't anything gruff about him at all. He -- I literally used to call him my teddy bear. I just loved him, and my kids loved him. When he lived in Santa Fe, he and Christy bought a potbelly pig. And we used to -- my older kids would just chase this potbelly pig around their house for hours on end. And we just had a lot of fun together. And we have a house, as I said, in Santa Fe, and we spent a lot of time together.

**Timothy Naftali**

It's nice to hear that the possible connection between the work he did on Indians and the fact that he ended up --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yeah, and he was there for 10, 12 years, a long time.

**Timothy Naftali**

Let's ask, how did you get involved with the National Council on Indian Opportunity?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Well, you have to back up a bit. I mean, I got involved in it because the President had decided he had to do something about Indian policy, and do you want to know what the whole story was?

**Timothy Naftali**

Yes, go ahead, yeah [unintelligible].

**Bobbie Kilberg**

I got to go to the senior staff meetings, not because I was a member of the senior staff, but because I was a White House fellow. And they felt that this was something, I guess, that Johnson had started, and they continued the tradition. So there was me and Rose Woods and all these guys, John Whitaker and others who were at the senior staff meeting every day. And Ehrlichman comes in one day and just says that out of the blue, the President had told him we needed to do something about American Indian policy, that this concept of termination and assimilation was wrong, was unfair to the Indian community, and he wanted it stopped. He wanted to have some progressive and some positive actions in the realm of Indian affairs. And Ehrlichman looked around the table and said, "Who knows anything about Indians affairs?" And I went -- they said, "You?" I said, "Yes." Actually, I didn't sit around the table. I sat around the edge. I wasn't part of the table. So I had to go like this. And he said, "You?" And I said, "Yeah, because when I was at Yale Law School, I spent about three to four weeks out on the Navajo Reservation on a community control of schools case, community control of Indian schools case. And so I knew something about -- and I had written my thesis at Yale Law School on Indian education, which is kind of a strange topic for a lawyer and a law school, but this was Yale. And so I knew something about Native Americans, and knew a little bit about land and water law, not that

much, but I knew a fair amount about Indian education. So, he looked at me and said, "Okay, you're it." And then he -- I'm not sure if at that point -- no, he just said, "You're it." So I got involved then with the National Council of Indian Opportunity, et cetera, but shortly thereafter, it didn't take -- I was smart enough to realize that I really needed help, and so I said to John, I said, "You know, I really need an adult in this as well, in addition to me," and he said, "Well, Len Garment is available. He doesn't have a portfolio. He can, you know, do what he wants. Let's get Len involved." So I went over to see Len, and got Len involved. And he got very, very excited about it. And he was just an extraordinary help. Without his constantly being there at my back and sometimes, you know, I had his back, I don't think this would have happened. He had a wonderful guy named Brad Patterson, who was a civil servant who worked for him, too, who was just a rock. At any rate, do you have any interest in how in the world --

**Timothy Naftali**

Yes, yes.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

-- end up on the reservation? OEO, the Office of Economic Opportunity was starting legal aid programs all over the country, and the first one on the Navaho reservation was called DNA, for Dine something, something, and it was in Window Rock. And it was draft deferrable, if you were a guy, and this was Vietnam. And so a number of my friends who were a year older than I was, that started the year before I graduated, started '68 -- it was run by a Harvard professor, actually. They all went out. There was about eight or nine of them, and they went out to the Navaho reservation, and they were in Window Rock, and they were in Chinley and other places, and it was draft deferrable. And they spent two years doing legal services on the Navaho reservation. And they were short-staffed, and they had this case on Indian -- on local control of Indian schools, which was in the Chinley district, and they needed help, so I went out there. The reason I went out there was because my second year, you take a small seminar at Yale and that seminar is the basis of what you do your senior thesis. At Yale Law School, everybody has to do a senior thesis. Well, I wanted a fellow named Boris Bikle [phonetic sp], who was an extraordinary constitutional scholar, and he was teaching with a guy named John Simon. He was teaching this course on Indian education, no interest in Indian education, but they were teaching this course, and -- Indian education in the constitution, or something like that. And so I took the course, and I just got fascinated by it. And I decided to do my thesis on it. And therefore, I was a prime target to go out, so Yale paid my way to go out to the Navaho reservation, and I spent three weeks wandering around on this case. And what was funny about it was that I grew up in New York City, and then in Forest Hills in Westchester, but I didn't have a driver's license, because I spent most of my time on the west side of Manhattan. You don't have to drive. So in order to go out to the Navajo reservation, I had to get a driver's license, so I had a Connecticut driver's license. And my first driving was out on this, hundreds of miles with no people or anything, on this Indian reservation. At any rate, so we get back to the White House, and the National Council of Indian Opportunity was, again, established by Lyndon Johnson, and Vice President Humphrey had been the chair of it. And so now Vice President Agnew was the chair of it.

And they were having a meeting in February, and because the President had really said he wanted something dramatic to happen, my job was to go over there and work -- talk with Bob Robertson who was from Nevada, and a friend of Paul Laxalt's, Senator Laxalt who was the chair -- was the staff director of this. And C.D. Ward who was the Vice President's domestic policy guy, and Brad Patterson

came over with us, and we walked them through what could be a series of recommendations to the President on Indian policy. And that was a very, very interesting series of meetings, and at times we helped them draft the language. And then they all came together in a meeting in the Roosevelt room that the Vice President chaired with all the relevant Cabinet members around the table. He chaired it, and whoever was chairman of the council on the Indian side was the other chair. And they basically developed, and proposed and approved, as a council, a series of -- this was in February -- a series of recommendations that formed the basis of what we then took to the President to write the Indian message. And I guess the question is, you know, why do we go and what directions we went in, and I think that was really because of the President. Now, I'm telling you all this with my never having talked to the President about it at that point. This was all John Ehrlichman. And you'd give John a message, or ask John something, and he'd go into the Oval Office and come back and say, "You're on, you're off, yes, no." Never knew if he actually asked the President, or if he didn't and he just made the decisions himself, but regardless, they were all the right decisions. And when I had asked John Ehrlichman why the President was interested in this, he said, "Well, it's really very simple." And later, the President told me the story. And he had a coach named Coach Newman at Whittier College who was the football coach. And the President was convinced that if Coach Newman had been -- Coach Newman was Native American. If Coach Newman had not been Native American, but had been Anglo, that he would have had all sorts of opportunities in the Big 10, which he didn't have. And he was stuck at this small -- very good, but small, nonetheless -- school in Whittier -- Whittier, California, with, you know, no powerhouse of a team, and that that was discriminatory.

And that was unfair, and it was unjust, and that from Coach Newman he had learned not only what a solid, strong person he is, but he, the President, had learned about economic problems on the reservations, alcoholism on the reservations, a whole slew of circumstances that he didn't think any people in the United States ought to be living under. And so it was a very personal thing. And he really felt that was a wrong that had to be righted. And it was as simple as that. It was a wrong that had to be righted. And that you ought not to force people into any particular mode of living, i.e. you shouldn't force them to be terminated from reservations, you shouldn't force them to be assimilated into broader society. You should give them self-determination. And allow the individual and the communities to make a decision as to how they wanted to live, and how integrated they wanted to be into American life economically, spiritually and culturally, and how much they wanted to keep their own traditions and cultures separate and apart or together with the rest of the mainstream society. And, you know, people just keep on saying, why did he do this? Why did he do this? It's really very simple. He believed it was right. And my guess is that he did that on a lot of things during his Presidency. But in this one, clearly, it was what was right and what was -- what he was going to see happen.

### Timothy Naftali

How energetic was Spiro Agnew in this?

### Bobbie Kilberg

Not very. C.D. Ward was very energetic and very engaged in the topic, as was Bob Robertson, who came out of the West, came out of Nevada. C.D., I think, came out of the Eastern Shore here, Maryland or something. But -- so they came from very different world experiences, but the Vice President was inactive, but they were very active, and they really pushed and pushed as well. There was an interesting dynamic that now you just remind me of in the White House, in that the Vice President's

office was pretty much -- ignored wasn't the word, but they were kind of a backwater. It didn't matter what the Vice President said, we're the White House, et cetera, et cetera. So though the recommendations to the President came from the National Council of Indian Opportunity signed by the Vice President as the chairman of it, the reality was that they needed us. They needed John Ehrlichman and Len Garment to get it through the system, because it had to go through the system as every other domestic policy initiative had to. And without us pushing it wouldn't have happened, because people would tend to pooh-pooh what the Vice President's office said. And that's been true of many, many offices, Vice President offices until you get to Dick Cheney today. So that wasn't a pattern of "Oh, we really dislike Agnew." It was just the way things always were.

So for example, the Indian Self Determination Act, the solicitor -- what did we call it? The solicitor -- it wasn't solicitor general act. We had a separate solicitor proposal for separate solicitor for -- to represent Indian rights, separate and apart from the Department of Interior and the Department of Justice. The return of Blue Lake, the start of the Alaskan Native Settlement Act, which, by the way, did not make it into the President's Indian message. It was pulled out and done separately. All those things, which were in Indian education, urban Indians, all those things which were in the proposal from the National Council of Indian Opportunity had to be dissected and put into a huge memo, the kind of thing I told you I did as assistant staff secretary. And I did that. I mean, I went ahead and sat there and crafted along with obviously Garment, Simprimateur [phonetic sp] and Brads [phonetic sp], but crafted the decision memo for each of the different elements of the Indian message, and at the end of the each of the elements, you know, approved, disapproved, see me, meaning see John Ehrlichman. And that took a lot of time to do. And then that was sent out, as all the other things were, to the departments and agencies, so it went to the Justice Department, it went to OMB, it went to the Secretary of the Interior. It went to the Congressional Affairs Office in the White House, it went to the Intergovernmental Affairs Office in the White House, and then we had to pull all those comments back in. And you literally had to have a line in which said Secretary Ventura [phonetic sp] you're approved, Secretary -- attorney general doesn't, et cetera, et cetera. You listed everybody and their opinions, and then you put it into the President.

And Ehrlichman, you know, revised it somewhat, and signed it. It was his name, and he brought it into the President. And the way they did it, I guess, if I remember right is that they would bring -- they would send it to him the day before or whatever, and he would read it, and then for certain things, and including this one which was fairly complex, they'd sit there with him. So Ehrlichman sat there with him, and he came out of the Oval Office. I remember I was waiting across the room in the -- outside the Roosevelt room. And he said, "We did it. We got it. We got it all." I said, "We got it all? You're kidding me!" He said, "No, this is a go." And having it as a go was really quite extraordinary. And so we wrote up what was a statement -- not a message, it was a statement. It was just a statement with a series of all the things that were going to be done under the Indian message, and a redefinition of Native American policy, and it was approved. The language was approved by our speechwriters, et cetera, et cetera, and was approved, we thought, by the Congressional Affairs Office. And we had Xerox. In those days, you had those long -- we didn't do mimeographs, I don't think, anymore, but you had these big clunking Xerox machines, and it took you hours and hours to, you know, to do for the press office, to release a statement, I had to do, I think, 200 copies. It took you hours to do it, and stapled it all together. There was nobody to help you.

And I went down the hallway to the press office, if you know the White House, you go down that hallway, you know, there is the diplomatic -- front diplomatic West Wing entrance, and there is this hallway, and the Oval Office is here, but you go this way, and you go down to the press office. And

I'm going to the press office to give it to one of the assistant press secretaries, and a fellow named Ken BeLieu, who was the President's Senate person came charging all the way from -- their offices were in the east wing, came charging down the rose garden portico, literally ran into me, caused me to fall down, and grabbed all my Presidential statements. I said, "What are you doing?" He said, "This isn't going to see the light of day." I said, "What do you mean, it's not going to see the light of day? It's been approved. It's supposed to be released." This was the end of June. And -- of 1970 -- and he said, "No, it's not." He said, "You can't do that." And I just looked at him, and I burst into tears, and he said, "What do you mean, I can't do this?" He said, "We have trouble on the Hill." He said, "Senator Anderson, the Democratic senator from New Mexico, is threatening to vote against the ABM treaty, the anti-ballistic missile treaty." He looked at me and said, "You have heard about the ABM, haven't you?" And I said, "Yes." He said, "He's going to vote against this if we propose this message, and if it includes Blue Lake." And so basically, it died that day, and there wasn't going to be any fanfare, there wasn't going to be -- it was just going to be a statement. And -- but it included Blue Lake. And so that was gone. And I kind of went back. I went up to the second floor of the West Wing to John Ehrlichman. I said, "What do we do now?" He looked at me and said, "Are you serious, this guy is going to vote against the anti-ballistic missile treaty because of Blue Lake?" I said, "Yes." Now, you say what is Blue Lake? Blue Lake was -- should I describe what --

**Timothy Naftali**

Yeah --

**Timothy Naftali**

Before we get to the unexpected and ultimately gratuitous consequences of this, why wasn't the Alaskan tribal issue included?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Because -- I think because it was too complicated, and I think the stakes were so high involving the Alaska pipeline that I don't think that anybody wanted to -- this -- remember, you got to remember that this, other than -- to those of us who really cared about it, this piece of legislation, I mean, the Indian message statement we were going to put out was really not earth shattering. And I think they felt that Alaskan native claims kind of stand by itself. And it just wasn't ready. There were a lot of complicated issues. There were a lot of issues with the business community up there, a lot of issues with the Native American communities up there. They eventually wound up with having 12 regional corporations. I just don't think it was ready, and they thought it was going to muddy the waters, the best I can remember.

