

June 18, 1991 and August 14, 1991
Interview conducted by Raymond Boryczka
Judge Joseph B. Sullivan at his office in Detroit, Michigan

RB: Judge Sullivan, could we begin with a little about your background, the date and place of your birth, family background, your education?

JS: I suppose first I should say that I'm best identified as Joseph B. Sullivan. It so happens I have a brother-in law who is Judge Joseph A. Sullivan. So if you just say Judge Sullivan.... Well, I was born on May 30, 1922 here in Detroit. My father was also a Joseph Sullivan with A. middle initial and he was with the Wabash Railroad. My mother was Winifred Bruin from Canada. I went to St. Theresa school in Detroit for twelve years and then to the University of Detroit. Before I finished at the University of Detroit, I served in the military for three years, came back and finished at night school; married, and we had a child. So, I had been working with first General Mills with then with a publishing firm in the happy-go-lucky days of a traveling salesman. I covered Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, and frequently New York and Chicago for the company.

RB: Was that while you were in college or after college?

JS: I was in law school. I traveled with two suitcases, one with my clothes and the other with a set of law books. I finally graduated from the University of Detroit.

RB: Was this in the 1930's?

JS: Oh no, 30's. My goodness no. This was now 1957 when I graduated from law school. I graduated from undergrad in 1947 and didn't start law school until the end of 1952. So, I graduated in 1957. I was admitted to the bar in 1958 and began to practice with my brother-in-law, Bob Sullivan. Jerry and I had known each other from U of D, first in undergrad to a limited extent but then got to know each other much better in law school. But our contacts always were mainly political. When I would get a phone call from Jerry, I would know something political was in the air because otherwise we didn't have many occasions to get together. And this one particular day in 1961 he called me and asked me to join him for a drink at the Caucus Club at about 5:00, he suggested. We met down there and I cannot guess with whom he might have discussed this previously, but he asked me what I thought about him

running for mayor of Detroit. I showed my political astuteness by saying he couldn't possibly beat Louie Mariani but I was sure that he could be nominated. We had some idea of who had announced that they might be running, and I said I'm sure we could beat any of those. You'd be in perfect position to run for prosecutor, Congress or what have you. He said, "No, I'm not interested in prosecutor or Congress. I'm interested in being mayor and I think I can get elected as mayor." So I said, "Well I still have my doubts, but it sounds like a lot of fun to try so let's go ahead and give it a go." So he asked me if I would manage the campaign, not the primary. He said, "you stick with your law practice till we get through the primary." He said, "I agree with you that we can win the primary without too much difficulty. But after that its going to be a tough fight against the incumbent mayor." So we agreed on that basis. I floated around the primary campaign. I didn't spend the time on it like I did the general campaign. One of the things that I did do because he had suggested to me that there were two basic reasons why he felt that he could defeat Miriani. One was the restlessness in the black community concerning Marianni, particularly because of the police relations; and the other one was a little more amorphic but it was the concept that even those that supported Miriani really didn't like him that well. He said, "Miriani is having a fund raiser in a few days over at Cobo Hall and," he said, "why don't you go to it (it was only a \$5 deal) and see what kind of reaction you get from the people in attendance." So I did go over and it was to me quite interesting to see Miriani enter the hall. Cobo Hall, of course, is a large hall and it was packed with people; even at \$5.00 a head, it was a significant turn out. But he came in riding on a cart and he circled the hall on the cart, just kind of waving to people. I would hear some rumbling as the cart would go by: "You would think that he would get off the cart, walk around and shake hands with the people. Who does he think he is?"-- that sort of thing. Now these were the people who I presumed were his supporters but obviously they were expressing a certain lack of warmth for the man. When I talked to Jerry, which may have been a shallow observation, but I said, "I think you're right. At that party I didn't hear anybody with a good word about him except the people who were speaking on the program extoling his virtues. Other than that, there seemed to be a lot of resentment toward him. So I think there is a great deal of hostility out there and maybe it can well be capitalized." Shortly thereafter and still before the general, as I recall, or it may have been after the primary, very close to the primary, he and I met with a man named Horace

Sheffield. Horace is a giant of a man, terrific, terrific fellow; really dynamic. He at this lunch the three of us had pledged to help Jerry if Jerry could sell himself to the TULC, the Trade Union Leadership Council. And shortly after the primary was over and now I began to work full-time, pretty much full-time, I was still trying to earn a living in my law practice too, as was he, we went to TULC and Jerry spoke to the membership there following which they agreed to endorse him. I don't know if you ever knew Jerry Cavanagh. Well, he was a man of tremendous charm and a beautiful speaker. He had a great wit. A reporter from Newsweek once said to me, "I have met many politicians and every president going back for some years and he said John Kennedy and Jerry Cavanagh are the two most charismatic, charming politicians that I have ever met." So you have an idea of what kind of person Jerry was in his public image. Another illustration just to point that out, at the end of his second term Jerry and met a lot of hostility in Detroit particularly in the Polish community and he was invited to speak at the Romanowski Post to a meeting of Polish individuals, in the southwest part of the city. I remember as we walked in the hall that night, there was just mumbling, grumbling, and kind of snide remarks made off to the side.

RB: Was this hostility because of the racial situation in Detroit at the time?

JS: Oh I think it was many things; the tax situation, his stand on open housing, the Polish community didn't feel he had appointed enough poles, various things like that. When you run into hostility, there are many reasons for hostility. Anyway, there was a dinner after which he spoke. He spoke for only about ten minutes to this rather hostile crowd and received a standing ovation as he walked out. He had a wonderful way of winning people over.

RB: I wonder if we could back up just a bit, and perhaps fill in some gaps in the early period before Mr. Cavanagh decided to run for mayor. You mentioned that you first became acquainted with Mr. Cavanagh in law school.

JS: I met him in undergrad at U of D and the both of us had been active in the Democratic Party.

RB: The Young Democrats? Did you notice any particular traits about him that struck you immediately? You were just talking about his charisma which perhaps is something that, at least to the public, emerged when he was Mayor of Detroit. Did you notice anything like that in his personality early on?

JS: At that point, no because we didn't see that much of each other. He was active in an organization called the Young Democrats, I in another organization called the Wayne County Democratic Club. We didn't overlap but some people said to me you should get to meet Jerry Cavanaugh. One day both of us happened to pass in the halls of U of D and stopped and spoke, sort of introduced ourselves, had a few words, and went on our way. I had no real immediate reaction but others had told me that this was someone to watch.

RB: As you got to know him in these early years, did he seem to have a defineable, personal or political philosophy at that point in his life as a student?

JS: Political philosophy may be too broad a question but he certainly was one who understood civil rights even in those days. I can illustrate with a point there. He was ahead of me in law school but we were there at the same time and he was head of the legal fraternity. There was a black student whose name was Smith and he was proposed as a member of the fraternity. Kind of surprisingly, when you think back, particularly at a place like the University of Detroit there was some hostility; not an awful lot, but it only took one person to keep you from joining and Jerry really lead a campaign to bring this individual in. I didn't know him as well as Jerry did but he seemed like a fine man to me and we both thought he ought to get in and I worked with Jerry attempted to bring him in. We did not succeed. He was kept out but it was kind of a bitter circumstance. That was my first real activity involved with Jerry.

RB: Some of the hallmarks of Mr. Cavanagh's career, you've alluded to it several times, are the good relations that he maintained first of all with the black community and secondly that he seemed to have some very strong feelings on the issues of civil rights. As a white Irish man coming from the city of Detroit, how do you explain that? He is one of the pioneers of the civil rights movement of that era. Was there something in his family background do you think, or in his training, or religious background that generated that? Would you have any idea? Did he ever reflect on that in conversations you may have had?

