

Exit Interview
With
WILLIAM R. CODUS
On
November 29, 1972



Nixon Presidential Materials Staff
National Archives and Records Administration

Exit interview with William R. Codus
conducted by Terry W. Good
in Room 350 of the Old Executive Office Building
on November 29, 1972

TWG: Many of the questions are very basic and I hope you'll forgive me for asking them [unintelligible].

WRC: Go right ahead [unintelligible].

TWG: You joined the, well, you came over here from [the] State Department when?

WRC: July ninth.

TWG: July ninth.

WRC: July ninth of this year.

TWG: And your last day here will be this Friday?

WRC: Well, which is November thirtieth, right.

TWG: Hm hmm.

WRC: I was on a leave of absence for approximately four months.

TWG: Your title over at State is Assistant Chief of Protocol?

WRC: Assistant Chief of Protocol for Visits. There are a couple, three Assistant Chief[s] of Protocol. One is for ceremony and one is for protocol services, and mine is for visits, which entails visits of chiefs of state and heads of government from all over the world. I come in at the invitation of our President and we plot, plan, and execute their entire trip here, as we do when we go abroad, for our President.

TWG: You came over here with a great deal of experience in scheduling.

WRC: Yeah, I, basically, the scheduling, of course the scheduling we've done over there are for a chief of state or a head of government. The scheduling that was done here, of course, was

for the First Family, which was Mrs. Nixon, Julie [Nixon Eisenhower], Tricia [Nixon Cox], Edward [Cox]. We can't include David [Eisenhower] in that because David was in service, although, during the convention, he participated, along with Julie, in some activities. I had to, of course, check out with John Dean,...

TWG: The legal counsel?

WRC: ...the legal counsel, any activity that he participated in. It was very, very minute because it was a political campaign,...

TWG: Yeah, well that's understandable.

WRC: ...he just couldn't involve himself.

TWG: How big a staff did you have? I don't even know how to ask the question, but....

WRC: How many people we had in the First Family operation?

TWG: All right, let's start there.

WRC: Well, we had....

TWG: Maybe some of the major people you might name?

WRC: Well, my secretary, who was very important, who came over with me from State Department.

TWG: Was that Kathy Tindle?

WRC: Mary, no, Marylou Sheils.

TWG: Oh, Marylou Sheils.

WRC: Kathy Tindle came from Correspondence.

TWG: I see.

WRC: And then I had a gentleman, Allen Hall, who was here before I arrived. Who had been involved for, oh, I think about six weeks, in the girls' operation, in Julie and Tricia.... He was part of

Ron [Ronald H.] Walker's staff. I inherited him. What I did is I put him on the desk to exclusively handle Eddie Cox. Eddie did a lot of traveling, and he had quite a horrendous schedule, going six and seven days a week and four or five events a day, so it warranted having one man handle Ed Cox exclusively. In addition to that, we brought on a full time secretary to work with Allen, who did all the clerical work, as well as the thank-you notes. Eddie Cox, all his operation was handled right here, and nothing was done over in the East Wing [of the White House]. Now there was another young gal here, named Lynn Duffy, who we had for two months, who did secretarial work and messenger work. She was very helpful because the problem that I found, when we arrived here, was the mail system. I think it's rather ludicrous: if it's an emergency you red tag it.

TWG: Yeah.

WRC: Yeah, but it seems like the red tag takes longer than....

TWG: That's right.

WRC: So what we did was--when I brought this other secretary in--any time we had any correspondence, any material, any scenarios that went over to the First Family, it was hand delivered, it was walked over. We found out that we were able to get things over to them right away without some of the problems we encountered in the past. That, basically, was the in-office operation. Now, I did have two full time advance men assigned to me. One was Steve [Stephen J.] McCarthy, who is one of my protocol officers over at [the] State Department, who came over for a two month period. He was actually assigned to, or worked out of the Committee to

Reelect [the President]. His expenses and salaries were paid by the Committee to Reelect. The other gentleman was Dan [Daniel M.] Searby, who took a leave of absence from OPIC [Overseas Private Investment Corporation]. The same procedure there--he was paid out of [the] Committee to Reelect. These two gentlemen were assigned to me full time and I basically had these men concentrate on, or advancing, Mrs. Nixon.

TWG: How did you spell Searby's name?

WRC: S-E-A-R-B-Y. Incidentally, Searby is now over at the, working on the Inauguration as finance chairman.

TWG: McCarthy will be going back with you?

WRC: McCarthy's already gone. He went back on the twentieth of November, back to State Department.

TWG: Now these two gentlemen were working basically on Mrs. Nixon's activities and....

WRC: By that time they were also involved in Julie or Tricia's, and even Eddie's schedule, when we were short of advance men. Of course Mrs. Nixon, when she was not busy, I would use one of these two men to advance for the gals or Ed.

TWG: Now, as far as advancing for the girls go, who was doing that?

WRC: Well, when we had a schedule proposal approved by Julie or Tricia, we then contacted Mike [Michael R.] Schrauth, in Ron Walker's office, and informed him of the event or events that were going to take place in the coming weeks. Thereby, he would assign advance men--he'd have a backlog of advance men--he'd assign [an] advance man to us and then we'd immediately contact them and inform them of the schedule. Were most helpful.

TWG: All right. How much contact did you yourself have with Ron Walker's office? Was your operation totally separate from Walker or Dwight Chapin or the people [who] were scheduling the President's activities or [unintelligible].

WRC: No, we were in daily contact. Of course, every morning at eight o'clock, Dwight Chapin had a meeting, which I attended, along with Ron Walker, and several other people. The purpose of it was to inform those people who were concerned, on what activity there would be for the day, and also for the rest of the week and the weeks forthcoming. Just keeping them abreast, keeping Chapin's office, who, I'm sure, in turn would keep Bob [H. R.] Haldeman informed, of what activity the First Family was involved in. If there were any problems that were encountered, what should we do, or what can we do to overcome them? We've had our share of them.

TWG: I'm sure you did. Where did the ideas come from as to what should the First Lady do, what should Julie do, what should Ed do?

WRC: Well, the scheduling, the actual scheduling for Julie, Tricia, and Ed, came out of Dave [David N.] Parker's office. Dave had several people, several ladies working with him.

TWG: I talked with Jackie [Jacquelyn] Low.

WRC: Jackie Low and Barbara Franklin. Both of them worked on scheduling. Once they were able to work up a schedule proposal, Dave sent it on to Julie and Tricia direct. They, themselves, confirmed whether or not they would involve themselves in that particular type event. Now, it's a little different situation with Mrs. Nixon. I'd basically handle that one hundred percent,

working with Dave, as well as Connie [Constance C.] Stuart.

