

Part of the Richard Nixon Oral History Project

An Oral History Interview with MAUREEN BARDEN

Interview by Timothy Naftali
September 28, 2011
New York, NY



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Descriptive Summary

Scope and Content

Biographical Note

Maureen Barden worked on the U.S. House of Representatives Impeachment Inquiry Staff in 1974. During her time on the Inquiry Staff, she oversaw many of the paralegals. She graduated from St. John's College in Maryland in 1970, and became a practicing lawyer in 1985, working mostly in the Philadelphia area. In October of 2006 she became the Department of Justice's prisoner reentry coordinator, working primarily with a federal reentry court program.

Administrative Notes

About the Richard Nixon Oral History Project

The Richard Nixon Oral History Project was created in November 2006 at the initiative of Timothy Naftali to preserve the memories and reflections of former Nixon officials and others who had been prominent in the Nixon era by conducting videotaped interviews. Naftali insisted from the project's inception that it be a serious, impartial and nonpartisan source of information about President Nixon, his administration, and his times. A second goal of the project was to provide public domain video that would be available as free historical content for museums and for posting on the Internet. Donors to the project neither requested nor received a veto over interview questions or interviewee selection. Accordingly, the project includes interviews with former staff members of the Nixon administration as well as journalists, politicians, and activists who may have been opposed to the Nixon administration and its policies. Taken as a whole, the collection contributes to a broader and more vivid portrait of President Nixon, the Nixon administration, and American society during the Nixon era.

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The following is a transcript of an Oral History Interview conducted by Timothy Naftali with Maureen Barden on September 28, 2011.

Naftali: Hi. I'm Tim Naftali. I'm Director of the Richard Nixon Presidential Library Museum in Yorba Linda, California. It's September 28, 2011 and I have the honor and privilege to be interviewing Maureen Barden for the Richard Nixon Oral History Program. Maureen, thank you for joining us.

Barden: Oh, it's my pleasure.

Naftali: Alright. Let's situate you just before you come to work on the Impeachment Inquiry. Tell us what you were doing in the early 1970s, please.

Barden: Well, I was working. I was working on my degree at Columbia University full-time and part-time and working either part-time or full-time depending. I had a great opportunity in 1972 to work with the New York State Special Commission on Attica, which was named by Governor Rockefeller to investigate what happened on September 13th, 1971 - coincidentally just about forty years ago.

And I had been doing some work for a partner at Paul Weiss – some research for a man named Morris Abram who had been President of Brandeis. And apparently Arthur Liman, who was General Counsel for Attica, needed someone to do the kinds of things I was doing for Mr. Abram, and I guess Morris Abram gave him my name.

So I had the opportunity to work on that investigation doing the coordination of the investigation both at the prison and at the Commission's offices in New York. We had time up there interviewing various people about what had happened - which was not what I was doing. Law students and lawyers were doing the interviewing but I was doing all the management of the files and so forth.

That was an unbelievably wonderful experience. The first time I had ever really worked with lawyers, I was studying. I was an English major at Columbia University at the time. And it was an extremely emotional experience due to the nature of what we were working on, and intellectually challenging and really interesting in every way.

One of the people that I worked with there, my co-paralegal, was a woman named Patty Conroy. And she was a woman who lived in Brooklyn, married, at that time, to a writer named Frank Conroy, and she was a friend of John Doar's. Immediately after the Attica Commission I went to work at the New York City Board of Correction for one of my Attica Commission friends, a woman named Mary Doyle, and was working there preparatory to going to law school – I had been accepted at NYU and I was intending to enroll in the fall of... I guess it would be 1974.

But in December of '73, John was named Special Counsel to the Inquiry, and Patty called me and said, you know, 'If you saw the paper you know that John has been named to this position and he'd like you to come and work for him.'

So there I was, just twenty-five that December, living on a 110th Street, looking forward to finishing my last class at Columbia and going on to law school. And of course I said yes immediately. There was no question that I was gonna do this. I met John... I think there was a transit strike in December of that year and John was living on Willow Street in Brooklyn, in the same area where Patty was living and my friend Mary was living.

And we drove out one Sunday evening out to Brooklyn - my sister, another friend and I – and knocked on the door at Willow Street. John wasn't there, but Ann Doar, who was either then or soon to become his former wife, opened the door. My sister and I were led into this parlor in this lovely home in Brooklyn, which had kind of pocket doors and very high ceilings and so on. And there was this huge, enormous portrait of Abraham Lincoln on the mantelpiece, not mounted but leaning against the wall.

And there we sat until the door opened again – the front door – and in came tumbling John and his children and a dog, and there was all this activity. John came into the room; sat down in this rocking chair under this portrait of Lincoln, and proceeded to - and the portrait, by the way, had been given to him by Dorothy Landsberg – and proceeded to tell me what was about to happen.

And so I took in as much as I could and said of course I would be there when he wanted me there, which was December 28th of 1973. I guess I took a train down with my two suitcases and met John in the office on the second floor of the Congressional Hotel. At that time there was a lawyer

named David Haines whom he had hired, who's now deceased, and a lawyer named Dagmar Hamilton - older woman.

I don't know her whereabouts at the moment – and me. And I think that was the group that started moving forward with this process. And that was that. December 28th, 1973.

Naftali: Dagmar Hamilton?

Barden: Yes.

Naftali: A woman?

Barden: Yes.

Naftali: Would you tell us a little bit about women in the law in that period of time.

Barden: Well, 1973 was eons ago in many ways, as we know from the Jackie Kennedy just-released information. There certainly was a push at that time and there were a lot of women in law school at the time, but as far as... I don't know what the numbers are. I don't think there were a whole lot of women lawyers around. Dagmar did not stay all that long and I cannot remember what she did.