JS: Oh yes, that's something we did discuss and it's a strange sort of a situation. Jerry's background and mine would be essentially the same. He went to St. Cecilia's school and I went to St. Theresa's. One was close to the other. St. Theresa's was located at Grand River and Quincy. A mile down the way at Livernois was St. Cecilia's. So many of the people who later became involved in Jerry's campaign were young men and women who had gone to St. Cecilia's

primarily and had known Jerry from there. So they were a typical Irish neighborhood crowd, who were not particularly concerned about civil rights or rights of any minority group. Nor would Jerry's family background, any more than my own, express any particular concern in there and yet he had a great concern that came from nowhere about the rights of all minorities, the rights of blacks, the rights of women and just the innate sense of justice. This isn't a very good answer and yet it's a very difficult question for me to answer. Because I can remember discussions we had concerning housing problems and he knew for example that it was going to hurt him badly politically to come out in support of housing for poor people. And yet he felt it was absolutely something that had to be done even if he had to take a beating because of it. So he wasn't afraid to do things that were unpopular because he felt that they were right. I suppose part of this was his religious background. We shared a common thing there and certainly had been taught that sort of thing in schools, but they taught a lot of things in school that you brush aside. I think much of it might even have come as a surprise to those who knew him very well. Because a lot of people, those very, very close personally to Jerry thought that he was crazy to be running for mayor, saying that he didn't have a chance and why was he wasting everyone's time in doing this sort of thing. There were people very close to Jerry who didn't even bother coming down on election night because they said that the whole thing was a farce and he had no chance of winning anyway. And these people certainly were people who loved him and thought well of him and I'm certain influenced him in his life generally and yet I think they never really knew some of the depths that were there.

RB: Do you think that the Jesuits at U of D, for example, who are noted for their strong sense of social justice had any sort of an impact on his sensitivity to the civil right issue?

JS: Oh, I think so. Regardless that others might dispute that, yes. I think you can't go through a Jesuit university without getting some of that feeling. Admittedly at the time we were both at the University of Detroit alot of the faculty were not Jesuit's but there still were many there and you had them in many of your classes and particularly in sociology, religion and even in my science class. I don't if he had the same science class but I know he had the same sociology classes and their philosophy courses. You were given a foundation in that sort of thing, and maybe in other things too. I remember a Free Press writer trying to find out from me who Jerry was going to appoint as police commissioner. Jerry had said this is something they

should not know. But the Free Press knew that somebody was under consideration and the editors at the Free Press would get together with this reporter, who was Jack Casey, and they would frame a question for Jack or Earl Doudy of the News and they would come over and try the question on me. Or if Jerry were available they would, of course, try it on him, but they could never get the answer. I think it was Casey or it might have been Doudy from the News, but I think it was Casey from the Free Press who said it's your Jesuit training -- you don't lie to us but you never tell us the story we want to know.

RB: Do you know of any particular individuals, events, or ideas that influenced Mr. Cavanagh in his pre-public years?

JS: Yes. Jim Friel, who was director of State Fair, and Jerry and Mary Helen Martin, later Cavanagh, both were at U of D and both worked at, I believe she did too, at the State Fair. Yes, she was secretary to Mr. Friel as I recall. And he was a man always interested in politics and I'm sure he was one of those who was first urging Jerry to run for mayor and had faith in him. In fact, he managed the primary campaign. I think that's the only person I can name who had a great influence on Jerry.

RB: Did Mr. Friel serve as something of a mentor then, early on to Mr. Cavanagh.

JS: Yes, yes he did.

RB: I'm not really familiar with Mr. Friel. Could you fill us in on anything you might know about him, his background?

JS: Well, other than he had been active in the Democratic party for years and, I say, had been appointed by the Governor -- which governor I can't say -- to manage the State Fair. That always goes to one who is among the political faithful.

RB: That was a political plum in those days?

JS: Yes, right. He had a general interest in things political and liked to sit around and talk politics and Jerry had a great interest in politics. Jerry was fascinated with politics. He could name every candidate for vice-president, I think, in the history of the country and the year itself. He had a magnificent memory, great retentive powers. He could recall all of this. So he found Mr. Friel with his political background very interesting. Mr. Friel is deceased now, but they were very close during Jerry's younger years particularly.

RB: In 1955 Mr. Cavanagh joined the law firm with Fred Romanoff and Joseph Sullivan.

Now is that Joseph A. Sullivan or Joseph B. Sullivan?

JS: It's neither.

RB: It's neither?

JS: No. It was Leo Sullivan.

RB: Leo Sullivan. Then the record is incorrect?

JS: Correct.

RB: According to the record, Joseph Sullivan was the senior partner.

JS: No.

RB: It was Leo Sullivan?

JS: Yes.

RB: Okay. Any relationship to yourself?

JS: No.

RB: Alright, so there no connection professionally at that point?

JS: No. We weren't even in the same building.

RB: Okay, we've cleared the record on that one. Mr. Romanoff was a partner in that law firm though, and he did join Mr. Cavanagh's staff after the election as his executive secretary I believe?

JS: Sometime later, I was the first executive secretary.

RB: Okay.

JS: I left after about six months to run for prosecuting attorney; unsuccessfully I might add in the Democratic primary. Just to fill in that time, let's see, Freddy didn't take my place, Ray Girarden took my place. And Ray was there for more than a year. I can't recall just how long, probably more than a couple of years. Then Ray left to become police commissioner and Freddy Romanoff came at that time to become executive secretary.

RB: But Mr. Romanoff had been one of Mr. Cavanagh's confidant's very early on? They had been very close?

JS: They had been. Freddy was a great guy and one who would really stand up on issues. Freddy was not one to quibble about where he stood on anything at all. Freddy was a wonderful man and still is; well he's retired. He wasn't outspoken, he just let you know where he stood and let you know where he stands in fullness and in fairness. Freddy was a good friend.

RB: Did he have any particular areas of expertise that Mr. Cavanagh leaned on him for?

JS: Just as an attorney. And Freddy was a good lawyer, later became general counsel for the Michigan Bank.

RB: He's retired now?

JS: He has retired, yes.

RB: Do you know if he's still in the Detroit area.

JS: Yes, he's still in the Detroit area. I talked to him not too long ago.

RB: He's another individual we'd surely like to talk to at some point for an interview. Let's move on to the 1961 mayoral campaign and you've discussed why Mr. Cavanagh decided he was going to run. I wonder if we could pursue for a bit the issue of where Mr. Cavanagh received his support, first in the primary and then in the general election. You mentioned Horace Sheffield and the TULC. What sort of assistance in particular could Mr. Sheffield and the TULC provide to the campaign?

JS: That assistance primarily came during the general election. As I said, it looked to us from the lineup of candidates and just general help and a lot of help from U of D and St. Cecilia people who knew Jerry from those days pretty much made up the primary campaign with some fund raising and some radio and television ads. It was our theory that we should announce big, act like we had money or something and then we would see what would happen. So we bought time for a fifteen-minute television spot. I don't think you could even get that sort of thing today. Anyway, we bought a fifteen-minute television spot and Jerry started out on that, and made a good opening sort of a thing. After that, there wasn't too much we could do because we didn't have any money. I can't speak on too much of that because I was flirting around the edge of it but was never fully involved in it. When the general election came, we first got a speech writer named Tommy McIntyre who Jimmy Friel had contacted. Tommy McIntyre had worked for Senator Potter among others and had been an old Times reporter and he was to do the PR and the speech writing. Next thing to do was raise some money and I can say right now that through the entire campaign we didn't raise more than \$25,000.