TWG: Was it a case of just sitting down and saying, "Let's see if we can't get the First Lady to California, to Florida, New York, Texas?"

WRC: There would be a number of inquiries, requests, coming in from all over the country, saying, "We'd like to have Julie participate in this. We would like to have Tricia participate in this." Or, "We would like to have the First Lady participate in this." Then it was up to us to decide which would be the best ones for Mrs. Nixon to participate in. We had, basically, ten key states that we had to concentrate on. With Mrs. Nixon, there again, when the request came in, it came to me, and I would discuss this with Dave Parker to see what the importance of that particular area is to us, or would be to us. If he felt it was important, then I contacted Mrs. Nixon direct and recommended or suggested to her why she should do it. Of course, she always made the decision,...

TWG: Hm hnn.

WRC: ...with an endorsement from me on it.

TWG: Let's say she approved it. Then there would be the paper work?

WRC: Well, once she approved it, then I would immediately pick an advance man, whether it be Dan Searby or Steve McCarthy, or sometimes, when they weren't available, we then immediately went to Mike Schrauth to get some of his advance men. Then I would make the initial contact from here to the key person in the state, to the organization that was looking for Mrs. Nixon to come, to our National Committeeman there, informing everyone.

Then we'd have a checklist here, which we went through, starting with the Secret Service, it must have been ten or twelve names, here in the White House, that we informed, that Mrs. Nixon, Tricia or Julie would be doing an event on such and such a date, at such and such a time, and what was involved. We would inform, let's say, Secret Service, and the speechwriters, Connie Stuart's office, Ron [Ronald L.] Ziegler's office, all these people, we would inform them including the gals, as well as Mrs. Nixon and Ed, were going to be making a trip.

TWG: Was this as much allow them to start doing whatever they had to do, in conjunction with this, or to solicit their advice and guidance on various aspects of it? A little bit of both, or was it as much a courtesy in some instances that they be notified?

WRC: Oh, it's both a courtesy and also to get them all geared up. They, the people that we informed--are you talking about the people within house?

TWG: Yes, this checklist.

WRC: Well, a lot of them, of course, are very much involved with the First Family. Secret Service, number one, of course, accompany the First Family when they travel, excluding Ed Cox. We would inform Ray [Raymond K.] Price's office, who was very much involved in the speechwriting. We would inform Brad Hainsworth, who was involved in the political background. We would give the First Family briefing papers. Connie Stuart's office, so that her people, in turn, would contact the press people locally. So we were all an integral part of the event. The people locally, of course, were very much involved in it as well.

TWG: There was never any possibility that these people on this checklist would say, "Hey, wait. This just won't do. We can't be sure that we can support this particular activity"? I guess I'm thinking now of the Secret Service. Would they ever come up and...?

WRC: Oh, yes. We've had several events--this mainly pertained to Mrs. Nixon. I had her scheduled in New York for a weekend, both in New Jersey and New York. In New Jersey she visited a seeing eye center, and then over to New York to.... She was invited to attend the American-Irish Historical Society, where she was the keynote speaker and received an award. In addition to that they had a--I don't know whether you're familiar with block parties, or celebrations,...

TWG: A neighborhood....

WRC: ...neighborhood block party, right. Well, they had one scheduled in downtown New York. It was an Italian group, very festive. I don't know what particular--whether it was St. Anthony's or one of the patron saints--but they invited her to attend. Of course my advance man went down, along with the Secret Service agent, and they found that the whole facility, the physical set up, was very awkward for her to get in and out of. I mean, she would actually be surrounded by literally thousands of people. The security factor was an important one there. My people came back to me, the agents came back and reported to me and said, "We advise against it." They advised against it, but, of course, I listened to my advance men--that's the purpose of the advance man, going up there to--sometimes the agents get a little

overprotective.

TWG: Yes, understandably so.

WRC: So, based on the recommendation or suggestion of my advance man, I called Mrs. Nixon and I said.... We actually didn't have her locked in, I mean we didn't have any press going out on it saying that she's going to participate. The people locally, of course, were disappointed,...

TWG: Oh, yeah, that's understandable.

WRC: ...but they understood the situation. There were cases of that sort where.... We also had, this also pertained to the convention down in Florida. As you know, the Doral [Hotel] was the Nixon headquarters. We flew down, I myself went down to look over the whole facilities, as to where we were going to house the First Family. In the Doral the facilities were just great, but Secret Service were very concerned about it because it only has one entrance and exit.

TWG: Oh my.

WRC: Of course we knew that there would be, they had some known intelligence that there would be some demonstrators, as there [were] in the Democratic Convention. So we sat down and discussed this in detail, and they strongly recommended that I not put the First Family in the Doral. I asked them to come up with some alternates at the same time, which we checked out. Well, the end result was I had the First Family staying at the Fontainebleu.

TWG: Yeah.

WRC: The facilities there were just great, they did a nice job for us.

Logistics were fine between the Doral and the other hotels.

TWG: That's just a short walk anyway between the two,...

WRC: Right, right.

TWG: ...in terms of distance.

WRC: Not that we, you know, we really, I don't think the First Family at all--we'd had the First Family in the Doral at all, because there wasn't any activity going on.

TWG: No, no official activity.

WRC: We had, I like to think, two or three events that were scheduled right in the Fontainebleu.

TWG: I remember seeing...

WRC: The GOP [Grand Old Party--i.e. Republicans]....

TWG: ...Tricia down there signing some book.

WRC: Right, right, we had her--The Living White House, I believe, she was signing. So everything, it worked out fine. I mean, the schedules worked out, we had them going every which way, and they were very busy. So, there again, the agents--we worked very closely with them, and if I feel that they are justified in asking us to change, then we'll do it. No problem.

TWG: At least during the campaign then, you were that person that, by and large, had the last say on the First Lady's movements? Of course she could veto you obviously,...

WRC: Yeah.

TWG: ...but in terms of everybody else....

WRC: As well as, I would say, the entire First Family because even though the girls were scheduled to go into an area, and, of course, I would be in constant communications with the advance

men on the scene, who would get back to me and say, "Well, this is bad, this is good. We should do this and do that." Then, of course, I would make a decision based on my conversation with the advance man. However, I would, many times, consult with a member of the First [Family], with Julie or Tricia, and say, "Well, we shouldn't do this because, or we should do it because." The same with Mrs. Nixon. On Mrs. Nixon's activity, I traveled with her on--we had a one week swing there around the U.S. When we went on that visit I accompanied Mrs. Nixon as so-called "Tour Director." I think it was important that a person like myself, or someone who was familiar with how Mrs. Nixon works, accompany her, because that was a very important swing. It was a big operation because it involved taking one of the President's planes, one of the large planes, where we carried thirty-five to forty press. It was a big movement. However, when Mrs. Nixon went on a, just a one day activity, I didn't get involved because I didn't think it was necessary. We had capable and qualified advance men to handle the situation. Although I did accompany her on the trip to Boston, because I was very concerned about that.