John ultimately hired three other women lawyers for the staff – Hillary, at that time Rodham, and two others – a woman from Alabama or Arkansas named Terri Kirkpatrick, and a third person who was in a picture I have, whose name I don't know. They were very junior. Hillary was just out of law school, as were these others. It was really a different time.

John recruited by word of mouth, and the way he got most of the people on that staff was the way he got me; was that someone whom he trusted said, 'This is a good person. You should hire him or her.' And I'm sure you've heard the story already about how he got Hillary.

Well, Burke Marshall was, of course, one of John's closest confidantes and he asked Burke to recommend a person for the staff - one or more young lawyers who would be interested - and Burke nominated Bill Clinton. So John called Bill Clinton and Bill said, 'I'm sorry, I can't do it. I'm going back to Arkansas to run for Governor but how about hiring my girlfriend?' And that's how it happened.

And Hillary's office was next to the library and I honestly cannot remember when she started, but I assume in that early period, as did everyone else. So Sack came because of Bob Owen. They worked at the same law firm. Dick Gill came because of Judge Johnson. Anyway, there's a lot... I don't remember what Evans's connection is but he'll certainly tell you. And there's a long, long list of how those people got there, including me.

The way people were recruited for the library staff was an amalgam of that. There were people who recommended young either law students or people interested in the law, or others, to come and work with us. And Bob Shelton, who was John's administrative person, a lawyer, worked for Venable, Baetjer & Howard in Baltimore. Lovely man. Dorothy Landsberg's brother.

He and I interviewed people for the job - usually together; sometimes separately. And one of the people we took on was a friend of Francis O'Brien's. I don't remember who recommended Robin. But Jan, then Orloff, now Piercy was a roommate of Hillary's from Wellesley. So we kind of built up the staff in large measure that way and he built up the legal staff in quite the same way.

Naftali: What were the lessons you'd learned at the Attica Commission that you immediately implemented or deployed, if you will, when you started this job? What did you learn from collecting information for the Commission?

Barden: Well, that is a really good question. Part of what I learned was that I really enjoyed working under pressure; working as part of a group; being of help to the people who were actually doing the work. And I guess I learned that I really was pretty well organized and that I had a gift for organization that was useful in moving forward a big project. And I hadn't had the opportunity to really understand that as well as I did at the end of Attica.

My job in both of those projects was really an engineering job. I wasn't paying as much attention to the substance as I was to the process, because making the process work was my job. And I really, really, loved that. So that was really pretty much what I took away from it.

Naftali: Engineering is going to be a very important part of this new job with the Impeachment Inquiry because of the amount of material you were gonna have.

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- Barden: Absolutely.
- Naftali: So I know this is difficult. It's a long time ago. But it would be helpful to scholars and viewers. Let's try to explain what kinds of information were available to you when you start the job and then we'll track how you get more and more as time goes by.
- Barden: Well, we were in the extremely fortunate position of having had all of this work done before we got there. And the initial task was to gather as much as we could from as many sources as we could that existed already. And the first and most obvious source was the Senate Select Committee. We were doing two kinds of things, I think. We were obtaining information in bulk as from them, and then we were obtaining things that the lawyers specifically asked for. And in fact we did this...
- Working with John and working with all these folks had an aspect of fun to it. So we devised a form that lawyers would use to request information and we called the form KTS. And we called it that because it was named after Dick Cates. So the KTS form was invented. And it was a very simple form just asking what the information was that the person wanted and why. And I think maybe John signed off on it.
- But I am fairly sure that I went and visited the librarian or the librarian equivalent at the Senate Select Committee and took a look at what they had; figured out how much space it was going to take up; and then oversaw the process of getting that information, at which point the lawyers could really begin to dig in with the specific witnesses who were relevant to their area of inquiry.
- We got information from the Special Prosecutor and there must have been... I now know – I paid no attention to it at the time but there must have been a 6E Motion that was granted by I guess Judge Sirica, who was overseeing the grand jury proceeding. And all of that information came in. We would get it into the library and get it into files and in some usable form by the lawyers as very, very quickly as we could.
- Naftali: Now, that's the handover in March.
- Barden: Well, that was late though.
- Naftali: So you had material from the Special Prosecutor before.
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Barden: Well, I guess we had anything that wasn't 6E. Because they had a close... Because they were good to us, I think. I never had any personal meetings with them but my recollection from John is that they were good to us and they would share whatever they could. And then the grand jury material came in March. But earlier I'm sure we got interviews that were not considered 6E and other things like that.

We had some material from the Senate Farm Relations Committee and I don't remember what that was, but I guess maybe it concerned Cambodia and some of those other... the undeclared war business. We had some information that was classified and I actually had an interim top secret security clearance for dealing with that information. Information from the CIA and others.

Naftali: Did you have a special vault for that?

Barden: We had a special locked cabinet and a special procedure. You know, people can only look at it in a special room under certain conditions. Anyway, so those were the big sources of our information.

Let me just look at one thing.

Naftali: Sure.

Barden: I brought some notes with me and some of them have to do with the way in which we categorized some of this stuff toward the end. Here. When I did the wrap-up for the National Archives I had a list that I found in going through my notes. We grouped the material by sources and so it's helpful to look at some of this stuff.

We had information from the Internal Revenue Service because, of course, they were using that to audit people. So we had that information. I have a reference here to something called HASC and I don't know what that is, Tim. It's some House Committee. And then the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. There was a lot of litigation that had already gone on and so we got all those... duplicated all of those filings and divided those up as relevant.

We had a lot of information on this Howard Hughes/Bebe Rebozo business, and I'm not sure where all of that came from but we had information about that. And I think those were the main... And then, of course, we got things from the White House eventually. And so that was

another source of information. It was all kept in the library and doled out to the lawyers as they needed it.