RB: This is in the general campaign?

JS: Yes, this is in the general campaign. But that was enough.

RB: In those days?

JS: Yes, in those days. One reason it was enough was because Marianni spent almost nothing.

RB: Why do you suppose that was?

JS: Because he didn't think young upstart Cavanaugh who had never held any public office had any chance at all. He didn't make too many public appearances, it wasn't until near the end of the campaign that Marianni really begin to show some concern and not an awful lot even then. I just don't think that he or his people ever conceived that Jerry could possibly win. I had told you that when Jerry first broached this to me that I didn't see that we could win it but that it would be fun trying. I later became fully convinced that we were going to win and in fact bet about \$100.00 even money -- I didn't even ask for odds -- that we would win. I might add that the fellow who I bet never paid off.

RB: How did you become so convinced that you were going to win? What changed your mind?

JS: We couldn't afford any public opinion polls obviously, but one thing that both he and I did that began to really convince me because of one thing or another -- we had to use cabs quite frequently then for transportation, and we would play the same dummy role whenever we get a new cab, It would be something like this. I'm from out of town but I noticed that you have an election going on here. Who do you think is going to win? The cab driver would inevitably say something like, "Well, Miriani is going to win it, but I'm going to vote for the Cahalan guy," or some variation. It was never Cavanaugh; it was always something like that. And I think there was just a lot of that in town. Plus we were certainly getting the support that Horace Sheffield had drummed up. I say we because I think of it in terms of the fact that we were working together. If I can deviate for a moment, after the election was over various people took credit for Jerry having won. Jerry won that election because Jerry Cavanaugh was Jerry Cavanaugh. He had the feeling for it, he had the ability, he had the ideas, he had the charisma and wherever he went he won people to him. So we were able to buy television spots to a limited extent; they were very inexpensive in those days. We were able to buy radio spots and Tommy would write the speech because they wouldn't let you on unless you had a speech in advance. It might be that you didn't use the speech that you had turned in, but at least you had to have turned in a speech. So my task would be to rewrite McIntyre's speeches, which is a

story in itself, because Tommy was a very, very opinionated person and didn't want anybody touching anything he wrote. And what he wrote was very good except he always vented his spleen at his personal enemies within the speech and no speech was written without an attack on Charlie Edgecomb. As Jerry tried to instruct Tommy and as I did too, Jerry was not running against Charlie Edgecomb.

RB: Could you describe who Charlie Edgecomb was?

JS: Yes, Charlie Edgecomb was county auditor and a power in county politics, but had absolutely nothing to do with any of this. But the speech would contain such things as "that rat Edgecomb." I'm not exaggerating when I say there would be lines like that in there. So it was my task to edit them out, and as a result Tommy was always furious with me and every time I would have to go fight with him to get the speech out of his hands.

RB: Was it you who coined the phrase the "nickles in novenas campaign?"

JS: No. I'm not the author of it. I can't say who was.

RB: Is that an accurate description?

JS: Yes, yes.

RB: \$25,000 for the entire campaign. Were these all small donations; were there any large financial backers to the campaign?

JS: Off hand the biggest contribution I can recall, I may be wrong in this, was \$500.00. Now there could have been a \$1,000, I'm sure there was nothing bigger than \$1,000.00, but I can't even recall a \$1,000 contribution. We put on parties primarily as fund-raisers and they would be \$25.00 parties most of them. I don't even think we had a \$50.00 fund-raiser. Jimmy Friel and a man named Ron Sealy put on a small fund-raiser, very personal sort of a fund-raiser, of some people they knew in politics and in business who contributed. I don't know how much each but out of that meeting I think we had three or four thousand dollars or something like that which was the biggest boost we got.

RB: So, from a financial standpoint would you characterize this as a grassroots campaign?

JS: Oh, very definitely.

RB: You mentioned the neighbors in Mr. Cavanaugh's old neighborhood supporting him, I assume working as volunteers?

JS: Yes, everybody worked as a volunteer. Now the people who really, I feel, were the ones who were instrumental in Jerry's victory in addition to Jerry himself was the black community as organized by Horace Sheffield and TULC and the firefighters of Detroit who were very upset with Miriani. A guy name Robert Tye was president of the fire-fighters union at that time and he became very active as did all of the officers and many of the firemen. They ran a headquarters for Jerry on the east side. We were able to rent an office on the west side and probably got it for free, I can't recall now, and that was staffed by Patty Knox, among others, personal friends like John Healy, Bob Knox, ran that one. The fire-fighters ran the one on the east. We had one downtown where I was myself and then TULC which was doing a tremendous job in organizing support in the black community. They had a campaign called 4+1 or 5+1. I can't remember the exact figure now but the "one" was Jerry. The "four" or "five" were council candidates that they were supporting.

RB: Why specifically were the firefighters upset with Miriani?

JS: I think one of the reasons was the pay level between themselves and the police department. For a long time their pay was always the same. Whatever you paid the police you paid the firemen, and Miriani tried to upset that tradition.

RB: Do you have any idea why Miriani did such a thing?

JS: No, I can't say.

RB: What about the policeman's organizations. What was there stand in the campaign? Did they endorse anybody?

JS: Whatever support they gave was for Miriani. There were a series of two or three meetings where Jerry and I met with the heads of the police union. They were always rather secretive meetings because they didn't want it even out that they were even considering Jerry. But they did not. I don't say that they gave Miriani a lot of support either, but they didn't give Jerry any real support.

RB: Is it not true that in that campaign that the UAW supported Miriani?

JS: Yes

RB: Did that not present problems for Horace Sheffield?

JS: Yes, it did and Horace paid the penalty for it later on. When the UAW decided to elect a black vice-president, Horace was the obvious first choice. But because he had gone

against the grain on the mayor's race they elected to name instead Nelson Jack Edwards. Who by the way, was also a very fine individual who had helped us also, but was not in the forefront of the entire thing as Horace Sheffield had been.

RB: You mentioned that early in the campaign, yourself, Mr. Cavanagh, and Mr. Sheffield had a lunch. I assume that during that meeting Mr. Cavanagh and yourself asked Mr. Sheffield for his assistance and support in the campaign. Was there any commitment on the part of Mr. Cavanaugh at that point to pursue civil rights issues if he did win the election?

JS: No, nor was he asked to. As I remember the conversation and I was just an observer there; when I say we had lunch, Jerry and Horace discussed the possibilities and I pretty much sat in on it. But one thing Horace said that I do recall, he said, "I have checked you with other people and," he said, "I am aware that you stood up for Mr. Smith and joining the fraternity at the University of Detroit. So we know what your attitude is and we feel we can support you."

RB: Where did organization a such as the local NAACP, the Urban League, and some of the other civil rights groups stand?

JS: Officially I don't they took any stand. I don't recall anything that involved any of them. I would say that Jerry had almost full support from the black community. I can't recall what the election figures were now, but certainly he got the bulk of the vote of the black community. Interestingly enough about the UAW, on election night I had been covering a poll myself for awhile and Jerry was going driving around stopping at some polls and he came to one where I was at. So we went on together and, I think it was the next one we pulled up at, there was a UAW fellow circulating literature and of course we had a sign on the car. We pulled up and he showed it to us and he said, "Give me that Cavanagh literature will you?" He took the Miriani stuff and threw it in the trash barrel. I think there was a lot of that feeling among the rank and file of the UAW.