**Timothy Naftali**

What role did the secretary of the Interior play in shaping the Indian message?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

He -- gosh, he assigned a fellow who was his general counsel, as well as he had a fellow named -- he was a good friend of mine. He died in a plane crash. Oh, Alaskan plane crash -- I mean a Hawaiian Airlines plane crash many years ago. Morey Thompson, Morey Thompson was his assistant, special

assistant for Indians, and then you had somebody named, from New York State, who was the director of Bureau of Indian Affairs. But then you had this guy named Hoffman who was the general counsel, and Hoffman really played a much more important role than anybody else. They participated -- Morey Thompson participated in the National Council of -- National Council --

**Timothy Naftali**

On Indian --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Opportunity, that's right. It's the National Council of Indian Opportunity. Participated as the secretary's representative on that council. The secretary did come to the meeting in the Roosevelt room with the Vice President. But on the day to day, he really turned it over to Morey and to this guy Hoffman, and to Louie Bruce [phonetic sp] -- that's what his name was, Louie Bruce, who was the director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. But he wasn't -- I never got the sense that he was intimately involved in it. That -- okay, now this makes sense. But he did care very deeply about the Alaskan Settlement Act, and he wanted that to be separate and apart and given attention after this was over. But he was positive about it. I just don't think he was very engaged.

**Timothy Naftali**

How did you, when you were picking the issues, I mean, Blue Lake and the others, when you were putting this together, where did you find -- had there been some studies in the Johnson administration?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yes, I mean, this was not brought out of whole cloth. Obviously, the Johnson administration had started under the Vice President, started relooking at these policies. And it was obvious, put Blue Lake aside. But legal representation, the Self Determination Act, the ability of Indian communities to run their own programs, Indian education, Indian health, economic development, I mean those were all things that were about to explode on these reservations. So it was -- the solutions didn't take a rocket scientist. And there was work that had been done before. There were a variety of studies that had been done, et cetera, et cetera, and the National Council of Indian Opportunity, NCIO, did a very good job of pulling all those materials together, plus you had the Indian members of the council, and the Indian members of the council did a lot of work and did a lot of good work. And the proposals were really a consensus of the things they felt and saw every day. And, you know, it was -- the right place at the right time, the mood was really changing. If you would try to do this in the Ford administration, it wouldn't have worked, because by that point in time, the ranchers from the checkerboard [phonetic sp] areas, all over the west were really, really getting very nervous about what they considered encroachment of Indian rights on their lands. They were very worried about grazing and other things. So it was just at the right time. And in many ways, it would have almost been -- although Blue Lake would have exploded when it went to the Hill. But the other parts of the Indian message would have almost, in some ways been under the radar, if it hadn't been for Ken BeLieu and I falling down outside the press office because he didn't get the decision memo. And in fairness to him, I know the decision memo went to the Congressional Affairs Office, because it came back approved, but I think it must have been signed off on by somebody more junior, or somebody who thought this was no big thing, and

obviously, he hadn't seen it. So if you go back to that, everything stopped then. This was towards the end of June.

And so John Ehrlichman -- I guess it was the week before the 4th of July, goes into the President, and the President wanted to know, because he expected to have the statement come out again. Again, it wasn't a message; it was a statement of just facts and proposals. And he asked John evidently, "What happened to it?" And he said, "Well, there is Clinton Anderson, and he's on the, you know, the Senate Interior Committee, and he believes that Blue Lake is the thing he" -- he did not like Indian Self Determination Act, either. He did not like turning over the running of services to the Indian tribes rather than having the Bureau of Indian Affairs do it. But Blue Lake really bothered him because he thought it was a slippery slope, and once you returned the 48,000 acres of land to the Taos Pueblo Indians for Blue Lake, which they viewed -- and I guess we haven't said this. We need to set the stage. They viewed Blue Lake as the central part of their religion. Their religion was very much have a native land-based religion, and they believed that they could not, they could not observe and celebrate their religion without Blue Lake being sacred and being untouched. And Blue Lake had been taken away from them 64 years before when the Carson national forest was created under Teddy Roosevelt. And the forest service did what turned out to be a survey error, and they mistakenly, but legally surveyed these 48,000 acres of land out of the Pueblo and into the national forest. It never should have been done. And for 64 years, these people were trying to get this lake back that should have been theirs.

But Anderson's point was that if you start this process, next it's going to be the Utes, and then it's going to be the Navajo, and then it's going to be the Cheyenne, and everybody is going to want to take land back. And they're going to want to take it back for economic development and for grazing, and the religious stuff was nonsense. You had to be with and live with the Pueblo, the Taos Pueblo people to know that -- I can't tell you what any other tribe would have done, but I can tell you what these people would have done, and there was no doubt in my mind, or Len Garment's mind, or Brad Patterson's mind, that to these people, Blue Lake was their religion. And they had no intent in any manner, shape, or form of using that land for economic development or for grazing or for anything else. It was going to stay as part of their religious heritage. And indeed, they agreed to, in the legislation, to basically say that, that it shall remain, in effect, wild and open and untouched and unspoiled. But he believed that it was going to cause havoc in the west, and he was unalterably opposed to it. So John Ehrlichman goes in there, and the President says, "What happened?" And he said, "Well, Clinton Anderson has threatened to vote against the ABM Treaty if you will not back down and withdraw your support from Blue Lake." And according to Ehrlichman, I wasn't there, John said the President got red in the face and he said, "If he's going to vote against the ABM treaty over Blue Lake, well, goddamn it, let him do it. We're going to do this because it's right, and I want it done, and you go out there and do it."

So Ehrlichman went out and called me up to his office. I walked in, he went like this with a big smile on his face, said, "We got it. Let's go for it." Well, at this point in time, it was almost 4th of July, and most everybody wanted to go on vacation, Brad Patterson, who was, you know, in his late 50s, early 60s by that time, was an avid hiker. And he was going with his wife and kids or grandkids or whatever to climb some peaks in Europe, so he was gone. And Len Garment had some things he wanted to do in New York, and so you went down the totem pole, and there I was at the bottom of the totem pole. So I canceled my 4th of July plans and convinced Lee Huebner, who was a speechwriter, to cancel his plans. Lee Huebner went on to be editor and publisher of the International Herald Tribune, and then a professor at Northwestern University, and now a professor here at GW, at George Washington University. And so we sat down and started writing, and it turned -- the President wanted a message

this time. He was angry. He didn't want a statement anymore. He wanted a message. And Len Garment piped up and said, "Why don't we invite the Pueblo here?" And the President said to Len Garment, "That's a wonderful idea. I want the Indians here. I want the Pueblo in the Cabinet Room. I want the photo op." He said, "I want to make a big thing of this."

And then Len went off to New York, wherever he went. So there was Lee and I, we sat there, and I mean, Lee was the wordsmith. I clearly wasn't. He wrote a wonderful Indian message. Leonard produced the Taos Pueblo people. Leonard convinced the White House scheduling office to do it in the Cabinet Room, and that was a big thing, too, because normally, and from my experience in Bush 41 White House, we only used the Cabinet Room for Cabinet meetings, for governors, for heads of state. You rarely if ever used it for individual, "interest groups," or people who didn't have those, you know, public titles and officials. And so for the President Nixon to use the Cabinet Room was a recognition that he was dealing with tribes, which were sovereign governments, that this was something extraordinarily important to him. And so there is a picture, I know we have it and you'll hopefully have it in the library, picture of the President seated on one side of him by the cacique who was the 94-year-old religious leader, Juan de Jesus Romero; the tribal secretary and translator, Paul Bonel [phonetic sp] on the other side; the governor of the Pueblo next to him with two very important canes, one from the King of Spain and one from Abraham Lincoln, given to the Pueblo. And then around the table, representatives, other representatives from the Pueblo; the head of two of the Indian national tribal organizations; and then the secretary of HEW, Bill --

### **Timothy Naftali**

Elliot.

### **Bobbie Kilberg**

Elliot Richardson. The secretary of -- okay. The Vice President, the President, Elliot Richardson, Secretary of Interior Wally Hickel, the head of OEO and the Council to the President, Don Rumsfeld, Len Garment -- it was quite an array. And then some of us junior people were, you know, along the side of the wall in the Cabinet Room. And the President, you know, emphasized and promoted Blue Lake as the center part of that message, not ignoring the other things, which, in effect, had an impact on many more people throughout the Indian world. But that was what he wanted emphasized. And the -- you know, you let the press come in for the photo op, and the press came in, and they went nuts. Here's the -- Richard Nixon of all people sitting there between two traditionally clad Indian leaders turning over -- proposing to turn over land for them to redefine the whole definition of Native American policy in the United States on self determination, on the Indian Trust Council Authority, on economic development and health and urban Indians. And they left, and the scribes left, and they went to the press office and they got the President's statement.

The next morning, in "The New York Times," the front page of "The New York Times" was a picture of the President with the Cacique and Paul Bonel and the tribal governor on either side of him. That was the front page of "The New York Times." The article started on the front page and continued in one of the inside pages. The whole entire gosh darn page was a, was the whole transcript of the Indian message. And so I come in to the senior staff meeting at 7:30 in the morning, and all these guys got up and gave me a standing ovation. I kind of looked, I said, "What are you doing?" They said -- and Ehrlichman, of course, said, "You're my own little Sacajawea." And I looked at him and I said, "Oh, come on." But they just said they couldn't believe that -- they had been trying to get a positive story on

the front page of "The New York Times" since the guy became President, and by golly, he gets it for Indians, for dealing with a minority community in the United States. And it just made, that just made the year for me, and it was, it was quite amazing. There was just -- it was an extraordinarily special moment. And the President -- and he did this again when the bill finally passed, and it was signed in the East Room of the White House. But going back to the July 8th Cabinet Room presentation, the Cacique had a -- the religious leader had a habit of speaking maybe three, four sentences, and then his translator, Paul, would translate for a good five minutes. I mean it was -- you know, you'd say good morning, and it would turn into good morning and good afternoon and good evening, and the world is fine, et cetera, et cetera. So the President was very patient. I mean, he sat through it all. And you wonder what he was thinking, but he obviously was really into it, and it obviously meant a great deal to him.

### Timothy Naftali

Well, he told you that, didn't he?

### Bobbie Kilberg

Yes, he did. He told me -- as a young White House fellow, I rarely saw the President. Unless you were Steve Bull, his personal aide, this was a very button down structured White House. And so I, maybe in -- a year as a White House fellow, another six months staying on as a staff assistant. I maybe interacted with him three, four times. But at the signing ceremony, which was at Christmas, and the state floor was just beautifully decorated, and this was in the East Room. The President was sitting at a table, a signing table, and again, you had the Cacique and Paul Bonel, the secretary and tribal translator standing on either side of them. And again, the Cacique welcomed -- thanked the President for being there and did a word of welcome, and Paul took five minutes to translate it. And then the President made remarks, and Paul had to translate for the Cacique so this went on for 15, 20 minutes at least before the President signed anything and made his own speech. And I was looking, and I was thinking, "Oh, gosh, am I going to be fired? Is this guy just furious?" Because I knew he was late for a -- I knew his next event was to go do something at HUD. But he seemed to be really engaged in it, and he lingered. So at the end, John Ehrlichman invited me to walk back to the Oval Office with the President, though his motorcade was waiting to take him to HUD. For some reason, he had to go to the Oval Office first. So we were walking between the East Wing and on the ramp by the rose garden to the Oval Office. And I said, "Mr. President, I really apologize. I know that took very long, and the translations can be very cumbersome." And he looked at me and said, "Young lady, don't you ever say that." He said, "That was one of the most moving, wonderful experiences I've ever had at this White House. We did something good that you ought to be proud of. We did something important for the Indian community. And what the hell, HUD can wait." And you know, I just went, "Okay!" And it was just -- you know, it wasn't classic, it was unique. And actually, as you go back to the July 8th meeting in the Cabinet Room, Steve Bull, his personal aide, came in not once, but twice with what we used to call little escape notes. You give it to the President, he looks at it, he says, "Oh, I have to go to a meeting or an important call." It's usually a blank piece of paper. But Steve came in twice, and the President pushed him away. So he obviously was into it in July as well as being into it in December.