Naftali: Again, people watching this will be from the iPad generation. Why don't you explain and talk about the role that index cards played or –

Barden: Well, we started off this chronology... We tried to do a manual computer system. I can't say it was the most successful thing we ever tried to do but we did. We devised these what were call 'chron cards'. They had a manila-colored card on the front behind... I think they must be in the files you have. Then had a green copy, which was a tissue copy. We were a little more advanced than having carbon paper.

I think they copied straight through. I forget what that technology was called. And then we had a green copy as well. And those copies were filed... I found our notes on that. We filed the yellow ones in chronological order. We filed the green ones in chronological order by person. We filed the blue copies according to the areas and subject matter.

And then there were pink cards, which were the attorney copies that they were able to keep for themselves to work through. And so it is hard to believe that that is what we did, but that is what we did, because that was the only choice we had.

Naftali: So that means you had five sets. It was the same document.

Barden: Right.

Naftali: So you'd have five different, if you will, complete sets.

Barden: Right.

Naftali: According to these different divisions.

Barden: Exactly. And it's just a matter of slicing and dicing. Of course, like a computer today and the expression 'garbage in, garbage out', they were only as good as what was on them. And there was a space for what the event was. There was a space for who the people were who were involved. There was a space for what happened. And then there were some other little entries on the cards.

Bob Owen, who was a very trusted deputy of John's from the civil rights era, helped me. He and Dorothy Landsberg, in the early months - probably mostly January, because we moved so, so fast – helped me devise how

that card was gonna look based on his experience in working with John and based on what they had done in the civil rights division. But yeah, that's what we did. And it worked fine, surprisingly enough.

Naftali: I'm not surprised, but what's interesting is at the very early stage you had to actually have a sense of all the categories.

Barden: Yes. Right. Well, and I just gave to Evan... We had... I don't know who did this up. It was not I – to my memory anyway. A glossary that had every single person's name on it and a description of who they were. Because really the numbers of actors here was in the hundreds. So we had that. While we had a fairly large time period and a huge number of subjects in Bob Sack's area to cover, it was a discrete task that we had when broken down.

You know, there was the Watergate and then there were agency practices and then there was the IRS and then there was... So we were really very focused from a very early point on whatever had to happen in each of these areas. Whatever we needed to get; whatever we needed to find out; whatever we needed to investigate further. Somebody has probably given you already, or it's in the archives, the page of Gordon Liddy signing in to talk to whomever with 'under protest' written. It's a sign-in sheet.

I don't think I brought it but I can get it to you. I'm sure you have the original because there was a sign-in procedure on the second floor of the Congressional Hotel devised by Ben Marshall, our Security Officer, and I think it was again something that made multiple copies at once.

And people would sign in and what they were doing there. And at the bottom of one page 'G. Gordon Liddy' and written in small letters over his name is 'under protest'. I know they'll be a lot of talk about Liddy later, and Dick Gill and others, and I don't know much except I have that particular little copy of that document somewhere.

So that's what we did. We brought it all in. John relied heavily on researchers and that was from the time... from the civil rights era, he had a group of people, young... again, gender roles of the times. In this case the sixties. John worked with a small cadre of young lawyers who worked for the civil rights division, including Bob Owen, Frank Allen, Brian Landsberg. A number of them, all of whom are still very close friends.

He then had a group of women, college graduates, who were quote ‘researchers’, and those people included Mary Lee Campbell and Dorothy Shelton and others. And this group paired off in at least five and maybe more marriages.

Naftali: Yeah. Landsberg.

Barden: That all exist to this day. I don't think Owen Fiss. Well anyway, some of them were very, very interesting. So when he came to do the Impeachment Inquiry he knew that once again he'd wanna use that model because it worked very well and it accorded with his sense of the world. And I was lucky enough to be hired to run that little outfit - a leap of faith on his part, I must say – and got to work then with John, with Bob, with the people who were running the little areas of subject matter interest.

But this is one of my favorite little John Doar-isms. Early in the project, February 18th, 1974, I wrote John a memo about the research assistants and that they had started and what they were doing. And I had certain questions that I put to him in the course of my memo.

So I got back a memo that has his writing on it, and at the top there's the following little poem: ‘Are they careful? Do they pay meticulous attention to detail? Do they take nothing for granted? Do they organize their work? And are they neat? Are they stubborn?’ – underlined. And then as you go through... and I have different people assigned to different subject areas and lawyers.

Here's another little John Doar-ism about their assignments: ‘The good ones will be like gold. They should be assigned to help the best lawyers.’ And we really did have quite the extraordinary team, I must say, of people who were very talented, very hard-working, very dedicated and very smart. And it wasn't like there ended up being, *oh, you have to use this person*. It was a society of equals most definitely so.

Naftali: Do you remember some of their names?

Barden: Oh my. Yes, of course. Larry Keeves. Barbara Campbell. Muriel Pugh – P-U-G-H – who is now Muriel Morrissey, having returned to her maiden name. Jonathan Flint. Liz Donegan. Liz came our way... she was hired by Sam Garrison but Sam didn't have enough for her to do and so she kind of worked her way down to the library. Lovely woman. Very hard-working. Very quiet.

Michael Hughes. Jen, then Orloff, now Piercy. Sally Regal, who had worked, I think, for the Chairman in his office. And she was a little ball of energy whose name will come up again later on. Wonderful. Young woman. Younger than everybody else. Tiny little person. Just fabulous.