RB: Were there any other key advisors in that '61 campaign that we haven't mentioned?

JS: I don't know if I should even go into this. But there was an article in the Free Press which frankly always amazed me. The article was the men behind Cavanagh. It said the three people who had elected Cavanagh were Jimmy Friel, Tommy McIntyre and Lou Gordon. Lou Gordon had absolutely nothing to do with the campaign.

RB: Wasn't he the TV personality?

JS: Yes, he was. Jimmy Friel had called Gordon and asked him to support Jerry, but he said he couldn't do it because he didn't think Jerry could win. But he made some nice comments about Jerry and at Jimmy Friel's request agreed to let Jerry see what he had in the way of files on Miriani. But after Jerry visited and looked at the files he came back and said to me, "there is nothing there that we can use." But election night at the headquarters, we had a suite at the hotel, the old Fort Shelby. People flocked up there, of course, one of whom was Lou Gordon. Everybody, as they came there, I said to everyone who came in, "we couldn't have won without you." It was true of the whole 50,000 or whatever in the hotel. And Lou Gordon used that and told the reporters that as the proof that he was one of the instrumental people in the campaign was that I had said they couldn't have won without him. Other than that, he didn't have a thing to do with the campaign. But he became very angry with Jerry because Jerry refused to accept his advice on all appointments and whatever, and then launched into an attack on Jerry that continued through the eight years. He just attacked him viciously. I could go on for a long time on that one. Jimmy Friel had been very active in Jerry's campaign. Tommy McIntyre, who is now deceased as is Lou Gordon as is Jimmy Friel, had certainly been helpful in the campaign. But the important people in that campaign really were Jerry Cavanagh, Horace Sheffield and Bob Tighe. Those were the three people who won that campaign. Tighe later was appointed. Horace Sheffield would never accept an appointment.

RB: He would not accept an appointment?

JS: He would not accept an appointment. He could have had any one of a dozen appointments.

RB: Why do you think that was?

JS: He just always felt that he should work outside. We've remained very close. He was an advisor, consultant, was active in the next campaign. He was always active in Jerry's campaign, but he would not accept any appointments. Nor from anybody else, he just would not take political appointments. Bob Tighe ultimately did take an appointment with Jerry as secretary of the Fire Commission which was, in one sense unfortunate. The fire-fighters never forgive one of their people for taking an appointment. But Bob was an outstanding guy, smart, energetic, very capable, and deserved an appointment. And even he wouldn't take it for the first four years but he finally did take it in the second. Great guy, he now lives in Florida. But I think I can

speaking without fear of successful contradictions, as they say, that those are the three people that won that election. I couldn't help but resent the claim of a man like Lou Gordon that he was one of the people that helped win the election because Jerry didn't acknowledge all of his tremendous help and he turned against him.

RB: During an earlier conversation you related to me the truth of the matter involving the "Phooie on Louie" buttons. Would you care to relate that for the record?

JS: Yes. In Dr. Fine's book, I think in the opening page he talks about the deluge of "Phooie on Louie" buttons which were circulated. The fact of that story, as I recall it, was that a man under the name of Nails Murphy, I forget what his real first name was, but Nails was an attorney who operated mainly in Recorder's Court and Traffic Court. Very dapper individual and he came over to the headquarters one day carrying with him a box of buttons which he had purchased himself and showed me the buttons proudly saying "Phooie on Louie". As I recall, it was a blue button with white print. I took one look at it and thought I'll get rid of these without letting them get out because that would have... Maybe negative campaigning would work to but we didn't believe in that sort of thing. So when Jerry came into that court as I showed it to him and he agreed with me that we ought to deep six these as fast as we could. So I preserved one for my collection of campaign buttons that I have at home and gave the box to his sister who was there working in headquarters with us. As I recall, she was going home and I said, "you take these and don't let them get out of your hands. They are not to be distributed. Don't give anybody any of these." Why I didn't take them home myself, I can't tell you. Anyway, to the best of my knowledge they never left that box. I had the one which I put in my button collection and not long ago looking at my button collection found that it is missing. So I don't know who has my "Phooie on Louie" button. To the best of my knowledge that's the only one that got out of that box.

RB: That's interesting. I assume that when the results came in, Mr. Cavanagh was elated but not surprised at the outcome.

JS: Well, let me tell you the story of that election night which probably was one of the most fascinating evenings of my life. If I may, let me tell you two stories about election night. On election night Jerry and Mary Helen had gone out to dinner and I went to the suite that we had arranged for at the hotel. We had put a special phone in there. I remember taping red tape

around the handle of it and there was another phone, but no one was to use that red phone because Freddy Romanoff and Jerry's brother, now Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Michael Cavanagh, were over at the City County Building. They were going to get the results and phone me as soon as we had something. Polls closed at 8:00 and, if my memory is accurate, it was 8:25 when Freddy called and said that the City Clerk had already announced that Cavanagh was the winner. The 25 key precincts showed that Cavanagh was winning everywhere in the city. Those 25 were used as test precincts and those 25 showed Jerry winning in all of them. Jerry hadn't come down yet; there were only a couple of other people in the room. I remember Tommy McIntyre being one, and Tommy said to us, "Now don't anybody make any statements to the press." He said, "they are going to try to sucker you fellows into some kind of statement, so let me do all the talking to the press." And he did. Much to Jerry's annoyance, he told the press how he had engineered this entire thing and he won the election almost single-handedly. Well, anyway the funny thing of that night to me was Vince Brennan, the judge who just died, a wonderful man. Vince and I at Jerry's request had gone over to see Jerry Moore who was managing the Fort Shelby Hotel a couple of weeks before the election night to arrange for a victory celebration. Jerry sat there and listened to us for a while and he finally said coming to reality, "how much money have you fellows got?" At that point we didn't have anything. He was very nice about it and he said, "well, instead of the ballroom" which we asked for, "supposing I give you a nice party room up on the 21st floor. You can have that and instead of the open bar let's just limit it to beer." Well, we argued with him as best we could from a point of not having any money. But we finally got him to agree to let us have the ballroom anyway because we said we're gonna have enough people that we'll need the ballroom. We just can't get them into that room up there which might hold 60 people, but we'll go along with the beer. So he said, "I'll go out on a limb for the ballroom and the beer." Well, election night came, we get the report that Jerry is winning, and all of a sudden people start streaming into the ballroom and streaming along with them I see employees of the Fort Shelby Hotel carrying cases of scotch, rye, what have you. Everything opens up, suddenly we have a full-line bar.

RB: But Mr. Cavanagh himself surely was not surprised.

JS: He was not. He came down to the hotel as calm as ever. He never showed any real surprise at the whole thing. He assumed that he was going to win, he was confident of his win.

Of course he was a cool person under any circumstances. He never, never allowed himself to be flustered or appear flustered.

RB: Let's talk a bit about Mr. Cavanagh's years in office. What do you think his perception of the condition of the City of Detroit was when he took office in 1962?