And he stuck by his guns on the ABM, and he stuck by his guns on when Scoop Jackson objected, and Scoop Jackson was the senator, as everyone knows, from the state of Washington and was chairman of the Senate Interior Committee. And not only did -- this bill -- the Blue Lake bill had passed the House some time ago through the good works of a Congressman Yates [phonetic sp] from Florida, of all

places, actually. And the July 8th meeting in the Cabinet Room was one day before the subcommittee of the Senate was going to -- the Senate Interior Committee was going to meet. The bill -- I don't remember if it passed the subcommittee or it didn't pass the subcommittee, but either way, we forced it to the full committee. The full committee turned it down, and it went to the floor. Ted Kennedy -- this is the really weirdest combination. Ted Kennedy, Fred Harris, a senator from Oklahoma whose wife, Ladonna, was head of the American's for Indian Opportunity, and she, who was on the National Council for Indian Opportunity, and a Comanche. So Fred Harris, Ted Kennedy, Senator Griffin from Michigan, a Republican, and Richard Nixon together became this cabal, and they forced it to the vote in the full Senate, and never before in the history of the Senate Interior Committee had anything that they had voted down made it to the Senate, to the floor.

These days, I don't think that would have even happened. I don't think under the rules, you can get to the floor if you don't get it past the Senate, I mean the Senate committee. But they did, and it was unanimous -- not unanimous, but it was a two to one vote in favor of the legislation. And that had never happened before. And the President took a lot of risks in doing that because there were a lot of really pissed off senators. But he did it. He did it because it was right. And not only did he do it, but he was personally counting heads, according to Ehrlichman. And he flew -- again, you're not supposed to do this, in these days, I guess, but in those days, he flew at least two senators back on a jet from where they were, because he wanted them to be there for the vote. And Mac Mathias, who was the senator from Maryland, Republican senator from Maryland, he sent -- he ordered a park police escort to accompany -- a state police escort to get him from somewhere up in Frederick, Maryland, or something in time for the vote. They had an accident on the way down, and they switched cars and put Mathias in another car and got him there to come to the vote. And Barry Goldwater, who I guess was a friend of the President, I'm really not sure, but Barry Goldwater, we kept on going to him and asked him how he would vote, and he wouldn't tell anybody. He just said he'd keep his own counsel. And he was very important, because he was the senator from Arizona, and, you know, that's next to New Mexico, and he could be a counter balance to Clinton Anderson. And he wouldn't tell anybody how he would vote until the day of the vote, he got up to make his statement, maybe 10, 15 minutes before the vote, and he said, "I'm going to vote yes, and maybe we would be better off as a country if we just turned all these lands back to the Indians." I mean, it went to a place where you didn't really want them to go, because that was the fear of everybody. But he just made this eloquent statement. And then everything just fell like dominos.

When the vote was over, the Cacique, who was up in the family gallery, stood up and held -- I still kind of cry when I think about this -- stood up and held the two canes, the cane from the king of Spain and President Lincoln, up in the air and didn't say a word, just held them in the air. And the galleries and the floor of the Senate burst into applause. All these senators turned around and looked at this Cacique, and all started to applaud. You're not supposed to applaud in the gallery. And the Senate -- you're not supposed to applaud on the floor, but they all did. And it was just this absolutely magical moment. Again, I can cry, what, almost 30 something years later. And I was just a kid, I was 24-years-old. And you thought, "My God. We really did something important here for a people that they'll never forget, and is central and key to their lives and their value of their religion. And the President helped us, and it all happened." And I don't know that it could have happened the year before or the year after or ever again, but all the stars were aligned correctly. Len Garment was running around to as many editors of, editors of the editorial pages. He got an editorial in "The New York Times." He got an editorial in "The Washington Post." He got an editorial in the "Evening Star." He had an editorial in the Chicago papers and the "Los Angeles Times." He -- Bill Safire got into it, who was working at the White House at that time with Len. It became kind of a -- everybody just kind of really got galvanized.

And, you know, I don't know what more to say about it, except it was just an extraordinary experience. Now, the one last thing, though, that was funny was that in the end of -- July 8th was the President's message. The bill didn't pass until December. The end of July, the Pueblo people, who were pretty crafty, decided we're going to take the senior people in the White House to Blue Lake. This was a very special thing, because they didn't allow Anglos, i.e. non-Indians up to Blue Lake. You literally could get killed if you went up there and you weren't supposed to be there. And so Len Garment went. Brad Patterson still was somewhere, climbing the mountains, because he didn't go.

But Len went, I went, Bob Robertson went, who was the executive director of the National Council for Indian Opportunity. C.D. Ward went, who was the Vice President's domestic policy advisor, and Kim Agnew, who was then, who was 16-years-old, who was Vice President Agnew's daughter went, and the Vice President's military aide. His first name was Les. And we went, and stayed over, I guess we stayed overnight at a little place called Rancho & Congtoto [phonetic sp] in Santa Fe, and then we went up north to Taos, and we only discovered later on that you literally could have probably gotten within an hour and a half to two hours max of the lake, of Blue Lake, by four-wheel drive. But they decided they were going to make us go on horseback for five hours up and five hours back, I think to make us just appreciate and understand how special this place was. And we went through extraordinary meadows of wild flowers, et cetera, et cetera, and then up very steep inclines until we were above the tree line. And we were above the tree line. Some of us, including me and Kim, we got very, very dizzy and almost fainted. But then you looked out over the top of the tree line, and you looked down to what was Blue Lake, and it looked like a gem. It looked like literally a turquoise gem. It was just gorgeous. And then you proceeded to go down the other side of the mountain, down from the tree line back through the trees and then down to the lake. And when you got to the lake, itself, it was actually very full of algae, very green. There was nothing to the Anglo eye that was special about it, which made it all the more important and all the more kind of magical, because obviously, there was some inherent spirituality that the Indians saw in the lake, that if you were just wandering in McLean, Virginia, and ran upon this lake, you wouldn't have thought so. But it was very, very special to them. And we were coming in towards the, at the end, towards the lake. We were met by Indian guards with machetes, real machetes. And Paul Bonel, again, the tribal secretary, who was our translator had to talk our way. He had all these papers signed with the big seal from the Cacique and everything, and it took 20 minutes before he convinced these guards to let us go in. And they jokingly later showed us, you know, things, indentations that looked like they were made by machetes on trees of people who totally did the wrong thing. I don't think that was true. But you know, they were very hostile, and made it very clear that this was a place, you know, that you only go if you're permitted. And then we went five hours back. And I've never been on a horse since. That was it. But that was -- and I think I understand that we're still one of just a handful of Anglos who have ever been up there.

**Timothy Naftali**

And this was because of the surveyor's error?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Correct.

**Timothy Naftali**

This was actually considered National Park Service?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

No, yes, forest service.

**Timothy Naftali**

Forest service?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Forest service, but the forest service didn't have any representatives there, presumably?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

No, no, no. You went into that lake in that area, you took your life in your hands if you didn't belong. So, no, the forest service, as far as I know, it -- well, I take that back. One of the things the Taos Pueblo were concerned about -- well, they were concerned about encroachment. They had seen hunters and fires being lit by campsites, some grazing, so things were beginning to happen around the edges of the lake that got them very nervous. So yes, I think the forest service was around, but they weren't around that day. If you, today, go to Taos Pueblo for a tour of the Pueblo, which the Pueblo leaders do, they have these tour guides. And one of our friends was there, I don't know, five, six months ago, and they came back and they said, "This young girl who must have been just out of high school kept on talking about Richard Nixon, and how he had protected their religion and their lands, and he was the most wonderful President in the world." And they came at me and said, "Where the heck did that come from?" Oh, I remember who said it. It was the speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates, Bill Howell, who is a friend of mine, and he was out there, and I think visited us -- we have a house of Santa Fe -- that summer after having coming back from Taos Pueblo. He said, "Why do these people love Richard Nixon?" He said, "I don't think anybody would love Richard Nixon." And so they're continuing their tradition. You know, these young people are being brought up to believe and to know that Richard Nixon had been a very special President for them, and a very strong Republican in that Pueblo, but I think ties back to that as well. They will be Republicans forever more.

**Timothy Naftali**

The Cacique must have remembered Theodore Roosevelt.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Well, he was 94 in 1970, sure.

**Timothy Naftali**

So he remembered when the transfer had happened.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yeah, yeah.

**Timothy Naftali**

To what extent was the -- were the events at Alcatraz pushing for a change in Indian policy? Because that's happening at the same time.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yes, well, it was happening at the same time, and by the time the Indians left Alcatraz, the message had been released. They left in the fall, right, of '70?

**Timothy Naftali**

Well, they left -- actually they left later.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Later than the fall of '70? Okay, it was there. I tried as hard as I could to ignore it. Geoff Shepherd, who was a fellow Fellow, who was at the Treasury Department at that time and, therefore, had a lot of relationship with the Secret Service, I don't know what they had to do with it, but at any rate, Geoff got very involved in the law and order thing of that. He wanted to -- he will tell you -- he wanted to either have the military go in and kick them out, or he had this idea that you could, he found some sort of sirens that are just screechy, unbelievably, that would make it impossible to stay there because your ear drums would not pop. It would be just unbearable pain. And John Whitaker and Bud Krogh and John Ehrlichman rightfully just decided we would wait it out, we would wait them out. And they eventually did. It had an impact. I think it probably was in the back of the President's mind, but I don't think it was -- it wasn't the motivating factor. I mean, he really was not trying just to react to a bunch of rallies who took over a government facility, and you know, some of the good publicity those guys were getting when they shouldn't have. But I don't think he was motivated by that. I genuinely think he was motivated by doing what he thought was right, and proper and good, and righting specific wrong of Blue Lake, but also righting what he thought was the wrong of a hundred years of America's treatment of Native Americans. I just -- I think Alcatraz was a distraction. Now, the other question is, what happened and what was his reaction when we had the takeover of the BIA and then Wounded Knee, you know, post everything he had done on the Indian message. And then people come careening in the night, you know, the week before the election, which he was going to win in a landslide anyway, but regardless, coming in a week before the election and taking over the BIA. That was a very scary thing, and I was out of the White House by that time, but I was in the BIA building at the request of John Ehrlichman, and I never spoke to the President about it, obviously, but that -- you know, how he would have -- I don't know how he would have reacted to, you know, look what I do and then look what the payback is or thanks I get or lack of thanks.

**Timothy Naftali**

Let's talk about the BIA occupation.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Wait, before we do that, can I just go back one second --

**Timothy Naftali**

Sure.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

-- to the fact that many elements of the -- you know, Blue Lake was the one that was passed almost immediately in December of 1970. It took until 1975, the Indian Self Determination Act to pass, but it did. The Indian Trust Council Authority, which I referenced before but called it the wrong thing, I called the it Solicitor General Office, but the Indian Trust Council Authority never passed, but elements of it passed, i.e., the concern was that the United States was the trustee, and you have fiduciary responsibility when you're a trustee for the Native American -- for the Native American sovereign rights. And yet every time a land dispute came up, you had the government having to be on two sides of itself. You had the Justice Department, but you also had the Solicitor's Office and Interior. And Interior represented the Bureau of Land Management. It represented -- Bureau of Land Management represented a variety of ranching and other interests, at the same time they were supposed to be representing the Native American interest. And then you had the Justice Department weighing in. And so you had the government arguing against itself. And the thought was to create an independent Indian trust council authority, which would have the authority to sue on behalf of the United States, and would not be feathered or tethered by the position that the Interior Department would take, or that the Justice Department would take. That never passed, but they did establish the principle bifurcated brief, so that the Interior Department could go one way, and the Justice Department representing the trust responsibility could go another way.