TWG: Hm hmm.

WRC: There was known intelligence of demonstrators, but it worked out fine. She was not aware of it until the next morning. [Laughter] But the major trip that we took, that one that [I] explained was about [a] five to seven thousand mile trip around the country, was an important trip because we had six key states. There was a lot of personnel involved in that. The press....

TWG: You had advance men in each state almost...

WRC: In each stop, right.

TWG: ...in each state that was involved.

WRC: Right. And I also, we had an advance man at each stop, and sometimes two or three, depending upon the event or events that we had. In addition to that, I had one advance man leapfrog before us, to make certain that.... He was on the ground and coordinated with me on the plane should there be any last minute changes. That in itself is really very interesting, and I'm happy to say it was a very successful trip. But we've encountered, you know, the major things--weather. There are changes in schedules and such, but the key thing, or the major one on that trip was, we were in Chicago and we were flying from Chicago to Billings, Montana. In Billings, Montana we were switching planes--we traveled in a "707", and of course in Billings we had to switch to two Convairs, because we were then leaving--we were just there for a change in planes--and then flying to Yellowstone [National Park], Madison Junction, Wyoming, which cannot take a "707", so we had to switch planes. So, that, as I say, was really very interesting because we have to make decisions right away, particularly when it comes to inclement weather. What are we going to do? You know, we're not prepared for this. But we still have enough time in the air, several hours, to make some drastic changes. We received word that we could not land in Yellowstone National Park because of weather. So, what do we do? Do we overnight in Billings, Montana, or do we overnight in Idaho Falls? Which would be the next stop after

our Yellowstone National Park. Plus the fact that we were detained on the ground in Chicago because of thunderstorms and lightening and what have you. But, someone up there must like us because everything worked out fine. We were able to arrive in Billings to forty, fifty mile an hour winds, and we had like five thousand on the field. We had a layover of thirty minutes to change planes, move the luggage or what have you. So we had an airport rally, and the people were just great. They came out to see Mrs. Nixon, meet and greet her. But, you can imagine.

TWG: Forty or fifty mile an hour winds! Oooh!

WRC: Yeah, and I don't know whether you're familiar with Billings, Montana,...

TWG: No, I've never been there.

WRC: ...but the airport is on a plateau, right on a peak. So, you've got these winds sweeping right across--and I felt really so sorry for those people [Laughter]. We had Indians out there with headress--they had to take it off [Laughter].

TWG: Aww. [Laughter]

WRC: Then switching over to,...

TWG: To Convairs?

WRC: ...to Convairs, and then another thirty-five, forty minute flight. When we arrived in Yellowstone the weather was absolutely beautiful.

TWG: Oh, that's good.

WRC: But, I mean, all these problems that we encounter. That's why it's important on a trip of that size that you have to have someone, I would call him a Tour Director, who's responsible to

coordinate with the advance man as to last minute decisions. We were confronted with not being able to land in Yellowstone, and then what are we going to do? Are we going to overnight in Billings, Montana? Or are we going to overnight in Idaho Falls? Now, the decision there was to overnight in Idaho Falls because, after our stop in Yellowstone, we were going to Idaho Falls to do an event. But then our advance man in Idaho Falls says, "We cannot take you here because they have a convention, and there isn't any room." [Laughter] So, those are the problems which made these four months very interesting.

TWG: Were there ever any instances where you had to make a radical change at the last moment?

WRC: With one of, I think either Julie or Tricia, I don't recall right now, where we had to land—because of inclement weather—they had to land at another airport. Which meant the driving time was longer. See, we always have to plan for that.

TWG: Hmm.

WRC: Particular during the last month of the campaign, when we're getting into the winter months. And, of course, on the East Coast, we had to abort, on one of Julie's events in New Hampshire, because of inclement weather. She was going up there to participate in a dinner and also support Senator Margaret Chase Smith. Because of low ceiling we just had to scrub the whole thing. But, it worked out fine because, when Julie came back here to the White House, I had her make a phone call. This was all set up while she was flying back. I was talking to the advance man and I said, "Arrange for a PA [public address] system

in the school,...

TWG: [Unintelligible].

WRC: ...wherever it was. Julie was able to then talk on the phone, and then the five or six hundred who were there attending.... You know, we can control a lot of things, but we can't control the weather. That, I think, was probably some of the major problems that we encountered. We were very fortunate that we didn't have any serious things. Everything went, I think, went very well then at the Republican Convention. We had them going every which way. That was really very exciting. I enjoyed working very much with them because it was close contact, this daily association with all three of them. I can't say Eddie because I had Allen working with him. You know, just going over the schedule and what was going to transpire. And, of course, they would always call, when they came back I always said to-- they immediately informed me if there was anything wrong. We encountered one or two problems, serious problems with Tricia, which was the microphone, or the sound system. See, the First Family does not get the same support, or does not get the support from WHCA [White House Communications Agency] as the President does. So, therefore, we have to rely on the local people to help set up the sound [system]. Well, what we did, in that case, was we contracted with a guy named Ed McDaniels [sp?], who worked with us in '68 during the campaign, and his basic responsibility was for the sound system. Once we had him on board, no problem.

TWG: Did he, by chance, make tape recordings of all of their, or a good portion of their remarks, or addresses, or what have you?

WRC: If he didn't, then usually the local people did. They have them....

TWG: Do you think those would be available for the President's library sometime then?

WRC: I don't see why not. Most of the time I would ask the advance man to have a tape made.

TWG: Would those have been brought back here [unintelligible]?

WRC: They usually are sent back here and I've seen several of them.

TWG: Good.

WRC: In fact, even the one up in Boston, I had one, on Mrs. Nixon, I had a video done of it, which is right in [unintelligible].

TWG: Oh, well we'd love to get our hands on that. It would be very helpful.

WRC: Yeah.

TWG: In those instances where any of these members of the First Family were traveling or attending an event that, let's say, a member of the administration was also participating in, how much coordination was there, let's say, for Clark MacGregor, or, I don't know.

WRC: Yeah, we worked, well, there are times when we had--well, go back to Yellowstone National Park. Rogers Morton, the Secretary of Interior, was involved in that rededication of Yellowstone National Park, the two hundredth anniversary. I coordinated with Rogers Morton's people, telling them what time we're arriving and working out a scenario with them, as to who should greet her, who should ride in the car. And, of course we always had, when it was a member of our administration, we naturally involved them as

much as we could. The same thing when the gals traveled around the country, there were times where they--also involved in the event would be a Cabinet officer, such as Secretary [John A.] Volpe. There was a dedication in Morgantown, West Virginia of the Rapid Transit System, where Volpe, naturally, would be included.