I think that was everybody. Oh, John Peterson, who was very interested in all things involving President Nixon and that, and has remained so to this day. A friend of Francis O'Brien's. Lovely man. Lovely man. And we worked together in a small room twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week almost. We were in there with the file cabinets. And they had desks. People would go home and sleep when they had to and just work all the rest of the time. That's all we did for those however many months.

To the point where I once fell asleep in the tub. I once went home to take a nap at, you know, six o'clock, thinking I'd come back at eight, and never got up again. I mean, we really... I feel asleep. I took my sister out to dinner one night when she was visiting and feel asleep at the dining table. I mean, we truly did nothing but work. And we worked. We worked. I mean, sometimes thirty-six hours at a stretch.

At one point the Press Secretary, Ziegler, was ranting and raving about how the Impeachment Inquiry wasn't doing its work and it should really hurry up. I think it was March or something. And every Thursday, as I recall, John had a staff meeting in the library. And I was sitting there as usual, having no idea of what was going on in the larger world whatsoever. And John stood up and said, 'Well, Ron Ziegler sent Maureen flowers this morning.' You know, by way of apology about making that comment that we weren't working hard enough. But at the time I had no idea what he was talking about.

So there we were in this crucible of everything - history and personality and... And we got along, to know. We really did. We really liked each other. In April of 2002 we had a reunion at my home in Philadelphia and everyone came. And John came. And Francis came. And it was great. And we took some photographs, replicating some pictures that we took during those years. And I'm wearing... Well, no. I take that back. Never mind. I was gonna wear it but I didn't.

But we had a lovely group. And unfortunately Larry died soon after that lunch, but everybody else is still alive and kicking and we're friends.

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- Naftali: Did they go on to become lawyers – your team? What happened? Did they become lawyers or where they scholars?
- Barden: What would happen to them when...?
- Naftali: Afterwards. After the impeachment.
- Barden: Oh, well Muriel and Barbara and Jon Flint went to law school. A lot of them went to work immediately for Frank Church's Committee, which was the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. There was a whole cadre of them that did that. Larry went on to do some interesting... He was involved in politics to some extent. Worked for Ed Koch for a while and made a lot of money in private industry of some sort before he died. And wasn't even working at that time.
- Jon Flint does not practice law. He's a business person of some sort in Massachusetts. Also extremely successful. Came to the party in a car that waited for him during the party and took him back to the airport. Wonderful, delightful, wonderful man. Oh my goodness.
- Muriel's a law professor now at Temple. Barbara works for an organization called... Oh, it's a healthcare... I'll think of it... Families USA. Does healthcare stuff.
- Michael, I'm not sure. I think he's worked for the government for a long time. And I'm not sure what Liz was doing. And Robin has her own firm. She went to Stanford Law School. Did extremely well. She's an extremely smart woman. Capable. And is a Principal in a civil rights law firm in California.
- So everybody has gone on to have interesting careers and good lives. You know, you just form relationships that you never... Even if you don't see the person for twenty years. Doesn't matter. Because we had so much in common.
- Naftali: Maureen, tell us... Let's just track what would happen to a document. So let's say you had the material coming to you from the Senate Watergate Committee, and in fact there was a ton of material. Did they actually give you copies? Or did they give you originals?
- Barden: Oh, Tim, I can't remember. I'm sorry.
- Naftali: That's okay.
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Barden: What we have is in the archive, in those boxes. I doubt they gave us originals. I seriously doubt it. But on the other hand it seems like an awful lot of Xeroxing.

I don't remember that we had to do copying ourselves, but if we got copies it's possible that maybe we sent them out. I just am failing on that. I'm sorry. I'd have to look at the stuff to see.

Naftali: That's okay.

Barden: Once we got it, because the lawyers were divided up into teams, they would take the material, check it out of the library and review it, and make notes on the basis of it either on chron cards or in other ways. And then the team leaders had regular meetings at least weekly, maybe more often – Evan and the guys would be able to tell you – at which they discussed what they were doing, and each person had a small to medium-sized chunk that he or she was dealing with. And then they'd return the documents to the library.

The one very, very critical role the library staff played was in fact checking everything. So the way John saw our role was all the information came into us; all the information when out from us; and everything that was publicly... or presented to the Committee or anything like that, was fact-checked by the researchers.

So nothing ever went directly from the legal staff - well, unless it was a brief or something like that. But in terms of the Statements of Information or other things, somebody looked at every assertion that was made and checked the documentation behind it to be positive that the assertion that was being made was borne out by the evidence.

Naftali: Well, given the number of those volumes you must have been extraord-... I imagine you fell asleep in the tub at the end of February...

Barden: I don't even remember when it was.

Naftali: I mean, end of April, early May, because the Statements of Information are presented to the Committee on May 9th. So that was a huge body of material.

Barden: Right. In retrospect it was astounding. But at the time, again, you just... Everything is broken down into the discrete task that's necessary. And I

sat down with, I think it was with Fred, who was intimately involved in a lot of this stuff – Fred Altshuler.

Naftali: Why? Why?

Barden: But we came up with how the books were gonna look. And I'm pretty sure Bob Owen was involved. Certainly John. I mean, it was kind of a moveable feast there for a little while. But we came up with what these Statements of Information were going to look like. And then it was just, you know, put one foot in front of the other.

We did have a foolproof process – almost foolproof, because there is an errata document that was published after the fact. But I learned on impeachment that you can only... unless three different people, three different pairs of eyes, hit a work product you cannot catch every typo, you cannot catch every comma. You just can't. It takes three people. Now, maybe we were extremely tired. So maybe under better circumstances it would only take two. But that was an interesting thing.