So you got that accomplished. You did get more money going into urban Indian centers. You did get more money going into Indian health programs. You did get an acceleration of community control of Indian schools on reservations. So when you add it all up -- and you did get the loan financing fund, the economic development fund passed. So you did really get a really major change in the landscape. And I think it's important to note that some of it took three and four years, but it did happen. And some of it, such as the Indian Trust Council Authority, were having such a fight with Interior and Justice and OMB, who was taking the side of Interior, if I remember at the time, that we did not have -- we were supposed to have legislation going up to the Hill, and the Indian Trust Council Authority, when we did the message on July 8th, and we didn't have it. We spent the next three months after that arguing about the legislation. And despite the fact that the President's words were very clear in the message, OMB in particular trying to just kill it. Two guys, one named McCormick and one named Craible [phonetic sp] who were at OMB who were opposed to every single thing that was in the message, and they aimed at things that they thought they could most directly affect. And one was the Indian Trust Council Authority, and the other was the Self Determination Act, which also didn't go up, I don't think, right at the exact same time. But so once the message was over, you couldn't just go about your business and go on another topic. You had to monitor and continue to worry about the stuff. Before it ever got to the Hill, you had to worry about what other departments and agencies and particularly OMB and the White House was going to try to do to derail it. At any rate, I don't know if you want to go talk about --

**Timothy Naftali**

We should ask [unintelligible] if they're still around, why --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

McKitrick [phonetic sp], I'm sorry, not McCormick. McKitrick -- McKitrick died, because I saw his picture in the paper. I think Craible is still alive. And another person you can ask, because their boss was -- the guy from RAND, who went and headed up RAND after --

**Timothy Naftali**

Don Rice.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Don Rice, who sometimes comes to our reunions, by the way. Don was their boss, and he may have some --

**Timothy Naftali**

Tell me -- well, so that's why it slowed it down. Tell us about the discussion over ending the policy of termination. Because that's the big -- that's the big headline.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Discuss in what way?

**Timothy Naftali**

Well, was it -- was it from the beginning, was it clear --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yes, it was very clear. I mean, when Ehrlichman came out from meeting with the President the first or second time, he clearly said -- and, well, back up a second. When the National Council of Indian Opportunity, when we produced or they produced with our help their series of recommendations, the very first one was ending termination and assimilation. And Ehrlichman would go in to the President for updates from time to time, I don't know how often, but from time to time, and came back at one point in time and said, that's the key. He views that as central to what we're doing. So that wasn't even really a topic of discussion. It was basically from the very beginning, and then the question was how do you do that? And, you know, what are the elements to that? But, no, it was very clear that that was going to be the first word out of the mouth. And Len Garment told me, I think, that during the time we were drafting the statement, not the message, I think, but the statement, the first time before it was sent back from Ken Blew, he went out and had dinner, I guess, with Pat Moynihan, and he said, "This is just not clicking enough." And Moynihan looked at it and said, "Well, the reason it's not clicking is that your first paragraph, your opening statement doesn't have punch. The punch needs to be we're ending, you know, termination and we believe in self-determination. Say it right up front, say it clear, that's your headline. That's your sound bite." And that was absolutely right. But it was always -- there was no question that that was going to be the policy. And you might say also, what did Interior think about that, or whatever, ever, the answer was that this was such a button down White House, and the

power was clearly in the White House staff, and the senior White House staff, not in the Cabinet agencies, that if John Ehrlichman walked out of the Oval Office and said, "That's what it's going to be," that was what it was going to be. You didn't see any push back from Cabinet members, or at least very rarely. They're very different from other kinds of White Houses that I've seen, been in the Gerald Ford one or the Bush 41 one. Maybe more similar to what you have in Bush 43. But Nixon's was a very top down, and the White House staff was the controlling body. When you went to Alaskan Native Settlements Act, the same thing happened. Rogers Morton went into a meeting that I was in in John Ehrlichman's office with George Shultz, who was then head of OMB, myself, Brad, and Len and Ehrlichman, and he went in there ready to bear, saying he wasn't going to agree. He didn't like -- was it two billion acres and 500 million -- one billion acre --

**Timothy Naftali**

No, 40 million acres --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Forty million acres and two -- and \$1 billion divided between the oil revenue and direct payments. I think it was 500 -- 500 million for oil revenue, and 460 something -- a million for direct payments. At any rate, it was close to a billion dollars. He just came in bear and Ehrlichman sat there -- it was the shortest meeting I had ever been in -- Ehrlichman sat there and said, "Well, I just came out of the Oval Office this morning, and the President says we're going with 40 million acres and \$1 billion in payments. That's his position." And Rogers Morton said, "Okay." Wally Hickel was there also, he said, "Okay." That was just it. You knew when -- and they knew Ehrlichman well enough to know when he was bluffing and when he wasn't, and in that case, he had clearly said he had gone to the President. Later that day, I came back in to say good night, and I said to him, "Did you really go in and see the President?" And he just kind of smiled and winked at me. So I don't know whether he ever did or not, or that was just he decided it himself. You'll have to ask -- John Whitaker was there, I'm sorry, John Whitaker was at that meeting. He was very key to that. And I'm sure John has the same memory of that meeting that I did.

**Timothy Naftali**

Was Hickel there, or was Hickel gone by then?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

No, I'm sorry, Hickel couldn't have been there, because Rog Morton was there. That's right. It was -- it was John Whitaker, Rog Morton, and John Whitaker was still at the White House, he wasn't deputy secretary of Interior yet, and Len Garment, and Brad, and myself and John Ehrlichman.

**Timothy Naftali**

So that's how the number was -- that's how you got to 40 million --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yeah, 40 million. So we went in -- excuse me. He said he went in and just said, talked to the President, this is the number we came out with, and that's what it is. Anybody have any objections? And every one just went, "Nope." So I mean, I've never seen people cave so quickly. So you know, it was a very different kind of White House, and whatever came out of the Oval Office, or whatever people thought came out of the Oval Office as iterated by John Ehrlichman or Bob Haldeman, that's what it was. Now, I can't tell you that's how foreign policy worked, but that was clearly how domestic policy --

**Timothy Naftali**

And it wasn't that way in the Ford administration?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

No, the Ford administration was anybody could walk into the Oval Office at any time and have discussions. I mean, Gerald Ford, I really think, believed that he was going to return civility and openness to the White House, and that was the way to return that sense of camaraderie and trust to the American people, and it was the most open White House I've ever seen. I mean, I'm -- you know, I was an associate counsel to the President, so I moved up the chain a little bit, but that -- you know, that was -- you have, you have associate counsel to the President is the same as the special assistant to the President. You had special assistant, associate counsel, then you had the deputy assistants to the President or deputy counsel, and then the assistants to the President. So I was part of the senior staff, but the lower rung of the senior staff. I could walk into the Oval office, not frequently, but I could. I could say, "I'd like to come in." It was -- it was a very much more -- it was a very different system.

**Timothy Naftali**

And Bush 41 also was different?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Bush 41 was more structured, clearly, than -- I don't know, I can't tell you about Ronald Reagan's White House, but Bush 41 was more structured than Gerald Ford's, but there still was a lot of openness and a lot of ability for people to come in and express their views verbally to the President. Bush 41 loved the interaction with the Cabinet members, and virtually anybody else. And he really got a lot of energy from that. Richard Nixon, from my observation, really didn't want to meet with his Cabinet, and really was very comfortable with two or three people, and that's how he liked to make decisions. He didn't like a lot of noise around, and he wanted everything clear and crisp, and decided by a very small group. So Cabinet members, in my opinion, really didn't have -- now, again, I'm talking about it from the perspective of, you know, a very young junior member of the White House staff. But from my perspective, there was little ability for Cabinet members to wheel and deal, or to be free agents, or to try to be part of the discussion process, because he really didn't want that. I mean, that was, again, my impression. A huge amount was done on paper, more so than evidently -- I mean, all other White Houses used paper, obviously, to document what you do, or emails to document what you do, whatever, paper back then, but with Nixon, that was how the decision process was made, so...

**Timothy Naftali**

Did the Yakama issue come up while you were there? It settled after you leave.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

It settled after I left, but again, for some reason, I went out there. I did some consulting once I -- I went to Arnold Porter to practice law, but I did consulting, and I went out to Yakama, and I'm not sure if I went out to Yakama or Yakama, however you say it, before I left the White House in the end of June '71, or afterwards. But it didn't get settled before I left. The Alaskan Native Settlement Act didn't get settled before I left, either, but it clearly was going to be. I mean, those were the -- that meeting in Ehrlichman's office set what we were going to do, and then the question was selling the Congress.

**Timothy Naftali**

What role did the pipeline play in selling it to the Congress?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Pipeline -- well, I don't know about selling to the Congress, I was gone by then, but selling it in the White House, I mean, John Whitaker came in, and I remember him standing both outside John Ehrlichman's office, and then in John Ehrlichman's office saying, "We need this pipeline. The -- it's not just the oil companies want a pipeline, but we need this pipeline for energy independence and energy sufficiency. And the oil companies really don't care how the hell you do it, just do it. This is most important, and you can't have this land claim mucking it up. So go, gosh darn it, they went you to settle it, and they don't care what it costs." So I'm sure that Ehrlichman took that into the Oval Office as well, and I'm not implying that the President decided this was just the right thing -- you know, the sense of 40 million acres and a billion dollars, this was just to right thing to do emotionally or spiritually or whatever. It was a clear economic decision as well, and they wanted that pipeline.

**Timothy Naftali**

So your memory of the Whitaker statement is before the White House decides 40 million --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yeah, that's right. I remember an earlier meeting, which Whitaker just stood there and said, "We need the pipeline. They want it settled. They don't care what it costs, just get it settled. Get it off the plate." It was, you know, very simple.

**Timothy Naftali**

Very simple... that's a good segue to the summer of '72. Tell us about the National Women's Political Caucus.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Okay, you don't want to talk anymore about the BIA takeover?

**Timothy Naftali**

That's afterwards.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

That's afterwards. That's right. We're moving on.

**Timothy Naftali**

We're going to do this chronologically.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

The National Women's Political Caucus, well, by the summer of 1972, there was the Republican Women's Caucus within the National Women's Political Caucus. And they really ran on parallel tracks. One, because the issues in regard to the conventions was different, but also because the National Women's Political Caucus was beginning to go off into this realm of opposing the war, which the war is already beginning to wind down, but it went on through -- you know, until 1975, but opposing the war, and getting into just a wide array of domestic and foreign policies that were not what the Republican women who joined the caucus thought when we joined it. We joined it, Jill Ruckelshaus, Peggy Heckler, Betsy Griffith, who's now -- who's now head mistress of Madeira, all sort of very moderate women joined it because we believed that we wanted to empower women to run for office and to have more power within the political parties. And that's what it was supposed to be. It was supposed to be about process, not about positions on a variety of policy issues, positions of variety of policy issues outside of dealing with the party process. And so come the summer of 1972, there was obviously going to be another convention, and it was going to be in Miami.

And we had a major interest in increasing the number of women delegates. Prior to that, and at that convention -- my numbers are really hazy. It's a long time ago. But I think they were in the 20s, my guess, percentile somewhere of the number of women delegates that were going to the conventions. And we really felt as though we had reached a plateau. We weren't getting women elected through the local party systems to get to go to the conventions, whereas when the national party, themselves, could select things, they were doing very well. They had a rule that you had to have 50 percent of the delegates who were members of the Platform Committee, and you'd get two for each state, had to be female. So you had one woman and one male from each state. And nobody seemed to think that was a problem, but the concept of it in any way impeding local control of the election process of delegates was a real issue. And we understood that. We understood -- and many of us were involved in local parties, and we knew that, you know, they didn't like you to have the national party come in and say you must do this or you must do that in the sense of who you were electing to actually go to this convention.

So back in the fall of '71, George Bush -- George Herbert Walker Bush was chairman of the Republican National Committee, and some of us went to talk to him, because he had established the Rule 29 Committee. The Rule 29 Committee -- I don't know why it's called the Rule 29 Committee, but it was a committee that was structured by Bush to take a look -- I guess it was provided for in the rules of the party. The Rule 29 Committee -- under Rule 29, you could establish a committee to take a look at all the party rules. And so he decided it was time to take a look comprehensively at all party

rules, and he appointed Peggy Heckler as one of the members of the rather small committee. She was the congresswoman from Massachusetts. And he allowed Peggy to appoint me as her stand-in, her surrogate, because she was very busy traveling at that period of time, and because of the number of things in Congress, she couldn't pay a lot of attention to it. So I sat on this committee with Clarke Reed, who was the national committeeman from Mississippi, and a variety of other very, very conservative people compared to me at that time. And we went through lots of lots of rules, most of which were not contentious, but then we got to Rule 32. And Rule 32 dealt with the selection of delegates to the convention. And the Republican caucus of the nationalist political caucus proposed that you actively encourage -- I think those were the words, actively encourage, but there was another set of terms.

**Timothy Naftali**

But in '71, Bush was at the U.N.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

But in 1972, he was at the -- well, okay, now I'm confused. Because maybe it was 1970, but I was on this Rule 29 Commission, and I was on the Rule 29 Committee, and it proposed rule changes for the '72 convention. And Bush put me on it.

**Timothy Naftali**

Bush put you on it?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yes, and I don't know -- he put Peggy Heckler on it with the authority to delegate it to me. So I don't know how -- I don't know what the -- I'm not clear of the sequence anymore.