TWG: Right.

WRC: So, I'd coordinate with Secretary Volpe's people

TWG: Would that be a case of this idea of coming up, or you receiving an invitation for the First Lady or some member of the First Family to be present, and then you calling over to the Department of Transportation and asking, "Would the Secretary be available for such and such an event?"

WRC: Well usually it's reversed.

TWG: Oh, is it?

WRC: Yeah. Now, with the case we just mentioned, in Morgantown, West Virginia, because it is a Department of Transportation function....

TWG: Yeah, that's an experimental type of thing.

WRC: Right, right, one of those monorail trains. He would participate in it. Then, of course, they contact us then and ask us if a member of the First Family would be available to participate. So, it's always the reverse, rather than....

TWG: So these would just be one of many types of invitations that would be coming in here,...

WRC: Right, right.

TWG: ...that you would have to play and evaluate and make decisions

on.

WRC: Yes, yeah. The one event we had was right across the street here, at the Department of Treasury, where they were rededicating it, or turning it over to—it was a landmark, and they had a special event set up where Secretary [George P.] Shultz and Rogers Morton were both involved. They asked for a member of the First Family. I had Mrs. Nixon participate in that. Basically, when it's a government event, usually a member of the Cabinet would be there, invited, it comes under his jurisdiction. Then, of course, they contact us and say, "We'd like to have such and such."

TWG: You said you came over here in July, was it?

WRC: July ninth.

TWG: July ninth.

WRC: Yeah. And we've been working every day. [Laughter]

TWG: And night, undoubtedly.

WRC: Eight days a week. Right, and night too. See, there were times when, because of time factors, you know, on the West Coast, the Midwest, and changes, it was necessary for us to stay here. And, of course, you've got, we had three, basically, four people, four personalities involved, so we had the group out here going seven days a week, holidays included.

TWG: I'm trying to phrase a question that would give me some idea of how far in advance you were able to plan some of these events with some degree of certainty, that they were locked in.

WRC: Yeah.

TWG: I'm sure that this varied depending upon every event, there were

factors....

WRC: With Mrs. Nixon we were able to, we had sufficient time to plan the event and work out detailed scenarios on it, and have it back to her at least two days before the event, maybe three days. There were problems we encountered with Julie and Tricia, because of last minute proposals. Something came up which was really worthwhile for them to do, and, of course, the time it went over there, the time it got to them and they looked it over, and then called us, and say, question us, "Why should we do it?" etc., etc. That was a big problem. Then, of course, another serious problem was, when the President was on the road, there were a number of advance men out, and we really didn't have, well we encountered problems with trying to get advance men. It took a little time, because Mike would try to get in touch with them and, of course, the minute he called they weren't always...

TWG: No.

WRC: ...necessarily available. Then it took time for them to check their schedule over to see if they could do it, so that got to be one of the major problems. An event that was laid on us just a couple of days before, because it takes time to get the advance men out there and contacting all these people. Particularly, it created problems for us if we had to raise a crowd. Because we need time, getting flyers out and notifying the press, etc., etc. But if it's a dedication that had been scheduled for some time, there weren't that many problems with it. It wouldn't be as horrendous as it would be when we're trying to get a crowd.

TWG: You came over in July. Were you, let's say, during the month of

July sitting down and attempting to make some plans for what the First Family would be doing in October? Were you able to think that far in advance?

WRC: Yes, because a number of invitations have come in during the year, for a later date, for September and October. Particularly if they were events which had to do with a banquet, dinner, American Cancer Society, those type of events. Those things would be locked in, or they'd have to have sufficient notice on those. So, we knew several months in advance, but, at the same time, we wouldn't do anything about it. I mean, we would confirm it, saying that we would send a member of the First Family. That was usually applied to Mrs. Nixon, because Mrs. Nixon receives many invitations on functions of that sort, where they would like her to be the keynote speaker, or to be the recipient of the Cancer Society, or the Golden Slipper Club, which is one that comes to mind, in Philadelphia. Where they have to plan way in advance. Mrs. Nixon agreed to do that, you know, like four or five months before the event. But we really don't lock it in until a week to ten days before.

TWG: In some instances you would simply confirm that a member of the First Family would be there. It might be Julie, it might be Tricia, it might be the First Lady,...

WRC: Right.

TWG: ...depending on subsequent changes in scheduling and what have you.

WRC: Yeah. In July we were gearing up for the convention, and also getting organized in here, with personnel, phones, and office

space, etc.

TWG: All the logistics.

WRC: Yeah. Then, as I say, we were concentrating on the convention, on what their activity or activities would be at the convention. Because we had them going every which way, frankly, twenty-four hours a day.

TWG: Was there ever any attempt made to evaluate the success of any of these events, or all of them? You said, when they got back after an event, they would call you up and tell you what was good and what was bad about it.

WRC: Well, well, yeah the principal would call and comment, offer constructive criticism, but at the same time, my advance man would call, and then we would also get what we call a follow-up on the event: newspaper articles, what media coverage they had. So we had a report, a trip report submitted on every event by the advance man, it was a detailed report on that particular event and what media coverage it had had. With some recommendations or suggestions as to whether or not we should do something like this again. One thing I would like to include is.... Tricia or Julie, as well as Mrs. Nixon, we had a schedule proposal. And, of course, after they agreed to do it, then we sent the advance man out. Now, when the advance man gets there locally, I've also instructed him not only to lock us into that particular event, but if there is something else that's of interest, something else where we could get some value out of it, for him to ferret out not only this one or two things that may be involved in, but let's look for something in addition to....

TWG: It might give you more....

WRC: And if I see, if I felt that it had a lot of merit, then I locked them into that. Then inform the member of the First Family.

That always proved to be very successful. Of course, many times, when they concluded the event, on the way out to the airport, we would drop by the Committee to Reelect headquarters, which was more or less the standard thing. But if there were other events which I felt, or the advance man felt, [were] something that we should do, he contacted me and gave me the background on it, etc., etc. If we felt it was worthwhile, then we'd lock them into that as well. So it wouldn't just be the one or two events. Sometimes, it would be as many as four in that day.

TWG: That's a pretty tough schedule to follow. Oooh!

WRC: Yeah, yeah.

TWG: You said that your contacts out in the field were with the people right there on the scene, the local people there.

WRC: Right.

TWG: Did you have much contact with the people across the street at...

WRC: 1701 [Pennsylvania Avenue--i.e. the Committee to Reelect the President]?

TWG: Right, 1701.