JS: Well, the city was fortunately in better shape financially in all than it is today, but even then it had its difficulty and, as you know, he came out for an increase in taxes. He may have been the only political figure who ever campaigned, among other things, for an increase in taxes during his initial campaign. I remember getting a call from somebody who was shocked that he was going to come out for an increase in taxes. I said, "but he talked that all through the campaign." He said, "yes, but I didn't believe him." With the increase in taxes, there was sufficient money to meet the needs of the city. As I mentioned, he believed that the city should campaign for open housing throughout the neighborhoods, fairness in race relations. He strengthened the committee that was involved in race relations in the city and he worked very hard, but not with total success, in the police department to try to get them to recruit more blacks. I can recall him insisting with the then chief of police, a fellow named Lou Router, that the next class would have to be 50% black. If I remember rightly, the conversation that occurred a little while later Mr. Router proudly announced that he had gotten 25% black in that class. Jerry was very upset about this and he said, "I insisted that it be 50% black." Because they were already so far behind the race relationship to the number of blacks to white officers. And it never did achieve the level that he wanted all the time he was mayor. He spoke frequently with various chiefs of police and police commissioner George Edwards, who was certainly race relations conscious, about getting a better representation in the black community on the police department. But there was a lot of great resistance in the police department at that time. Finally things have changed and for the better, but Jerry was never entirely able to get his philosophy into the department. He certainly did improve race relations during his time as mayor.

RB: Was racism a major problem in the ranks of the Detroit Police Department in 1962? Is that a fair statement?

JS: Well, I think there was a perception that it was. As you know, they had the police officers who would act as decoys, who walked down the street carrying usually a gasoline can, so it look like they had run out of gas and were on there way to the car.

RB: That was the program that was put in place by Mr. Miriani late in his administration.

JS: Right, and that was what caused tremendous resentment. Well, there was some resentment on the part of the department that Jerry cut that out. But it was effective and a lot of people were arrested as a result of this. It got a lot of armed robbers off the street but, on the other hand, it was so resented in the black community that the real effect of it was very negative. There was a tremendous amount of resentment as a result of that. It's like trolling down the streets in the black community trying to lure people out to commit a crime so that you could arrest them.

RB: Was there any sense of a brewing adversarial relationship between the Detroit Police and the black community in 1962, that emotions were really getting away?

JS: No, I don't think so. I think with Jerry's election in 1961 and he started serving in 1962 and race relations right away started to improve because Jerry been elected with the help of the black community and many blacks were appointed to positions in government. I speak sitting here as a white man who never could totally share the experience of the black man and woman, but it appeared to us at least, and I hope we weren't fooling ourselves -- when I say "us" I mean the general run of people who were in Jerry's administration -- that relationships were much better. All of that was to end unfortunately with the riots in 1967. Many people said, concerning the riot, that Detroit would be the one place where it wouldn't happen because the race relations were so good in Detroit and that black people had a real opportunity in Detroit. Of course this was not necessarily how the black community felt. This was the white observation in the community. But Jerry interestingly enough, contrary to what I have heard and read on the part of many, said to me one day he said, "you know, we could have a riot in this city." He was talking about running for the Senate. He said, "if I'm going to run, I should run before any of that happens, because once we have a riot then my image would not be the same and I couldn't successfully run."

RB: What caused him to make that comment?

JS: I probably can't give you a real answer to that question. We were sitting there in his office that particular day talking about the Senate campaign and should he or should he not run. I was one who strongly opposed him running and felt that he couldn't carry the black community

and that was his response to my argument.

RB: Why didn't you think he could carry the black community?

JS: Well, I was not in the administration at that time. As I had mentioned, I had left. I had run for prosecutor unsuccessfully and had gone to the attorney general's office for a year and a half and then ran again for prosecutor and again had lost. It took me two terms to learn that I couldn't win that race. I ran very well but they kept running a fellow named John L. Sullivan. Without John L. in there, I could have won easily. One day Jerry who was head of both the National League of Cities and the US Conference of Mayors was going to the two conferences, one being in San Francisco and one in Miami. He asked me if I would take soundings as to what I thought his chances would be, and would meet him in Washington as he was going through from one to the other and we would discuss this thing. He later told the same story to a WJR reporter one day. So I'm not reaching any confidence in telling it. So when I came down to Washington, I had talked to a lot of people in the black community primarily. I said to him when we met in Washington, "you can't carry the black community because they owe this to Williams and they will support G. Mennen Williams even against you. Therefore, if you can't carry the black community, you can't carry Detroit. If you can't carry Detroit, you can't carry Wayne County. If you can't carry Wayne County, you can't carry the State of Michigan. You just can't win." And I thought I had convinced him with that sort of comment, but he didn't say definitely. He said, "well, we'll talk about it more. Well the next day, he went on to Miami and I came back to Detroit. We met again on it on a couple of occasions and discussed it. Finally it came to the point that he said, "alright tomorrow, this is a Friday, I will let you know what I'm going to do." And Bob Toey and Jack Casey and I -- Jack was now with the administration as was with Bob who was head of DSR at that point -- met at the mayor's office and I bet them each \$5.00 that Jerry was going to say no he would not run for the Senate. At a little after nine o'clock we went down to his office and he said, "I'm going to announce two weeks from today that I'm a candidate for the Senate." He said, "I'm doing it in Escanaba." I remember I was thunderstruck. I was thunderstruck that he decided to run but more so when he said he was going to announce it in Escanaba. I said, "Escanaba doesn't have any television. You can't announce it in Escanaba."

RB: Why in Escanaba?

JS: Somebody had thought that this would be a great thing to get the outstate vote. Go up there to the Upper Peninsula where comparatively speaking there were few votes. Well, he didn't announce in Escanaba, he announced it in Detroit. Anyway there we were and off and running in the Senate campaign. But I just didn't feel there was ever a chance of winning. We had taken a poll which cost, at that point, \$7,000 which then was fairly expensive poll. Then it showed that Williams would win and we didn't change a thing in the whole campaign. As I mentioned, Jerry told that story but the part that got him in was this. I told you we were going to meet Saturday morning and he would announce his decision. Friday night he had gone to an exercise places out on Eight Mile Road and ran into Doc Greene who was a News reporter. Now the AFL-CIO at that time and the person by the name of Gus Scholle, Gus was head of the AFL-CIO, he made a statement that was carried on the front page of the papers: "If Jerry Cavanagh runs for mayor, we're going to take him to the woodshed and give him a good spanking." Well, when Jerry ran into Doc Greene, Doc said, "I've written a column about how you're ducking out of the Senate race because of what Gus Scholle has said, "Jerry said to him as Jerry related it to me, " I told him don't write that column, don't run that column, because I'm running." So apparently on that challenge, it swung his decision to run.

RB: Gus Scholle's challenge?

JS: Yeah, now Gus Scholle later on spent all kinds of time denying that he had ever in any way provoked Cavanagh, but he had.

RB: Do you think the story is true, then, that Scholle had actually said that?

JS: Oh yeah, he actually said it. I don't think there is any question about that. I don't think Scholle ever denied saying that. He just denied that he had provoked Cavanagh to the point of getting him into the race. Not that ordinarily Scholle would care one way or another if he provoked Jerry into getting into the race. But it made for a very strong primary. Jerry was anti-Vietnam. It was another one of his principled positions, although at that time it wasn't everybody who was willing to come out against Vietnam. Jerry was very, very close to President Johnson and had been invited time and again to the White House. Johnson frequently would call Jerry and when Jerry came out and said that we should be out of Vietnam, Johnson just cut him off. As far as he was concerned, there would be no more help for Detroit. And so unlike the mayor's campaign, a lot of money came into that campaign.

RB: So it was going to be an expensive campaign?

JS: But not nearly enough to pay for it. When we ended we were about \$200,000 in debt. I was back in the administration then and I was given the thankless job of raising the \$200,000 to pay off the balance of the deficit. Finally after three years we succeeded in doing it.

RB: Some columnists at the time also implied that one of the reasons why Mr. Cavanagh failed in that primary was that his relations with the state Democratic Party were not as good as they could've been.