**Timothy Naftali**

Because -- well, Bob Dole was the chairman.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Bob Dole was the chairman when Bush resigned -- when Nixon resigned. That was '74.

**Timothy Naftali**

Bush, Bush is the one who was the chairman.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Is the chairman when Nixon resigns?

**Timothy Naftali**

Yes.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Okay, and then he gets appointed to the CIA. And goes to China in between? Well, I know -- I don't quite know how this happened, but I know that somehow George Bush put me on that commission. I don't know why or how.

**Timothy Naftali**

But this is before the '72 --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yeah, it was clearly before '72. I remember sitting in his office. And I know Dole succeeded him afterwards. No?

**Timothy Naftali**

The other way around.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Okay, well, so then Bush was not chairman of the RNC in 1971? After he left, after he left the house, he went to the U.N.

**Timothy Naftali**

That's right, and he was at the U.N. in '71. He lost the '70 election.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

He was at the U.N. in '71.

**Timothy Naftali**

In November '70, he loses the election, and in '71, he gets the U.N. job. He starts in '71, and he holds it into '72, and then after the '72 election, he replaces Dole.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Okay, well, can we turn the tape off for a second? Okay, I'm going to worry -- strive to achieve versus actively encourage and what the other wording was. Sure, the question was how George Herbert Walker Bush became my mentor. I was at Yale Law School at a time when Yale College was still single sex. And Yale had just decided not to merge with my college, which was Vassar, and instead to integrate and include women. And so this was 1967, and they were trying to figure out how to deal -- actually, how to integrate women into the life of the college. Women didn't actually arrive until 1970, I think. But -- so in 1967, '68, that school year, I was assigned to one of the colleges as a Yale law

student. I was assigned to Timothy Dwight, and I didn't live there, but I spent an extraordinary amount of time there explaining to these young men, who were my contemporaries, and to the house master what it was going to be like to have women with them every day. I became an expert on the architecture of bathrooms and all sorts of things. And in the course of that -- well, before that actually, but in the course of that, I got to know the President, the present President fairly well, in that he was very active in DKE -- there weren't a lot of fraternities at Yale, but there was DKE, and he was -- I don't remember if he was the President of DKE or very, very active in DKE. So we spent a fair amount of time together on that issue. We also spent time together just before that in that Yale had a wonderful system where you could take -- the law students could take courses elsewhere, if you wanted to, and I loved American government and history, and I took one or two courses in that space, and the present President, George W. Bush, was in one of my classes. And that was, I think, before we even got involved in the whole thing about women at Yale. So I tended to hang out -- I also was very young. I got out of college at -- went to law school at 20, and I was the same age as the undergraduates, and so I spent -- I was much more comfortable socially with the undergraduates, so I spent a lot with the undergraduates.

I spent a lot of time at DKE and met the present President, and his father came up one day to have a talking with some of us about matters in other things, and he just kind of adopted me, and he reminded me that when I got out, when I left school -- actually George Bush left in 1968, and I didn't leave until 1969. He, you know, he said, "I want you to come see me, and, you know, I just want you to spend time. I'm there for you." And he was, and he was there for me for every year that I have been in Washington, and Mrs. Bush was extraordinary. Of our five children, one of them had -- he was the brightest kid I ever met, but he had learning disabilities, very similar to learning disabilities that Neil, their son Neil had, and Mrs. Bush walked me through all the options and all the different schools, et cetera, et cetera, and always kept track of how Jonathan was doing. And Jonathan is now President of a renewable energy company, wind power company in New Mexico, so he's doing just great. But they just became kind of a second family to me. And the President -- President Bush 41 tracked my career in every step of the way and brought me into the Bush 41 White House to a job that any sane person would not have done with five children. We have five kids: four are very close to each other. They're four within five years, and there is an eight year gap. And so I went into the Bush White House with a child who was a year and a few months old, as well as kids were -- who were preteens. And he made it work. He said to me, "I want you to be head of public liaison, and I want you to be part of my team, and I'm going to make this work so that a mom with five children can actually function in this White House and do a good job." And he was 66, 67 years old when he became President, right?

**Timothy Naftali**

Yeah.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

And his understanding of what young women, or what younger women were going through in raising families and trying to balance family and work was way behind his time at that point. He sat me down, he said, "Okay. Well, here's the drill. I promise you, you don't, won't have to travel on weekends. You won't have to be gone on weekends, out of the home." And remember, this is before email and before really cell phones. We had clunky cell phones, but not something you carried around in your pocket. And he said -- in four years I think I had to come in, maybe five weekends, in four years. One of them was the 1970 tax bill. And then he said "And you don't have to -- we'll keep your overnights away from

the family during the week to a minimum." And by golly, he let me send my staff on -- you know, on trips. And I only went overnight on Air Force One, you know, when you had to stay overnight, I only - - you know, in a venue where you wound up -- I maybe only did that three or four times in four years. So I was very popular, because my staff got to go to California, and to Florida, and to Europe, and I went to Peoria. It was, you know -- I'd go any place you could get back in one day. So I would go to Peoria, where you could get back in one day. And he also -- this was all before he actually became President. This was in his Vice President's office.

And he also said, he said, "Now, you got to realize, you are not going to be part of the inner circle." I said, "I know that, but how do you know that?" He said, "Well," he said, "You know, I've been around a long time." He said, "The guys are going to all sit around at night, 7:00, 8:00 at night, and they're going to have a beer or drink a glass of wine, and they're going to talk about the day's events, and they're going to look at, you know, 'TV,' et cetera, et cetera, and he said, "You're going to want to go home to the kids." And I said, "That's right." He said, "So you got to realize that you are not going to be part of the inner circle group. But I want you to know that I'm going to include you in everything, and I'm going to make it possible for you to do this job, because you're the right person for this job, and I want you to do this. And you're my person." And, you know, he made it manageable. I don't think under any other President I could have possibly done that. And he made it work. And for that, I will forever be grateful. But the response back to your question that you asked a few minutes ago off camera, whether present President Bush 43 was in Timothy Dwight TD -- no, I think he was in Jonathan Edwards, but everybody in the university was involved in the whole "issue" of how women were going to be integrated and made part of the, you know, Yale community, and so he was involved in that.

**Timothy Naftali**

Was he a part of some committee?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

I don't remember. You know --

**Timothy Naftali**

I know.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

It's been a long time ago. All I remember is DKE parties, the class we took together, and his being involved in some way. It was just -- you know, as senior student leader, maybe through DKE, of how we were going to deal with women. But at any rate, we became friends. We were not close friends, and we, you know, we didn't stay very much in touch after he left school, then I left a year later. We didn't really stay in touch by any means, rarely, but I became very close to his dad.

**Timothy Naftali**

'72 convention --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yes, '72 convention.

**Timothy Naftali**

With the -- tell us about the issue of daycare, Federal support for daycare, which is very important for the caucus.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

It is, and you might say, well, why is that different than, you know, the Republicans being upset that the Democrats were going off on all these topics. Democrats were going off on all these topics that we did not really consider essential to either the process of getting more women involved in the party and the political process, or issues that we defined as women's issues. And now, if you define something as women's issues, people get very upset, so there is only people issues. But in effect, daycare, childcare was an issue of profound importance to women who wanted or had to be in the workplace. And we considered it a women's issue at that time, and we weren't embarrassed to call it that. And what we wanted to do was get a sense from the Platform Committee and put into the platform that there was a commitment on the part of the Federal Government to Federal funding of voluntary daycare locally controlled, but with Federal monetary assistance coming into it, because as women were increasingly going into the workforce, this was a significant road block and setback, and you didn't have the wide array of daycare choices that you have now. Even now they are very expensive and there are lots of issues related to them. But back then, it was kind of virgin territory. And so we -- that and getting more women into the conventions as delegates, and getting more women elected to office were issues that we felt very strongly about.

So we went down, about eight of us, into the Sand Sue Sea Hotel [phonetic sp] in Miami, which is where we stayed and where I think -- it was also where the platform hearings were, and we put out flyers on the chairs of each of the 50 women who were members of the Platform Committee. Because again, the Republicans had no problem with saying they were going to have equal representation on the Platform Committee. And we invited them to a lunch in this suite that we had commandeered. And realized we had absolutely no money, so we went out and bought baloney sandwiches. Literally we had baloney sandwiches. I remember cutting up tomatoes to go in the baloney sandwiches. And we had soft drinks and cookies. And about 20 maybe or so, maybe 25 -- maybe 20 other women showed up. And we thought this isn't bad. This was quite amazing. We had Mary Louise Smith from Iowa, who later became chairman of the Republican National Committee. We had Carla Koray [phonetic sp] from Hawaii. We had Mary, and I can't remember her last name, from Arizona who -- Mary Crisp, who later came co-chair of the Republican National Committee. We had Peggy Heckler. We had Anna Chennault, who was from the District of Columbia, who was this very famous Chinese American woman whose husband was the Chennault of Tiger Airlines, General Chennault. And they came, and everybody was very proper and kind of very uptight, and everybody was kind of sitting on their chairs and looking at each other, because they had never done this before. They had never caucused to discuss issues like this, which were important to themselves as females. And we kind of stood there. We were very formal and all that.

By the end of the meeting, everybody was hugging and exchanging stories about children and about issues that they faced. So we decided we would have a lunch the next day. And again, we announced it

was just a baloney lunch. We put the flyers back on. 40 women out of the 50 showed up in this room. And it was just pandemonium. And it was just quite extraordinary. And they decided they were going to back a proposal on the Platform Committee that basically said what I just said, that there should be Federal assistance for locally funded voluntary daycare. And that night, I was in a restaurant, one of these little coffee shops in the hotel, and John Ehrlichman -- I don't know if it was Todd Hullin or not, who was assistant, but John and somebody else were sitting there and came over and said, "What the hell have you been doing?" Because I was not on the White House staff anymore. I could do whatever I wanted. And they said, "You rolled us." They said, "You're going to win," because they didn't want it. This was not -- they thought it was an unnecessary extension of Federal policy, et cetera, et cetera. And you can argue in good will on both sides of that. But it was just so funny. They said, "You rolled us, and this is going to pass." And it did. I mean, at least to my knowledge. I think I remember it passed.

**Timothy Naftali**

You mentioned that George Bush was helpful.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

George Bush was helpful with the Rule 32, which was designed to encourage more women to be selected as delegates. It was not mandatory. The Democrats -- the Democratic side convention, they pushed through mandatory requirements, and we had -- we started off with language that said actively encourage, and then we wound up with middle language that said something a little less than that, and eventually we had language that said strive to achieve. And that was just fine with us. Strive to achieve had different legal meaning that actively encourage or other things. It was further down the totem pole, but it made our point, which is that we wanted more women to be selected to be delegates to select the President of the United States. And we also had similar language to encourage the party to encourage women to run for office. And he was extraordinarily supportive of that, and that passed. And by 1976, we wound up with, we wound up with, I think, close to 40 percent. I could be wrong. Somebody would have to check my figures. I think it was close to 40 percent of women as delegates to the convention. So it did make a difference.

**Timothy Naftali**

But what was your -- what was this group also saying about abortion at the time, or choice?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Well that group -- the Republicans in the caucus were very much pro-choice. And I think our effort really was to be sure that there wasn't an anti-choice platform that wound up on the -- as part of the -- an anti-abortion plank that was part of the platform. Because at that point, the Republican Party, the national platform, was pro-choice, if I remember right. And so we managed -- not just we, but a lot of other people managed to just downplay. And the Nixon people didn't want this to be an issue either, so it was just downplayed, and it just kind of went along the way it had been. That obviously changed in 1980. But -- and in 1976, Gerald Ford was pro-choice, and so it was not -- everybody just left it alone as an issue.

**Timothy Naftali**

Well, George Bush was pro-choice.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yes, George Bush was pro-choice. George Bush was pro-choice, and then he evolved over time to believing it was states' rights, and he and I had some long discussions about where he started, and very strong in Planned Parenthood and a variety of other things that Mrs. Bush remained very strong on. And why he changed, I can't tell you. But I stayed where I was. By the way, you know, his initial position, as I remember it, and my position always were extraordinarily moderate. I mean, we basically were saying that an adult woman -- the decision on abortion, should be a choice of an adult woman and her doctor. When I ran for the nomination for lieutenant governor in Virginia in 1993, my position had always been what it was, which was that. I personally was in favor of parental consent or the consent of another adult. I was opposed to Federal funding except in cases of rape and incest. And I was still targeted as being, you know, a crazy -- within the Republican Party in Virginia at that time, somebody who was, you know, a crazy liberal on this issue. Mine was -- my position, and I think the position that George Bush had many years before, was very consistent with something like 72 percent of the people in the state of Virginia.