And our goal was perfection. That was the goal. So the book would be assembled by a combination of the researchers and the lawyers. I'm sure Bob Burney Evan looked at it at some point in that process very carefully and thoroughly. The library staff would then go through it again to make sure. And we bracketed the relevant portions of every document so it would be easy for the Committee to look at it. And on the Statement of Information page, of course, it has the assertion and then below it the source materials, which were then behind the...

And I have a little note from John somewhere saying, you know, just one tab. So you have Tab Number 1. And then 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4. The back-up did not have separate tabs. So that was a decision he made at some point – and a good one because otherwise you end up with too many tabs.

So the prototype book would be created and then handed over to be duplicated. And then Sally, this little bundle of energy, and I guess... How many Committee members were there? Thirty-nine?

Naftali: Yeah.

Barden: Yeah. So we probably had forty-five books because they'd be other people there who needed them – John, Mr. Jenner, so forth. All of those people overnight would be sitting in a room about this size, at desks, with an open

loose-leaf book, with the dividers, with the documents, and each person would assemble one book.

And then somebody would trundle all those books over and put them on the tables so the Committee members would have them when they sat down in the morning with their coffee or whatever. And I never actually saw that Committee room... So there were certainly plenty pictures of it.

And the first day was May 9th. And John came back from the first day and everything had gone without a hitch. There was not one hiccup, not one typo, not one page missing. Because you can see how important it was that people weren't raising their hands all the time saying, 'Mr. Doar, I don't have Number 1.4.' You know, it would be so disruptive. So he took me and Barbara Campbell out to dinner that night at Trader Joe's... No. That's... What was...? Trader Vic's.

Naftali: Trader Vic's probably.

Barden: Yes. May 9th. And I don't know whether that was the night but it could have been. And this really sounds like a made-up stupid story but it actually happened. He was driving us somewhere. If it was that night it was to the restaurant. And I said, 'Oh my gosh. Look at that. That's beautiful. What is that?' It was a huge, beautiful garden. It was the side of the White House.

So we went nowhere. We went nowhere. Every once in a while I would... once or twice I would get in a taxi and go to Garfinckel's. And I think it cost eighty-five cents because to go anywhere from Capitol Hill was very inexpensive in a taxi. And I bought a suit and came back. Or whatever – bought a blouse and came back to work. We went nowhere. Absolutely nowhere.

So John was very appreciative of the work that people did. And I have to say – and this is probably gonna be said by everybody – but for him... I mean, he set a tone there that pervaded down to the absolutely most junior person on the staff, and that was the President was called the President; this is not a witch hunt; we're gonna conduct ourselves in certain respects and in certain ways and we're gonna do the best job that anybody can do.

And it just pervaded... And the fact that he and Mr. Jenner had such a respectful, close relationship was critical. And it was a happy place. It was a happy place, even though... and maybe *because*, you know, we were

working all the time. That's all we did. And we really grew to enjoy one another tremendously. The lawyers, everybody. You know, it was a great... But he was amazing. He was amazing.

Naftali: How did your work change when you started to get tapes?

Barden: When we started to get...?

Naftali: Get tapes. The original tapes? I mean, copies of the original tapes.

Barden: Well, you know, mine not much. Because... Now, when did we get those, Tim?

Naftali: Well, I'm assuming that there were some tapes in what the Special Prosecutor handed over to you in March.

Barden: Right. Okay.

Naftali: And then you may have gotten more tapes after the White House published its transcripts on April 3rd.

Barden: Yeah, in April. Right. I think we did. Now, that process happened... We were not... To my memory we were not directly involved in that. I'm checking for Evan. We're trying to... we're gonna get some firm-up who the people were who listened to the tapes. But there was a young man named Jeff Banchemo who was... he did not work with the library staff.

I think he worked more with the people who were making the books. But I think he kind of rose to the top there somehow if memory serves me. And he was one. And there were a couple of others. And their work was off to the side. They were preparing these transcripts. So there was an operation parallel to the library operation that went on there.

The library only got involved when the Earl Nash event occurred. I guess we got involved because somebody came into the library and said, 'Who's Earl Nash?' And we all said, 'What?!'

So we weren't really involved. Clearly, I do think that was a critical document, that tape comparison. Critical, critical document in terms of hastening what eventually happened. And of course once the White House was forced to turn over those tapes unexpurgated, that was the end, we know. But we were not really involved with that. So hopefully some of the other folks will have a better recollection.

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- Naftali: So when you were fact-checking you were just fact-checking documents, not transcripts.
- Barden: Well, no. I guess it would have been transcripts as well. I mean, they must have become part of the documentation. But I'm sure they did. I'm positive they did. They had to. They were critical. But they just came into us and were treated... whatever we had in that regard, whether it came from the staff or other sources like that April 30th book, just became part of what we were handling, you know. In other words it was handled just like the Senate Select Committee. We weren't involved in preparing anything, our particular group.
- Naftali: Do you remember was there any anticipation or concern before the vote, before the Committee took its vote?
- Barden: No. Now, I should say I don't remember, because I took a couple of days off. This was a terrible mistake but I needed to get away and I went out to see my folks at the Jersey Shore. They were there on summer vacation. And I wasn't there during the open sessions. Because our work... You know, we got a breather.
- And of course at that point we were all thinking, 'Oh my goodness. We have to do this again.' And so it was... you know, we were kind of husbanding our resources. But I think it just became clearer and clearer as the days when by, especially when you had... You know before the vote we had some of these Republicans coming out and saying they had been convinced.
- So the lawyers will have to tell you better whether there was concern, but my feeling, and what I was picking up to the extent I picked up things from John and the lawyers, was a feeling of great confidence moving forward. Confidence in the process. Confidence in the work we were doing. And confidence that it would bear out.
- One time I got to go to a meeting with John. And I don't remember why. They would bring people over during the hearings and stuff but I have never had time to do that. But I don't remember why I got to do this, but it was wonderful. He had a meeting with the southern Democrats. Walter Flowers, Barbara Jordan, and I don't remember who the other people who were there were.
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It was a small group of people. And I remember coming out of there very struck by the degree of respect and confidence that those folks were displaying toward John and the great respect, of course, with which he treated them. But they were critical... Block at that time was such a different time, you know. And that was a striking event, because it was one of a kind and it was very interesting to see these Committee people up close.