JS: That's true. I don't know that that's why he lost, but it's true that the relationship was never that good. Jerry was just not given to playing the glad hander with the Democratic Party. He was a loyal Democrat and he supported the party's basic stands. Always financially had his people contribute to help at the Jeff-Jack dinner and things like that. But he was not about to march to the orders that came out of the Democratic Party headquarters. And Neil Stabler who was then chairman of the Democratic Party, particularly, I think was offended. This unfortunately provoked a very bad relationship to the point that, I think, Neil made some very strong, unfair, and inaccurate accusations against Jerry.

RB: Do you think it was a personal, personality clash?

JS: Well, I think it became more than a personality clash. Neil bitterly resented Jerry having run. G. Mennen Williams unfortunately suffered a physical setback during the campaign. He lost his gallbladder or something like that and physically it was an effort for Williams to make that campaign. He won it and probably would've won it easily. I don't think that there was any question about he was going to win right from the opening gun unfortunately, but Jerry by the fact that he decided to run may have earned Neil Stabler's undying enmity.

RB: The other major power in the state Democratic Party at that time obviously was the UAW. What was their position?

JS: Yes! Well, their position was pretty much pro-Williams, as most organizations in the party were pro-Williams. I don't know that the Democratic Party, at that point... They realized that Jerry was a very fine political person and one that they did not want to alienate either. So I think they were basically for Williams, but they weren't trying to alienate Jerry either by their stands. My mother-in-law lived with us and she was a great admirer of Williams. Somehow or another he found out about this. So early one Sunday morning, I was just getting out of bed

having been out working the hustings the night before and a car pulled up in front of the house and G. Mennen Williams stepped out of the car and came to the front door. He said, "I'm here to meet the supporter I have in this house." Unfortunately my mother-in-law was at mass so she didn't...

RB: What was your reaction?

JS: Dumbfounded.

RB: What could you say? He got you on the spot on that one.

JS: It showed a certain wry sense of humor.

RB: What were relations like between Mr. Cavanagh and Walter Reuther?

JS: Well, I think they became rather good after Jerry became mayor. I think the UAW was obviously impressed with his performance as a mayor. I can remember, I was party to other conversations. I remember being in the office in different occasions when Walter Reuther would call. Jerry might be calling him. I know they consulted, talked. I was never present when they met so I never sat in on anything. But I know we got a lot of support in those days from the UAW. And even after the senatorial campaign, after the riots, Walter Reuther called -- and I was present when that call came in -- and volunteered the help of the UAW in cleaning up the city. Nothing really came of it, but at least he was calling to volunteer.

RB: It seemed that Mr. Reuther had a personal interest in many of the same areas that were high on Mr. Cavanagh's list of priorities: the model city program, urban renewal, public housing, civil rights obviously. It seems like there are some rather distinct parallels in terms of their public policy positions and, their opposition to the Vietnam War.

JS: Yeah, I think it took a little while for them to warm up at all because the UAW was strongly supporting Miriani and then see Jerry win without any help from them sort of set them back politically in the city. It took them a little while to adjust to that. But the relationship with Jerry and the union in the end, I think, was very good. Al Barber of the AFL-CIO was a very strong supporter at times of Jerry's.

RB: Was Mr. Cavanagh the sort of political leader who would carry a grudge, in the sense of you didn't support me in the campaign, you supported my opponents, so now there is nothing I can do for you in my administration?

JS: No. Exactly the opposite. When Jerry won, he had almost no support from the

business community. But the reality, whoever is the mayor immediately at least gets the offer of support from that same business community. If I may illustrate, I said the campaign cost us \$25,000 and we ended up with a deficit. I thought within a matter of a few days, I found we had another \$25,000 deficit because people who done things for free and now that we won sent a bill for the services or printers who volunteered to print material. When Jerry won, I found a bill on my desk to pay for their printing supplies and things like that. But we accepted them under Jerry's orders. I say "we" because Ollie Nelson who was one Jerry's law partners and myself, on the day after the election were approached by people who I didn't even know offering sums of money to take care of any deficit we had. Regardless of what it is, we'll take care of your deficit. But Jerry had said the window closes at 8:00, the polls close at 8:00, the window closes at 8:00. Accept nothing after 8 o'clock. So none of these people were allowed to make any contributions the next day. However, the Chamber of Commerce had a party always the last week of December and that was sponsored by and for the business community. Jerry was invited and received a very gracious warm welcome from those people and was invited to participate in many of the civic affairs and he said we have to work with these people and I think he became very friendly with many of them. Henry Ford, for example, and the Fords had supported Miriani, but Henry Ford became a supporter of Jerry's as did Mrs. Ford. I mean, Mrs. Edsel Ford, she was very active in community affairs and she and Henry Ford gave significant contributions to Jerry later on for re-election and even in the Senate race. So, his relationship with the business community, I think, became very warm. Certainly with Chrysler officials too because he wanted to involve the Chrysler officials particularly in city government in that they had the largest payroll of people in Detroit. He went out to see them and he took me along on this particular day. We met with the top people at Chrysler and he asked them to designate some of their people who would serve on committees and even wanted someone to take a full-time job as head of the DSR. Chrysler didn't want to part with anybody on a full-time basis, but they did work very closely with us on many other things.

RB: What about the General Motors people?

JS: During my time, I can't recall any particular development of relations with General Motors. But again I was gone after six months and then I came back for the last three years. I came back from the Senate campaign to the end.

RB: Every office holder, I suppose to a certain extent, has his own style of running his administration, the kind of structure that he sets up in his offices, the chain of command, and that sort of thing. Could you speak a little about that? Did any reorganization take place in the way in which Mr. Cavanagh ran City Hall?

JS: One of the things that amused me is that every candidate for mayor that I ever heard talks about how he's going to open up City Hall. Jerry was the last of the mayors that I knew that ran an open City Hall. Jerry's office door was always open and newspaper reporters particularly were free to walk in any time and ask any questions. Not all appointees felt that free because Jerry didn't want to be interrupted by everybody with every problem, so he wanted the appointees generally to set up a time so that they could fit in on a schedule rather than just casual walk ins. But strangers would walk in, anybody really that wanted to walk in could walk in. There were only a few of us who were allowed access to the mayor's office at any time: Freddy Romanoff, Bob Toey, myself were always allowed access. But other than that it was pretty much that you had to get an appointment through the secretary to see him. Reorganize, no I think the department system was set up. He changed people who ran them but the basic structure of the city government remained the same. But he had a very hands-on attitude toward running the city. I don't mean as Jimmy Carter, I believe who had scheduled who could play at the tennis court. But he wanted to be very much involved in the work of each department and he wanted each department head to keep him fully informed and did both by memo and in person.

RB: Was Mr. Cavanagh good at delegating power?

JS: Yes. He would not hesitate to delegate to those like Freddy Romanoff, Bob Toey whom he had great trust in, to delegate great authority to them.

RB: You've mentioned on several occasions now Mr. Cavanagh's relationships with various members of the media, the print media, the television media. Was Mr. Cavanagh part of the new generation of politicians who were very sensitive to the media and went out of there way to maintain good relations with them?

JS: Yes. Many people at that time compared Jerry with John Kennedy. There was a great something that you saw in each of them. They were both very interesting people, very witty, excellent speakers, and both were very cognizant of their relations with the press and always had

excellent relations with the press. As I mentioned, any newspaper, television man or woman could walk in at any time to his office and he always had a good reparté for them. He could come up with something for them instantly and he wasn't afraid to answer questions.