**Timothy Naftali**

What about what ERA in '72? The party was pro-ERA.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yeah, the party was pro-ERA, and it stayed pro-ERA. There was -- there was a movement, again, to try to take that out of the platform, but it didn't happen. And I'm not saying it didn't happen because we were there. I'm just saying that there was an awakening of the Republican delegates, women delegates who were at that convention that I think got the guys to just kind of stand up short a little bit and say we're got to tread a little carefully here. And it wasn't just guys. There were some women who Obviously were pro-life, and some women who were anti-ERA as well. I don't mean to denigrate that, but there was just a change in atmosphere that that convention brought about that said we have women coming into their own, and we got to be really respectful of what they think and why they think it. Jeri D. Wheeler [phonetic sp], who was from North Dakota, was one of the leaders of the ERA movement in the state of North Dakota. It was a mother of nine, six of which were foster children, including Indian children, et cetera. She was just gangbusters. I mean, you had some very, very strong women. As a matter of fact, she invited me, when I was in the Ford White House, to come address the North Dakota legislature, which I think is a single -- is North Dakota one house --

**Timothy Naftali**

Unicameral.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Unicameral.

**Timothy Naftali**

I don't know.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Maybe not, maybe it's only Nebraska. But anyway, in North Dakota, a guest can come on to the floor and speak from the floor. So there I was, speaking from the floor on the floor of the legislature for the Equal Rights Amendment, sponsored by the national committee woman from North Dakota, who was as strongly in favor of that topic as she could possibly be. And Gerald Ford obviously was, too, and Mrs. Ford.

**Timothy Naftali**

And Mrs. Ford?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yeah.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did Barbara Franklin play a role in the caucus at the '72 --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

No, but she played an extraordinarily important role in increasing the number of women in the Nixon administration. She was coming in just as I was leaving, and I have a hysterically funny picture of the two of us somewhere sitting in an empty office, which I don't know whose it was, but it was a very bare office. And I think Sally Payton, actually, who wound up joining the Domestic Policy Council and doing a lot of work for the District of Columbia was just coming in, and I think it was her office. But Barbara was extraordinarily valuable in the role she played under Fred Malek in bringing more women into the White House. But I did not remember her playing -- she certainly didn't play a role in the caucus. I think she probably would have figured that was an inappropriate involvement in politics with a small "p" at the time when she was supposed to be focusing on the White House.

**Timothy Naftali**

So how did getting 40 women to the meeting and finding that you had unanimity, lead to rolling the entire --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

We didn't necessarily have unanimity of those 40 women. You had a sense of willingness to speak and exchange ideas and stand up as a group of women, which they never had before.

**Timothy Naftali**

But how did you get them to move the entire convention to support this? That's the achievement.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Well, first of all, it passed the, it passed the Platform Committee, and I think in those days when things passed the Platform Committee, they pretty much went. And then as John Ehrlichman said, "You rolled us." I mean, I don't think they wanted a major article in "The New York Times" or elsewhere opposing children, and we crafted the language so that it was voluntary, it was locally controlled, it was just Federal assistance. And it was aimed at helping people in lower income conditions, and it was pro-children. And, you know, I think we -- we weren't really all that sophisticated. We didn't have a PR team that was working with us. It just made a lot of common sense, and it made a lot of common sense to these other women, and they banded together. And when you saw Mary Louise Smith, Peggy Heckler -- people who are seeing this interview have to be able to visualize these folks, but, you know, Peggy Heckler, who is a Congresswoman, Mary Louise Smith who looked like a sweet little grandma from Iowa but who was destined to be chairman of the party; Carla Koray [phonetic sp], who -- from Hawaii -- who looked like a linebacker; Jeri D. Wheeler, who had nine kids standing behind her. They weren't all there, but she had a picture of her nine children, and she was from North Dakota. I mean, these were places -- Hawaii, North Dakota, Iowa, where you would have thought you would have had people opposed to this. And here were the leaders of the party there, the women leaders of the party standing up and saying this is important. Mary Crisp from Arizona, for goodness sakes, Barry Goldwater's home. So I think you just had, again, a convergence of the right place at the right time, and the right things, and, you know, maybe I had just been really lucky in my involvement in politics to have experienced both President Nixon and Indian policy in Blue Lake, and then what happened in 1972. And it was just, you know -- how in the heck? I don't know. I don't think there is a phone left.

**Timothy Naftali**

Okay, tell me when we're -- we can go? So you leave Miami. How are you dragged into the BIA problem?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

I'm practicing law and trying to be a good girl, minding my own business, and -- at Arnold Porter -- and Ladonna Harris lives about half a mile from us, and Ladonna Harris, as I said, is Comanche Indian, was the wife of Senator Fred Harris from Oklahoma, was head of the Americans for Indian Opportunity. And she calls me very upset and she said that a whole bunch of people from AIM and elsewhere, AIM is the American Indian Movement, had come and taken over the BIA, and that she had already been down there, and I hadn't known any of this. I don't know where I was, but -- I mean mentally, but I had not followed it. This had just happened. She had been down there, and they're not listening to anybody. But if I came down there, she thought I could make a difference. And by golly, about the same time, good thing we didn't have multiple phones at that time, I put down the phone from her, and I get a call from the White House, and I don't know if it was Tod Hullin, or whether it was Bud Krogh, or whether it was John Ehrlichman at this point. I don't know -- whatever it is. And they said that we understand from sources that you could go in there and you could talk to them. And my husband, who is a very reasonable person, Bill Gilbert, comes out and says, "You're not going down there. Those people could kill you." These are an angry mob of people who have taken over a building and threatening to blow it up. I said, "I know" -- I knew a lot of these people. I knew Hank Adams, and I knew a bunch of other people from previous dealings with them on just Indian issues. I said, "I don't think they'll hurt me. They've always been very nice and very respectful." And then

Ladonna came over, drove over and said, "Let's go down together." So I called back the White House, and I said, "I am going to go down there."

So I went down, and I don't know how we got through the police -- somehow, the police must have known we were coming or whatever, because they let us through. I walk into the BIA building, which was a beautiful building on Constitution Avenue, which after this takeover, they no longer had to be the BIA. They put the BIA in the main interior and used this building as an adjunct for other things. But you walk -- you come from Constitution, you walk on this wonderful grassy area, and then you walk into this wonderful building, and then it has staircases that go up on each side. They're all marble. And I walk in, and my quote -- you know, the people I knew from the Indian movement were there with machetes, again, and with some firearms. And they said, "Go up the stairs." So I was going up the stairs, and I'm not all that sophisticated about terrorism, et cetera, and there are these bottles with some stuff in them and what looked like cloth all up the stairs on one side. I'm sure it was true on the other side. And so I said to one of the guys, I said, "What's that?" He said, "Those are Molotov cocktails." And I then got really, really scared. So we went up, and they were meeting -- the place that they were was in Louie Bruce's [phonetic sp] office, and of course, all the BIA employees were long gone. And I came up, and I just could not believe the site, because they had trashed every office on this floor, which was the floor of the senior executives. They had taken every piece of paper out of every cabinet. They turned over tabletops and cabinets, and they had stomped on papers, and they had all these Molotov cocktails all aligned all over the place. And I thought, "Oh, my gosh. You know, they really mean it. They're going to blow this place up."

And so we sat and we talked for hours and hours and hours. Myself, and Ladonna, and at one point, a guy named Kurt Windsor, who is actually in the -- a venture capitalist now, or his son is. He must be in his late '70s. He was, had been at the RNC dealing with community outreach or something. I don't know how he wound up, but it turned around that he was there. And the three of us sat there, and we had long discussions, et cetera, et cetera, and weren't getting very far, but then they -- you know, they -- you know, we decided to go home and come back the next day. To make a long story short, at the end, they agreed to leave if the office -- the OEO -- or Frank Carlucci came over, the famous diplomat who wound up being secretary of defense and head of the CIA, at that point was working for Don Rumsfeld in the Office of Economic Opportunity, OEO, and he came over. And then we switched -- I don't know if he came over, but we agreed -- I know. A delegation agreed to go over from the BIA under a guarantee of safety, over to where OEO's offices were. And we met in the OEO conference room. And Frank had a proposal from the White House, which I had nothing to do with, a proposal from the White House. The proposal gave them amnesty, and the ability to leave town, and, I think, even some dollars, if I remember -- it was dollars, it was money for a variety of programs back in Indian country. And they left. But Bud Krogh tells the story about -- and I'm sure this is true, I just find it hard to remember -- but Bud tells the story about having me on the phone and talking to me and convincing the marshals and the D.C. police not to charge the building, because they believed what I said, which was that I was convinced people would blow the place up, and be killed and kill, and that I fully believed that. I mean, I really do think that they would have -- they would have engaged in warfare, if it came to that. They weren't going to go -- unless they believed somebody was listening to them, they were not going to be peacefully. So it was kind of a classic, I guess, negotiation of an end.

What was very upsetting to me was there was beautiful artwork in the BIA building and also down in storage areas, I think probably priceless Indian art, and discovered after the fact that they pulled up panel trucks to the loading docks of the BIA and just took numerous pieces of this work. And the police decided not to stop them, because they were under the misunderstanding that OEO, that Frank

had said, "They leave as is," but "as is" didn't mean taking half the artwork. But they left with the artwork, which was never replaced, and that to me was just really outrageous. But did we diffuse the situation where people could have been killed, and it was on top of it being a week before the President's election -- yeah, I think we did. It was a very, very scary time. The -- I read an article in "The Washington Post," on the op-ed page a few weeks after that about one typewriter that just -- I got fixated. I came in to somebody's office -- they used typewriters in those days, you know, manual typewriters. And somebody had taken what must have been a plier and had twisted every key on that typewriter. That takes a lot of effort and a lot of concentration. And obviously somebody was so angry at the "stuff that was coming out of the BIA," being typed on that typewriter that they twisted each and every key. And that to me was just symbolic of how much hatred and venom and frustration there was among this community of people, rightfully or wrongfully. But yeah, we managed to talk them out of that, and I think I had some role in doing so, but I think the restraint that Bud Krogh and Ehrlichman and the President showed, and basically ordered the Justice Department to stand down on the District of Columbia government was the right decision, because there would have been a lot of bloodshed. And that would not have been good for the country. So they went home, they had amnesty. Whether you should be able to have amnesty for destroying government property probably is a really serious question. But at the time, Rumsfeld, Carlucci, Ehrlichman, Krogh, and the President felt that that just made the most sense.

**Timothy Naftali**

There were children in the building, weren't there?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Oh, yeah. There were babies. I sat there one night feeding a baby with a bottle and changing the baby's diapers. There were little kids in the building.

**Timothy Naftali**

How many nights were you there?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Probably two, but I didn't -- I went -- I don't remember -- one night I think I stayed over. The next night I came home, changed my clothes and went back.

**Timothy Naftali**

And your husband didn't try to --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

He was very upset. But I think he concluded that hopefully Ehrlichman and Bud wouldn't let me get killed, but it was scary. If I had kids, which my first child wasn't born until 1975, if I had kids, I don't think I ever would have done that. I mean, I would be nuts to do that. When you think how could all this happen when you had all the good stuff coming out of the Indian message, I think the answer was that if you look at Dennis Banks and Russell Means and Terry Adams, who was less well known than

them. He was kind of their -- I don't know if he was really a lawyer, but he kind have prepared all their statements, was that they came out of Pine Ridge and other -- I think most of them were from Pine Ridge if I was right, but they just came out of just an extraordinarily poor Indian reservation. It was probably the poorest in the United States. And they saw rampant alcoholism. They saw 80 percent unemployment. They saw dysfunctional families. And they were active young militants, kind of parallel in many ways to active anti-war militants. It was a period when people believed that militancy would produce change faster than working through the regular governmental system and process. And they didn't see any immediate changes. They also believed that the Self Determination Act, for example, Indian Self Determination Act would be counterproductive, because all you would do would be substituting BIA bureaucrats for what they considered the worst of the Indian bureaucrats in their community, and that the money and the programs would not really reach the people in need, because it would just be another system equally bad, i.e., they didn't like and trust the elders in these reservations who they believe were corrupt and would keep the money for themselves, et cetera, et cetera. So they were just very frustrated, angry young men, basically, as I would describe it. And they were that way when they would come to see us in the White House from time to time, but they were very polite. I never had an ounce of trouble with them, et cetera, et cetera.