Naftali: And this was... I mean, it's hard to situate, but was it around June or July or just before the vote or...?

Barden: Tim, I just can't remember. I think it was probably before the presentation of evidence.

Naftali: Oh, so before May 8th.

Barden: I think so.

Naftali: Before May 9th, I mean. Before may 9th.

Barden: I think it was early. Because I think that... after that, I don't know when it would have happened. I think it was early.

Naftali: There was a minority staff.

Barden: Right.

Naftali: Would they send requests to you too?

Barden: Yes. Sure. And they were great. You know, you didn't have this feeling – I didn't – of... We really... I certainly didn't get to know Sam Garrison. He was kind of a strange fellow. He was just very... seemed like an introvert. So he wasn't particularly friendly but he wasn't that friendly to anybody. He was just there.

Mr. Jenner was a character, a one-of-a-kind. When he was there he would work really late and sometimes I'd see him down in the lobby of the Congressional Hotel waiting for a taxi with his shoes off. Because he would take his shoes off at his desk and he wouldn't be able to get them back on.

So he would carry his... I seem to remember that they were loafers. He'd have his loafers in his hand. He'd have his fancy little whatever you call that thing that men wear on their...

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- Naftali: Okay. You mean the triangle like...?
- Barden: Like where you put a handkerchief.
- Naftali: Yes, handkerchief.
- Barden: And that would match... That would be a gaudily colored pattern that would match the inside of his jacket. And I don't remember particularly if his socks were...
- Naftali: And his stocking feet.
- Barden: Yes. Often! Often! But he was dear. He was always so nice and friendly and funny. We had a birthday party for him. I think his birthday was in June. In the library. I think it was in the library. Big cake, and everybody was there. And he was a great gentleman.
- And then Bill Weld was very friendly and very nice. And I honestly don't remember who the other people were in the minority. They did have an area of their own, which was sort of across the hall from John's office, I think, if I remember right.
- But they were very much integrated into the work that was being done. There was no feeling of us and them at all. And that is, you know, a hats-off tribute to John and Bert Jenner and Mr. Hutchinson to some degree I guess, as well as Rodino. I mean, it really was...
- I'm making this sound very utopian and I'm sure that there were issues that never came to my attention because of the nature of the job I had. But the sense of the place was *we have work to do; we're gonna do it, and we're gonna do it fairly, and we're gonna do it well, and we're not gonna waste time squabbling*. From my point of view. Now, that was a unique point of view. And my job was surely to serve everyone, and there was never any distinction made at all between... Whatever anybody wanted they got.
- Naftali: Did members of the congressional staffs ever come to the library and use the library?
- Barden: No. The only person... We had dealings with Janet Howard, who was an administrative person. Very nice, very cooperative, very essential to keep things moving. But no. To my memory – and I think I would remember –
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we never saw anybody. I don't know if Jerry Zeitman ever came. I just don't remember that ever happening.

Naftali: I was just wondering if the members themselves, you know, used the library.

Barden: I don't remember that ever happening, no. Neither one. If they did they would be on the sign-in sheets. But it was pretty much just us.

Naftali: Before the Committee interviewed – and they did nine interviews, I think – did you put together briefing books for the lawyers?

Barden: I don't remember doing that. I don't remember. We might have. If we did it was the work of the researcher assigned to that section, together with the lawyer assigned. And I'm sure we used the green... or the blue cards rather. No, the green cards, filed chronologically by person. I'm sure we used them in whatever we did but I just don't have a specific recollection.

Naftali: Something that the viewer will find it hard to understand but you understood at the time, you didn't know how the process would end.

Barden: No.

Naftali: So once the Committee voted and approved three articles...

Barden: Right.

Naftali: Of impeachment, what did you think was going to happen next for the library? What did you think you would be doing?

Barden: Well, I thought we would be doing more or less what we had already... Well, I thought we would be preparing background material for every witness called by the government and every... or called by whoever it would be. That's a slip of the tongue of a former Assistant US Attorney. But called by...

Naftali: The House really.

Barden: The Committee.

Naftali: Yeah.

Barden: And then preparing, you know, material for cross-examination. So I thought it was going to be very similar to what we'd been doing already but just slicing and dicing everything in a different order.