WRC: Yes, yeah. I talked to, I believe it was Ken Smith or Ken [Kenneth] Rietz. When we had, oh yes, every time we had an event, I called a couple of those gentlemen over there to inform them. I think Stan [Stanton D.] Anderson, wasn't he over there too?

TWG: Stan Anderson was over there.

WRC: Stan, yeah. The purpose of that was, we tried to inform as many people as possible who were concerned in that area. With informing 1701, we were going by the Committee to Reelect, or we were going to some other event, and it was important to have our people there, our young YDP's in attendance.

TWG: Right.

WRC: So we informed, and in addition to informing by telephone, I always sent a note on it, just as a reminder. Saying that we have Tricia going to such and such a place, or Julie going to such and such a place. Because there are times when we encountered demonstrators, so to offset that we had our people there to counteract it.

TWG: I would have expected the Committee to be sending over recommendations to you also, so I would....

WRC: They had, yes. We worked, as I say, very closely with them. Because, at the time, they had people over there who were scheduling the surrogates.

TWG: Hmm.

WRC: Or working on, you know, scheduling some of the Senators, so we would coordinate, so that we would know who was in the area at the same time. We'd get their schedules and then we'd keep them appraised of what we were doing.

TWG: There wasn't any one individual over there though that you worked with...?

WRC: It's usually about two or three.

TWG: I see.

WRC: At times Clark MacGregor has called me and has asked for support

in certain areas. We have called him and told him various things. So, we, as you know, it had to be a team effort, particularly when it came to....

TWG: This is one of the things, Bill, where we've got our fingers crossed on. The amount of documentation of this campaign, is evidently considerable greater than any previous one. We're hoping that it will reflect the amount of coordination and the amount of team effort that went into this. I'm sure even an objective and a neutral observer of this whole campaign has to come away from this tremendously impressed with the organization. I mean, it really was fantastic.

WRC: Yeah, yeah.

TWG: If the records will document that....

WRC: Well, the papers that I have out here all packaged, ready to go to the Archives, confirm just what we're talking about.

TWG: Good.

WRC: Because, in it I have letters which have been sent over to the Committee to Reelect, informing them of the event or events that the First Family is participating in. That we need support from them, and vice versa. I've had many conversations with Senator [Robert J.] Dole too, on members of the First Family, having them participate in various functions or events. So, there was a close contact, communications with the Committee to Reelect.

TWG: And the [Republican] National Committee.

WRC: And the National Committee, right.

TWG: I'd forgotten even to raise that question with you.

WRC: Yeah, yeah.

TWG: I think too often the National Committee was more or less, at least by the media...

WRC: No....

TWG: ...you got the impression that they weren't as involved as, let's say, the Committee to Reelect.

WRC: Committee, right. Well, no, I worked very closely with Anne Armstrong and with Senator Dole, and Anne Armstrong's people, because there are many times that they contacted us and asked for a member of the First Family to participate in the event. In fact, you see that picture right up there on the wall with Mrs. Nixon holding the football?

TWG: Oh, yes.

WRC: That was that kick-off of that bus tour that they did around the country.

TWG: Yeah, there's Senator Dole there, I can see him.

WRC: Senator Dole right there. I really, I was very impressed with the First Family on how active and how much they wanted to help out as much as they can. All four of them really did a superb job. I enjoyed working with--my relationship with Mrs. Nixon goes back even further; it was....

TWG: That was another question I was going to ask you. I think I've seen your name on a number of the things over there in the pre-Presidential papers, but I....

WRC: Well, I won't go into background as far as--I used to do some advance work, but how I think this all came about was Mrs. Nixon, as you know, went to Africa. Well, I ran that trip to Africa.

TWG: Oh you did?

WRC: Yeah. I was asked by the President to handle that. I'm happy to say it went very well. [Unintelligible] we had a--Mrs. Nixon was just great. I'd been working with her for a number of years, but that was actually the first opportunity that I've had to work with her exclusively, or work for her exclusively. What we did there was, when I was asked to handle it, I preadvanced it. I took a team of people over on, like December eighth [1971], I think. We went to the three countries, Liberia, Ghana and the Ivory Coast. Of course, in Liberia, Liberia was strictly a ceremonial function where President [William R.] Tolbert invited President Nixon to attend the Inauguration, but unfortunately, he was not able to make it. So, he sent his best representative, the First Lady. The activities there were pretty much ceremonial, so I didn't have much of a problem trying to include other events. I felt that we shouldn't take away from the ceremonies. However, in Ghana and the Ivory Coast, it was a little different. We were there at the invitaiton of the Prime Minister in Ghana and the President in the Ivory Coast. So, in addition to the various meeting and state dinners, I then had to find events for Mrs. Nixon to do. When I came back I sat down with her and went over in detail, and explained to her why we should do this and why we should do that. And she, of course, at the same time, made some recommendations and suggestions. As you know, the end result was really very successful. Now, as far as China, I didn't go to China. Now, the reason for that is, we do not have diplomatic relations with China, so, therefore, no one from Protocol went. However, I did go to Moscow and was asked to

handle Mrs. Nixon's schedule, and there again had to ferret out as to what Mrs. Nixon would do. Of course a lot of the attention was on her because the President, as you know, was in substantive meetings all day long with these Soviet leaders. So we had to find things for Mrs. Nixon to do. I think what we came up with were good events. So that's....

TWG: So you've been involved with the First Family for [unintelligible]....

WRC: I have been involved with Mrs. Nixon.

TWG: All right, Mrs. Nixon.

WRC: And the President. As far as Julie and Tricia, no, this is really my first.... I have been involved with the President, mainly the President, a few years back, doing some advance work for him. But I have never really had anything to do with Mrs. Nixon solely, or with Julie or Tricia solely. So this was a new experience, and very rewarding. As you see, the sign. [Laughter]

TWG: Are you, by the way, going to take this sign?

WRC: Back? Yeah, I think we want to take it. Well, see, that's been cut off because we started it--we couldn't go that high.

TWG: Oh, for previous months?

WRC: Right.

TWG: Each month you put up a new one?

WRC: A new calendar, and it gave me great pleasure, Terry, at night, to take the red chalk and just put an "X" on it. [Laughter] In other words,...

TWG: I wonder....

WRC: ...saying that only sixty five or sixty three more days to go.

TWG: Throughout the campaign everyone was saying, "Four more years," and you were saying, "Oh, the X number more days."

WRC: Only sixty-seven more days. [Laughter]

TWG: I was going to say, that would make a unique exhibit. If you were just going to throw it in the wastebasket I'd be glad to take it and put it in the files.

WRC: I think we--you see the legend up on top--we have it,...

TWG: Right.

WRC: ...the red for Mrs. Nixon,...

TWG: Hm hmm.