But clearly, something snapped in them, and they went full boar, both in the BIA and then in Wounded Knee. And in Wounded Knee, I was still practicing law, but I don't know if it was Len or John Ehrlichman, one of the two, either Len Garment or John Ehrlichman, asked me to go up to Wounded Knee, and I did. And I was only there, I think, for two days, if I remember right. We stayed in a little motel in Gordon, Nebraska, where I saw and played my first slot machine. I was so shook up by Wounded Knee that we came back -- we went up and down by helicopter. You came back, I went to the -- there were restaurants -- I always had never seen this before. These were dry restaurants. We were in a dry county so -- you could bring booze, you had to bring your own booze. And I didn't drink, but the marshals who were with me, brought their own booze. And we stood there for hours with these silly machines that you pull down the lever, just to calm down. But the two days at Wounded Knee were all -- involved sitting around cross-legged around a big encampment, with Brad and Len doing most of the talking. And I really was just sitting there and observing. And I came back, and Ehrlichman and Bud asked me for my recommendation. And I just said, because it was out in the Dakotas, that if they waited it out, the press would get bored and eventually leave. Now, you know, there was one -- I think one Indian was killed, and one Federal marshal was permanently paralyzed, if I remember right. I don't remember if other people were killed. But there was a fatality, at least one, and there was very serious injuries. And those people were eventually arrested and charged, one with murder and one with attempt to murder, but -- as it should be. But I really thought if you just waited it out, and if the media eventually went away when it got very cold it would go away, and it did. I mean, eventually if nobody was paying attention, they picked themselves up and went away. Now, Len spent a lot of time fighting a battle of, again, law enforcement people who wanted to go in and wipe them all out. What was it the right decision? I don't know. But in effect, it died of its own accord.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did the Indian movement get anything out of Wounded Knee?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

I don't think so. I think not only did they not get anything out of it, I think that they caused a tremendous backlash among the non-Indian community in the United States, who said enough's

enough. You know, and what is the point, what are you doing, you're acting like thugs. And we don't operate that way. I mean, I guess if you look at it back in these days terminology you could say, "Oh, you know, they're domestic terrorists." We didn't have that word back then. But no, I don't think they got anything out of it. And I think they really got a backlash. Because when I went back to the Ford White House as associate counsel to the President, you didn't -- I mean, Indian issues were on nobody's plate anymore. And you bring something up and everybody would say, yeah, like Wounded Knee. You know, they managed to kill -- not kill the golden goose, that's not the correct word -- but they managed to kill the good will and kill the spirit that Richard Nixon had put in place, and that Blue Lake had put in place, the Alaskan settlement Act had put in place, and that the Menominee Restoration Act, all those things, and Yakama, all those things that were good, nobody was willing to try anything more.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did you work on the main Indian settlement?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

No, I was long gone. I had done some of the fieldwork -- not fieldwork -- some of the groundwork on Menominee before I left, but I did not work on the main one. At least I don't remember working on the main one.

**Timothy Naftali**

I wanted to ask you about back to '70 for a minute. Was -- do you remember Kent State? Where were you? I mean, you were in the White House.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

I was -- yes, and I have an interesting story about that. I remember Cambodia. I remember Kent State. I was part of a group of maybe six or seven -- maybe it was more than that, 10 -- young White House staffers who were asked to go out to universities to talk to kids, kid to kid, and I went to a few local schools. I think I went back up to Vassar, which is where I had gone to college, and what I remember in particular about Kent State and then the demonstrations was that it wasn't real sophisticated, but it's the best you had at the time. The White House was totally ringed by buses. That was the protection, buses. There were buses all around the perimeter of the White House. And my office at that point in time was no longer -- I initially started out under Ehrlichman with a little office in the basement of the West Wing. And then, once I ceased being a White House fellow, I moved over to the old Executive Office Building. And the entire fourth floor of the old executive office building was National Guard guys and their full military regalia, and with their guns and their bayonets, et cetera, et cetera, waiting to protect and defend the White House. They were really nice kids, and I stayed in the White House that day, and I went home at night, and about 3:00 in the morning, maybe it was 2:00 in the morning, I get this phone call, and it was from -- I think it was from Jeff Donnelly, but I'm just not quite sure. Maybe it was from Steve Bull. But somebody said to me I needed to come down to the White House. I said, "It's 2:00 in the morning." So I come down, they told me the road to go, and they told me that -- they'd let me through, and have my White House pass, and they would let my car through. And I get into the southwest gate and they said, "Get in the car." So I get in the car -- I think it was the southwest gate. I

don't think it was the west gate -- I don't think it was south portico, I think it was the southwest. "Get in the car," so I got in the car -- excuse me, to our viewers, but I have a cold.

I got in the car, and the President's motorcade car was maybe five, six cars in front. And I see -- it's 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning, whatever it is, that he gets in the car. And we take off, and we go to the Lincoln Memorial. And he gets out of the car, and he goes up to Lincoln Memorial where these kids have taken Lincoln Memorial, and he kind of says to them, "Hi, I'm the President. You know, let's talk." And then he couldn't think of what to talk about, so he started talking about football. And he had a conversation with these kids who were here to protest Cambodia at, I don't know, 2:00, 3:00, 4:00 in the morning, I don't know what time it was anymore, talking about football, and it struck me -- and then he said, "I have one of my young staffers here." And I know it was Jeff Donnelly, and I know I was there, and I don't know if Jeff -- if Geoff Shepard was there, or Bud must have been -- I can't remember anymore. But I was just struck by how hard he wanted -- the President wanted to communicate with these young people and understand them, but he couldn't. He couldn't figure out what to say to them or how to relate. So he talked about the one thing he thought they'd all have a common interest in, and that was football. Well, the typical kid who was there taking over the Lincoln Memorial, the last thing they were interested in was college football games or the professional football league to the extent that it was a big thing back then. And then we got back in the cars, and we went back to the White House, and I think I went home and went back to sleep. But it was just surreal. It was absolutely surreal.

**Timothy Naftali**

So you didn't go up to the Capitol, because the President went to the capitol next that day -- that night.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

No, did I think maybe our car veered off and went back to the White House? It could be. I don't remember going to the Capitol.

**Timothy Naftali**

Because Bud was with him at one point.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Okay, yeah. I don't remember going to the Capitol, but Bud remembers going to Lincoln Memorial, doesn't he?

**Timothy Naftali**

Yes, he sure does.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

I don't remember going to the Capitol, so they must have sent our car back. We must have just pulled off --

**Timothy Naftali**

Must have been unbelievable to see Nixon standing there, early morning, in front of the Lincoln Memorial.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yeah, trying to talk about football.

**Timothy Naftali**

And I assume that the students recognized him.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Oh yeah, they recognized him. I remember there was a lot of Secret Service around, but I think the kids got fairly close. But instead of yelling and shouting at them, I think they were so taken aback -- football -- I don't think they knew what to do. I mean, it was kind of a stilted conversation. I think I remember, maybe Bill will remember better, that there was probably some questions about the war, but he kept on doing football analogies, and then we went. It was quite interesting.

**Timothy Naftali**

What kind of pressure -- did any of your friends put pressure on you because of the war? I mean, there was --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yeah, it was a time when you lost some friends. I mean, I believed that we had to see the war through to the end. I believed that our troops were not given the ability to win. And you know, that didn't make me real popular with my Vassar friends or my Yale Law School friends. And I thought the President was trying as hard as he could. I think Kissinger was, too. But it was not -- I mean, the few speeches I made going out to the college campuses, it was not a friendly place to be, by any means. Interestingly enough, they were respectful. But again, I went to Vassar, and I went to some schools in Maryland. I may have gone to Towson State and places like that. I mean, I wasn't going to Yale and, you know, and Harvard, et cetera. But Vassar was pretty intense.

**Timothy Naftali**

No doubt.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Going back one -- I remember -- the other thing I wanted to say to you was that we talked about the BIA and communicating back to Bud. I mean, again, there was no email, there definitely were no cell phones. I don't think even think there were faxes back then. We were just -- I had to go to the -- they had cut most of the phones, but they left one or two open. So I mean, it was either getting through on

the BIA phone or going out and having to find a pay phone and having to come back. And when you think of, you know, we now are so used to immediate and mass and accurate communication, that was not easy back then.

**Timothy Naftali**

Where did the food come from?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

I don't know. Did they bring it in with them? I have no idea. I don't remember.

**Timothy Naftali**

Because you ate there. You were there a long time.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yeah, we ate there. And the water worked, and they didn't turn off the water. They didn't turn off the lights, I don't think. I don't know. I don't know if they turned out the lights or not.

**Timothy Naftali**

And they gave you a cot or something, because you stayed one night.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

I stayed on the couch. I slept in Louie Bruce's couch, yeah. I'm saying the government, I don't think, cut -- I know the government didn't cut off the water, and I don't think the government cut off the lights. Maybe they did. I just don't remember. Bud might remember.

**Timothy Naftali**

I was going to ask you about the role of one other person we haven't talked about, a man named Loesch [phonetic sp] or Loesch? Do you remember? L-O-E -- Loesch, Loesch?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Oh, assistant secretary --

**Timothy Naftali**

Yes.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yeah, Harrison.

**Timothy Naftali**

Harris --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Harrison, yeah. Yeah, I remember him. I can't -- I can't tell you. I remember him, but I can't tell you -- he was actively involved in the BIA thing, and I just don't remember. He's an older guy.

**Timothy Naftali**

Mm-hmm, an older guy.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

[Unintelligible]

**Timothy Naftali**

That's okay. We're almost done. In your piece in "The Washington Post" in 1972, the piece about BIA, you said -- you were very critical of Congress. You said, "Why can a President introduce a new progressive approach to governmental Indian policy in 1970 and still have the Congress ignoring the most important legislative components in 1972?" Was the reference to the sovereignty --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

It was a reference to the Self Determination Act. It was reference also to the Indian Trust Council Authority, but it was really a reference to the Self Determination Act, because everything grew from that. If you didn't have the ability to turn over the operation of the basic -- the basic services programs that the BIA provided to the reservations, to the local government, it -- you couldn't get, you couldn't get to self determination, because you would still be controlled by the government. It would be like the Federal Government telling your local town council what it can and cannot do in the very basic levels of provisions of services, and it was ridiculous. And while I think -- while the point I was making was that if the Congress had acted more quickly, maybe this wouldn't have happened. In retrospect, I was wrong in that, in that I think Dennis, and Terry and Russell were so angry, and their people were so angry, based back on many, many years of what they viewed as oppression, and their strong belief that not only would Congress not make change, but even if you made the change, there wouldn't be change because they believed the Indian tribal governments, themselves, were corrupt, that, you know, if somehow the Indian's Self Determination Act had passed in 1971, I don't think there would have been a BIA in 1972. I think it was two parallel tracks. I think I believed back then that if there had has been faster Congressional action, you might have avoided the BIA takeover and Wounded Knee takeover. Looking back at it from years past, after years, I just don't think that's right.

**Timothy Naftali**

In the summer of '74, you wrote, "If the GOP did not open to women after November, Republicans are going to be talking only to Republicans and the Democrats are going to be talking to the country."

Was there a certain frustration on your part, I guess, in '74 that the party wasn't opening up fast enough to women?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Obviously, because I wrote that. What precipitated that -- what was the context of that?

**Timothy Naftali**

That was just an article about women in the --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

I may have felt very frustrated. I think that everybody in the country by 1974 felt very frustrated with Watergate, and with the party and the party was in a, you know, just a hunkered down mode. I don't remember specifically why I would have said that, other than generally, I might not have seen the progress I thought I should see, though as I said, two years later by Gerald Ford's convention, you had about 40 percent women. And I think you began to have more women, also, run for office on different levels. So I can't really tell you why I said that, other than I obviously felt it. And I think at that point in time, the Democrats were far outstripping the women in the -- far outstripping the Republicans in the number of women who were running for office in the party post and leadership post that they held, et cetera, et cetera. But I think when Jerry Ford came in, a lot of that changed. Again, part of his concern to be open and to restore us all as moving in the same direction as a nation, included actively encouraging women as well. But I must tell you that again, when you look back at the experience I had in the Nixon White House, I could not have had a more encouraging, supportive group of people to work with, who really wanted me to succeed, both because I was a person, and I think because I was a woman. So -- and the women Barbara Franklin brought into the White House, and to the departments and agencies, I mean Richard Nixon made really a very important set of strides. And if you take a look across the board at Nixon's domestic policy, and everybody just focuses on foreign policy, which is why I'm really glad you're doing this. But if you take a look at this domestic policy agenda, he was an extraordinarily progressive Republican. He created -- not only did he change the course and direction of Native American policy, not only did he put a large and extensive amount of money into historically black colleges, not only did he move the desegregation ball forward in very, very important ways, doing it quietly and effectively, but he created the EPA, the Environmental Protection Agency. He created ERISA, the whole reform of the pension laws. He put into place the first affirmative action program, which was of all things in the construction trades in Philadelphia. You look -- he did Federal revenue sharing. He did welfare reform, which HR-1 didn't get passed until Bill Clinton, goodness gracious. If you take a look at some of the elements of HR-1 under Bill Clinton, they look very much like Richard Nixon's back then. No matter what you think of HMOs today, and I don't particularly like them, but HMOs and the whole beginning of addressing the needs of the private healthcare system in the country was Richard Nixon. He created the HMO system, which at that point in time was a very progressive thing to do. It may have sucked now, how it's developed, but it was a very important thing. You add that all up together. He created the National Endowment of the Arts, the National Endowment for Humanities, my goodness gracious. That -- he was progressive beyond his time.