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- Naftali: And did you have a chance to speak to anyone from the Senate about...? Because, of course, the Senate... if the President had not resigned he would have been tried by the Senate.
- Barden: Yes.
- Naftali: If the House had approved the Committee's three articles - ...
- Barden: Right.
- Naftali: And that's one of the three articles – it would have moved to the Senate and the President would have been put on trial in the Senate.
- Barden: Right.
- Naftali: Presumably the Senate would have had to collect information.
- Barden: Right. Gear up.
- Naftali: Gear up. Were there any preliminary discussions that you'd participated in with the Senate?
- Barden: No. Not that I was part of. I don't know whether John was talking to anybody. I don't know. It happened so fast. I guess they would have had to schedule the trial, and presumably we would have had a little lead-up time to get to it. But there were... Hillary worked on the constitutional... And John Labovitz, who was a Washington lawyer, worked on the constitutional and the impeachment precedents. And they may have done some work figuring out exactly how this was gonna go. Or somebody did. It did not involve us.
- Naftali: Are you talking about the document that was done in February?
- Barden: Yeah. Well, they did that but then they...
- Naftali: They did the one in February.
- Barden: I think they also studied the Johnson... You know, the precedent that existed. And maybe there was some talk there about nuts and bolts and what we were gonna do. But I was not involved in it.
- Naftali: To study the Johnson - we're talking about the Andrew Johnson impeachment - did you have to borrow materials from the library of Congress?
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- Barden: If we did I wasn't involved. I don't remember being involved in that. That material... I don't think that whatever they got was kept in the library. If it was I had nothing to do with it. And they didn't have a researcher either, to my knowledge. We were really working more on the facts than on the...
- Naftali: When you say 'they' you mean John Labovitz and....
- Barden: John and...
- Naftali: And Hillary Rodham - then Hillary Rodham.
- Barden: Yes. And they probably had some other people working with them on that but I'm not sure who it was. We called it Constitutional and Legal... C & L is what that was referred to as. And that kind of went... And I think maybe Joe Woods was involved in that as well; was supervising that. But it was not... we were not... Because it was more... It wasn't quote 'proactive'. It really was much more legal analysis of existing materials that were not in any way sensitive or... So that was a separate project.
- Naftali: Judge Sack told me about a meeting of the entire staff. How often did...?
- Barden: I think it was every Thursday.
- Naftali: The entire staff?
- Barden: No. I guess... I don't even know. Not too often. Maybe four or five times.
- Naftali: Because it would happen in the library, he said.
- Barden: Yes. It would happen in the library. John was very big on... He thought those Thursday meetings were important to keep everybody focused. And I guess, you know, when you're running the show it's good... and camaraderie and so on. But then as far as bringing everybody in, I think those things happened when there was a big event.
- So I'm quite sure he did it after we finished the presentation of evidence, because he wanted to thank everyone. And that was such a team effort that everybody would have been involved in that one. And, of course, there was one after the President resigned. That was huge. And I'm sure there were a couple of others.
- Naftali: Could you tell us about that one, please?
- Barden: Pardon?
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Naftali: Could you tell us about the one after the President resigned?

Barden: Well, I just remember... You know, we were all stunned. There was this feeling... this adrenalin outflow. And it was very subdued. I mean, it certainly wasn't... people weren't jumping up and down or anything like that. Far from it. It was that same decorous spirit imbued that meeting as well.

And, you know, truth be told we were sad, because we were geared up to do this next thing and we were a lean and mean fighting machine by then. And so it was sad. You know, we realized we were coming to an end of an experience that had been wonderful for all of us. So we were trying to take all that in. You know, it had as much effect on us personally, I think, as it did on our realization that the country was, you know, setting off on a different course.

They got us into... I certainly have a ticket and I think everybody who wanted to go was able to go to the swearing-in of President Ford, which was pretty exciting. But it was a somber occasion, in my memory.

Naftali: What did this experience teach you about our system of government?

Barden: Well, I was so heartened in both cases really – Attica too – because Rockefeller appointed that panel and that panel, including Walter Rothchild, came back and criticized Rockefeller, and that was big. And again, a tribute to Bob McKay, I think, who was the head of it.

Here the same... I mean, I think we all felt just so proud of what had happened and that it had been done the right way. And that we had a government which... you know, the pressure... Nixon had done really bad things and the pressure just kept getting ramped up and ramped up. And, you know, putting one foot in front of the other and not taking no for an answer, and having the judicial system and the executive branch and the legislature all working together toward this goal.

It was really... Really, Tim, I don't think... I mean, I'm a true believer. And that experience was critical to that. And I think we all came away feeling that way. It was almost a holy feeling about having been part of something that was so fine.

And, you know, I think that is a story to tell now. And I have this crystal... because things are so contentious and difficult. Not that there weren't difficult moments there. I'm sure there were. I personally wasn't privy to

them but I'm sure people will tell you of those. But people... there was a commitment to the process. And I think we all saw ourselves - and I think John brought this to it - we saw ourselves as servants of that process and as obligated to do the best by that process, you know. As really having a trust.

And in 1994, I believe, John had a dinner in New York for Bernie Nussbaum after he left his role as White House Counsel. And it was a huge dinner. There must have been fifty people there. I think it was one of those fancy clubs in New York. Cosmopolitan Club or one of those. And John has a system at dinners where... he's old-fashioned. The women stay put and the men move every course. So you get to talk to different people throughout the dinner.

And Bernie was there with his then wife, Toby, who died about ten years ago, I think. And she had stayed in Scarsdale during impeachment with their children. But she and Bernie were extremely tight and she was part of the process. And I remember her saying, I think to the whole table but certainly to me, 'It could never have happened... What happened in 1974 could never have happened in today's Washington.' But that was '94 and we're almost twenty years beyond that. So, you know, it makes me sad. I don't know what...

I also remember John saying at the end of the Inquiry that he thought that one of the most exciting places to be at that time would have been as a member of the House of Representatives, going forward. Because, you know, there was all that reform zeal that came in there and we were all pumped up on it. You know, it was just... it was a wonderful time. And it would be very interesting to sit down and think about what's happened since then.

Naftali: I want to ask you. You were working with – and you were young at the time too – you were working with some of the youngest members of the Committee staff.

Barden: Yeah.

Naftali: To what extent had Vietnam shaped them? I mean, if you've gotta put people into a per cent...

Barden: Right. Seventy...