WRC: ...the green for Tricia, and the blue for Julie. Of course we did have a separate one for Ed. But I like that victory at the end.

TWG: Let's see. We've been bouncing around on some of these questions. I think we've pretty well hit most of them. Oh, in the event, and I shouldn't say, "in the event"--when we want to get back in touch with you, perhaps five, perhaps ten years from now, as ludicrous as that may sound, nevertheless, do you have any sort of a mailing address in mind now that might still be valid in the future?

WRC: Well, we're residing in Potomac, Maryland now, but only the good Lord knows where we're going to be [Laughter] ten years from now. If I'm alive.... I come from New York and Long Island, and it's really hard to say as to....

TWG: Are there any professional organizations that you're a member of, that you'll maintain contact with, or your university alumni association?

WRC: Seton Hall University.

TWG: Seton Hall.

WRC: Yeah. Seton Hall University might keep in touch with, or they keep in touch with me when they want some money. [Laughter]

TWG: Four or five times a year if they're a normal university.

WRC: Basically, it would be through the schools, because, you know, who knows where we're going to be five, ten years from now.

TWG: That's been the answer a lot of people have given me. Their alumni association or their university.

WRC: I would say basically that. I belong to various clubs and organizations and credit cards and such, but I think, probably, through school is where you basically can find me.

TWG: I think we also assume that a lot of the people that have worked close to the President in this administration will continue at least to send him Christmas cards every year hereafter,...

WRC: Yeah.

TWG: ...and we probably will get that material, or that correspondence at the library. We'll probably keep track of people that way, return addresses. Were there any magazine or newspaper articles, Bill, that discussed this role that you had to any degree at all? That impressed you, that we could use?

WRC: There were, yes, there have been some press articles that came out. They were rather brief comments that some of the women of the press commented on, when I first came on board, somewhere. [Laughter]

TWG: Well, I'm asking, the one that you were impressed with in terms of their reliability and their accuracy and their completeness.

Did they do justice to you, to the operation, or were they terribly misleading, either because they were too brief or they didn't have enough information?

WRC: No, I think what they said was pretty accurate. Because, well, whenever the press called, in the beginning, when word got out that I had come over here, they immediately got on the telephone to find out what the situation was. Was Connie Stuart being ousted? I said, "No, in no way. Connie Stuart is staying on as Staff Director for Mrs. Nixon and I was just here for four months to assist in scheduling and...." As you can see, it was quite a big operation. I personally don't think, and I'm sure Connie would agree, that the staff over there was big enough to handle this type of operation.

TWG: Her staff is overworked, as is everybody else's, I think. So, I'm sure she looked with favor on more assistance.

WRC: Of course a number of the press women who travelled around, or press people who travelled around with Mrs. Nixon, I was somewhat familiar with because some of them had been on the Africa trip and the Moscow trip. So, they knew of my activities, my role, and it was in no way usurping Connie Stuart's job. As I mentioned to all of them, and to Connie, that we were all looking forward to November seventh, when we were going to win the election. And then I would go back to my job in Protocol, which I look forward to going back.

TWG: I'm sure that's a fascinating operation.

WRC: It is, it is. Particularly my department, the visit section, which entails the, you know, visits of chiefs of state and heads

of government. It has to, just by the nature of it. The people that you meet makes it interesting.

TWG: I wish that I was charged with the responsibility for talking to you about that job over there too, because I'd love to hear you talk about it. But darn it, I'd be taking too much of your time and I wouldn't be doing the job I was sent down here for, so I'll forego that. Maybe some other point.

WRC: [I'd] be happy to.

TWG: Would you have a biographical sketch that would, perhaps, fill in, at least a little bit, your background up at...?

WRC: I think I do, I think it's over at State Department, yeah.

TWG: Well, when we get this whole thing done and sent over to you,...

WRC: Yeah, we can attach,...

TWG: ...maybe you could attach that when it comes back.

WRC: ...we can attach it and send it back.

TWG: Well that's....

WRC: It's basically--you mean, you're talking about my background,...

TWG: Right, right.

WRC: ...school and...

TWG: Right, things like that.

WRC: ...employment, and service, etc. and all.

TWG: Hm hmm.

WRC: I had one at CBS, I used to be with CBS before I came down. I know they did one up there, and when I came down to Protocol they had some kind of a release on it.

TWG: Say, that raises another point. ABC did a convention factbook for the convention, that we got a copy of. Did CBS do anything

like that that we might, somehow or other, get a copy of for the President's library? Undoubtedly there're probably "X" number of them around the complex.

WRC: I remember....

TWG: I don't know, I've never seen any of them.

WRC: I know they--this is, you mean, after the fact, or before?

TWG: No, before the fact.

WRC: Yeah, because, when I was with them, we used to put out a book, a very attractive book, which well, it would be Campaign '68 or Campaign '72, or whatever it was. I can inquire on that and let you know.

TWG: From the point of view of a historical [unintelligible].

WRC: Right. I know I used to get a copy of it before--with pictures and stories.

TWG: Hm hmm, right.

WRC: Yes, they do. Now, whether or not they did one, I'm sure they did, because they....

TWG: I think it would be interesting to see how each one of the....

WRC: Yeah, I'll talk to--I still have my contacts up there and I'll.... [Laughter] You never can tell. [Laughter] I'll contact, get a call and find out if there is [one] available and if there is, I'll have them send it to me, and then when you send this...

TWG: Right.

WRC: ...epistle over. [Laughter] It's been fascinating. The thing I don't like is, like now, just sitting here and doing absolutely--well, what we're doing now is just cleaning up the files and what

have you, but I just....

TWG: I'm sure that it's quite a change from the hectic pace you've been maintaining.

WRC: It is, it is. I'm sure, while you've been sitting here for this half hour, forty-five minutes, the phone might have rung like six times or so.

TWG: Believe me, I would never have come down here during the campaign and expected to get any time at all with you.

WRC: Notice that?

TWG: Ohhh. Is that an Ollie [Oliver R.] Atkins [photograph]?

WRC: That's an Ollie Atkins, no, well, that's one of Ollie Atkins's people. It's--who came with us on that?

TWG: [Robert L.] Knudsen?

WRC: Well, [Jack] Kightlinger.

TWG: Kightlinger?

WRC: Kightlinger. That was very interesting. That was in Liberia, and what happened there was--the way I tried to (quote) "stage it", was, when Mrs. Nixon came up to the top, of course I immediately disappeared inside. She would then turn around and then wave to the crowd. But what was happening there, was that the chief of protocol from Liberia started to come up with her. I was waving my hands for him to go back. See, it wasn't right. I just wanted her to be up there by herself and do the waving good bye.

TWG: You really ought to put a caption under that. Although it doesn't need one.