RB: Do you think this was a conscious effort on Mr. Cavanagh's part to emulate President Kennedy or was this part of Mr. Cavanagh's personality?

JS: He was that sort of a person. He was just a very open, warm person, and it wasn't only with the media. There was a man who ran a bar somewhere in the area of the City County Building and he would stop to give Jerry advice. He'd just walk in and just start telling Jerry what he had to do about this or about that. Jerry would listen in the same kind of way he would with anyone else. He was just a very open sort of a person. Not everybody would do that, I assure you, but this fellow felt somehow or another, I don't know which bar he ran but I don't think I was ever in his bar. He was just very easy going with people.

RB: As we have mentioned already, a particular area of emphasis for Mr. Cavanagh was race relations. There were a number of other issues that he mentioned during his campaign and a number of other issues that he seemed to stress as mayor. One was in the area of education. Could you discuss a little bit Mr. Cavanagh's perspective on the educational needs of the city of Detroit and what plan of action he intended to implement in that area?

JS: You're aware of course that the mayor has no authority over the education system in Detroit. Yet people perceive somehow or another that the mayor has or should have and frequently turn to him for some guidance in that particular area. I can only recall on one occasion early in the administration there had been difficulties in the schools, didn't feel they had sufficient monies, may have been a threat of teachers strikes as so forth. The school board, I think it was the school board, and the teachers union all met in the mayor's office one time because they felt that Jerry was someone who could bring them all together. I deviate again because it shows something of Jerry's ability. He had some fantastic abilities. He had asked me to tell Dick Strickhardt who was one of his top aides, one of his think tank people, to prepare a document to present the problems of the schools and he had gone over with Dick the outline of what he thought should be done and so forth. The meeting was due to begin something like 9 o'clock in the morning, might have been 10 o'clock but it was one or the other, and a few minutes before the meeting (the people were already in there waiting in the conference room

which is right next to the mayor's room at that time) and Dick's position paper is outlined but Jerry was not there and he asked me if I would go down to see if Dick had it finished. So I went down and got it. They had already made copies for everybody in the room. I brought them back and gave one to the Mayor and the others were being passed out in the conference room. He got up from his desk and walked slowly to the conference room which can't be no more than 30 or 40 feet from the mayors desk. He was going through the thing, just leafing through it as he walked. Well, I sat in on part of that meeting and he began to refer to that document by page number. For example, on page 18 now we would suggest and he lay out...

RB: This is a lengthy document?

JS: Yeah.

RB: Did he have a photographic memory?

JS: He certainly did.

RB: Is that right?

JS: He had tremendous retentive power. I don't know if you would call it photographic memory, but he had a retentive power. He would see something and he would remember. Lyndon Johnson had that too. But whereas Johnson couldn't recall anything about it the next day, Jerry would remember the thing. He had a fantastic memory. But the mayor was never that much involved in the educational issues in the city; concerned about them yes, but not that involved, nor did he have any authority to involve himself.

RB: One of the areas in which Mr. Cavanagh is noted for being in the vanguard of urban reform in the 1960's is in his various proposals for fighting poverty in the city of Detroit. Could you speak about the programs that he inaugurated, how he came about to develop these programs, and so on?

JS: That occurred after I was gone, but he set up a poverty program and the first man in charge of it was Bob Brazell as I recall. Bob was an excellent administrator. After Bob left, Dick Simmons took over the poverty program, Jerry put a lot of himself into that program. He was particularly concerned about its efforts in the community and what it could do.

RB: When you say put a lot of himself into it, what do you mean?

JS: He met with the top people in that program and even with the full staff over there to try to keep up their efforts at a maximum level to do something about poverty. You know,

there is only so much you can do about some of these things. But he was very concerned on the issues of poverty and race relations, the underprivileged in the city and trying to do something to bring them up. He was a man who enjoyed the good life. He enjoyed fine food, fine wine but he was always very concerned too about the lack of some of the fine, rather decent things in life for the poor people. He came from an ordinary middle class family; they weren't poor by any means but neither were they rich. And as I mentioned, a lot of young fellows from St. Theresa's and St. Cecilia's weren't too cognizant of the problems. He had a great depth of concern about that and as mayor I think he inspired people to try and do something in those particular areas. He was an inspirational person.

RB: Another key aspect of improving conditions in Detroit was the necessity of attracting business, which is a constant problem for all city administrations. Did Mr. Cavanagh have any specific ideas or a battle plan as how he was going to convince the business community to spend more money, to generate more jobs in Detroit?

JS: Well, we had an industrial and commercial development department in the city. The city still has one, I believe, which was not too successful bringing business in. It did improve, I think, when he put some people there himself. But he did it more through business people. For example, he worked very closely with Walter Cisler at Edison, not often with Walter Cisler but got him to head up various committees to try to attract business to Detroit.

RB: That's a name that comes up so frequently.

JS: Walter Cisler?

RB: Yes, could you speak a little bit about him, some observations you might have about Mr. Cisler?

JS: Well, I hate to say that I don't have too many astute observations. I sat in on several meetings with the Mayor and Walter Cisler, all which would be held at an early hour at the Detroit Club. Jerry was not given to early rising particularly.

RB: By early hour, you mean after midnight or early....

JS: No 7 o'clock in the morning.

RB: In the morning, okay.

JS: Mr. Cisler apparently was an early riser. He was earlier than Jerry was. We would be there at 7 a.m. and he would talk about what could be done to make Detroit more attractive

as a business place. He set up some committees of businessmen for that purpose, industrial development committees and things of that nature. But again, most of that came after I had left and so I think really to find out about those things you would have to talk to Freddy Romanoff or Bob Brazell.

RB: We've touched upon it a bit already, but another very important area in Mr. Cavanagh's first administration was police reform. Perhaps one way of getting into that topic is to ask a rather direct question. Why did Mr. Cavanagh choose Mr. George Edwards as police commissioner, of all the choices that he may have had?

JS: I think that the suggestion came, if I am not mistaken and I could be because while I sat in on many of the discussions, when we talked about who would fit on that and other positions, that's one that Jerry held very close to his chest. If I am not mistaken, the idea came from Ray Girarden. At least if it didn't come from Ray, it was Ray who made the first approach to George Edwards. Jerry wanted to get a very strong personality, make a dramatic appointment to show that this was not just going to be any other administration, that he was going to bring in top people in top jobs. He had brought in Al Pellum, a man who had tremendous respect in the financial areas in government and Al was a great appointment. He really made a significant difference in the city finances. But police commissioner, because of the problems in the police-community relations, was going to be particularly significant. And so, as I recall, I had a lunch with Jerry and Ray Girarden but they were still playing that one awfully close. Jerry wouldn't even let me know who it was. We spoke about baseball at this luncheon, rather cryptically about the candidate is willing to meet with you and so forth.

RB: Why were they being so secretive?

JS: They didn't want it to get out. He wanted to make certain that it he would not get out because, if he turned it down and he was a member of the Supreme Court at the time. It was an iffy sort of thing as to whether he would accept it. Jerry was to meet with this individual at the person's home either that day or the following day, but I know it was the immediate future. Jerry went to such meeting with George Edwards who was then, as I mentioned, on the Supreme Court for the state. Whether it was because of Jerry's own tremendous persuasive powers or because George Edwards really saw an opportunity to not only do something in the community but George Edwards wanted, I believe, to be head of the FBI. He had no police background.