**Timothy Naftali**

To what extent would you give John Ehrlichman credit for that?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

I give him a lot of credit, and you can never tell, because again, it was just a closed White House that I never knew what was Richard Nixon and what was John Ehrlichman. What I know Ehrlichman said was that "the President has instructed us to do X. The President's decision is this." How much of that was John Ehrlichman's initiative and how much of that was the President's, I'm not sure. My guess is that the President had some very clearly defined goals and things he wanted to achieve, and he set the stage, said what he wanted to do, and then let John race out and run with it, and create it and craft it. And obviously the devil is in the details, and so you -- what legislation looked like in its impact is very much dependent on what you actually write. But I think it was Richard Nixon, together with John Ehrlichman, and I think in some cases there was a wonderful melding there. But I wasn't in the Oval Office, and maybe the tapes will show that. I've never listened to those tapes. Maybe you can tell me.

**Timothy Naftali**

Well, a lot of these come from before the period of the tapes, a lot of this activity. Would you say that -- why don't you take some water? Please, so clearly, John Ehrlichman was committed to a progressive agenda in these areas.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yes, I think there was no doubt about that, that John Ehrlichman was a progressive Republican, committed to these initiatives, and that a lot of people didn't pay attention, because they figured the President only cared about foreign policy. I just don't think that's true.

**Timothy Naftali**

Let me ask you one last question. What did Ed Nixon tell you?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

You caught me, huh? Ed Nixon came to one of the -- there is two sets of reunions, there is Domestic Policy Council reunion, and then there is another Nixon staff reunion. He came to the one of the Nixon staff reunions one day, and we all had lunch, and it was really uncanny. He looks like, talks like, has all the mannerisms of Richard Nixon. You close your eyes, and you think it's Richard Nixon. When we left, he didn't have a ride to where he was staying in Colorado, so I said I'd drive him over there, and we had an interesting conversation. I kept on looking over and saying is that Richard Nixon or is that Ed Nixon, but as we were pulling up to the driveway where we were staying, I looked at him, and I said, "Ed, if President Nixon was still alive today, do you think he would still be a Republican?" And Ed looked at me and said, "Nope." He said, "The Republican Party has gone too far to the right for him." And I just went, "Oh, my gosh." And I think that was a very telling statement, because I think Richard Nixon was a very progressive Republican. He was progressive on his foreign policy. Again, everybody said, "Well, only Richard Nixon could go to China," because he was so conservative. Well, yes, but that was an extraordinarily progressive thing to do.

**Timothy Naftali**

Where were you the day he resigned?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

I was in New Mexico, and I just heard it on the radio. I had been out of the White House at that point for three years, two -- for three years.

**Timothy Naftali**

But you were obviously in touch with Ehrlichman.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Well, Ehrlichman was long gone from the White House by that point.

**Timothy Naftali**

Yes.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

And -- but no, and then I got a phone call that fall from Don Rumsfeld asking if I'd come back to the White House to be -- to the counsel's office, and I was at that point vice president of Mount Vernon College, and you can't -- if you understand, as you do, academic calendars, you can't do that. You just can't leave at the start of a school year, so I said, "No," but I'd come that spring, so I came at the end of June of '75, and stayed in the Ford White House, and by that time, Rumsfeld was the defense and Cheney was the chief of staff. And I stayed until the end of the Ford administration.

**Timothy Naftali**

What did they ask you to do?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

They asked me to be an associate counsel to the President, so that was one of the -- at that point, five lawyers in the White House Counsel's office. Now you look at them and there is 50 and 60. I mean, Clinton, with all his investigations against him, just took this White House Counsel's office up to gargantuan levels. We were five people, five people and two law school clerks, headed by Phil Buchen, who was the counsel, and the deputy counsel was Ed Schmults, and then there were three of us who were associate counsels and -- I guess we had six, we had one assistant counsel and then some interns or clerks. And we did the President's legal work, which we obviously did very closely with the Justice Department, because we couldn't possibly do it all with five people. But it was very important to me to be able to come back to a White House, because so many people who had been in the Nixon White House and had left before Watergate, or even were there during Watergate but had nothing to do with it, but in my case, I left in June of '71 before it ever happened. If people asked you, you know, how you start a career, where you had been, and you said you were in the Nixon White House, they looked at

you very strangely as though somehow you were a bad person. And it was important to me to be able to show my friends, colleagues, evaluators, whatever, that I could go back into government, that I had not done anything wrong, that I could go back and go back to be a lawyer in the White House, was, you know, especially kind of poignant. So I was delighted that Rumsfeld called because it was something I really felt I needed to do.

**Timothy Naftali**

What role did he play -- I didn't ask you before -- in Indian policy?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Oh --

**Timothy Naftali**

Rumsfeld.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Rumsfeld? Well, going back to the early '70s, he headed the Office of Economic Opportunity, and they had a number of programs, particularly in urban Indian areas, where they worked with health, and education and job placement with the Indian community. And he established or started these Indian centers. And one of the things that was done in the Nixon message was to expand them, I think, to another eight or nine of them around the country. But it was kind of like one stop shopping. The concern was that the Indian people, when they came into the cities, were getting lost, and there wasn't a central place that they could go to find either their community or to find the services they needed. And they found it very difficult to navigate all these different local, state and Federal institutions. Now, a lot of the services they were getting were local rather than state or Federal, but the Feds were paying for the establishment of these centers that enabled all the local agencies to come together and try to serve them in one place. And that was really -- and then obviously he directed Carlucci during the BIA. I mean, Frank wasn't making this up by himself. Frank was doing, you know, what Don told him to do.

**Timothy Naftali**

Last question, there is a lot of discussion about the Frost/Nixon interviews and the extent to which Nixon may or may not have apologized, or should have apologized for Watergate. Did you ever talk to Ehrlichman about how Nixon handled Watergate publicly after the pardon?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

No, I didn't. I just know that he was deeply hurt before the resignation by how the President had treated him. I think he felt he was kind of thrown overboard, and put in the same category as Haldeman -- there wasn't a lot of love lost, I think, in the end between Haldeman and Ehrlichman, and I think he felt he was kind of thrown in the same mix, and that he was not the instigator in the case. Now, Lord knows what's true and what's not true, but I know he just was personally devastated. You've got to realize, this was a guy that was at the top of his class in law school. He was, you know, he was a very, very bright man.

**Timothy Naftali**

We've covered a lot of ground. Is there any anecdote you want to add that we haven't touched on?

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Can I come back another time?

**Timothy Naftali**

Sure.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

I'm sure there are, and I'm sure I'll wake up in the middle of the night and say why didn't I say X or Y.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did you use word -- did you use the title Ms. when you were --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

Yeah, I did. I used the title Ms. It was actually very important to me back then. It was very important to me when I was single, and it was very important to me when I got married. I did take my husband's name, but my middle name is Doris, and I switched it to Greene, which was my maiden name, so that I had my parents' name, as well as my husband's name. A lot of my friends didn't take their husband's name at all, and I couldn't quite understand that. I thought how do you have an integrative family if you refuse to do that? But yes, I did. So -- and I got married -- oh, one funny story is -- two funny stories. We got engaged on -- we met as White House fellows, though my husband insists we met before. I remember us meeting in the White House fellows weekend, the finals weekend, which was in Annapolis. And we got engaged on his birthday, June 12th. Bill was a White House fellow --

**Bobbie Kilberg**

You asked whether I used the title Ms. I did. I don't remember -- if I go downstairs and look at the Nixon files, most of the files were -- memos were memorandum to Bobbie Greene or Bobbie Kilberg to -- they didn't have Mr. -- from Mr. Ehrlichman or from Ms. Kilberg. But in my personal life, yeah, I used it. So I'm sure she did have an account with Rose, if she said so. But I didn't -- you know, it didn't seem to be an issue to me. But the funny story was that as we were saying, that my husband and I met at the White House fellows week, and we were both selected, and Bill went to work for -- he was a Harvard law graduate who was interested in labor law, had gone to the ILR School at Cornell, which is the School of Labor and Industrial Relations. And he became a White House fellow for George Shultz, who was at the Labor Department at that point in time. And I was a White House fellow for Ken Cole and John Ehrlichman. And we got engaged on his birthday, which was June 12th. And the night before, Bill told me, he said, "Now, it's very important that you be in your office at 10:00." And I said, "Well, why is it important that I be in my office at 10:00?" He said, "Don't ask any questions. It's very important." And of course, I got just agitated, et cetera, et cetera. This was all a setup. He all knew I

was going to get agitated. He said, "Well, if you insist, I'll tell you, because at 10:00 in the morning, an elephant is going to walk from the southwest gate to the northwest gate right past your window." My office was in the West Wing in the basement. "And there is going to be a big sign on the back of the elephant, and it's going to say, 'Will you marry me?'" I said, "Oh, no. You're making that up. You can't possibly be serious." He said, "No, I'm very serious." He said, "I've arranged this, I've arranged it with Mr. Ehrlichman, John Ehrlichman, I've arranged it with the guards at the southwest gate, and this is what's going to happen." So I immediately jumped up, and I called my secretary, Tara Donahue [phonetic sp]. We actually had secretaries in those days. And I said, "Tara!" And she said, "Oh, yes, you know, the elephant's coming. But you're not supposed to know, but the elephant's really coming."

So I didn't sleep the whole night, and I get up to get to the senior staff meeting at 7:30 the next morning, and I walk through the -- I didn't park inside the gate. I parked right outside the gate because I was a young staffer, and I walked in the southwest gate, and I said to the guys, "Is anything strange going to happen this morning?" And they went, "Well, you're not supposed to know." I said, "What do you mean, I'm not supposed to know?" "We got it okay, okay, the elephant won't -- it's all right, don't worry about it. We figured out what would happen if the elephant poops. Don't worry about it. It will be just fine." So the night before I had gotten very upset at Bill. I said, but you can't do that because at 10:00 in the morning, the President -- and he used to have this schedule. He would normally come down the stairs of the West Wing and go across West Lakeside Avenue to his hideaway office in Room 180 in the old Executive Office Building. I said, "What if the President goes by and sees the elephant? What if the elephant poops?" And Bill said, "Well, he'll just have to be careful, that's all. He'll have to step around the poop." And I don't know why I believed that he would actually do this. But when I came in at 7:30, and the guard said, "Oh, yeah, and don't worry, we figured out what to do with the poop," -- excuse me for saying that word on tape -- I thought, "My God, this must be right." Well, Bill had called his friend who was one of the guards the night before and said, "Be sure to tell her that." So I go in, and I go to the senior staff meeting, and I don't say anything because I'm petrified. And Ehrlichman then says to me, "It's very important that you get -- I have a call that I want you to take, they'll call your office at 10:00." And I looked at him and said, "What do you mean a call in my office at 10:00?" He said, "You just got to be in your office at 10:00." And I thought, "Oh, my God, he knows about it, too." Well, at about five minutes to 10:00, just by chance, a park service truck pulls up in front of my window and starts unloading hay. And I start thinking, "Oh, my God. They're unloading hay because they're afraid the elephant is going to poop, and they're going to put it on the southwest driveway." Well, it was hay -- they had just seeded the front lawn, the north lawn, and it was hay to put over the north lawn. And so I am just a basket case. And at 10:00, my phone rings, and Tara says, "You better open your door." And I thought, oh, my God, so I open my door, and there is Bill and the entire staff, and George Schultz, and John Ehrlichman, because George Shultz was Bill's boss with this -- Bill with a two dozen roses and this big sign, "Will you marry me?" And no elephant, but we had the whole White House staff, and the elephant was the funniest thing, and, you know, John Ehrlichman, and George Shultz and the White House guards -- now, these days, you'd get arrested if you'd try to do something like that. But everybody just thought it was absolutely hysterical, and they all were part of it. And it was really kind of a family. It was my first work experience, you know, after school. I had worked for my godfather who had been a senator from New York, and you know, I had done things during the summer, but I never had a real job before. And this was my first job, and these were how people related to each other. It was just wonderful. So at any rate, I leave you with that, with George Shultz and John Ehrlichman and my staff and the elephant.

**Timothy Naftali**

Ms. Kilberg, thank you very much.

**Bobbie Kilberg**

You're very welcome.

**Timothy Naftali**

This has been great. We appreciate it.