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- Naftali: Seventy-four. The draft's over. The demonstrations are over. But they only happened a few years earlier. In fact some of them had participated, no doubt. I mean, this was a very political moment in our country's history. What do you remember of...? I mean, did you get to know them and their backgrounds and what they thought? Were some of them veterans?
- Barden: John Peterson had been in Vietnam. He never talked about it. The rest... We were an idealistic bunch and I venture to say we still are. But, sure, we were all children of the sixties. I mean, we had been... I'd certainly been to Washington numerous times demonstrating and I'm sure some of the others had as well.
- I think the Vietnam experience... the triumph of our generation in, as we saw it, forcing us out of Vietnam... Well, there was probably a little bit of hubris involved there but certainly we saw ourselves that way. I think that spirit carried into everything we did. We felt powerful. We felt like we could make a difference.
- And I think to that extent it was there as the legacy of the sixties and the Vietnam era, but it wasn't any more concrete than that. I don't think there were that many veterans on the staff. There may have been some of the lawyers but I just don't know.
- Naftali: Because you tried to have a balance of... You wanted, I mean, Republicans and Democrats... Not that being serving in Vietnam in that era was a litmus test at all. But when you were recruiting for the library how you did maintain a balance? Or did you?
- Barden: No, we didn't. We really didn't. I mean, we took... We were looking for people who we thought would work hard and work well with other people and not have... So we didn't want anybody who was such a strong personality or - although we had some strong personalities in there - but it was a quick process and it was a somewhat...
- I can't remember other than Liz. And I had forgotten that she had come our way via Sam Garrison. I really did forget that. As far as the others, I know what some of their politics are. I don't know all of them and I don't even think it ever came up in the conversation.
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- Naftali: Did your sense of the Nixon administration evolve as the material came in? And if so, what do you remember? Because I asked Judge Sack this question. He had an a-ha moment.
- Barden: Well, no. For me, no. I mean, I read the papers every day. I lived in New York City. And I was at a dinner party the night of the Saturday Night Massacre, where this news came in and everybody was... I lived in New York at the time. Everybody was stunned and shocked.
- So we were all on the edges on our chair all the time over this. And President Nixon was not a favorite of the people of my generation. So it really was... I guess I would have to say that I wasn't capable of having an a-ha moment in those months because I was just trying to stay awake and make sure that we'd got done what we needed to do.
- For some of the lawyers perhaps there will be. Getting to read the speeches that were drafted for the Chairman, and some of that, you know, put things together a made you say 'Wow, this is really happening.' But other than that, no.
- Naftali: Some of your colleagues have commented that the friendships that developed were so strong amongst this group because of the enforced silence. Could you talk a little bit about the effect of Mr. Doar's commitment to secrecy; the effect that that had on making you closer and tighter as a group.
- Barden: Well, it absolutely did. I mean, there's funny quotes that we put in the scrapbook of, you know, somebody who was dating Larry Keeves saying, 'He's the most boring person the world. All he does is work and he can't talk about anything else. You know, he can't talk about that and he can't talk about anything else.'
- And there was a headline: 'Tight lips are a mark on Judiciary Committee staff'. And there's a picture of John, who has a very tight lip-line anyway.
- Bob Sack, who was kind of the... He had a lot of to do with the spirit of the place. He's a very loving person who enjoys other people a great deal. And he said once that he thought another part of the reason we were so close is that it was a self-selected group. Because how many people do you have in the world who will just drop whatever they're doing? I mean, these men were young men building law practices and families. Drop
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whatever they're doing and go to Washington. How many of them have spouses who are going to let them do that? How many...?

So in that it was a self-selected group. And then the fact not only I think as much as the secrecy was we never did anything else. See, for me, I came from New York. I knew nobody. My whole peer group was the people who were there. That was true for Bob, for Evan, for Bernie. I mean, they may have had a friend here or there but they moved in there from elsewhere. Dick Gill. So we were each other's peer group right from the beginning.

And there's an interesting... Mike Conway, a wonderful lawyer from Chicago. His wife came, and his children, and she's quoted in an article that was published after the Inquiry as saying, 'He would never tell me a thing. He said, 'Just don't ask me anything because I'm not gonna tell you. I know you would slip and tell somebody something.''

And so I think it definitely drove us closer together and it's one of those things that it's gotta be an ironclad rule or on the other side is perdition. Because once you start where do you stop, you know? So I think that was part of it. But I think there were a lot of ... The geography of the place made us closer. The nature of the work made us closer. I mean, just such a group of delightful people that, you know, you've got that going for you right from the beginning anyway if you think about it.

Naftali: Did you have parties?

Barden: Did I have...?

Naftali: Parties at the time.

Barden: No, not 'til the end. I mean, we had a birthday party for Mr. Jenner. I guess we had a coffee machine in a central place, and so you'd kind of congregate around the coffee machine. I don't remember a lot of parties though. John would take... Barbara Campbell was somebody who grew up in his hometown. He was like a surrogate parent to her in some ways. And so how would take us out to dinner sometimes, but other than that we just worked. That's all we did. We worked.

Naftali: You mentioned a scrapbook.

- Barden: Yes, we made a scrapbook at the end. If there's no copy in the archives I'll have a copy made for you. It was one of the last things I did and it's a great book, if I do say so myself. I'll get a copy for you. You would like it.
- Naftali: Well, we the library. We'd love to have one.
- Barden: Yeah. Well, John has the original but I'll get a copy made. It's great fun to go through it. It reminds us of things, you know.
- Naftali: Maureen, have we missed any stories you wanna record?
- Barden: Is that...?
- Naftali: Have we missed any stories that you wanted to record?
- Barden: Gee, I don't think so. I think we got lots of stories. It was certainly... John used to say to me, 'In life, Maureen, you've got three great parades.' And this was a great parade. It really was. And continues to be, thanks to you.
- Naftali: Maureen, it's been an honor and a privilege. Thank you very much. Thank you.
- Barden: My pleasure. Thank *you*.
- Naftali: Thank you.