WRC: Yeah. That captions.... In fact, down at the convention (this

has nothing to do with...), down at the convention, see, I travelled with Mrs. Nixon throughout that whole convention. Everywhere she went, I always rode in the lead car. She rode, of course, in her car. The purpose of that is, so that the minute we arrived, I would be out first so that I was able to introduce her to whatever dignitary was there to greet her at the event. Nine times out of ten the car that I rode in was a police car. It was always a police car, but the one that they used most of the time was, I don't know whether you've seen it, where it has a cage in the back.

TWG: Oh no.

WRC: You know, when they pick up some delinquent around town...

TWG: Right, right, right.

WRC: ...or such, and of course it doesn't have any doorknob or any window knob inside. It just has the cage, which separates the driver from the passenger. So, of course, I rode in this car, and what happened was, that Jack Kightlinger, along with Mrs. Nixon, staged something.

TWG: [Laughter] I can imagine.

WRC: Jack took a picture of.... I remember one day coming down, Mrs. Nixon and I were coming down to go to an event, and I put her in her car and I started to walk to the police car. Of course, immediately, there were two policemen standing there, and they both grabbed me and opened up the door and ushered me in. Which I thought was rather unusual, because no one had ever opened up the door before. Then I got in, and then Jack immediately was there, Kightlinger was there, and he was snapping pictures like

crazy. [Laughter] It didn't mean a, you know, I didn't pay any attention to it. So, right after, sometime during the campaign, I received two pictures from Mrs. Nixon. One was autographed to me, "To the cage man of the convention." And there I was....

[Laughter] In fact, the picture that Jack happened to take was me leaning forward, with my hands on the cage,...

TWG: Oh no!

WRC: ...talking to the policemen. She wrote a nice little caption underneath it, "To the cage man of the convention."

TWG: Kightlinger [unintelligible].

WRC: I have them framed, and I'm real proud of them.

TWG: I'll bet he's laughing about that to this day.

WRC: Some of them are just unbelievable.

TWG: Well, we get the contact prints from Ollie's shop. I'll have to look through them to see if I can find those.

WRC: That one's a classic. One is with two policemen holding me, troopers holding me by the arm, and he opens up the door. And I thought, "This is kind of strange". [Laughter] There were some like that. Another interesting one was, in fact it's being framed right now, this is while I'm back at my other job at Protocol. You see, my job over there, in handling the visits, of course I accompany the so-called "official party" over to-- there's a state dinner that's held the first night. My job and responsibility there is to, in addition to escorting the principals over, I also do the introductions to the President of all the guests. This was after the dinner, and we were separated in the Blue Room, Green Room and Red Room. This took place in

the Green Room then, and I was introducing--this is now, the people had already met, these dignataries had met the President, but after the dinner we went into these rooms for coffee and cigars. The President would always like to have certain people brought over so he could have a few minutes of discussion with them. When you're going through a receiving line there is not much time for anything, except a handshake. One gentleman that I brought over, he was the ambassador to Jamaica or to one of the [islands], Barba[dos], I don't remember which one it was. Here I was just introducing the gentleman to the President, and I had just made a move of some kind, and I put my hand to my head to scratch it, but I had my hand like this. Ollie caught the picture, [Laughter] and it's like I'm shooting myself in the head. You know, "Who needs all this?" [Laughter] In fact, I'm real proud of that one.

TWG: Oh my.

WRC: But there're so many of them that....

TWG: Well, I'm glad you explained that. At least now, in the future, when somebody goes through there, if they spot that, I'll be able to explain to them, you know, what the circumstances are.

WRC: Oh....

TWG: All these things will end up in the President's library.

WRC: Oh, I see, yeah.

TWG: And, oh my.

WRC: Yeah, I'm standing--the President and the ambassador are talking and I had just finished doing the introductions. Maybe I had an itch or something on my head, and I just put my hand up, and the

angle of it looked like I had a gun to my head. [Laughter] Like, "Who needs all this?" Well, I tell you, it would be interesting to, I suppose, to write a book or put some of these anecdotes down that have happened. Because they're absolutely hilarious.

TWG: Well, I would assume that, unless you had the personality that you evidently do, certainly a lighthearted approach, nevertheless serious, but lighthearted, a person would go out of his mind doing the type of work you do.

WRC: Oh, yeah. I'll never forget that--if you have another minute--this was in Africa, in the Ivory Coast. This is really a nightmare of an advance man. We were, no, no, it wasn't in Africa, it was on the trip to Moscow and to Poland and to Iran. In Iran, while the President was meeting with the Shah [Reza Pahlavi], I had Mrs. Nixon doing two or three events with the Empress [Farah Diba Pahlavi]. The scenario called for us to leave the palace where President and Mrs. Nixon were staying, and we were to go to the palace where the Empress was. Where Mrs. Nixon would have twenty minutes of tea. Then, after the tea, the Empress would accompany Mrs. Nixon to these two events. One was a school and the other was an orphanage. Remember, as I mentioned to you earlier, that I always ride in the lead car, so that I'm there on the site the minute she gets out. So I was in the lead car and, of course, right behind us was what we call a military car, or really security in this case.

TWG: That's what I was going to say, security.

WRC: I was like the pilot car let's say, and then this was the lead car. Then right behind that was the principal's car, Mrs. Nixon,

and then following that, of course, we have another follow up car, and then the press and what have you. It was a long motorcade--press bus. So, of course, my mistake there was not having a member of the embassy in the car with me, who spoke the language. I mean, the driver I had did speak English, but it was, you know,...

TWG: Broken?

WRC: ...broken, like mine. [Laughter] So, here we are now, heading toward the palace, to meet the Empress. I'm having conversation with my driver and we're at a nice pace. Just beautiful area in Iran. I'm checking back each time, looking, you know, we're only half a block or a block away. I'm checking back, and all of a sudden, as we're coming up this road, a policeman jumps behind, where my car and the lead car. And he waves the whole motorcade up the hill. Well, at that time, I'm saying to the guy, "What's...?" [Laughter] You have no idea. I was so.... "What's happening! Turn around and get back there!" Well, what happened was, this individual didn't realize (the policeman) that we were heading to the palace to have the tea with the Empress. The place that he had directed the motorcade to was the orphanage, which we were supposed to go, but not until another half hour later.

TWG: Ohhh.

WRC: So now this whole motorcade now goes up this very winding road. I'm dying a thousand deaths at this time. I'm telling this guy as best I can, "Turn around and get up there!" [Laughter] So finally we get up there and, of course, the motorcade had just

had time—we were able to weave in and out. Mrs. Nixon's car arrives right at the site...

TWG: Of the orphanage.

WRC: ...of the orphanage. Of course now these people are all up in arms because we were not due there for another thirty, forty minutes, and they're not ready for us yet. [Laughter] I jump out and I say, "This is the wrong place!" [Laughter] Now, of course, the bus is already on its way up there, behind the motorcade. Of course the press had already gotten out. You have never seen anything like it.

TWG: What did you do?

WRC: Well, I said—Mrs. Nixon even got out—I said, "Mrs. Nixon, I'm sorry, but we are [in] the wrong place. Someone gave us a wrong turn." So, she got back in and then we all, they all had to back down this winding road. Well, it made us, I think, five minutes late for the, no more than that, to arrive at the Empress's. Of course I was there three minutes ahead of time again, and I apologized to her, saying that we had an unfortunate situation where we were led the wrong way. I don't think that policeman's alive today. [Laughter] I tell you, it was really, it was just—that was one of the—well, where an advance man can get a heart attack.

TWG: Oh, I'll bet. You can sit back and laugh at it now, but I can imagine what you were going through at the time.

WRC: Oh, at the time I was just.... And, of course, you've got the hot weather and it's just.... Well, Mrs. Nixon understands things like that, that there are problems.

TWG: I'm sure she takes those in stride.

WRC: Yeah, oh sure. That was really the only one there that....

TWG: Oh, yes. You've got a flair for telling them. I'm sure that if you wrote all these anecdotes down, boy you'd have a great book.

WRC: [Laughter].

TWG: Wasn't there, some advance man did something for, was it one of [John V.] Lindsay's advance men wrote a book?

WRC: No, it was a guy named [Jerry] Bruno, [John F.] Kennedy's advance man. Called the....

TWG: Well, if he could sell that, I'm sure that you could sell your anecdotes.

WRC: Yeah. Well, I think the funny ones are--well, he had a couple of funny ones in there too.

TWG: Well, I didn't read the book.

WRC: Where, I think, he locked Kennedy in a shack because somebody took the cars away and.... [Laughter]

TWG: Well, I respect you people who take on these responsibilities, but I don't think I've got the stamina or--you'd go out of your mind!

WRC: Well, I'm sure you have. It's just a matter of knowing what you're doing, like in any position.

TWG: Did you do some of the advance for the '68 campaign?

WRC: Yeah, yeah.

TWG: Was that more or less...?

WRC: I was on leave of absence from CBS...

TWG: All right.

WRC: ...for about three months and worked in doing advance for....

TWG: But your contact went back before that with the Nixons, didn't it?

WRC: 1964. Or, actually, '64 was the first time I got involved. 1960, my brother-in-law was one of President Nixon's advance....

TWG: Now who was that?

WRC: A guy named Jim Murphy. He had a handful then, in 1960, when he was Vice President. Jim Murphy was one who travelled six months or so and advanced. But it wasn't until '64, then Jim had asked me if I would be interested. That's when President Nixon was going around the country, the Honorable Richard M. Nixon was going around the country supporting Barry Goldwater. Then I did some—my brother-in-law asked me, took me out and said, "This is what we do." I was in a position at CBS where I was able to do it. They encouraged getting involved in community activities and politics, etc. But it wasn't really until '66 that I travelled extensively with Mr. Nixon, who was then supporting, who was going out and supporting the Congressional candidates.

TWG: Congressional. Did you have much contact with John Davies during this?

WRC: Oh yes, sure, yeah.

TWG: I know I talked to John when he left over there in the Visitor's Office, and he filled me in a little bit on his role with Mr. Nixon during the sixties. I gathered that he was one of those people that Mr. Nixon called on occasionally, if not frequently, to help him schedule an advance, and whatever [unintelligible].

WRC: Yeah, well, John was more of a, I would say, more of an aide. Like Dwight Chapin did that too for several years. But I was

more involved in advancing. And then, as I say, took a leave of absence. Really it was very interesting because, in '68 I also handled the election night at the Waldorf [Hotel]. But I lived there about five weeks, making preparations for it. Then, also, after the nomination in Florida, I handled the visit out to San Diego. San Diego was where all the strategy was--do you recall the President went to...? This was now in 1968, when he won the nomination, and he went out to San Diego, to Mission Bay, to the Bahia [Motel],...

TWG: Yeah, I do vaguely remember.

WRC: ...where we stayed for eight days. This is where all, basically, all the strategy was done. [Unintelligible]. That was really very interesting because I was involved in that.

TWG: Well, I hope your memory remains sharp because I know we'll want to get back and talk to you about those events.

WRC: That was....

TWG: Because I'll bet you any amount of money there's very little documentation on some of that.

WRC: Yeah.

TWG: I don't remember seeing much of them over in pre-Presidential papers, but it may be that some of the other people involved....

WRC: I was really very very, I was slighted then, at that time, because I went down to Florida to participate, to be involved and work during the convention. I had never been to a convention before. I got down there, and I was like down two days and I got one of these "Mission Impossible" phone calls to get up here right [unintelligible] was then in New York--to come up. Sat

down and talked to the people. They said, "We want you to go out to San Diego," and that meant I'd miss the convention. Needless to say, I was quite miffed. Well, they asked me to do it, so I went out. Now this is all going on the premise that Mister Nixon was going to win the nomination. So I went out there and did my, what we call "survey", came back and reported to the people and made my recommendations and suggestions. Then went back out again and stayed there two weeks before they came. So I missed the convention, but, of course, I did watch it out there. In fact I enjoyed it very much out there and we got to know some people out there. In fact the place we stayed at was the Bahia Motel, and the people who owned it, Bill and Ann Evans [sp?], are absolutely charming people who've become very close friends of ours. Even there I can go into so many interesting stories [Laughter] which are just--I mean humorous ones--things that have happened in making preparations for Mr. Nixon's visit. But I've enjoyed it.

TWG: Have you attempted to keep any sort of a diary or a log of some of these activities, Bill? I just die a thousand deaths sitting here thinking, "Gee whiz, all this stuff..."

WRC: No I haven't, but...

TWG: ...that would flesh out the man, the people, the organization...."

WRC: ...I don't think, they have been such...

TWG: Only you would understand them?

WRC: ...interesting, great experiences to me that I don't think I would ever forget them. Some of the advance trips that I have

made, places like Minot, North Dakota. [Laughter]

TWG: I can spell it, I can spell it.

WRC: Why not Minot? No I haven't, but there are things that have left an impression...

TWG: Good.

WRC: ...on me that I think I would never forget. I enjoy relating back to them too, time and time again.

TWG: I'm wasting all your time here, and I apologize for it.

WRC: No.

TWG: I'm going to turn this thing off now, otherwise I'd....

[End of interview]

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conducted by Terry W. Good
in Room 350 of the Old Executive Office Building
on November 29, 1972

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