So, the chief of police of the city of Detroit might be a natural thing because he was close to the Kennedy's too and there were a lot of people who were interested in getting J. Edgar Hoover out of there. So it certainly was a doable thing. Whether that motivated Edwards or not, of course I don't know. But anyway after they met Edwards agreed to accept the position and then Jerry told me who it was going to be, but again I was sworn to secrecy as was anybody else. I think the only other person was Tommy McIntyre.

RB: What was your reaction?

JS: Well, I thought it was tremendous. George Edwards was a man of great stature in the city, in the state. Not only was he a Supreme Court Justice but he had been known as a real leader in the community. He had taken a lot of positions. He was a firebrand, he struck sparks anyway. And he was a man that things happen when he was there. So, I thought if anybody can do things with the police department, George Edwards would be the man that could do it.

RB: I guess what I was getting at, were you surprised?

JS: Oh yes, I was surprised, very surprised, because I didn't think a man like George Edwards who was sitting on the Supreme Court of the State would even consider such an appointment. I was very surprised.

RB: What's your evaluation of the job Mr. Edwards did as police commissioner?

JS: Well, I find that a little more difficult to answer because I don't think George Edwards as police commissioner and Jerry Cavanagh as mayor worked as closely as it would be hoped they were.

RB: How so?

JS: Well, I think Edwards felt. "I've taken the job but I'm going to run it independently." And I think it was traditional that when there were going to be promotions in the police department, the police commissioner would inform the mayor whom he was going to promote and I don't think George Edwards bothered to do that sort of thing. He just went ahead and did what he wanted on his own. And a man of his stature maybe Jerry should've expected that, but after all Jerry was mayor and Jerry was the one who appointed him. So, I don't think that George Edwards was really that happy as police commissioner and never did feel close to Jerry or did Jerry ever feel close to him. And so when the opportunity came to be appointed to the Federal bench, George was ready to take it.

RB: Was the appointment of Ray Girarden as police commissioner any more or any less of a surprise than George Edwards' appointment? If I recall, Ray Girarden's background was in journalism, correct?

JS: He was a newspaper reporter, had been with the Times for years and had covered the police beat. He was a very good friend of Jerry's. Jerry had gotten to know him while he was practicing law. Jerry knew a lot of criminal law and he had worked on some important trials and had gotten to know Girarden and Girarden was a great raconteur, political story teller, and so forth and Jerry liked him. So when I resigned, he offered the job to Ray. Well, when George Edwards resigned, somebody floated the belief that Ray was going to get the appointment. I don't know who floated it. It was the trial balloon that went up anyway. I suppose Ray had been executive secretary for more than a year or so and I thought it was a surprising but...

RB: It did raise a few eyebrows in the city, didn't it? Did some people feel that perhaps Mr. Girarden didn't have the credentials for that kind of position?

JS: He was a very warm person and very well liked, but he did not have the police background. There is a story that they tell, whether true or not, that when a person was appointed police commissioner, when he was sworn in, the police officers would always step forward and hand him a badge and a gun. Then they all stood back to see what he would do with it. If he stuck the gun in his belt and put on the badge they always knew they had him. If he tossed them both in the drawer, he was going to run the department.

RB: Which did Mr. Girarden do?

JS: I don't care to say. I wasn't there. But there was a sort of an image problem there. It was one of the things that after a while did present a concern. Ray would frequently appear on television with some of the police personnel. Ray was a small man, as I am, and some of the policemen would be great big guys. It made some way or another created a public image that wasn't ideal. It didn't look like you had a big strong leader. Ray had a fine mind and a great sense of integrity, did a lot of good things, and was very race conscious himself and wanted to do the right thing. I think Ray was popular with the police officers.

RB: Judge Sullivan, when Mayor Cavanagh first took office, what were his views regarding the relationship between city government and state government, specifically Detroit and Lansing? Did he have specific views on what the relationship should be like?

JS: He may have had specific views but I can't remember him expressing any. I do recall right after the election that he was invited along with myself to call on John Swainson who was then governor of Michigan. Jerry took this very casually, much to my amazement. I thought that after all the governor is a higher office and we were due at the governor's office at a certain hour. We arrived at least an hour late and there were a lot of the press who were waiting there for this meeting and taking some pictures of it. They were somewhat taken aback that Jerry treated the whole thing so casually that we would arrive late, of course, I was just sort of a tagalong. Jerry had asked me to accompany him for whatever reason. We had a very friendly meeting with Swainson but there was no doubt in my mind Swainson was somewhat perturbed that he, the governor, was asked to wait for the mayor. I think that Jerry was never really too concerned about what the state officials were thinking. He felt the city was an entity unto itself, would handle its own problems, and he wasn't going to be doing things because somebody in Lansing wanted him to.

RB: So, he wasn't looking toward Lansing to help with Detroit's problems at that time?

JS: No. He did look to the federal government for help and was very successful in that area. He had excellent relations with those officials.

RB: Before we get into that, let me ask you just one more question about relationships with the state. The governorship often times in Michigan is a Republican domain. Did politics play any kind of role in the Cavanagh administrations' relationship with the Swainson administration?

JS: Not really. When Jerry would work with the legislature particularly was totally unconcerned whether the person was a Republican or Democrat. He was fairly effective in dealing with the legislature up there and he had a lot of support from Democratic legislators. Coleman Young in particular was very helpful. On different occasions Jerry would ask me to go to Lansing to try to help work something through. I would always go first to Coleman Young because he was very helpful to us. And there were several Republican legislators who just liked Jerry's method of running the city and they too would be quite helpful. He cut across party lines in that regard. He had a certain admiration for John Swainson because he thought John Swainson had a lot of guts. But on the other hand he didn't feel that he as mayor was one in a position to defer to Swainson.

RB: A lot of guts, in what sense?

JS: John Swainson?

RB: Did it have to do with his physical disability?

JS: That was certainly part of it. But also Swainson was not afraid to attempt to pass legislation that some people thought better left untried because it would be resented. I can't think of specific bills at the present time, but he urged the passage of programs that some governors before him just thought it better to keep their hands off of those things.

RB: You mentioned that Mayor Cavanagh focused more of his attention on Washington than he did on Lansing. Why?

JS: Well, the same reason that Louie Sutton went to rob banks. It's where the money is. You weren't going to get any money out of Lansing, because they didn't have much money to give.

RB: Couldn't one also think, however, that the dealing with the federal bureaucracy would be much tougher than the state bureaucracy, if for no other reason than its size?

JS: This is something I can't say with any assurance that I'm correct. But I think Washington was much more attractive to Jerry; the atmosphere of Washington, this was the mainstream of politics. He liked to go to Washington. He was frequently called to Washington to testify before a Senate and House committees. He enjoyed that very much and he enjoyed working with the Washington officials, and he was very effective in dealing with Washington officials. Surprisingly enough Kennedy's election, I think, gave Jerry a great opportunity but yet he didn't move right into that area. I can recall when they had a big birthday party for Kennedy, he sent me as his representative rather than go himself which frankly surprised me at the time. After that though he became a frequent visitor to Washington.

RB: Did he have a personal relationship with President Kennedy?

JS: Yes, but not anywhere near as close as he did with President Johnson. He also had a very close relationship with Senator Pat McNamara. McNamara obviously was a friend of Jerry's. In fact when McNamara ran for the Senate against Blair Moody, there were very few people involved in his campaign. Jerry was very involved in the campaign and so was I, only because Jerry got me involved in it. But we were there practically alone at the time, until Blair Moody died. Then all of a sudden there were all kinds of people involved in the campaign.

RB: Why the lack of support?

JS: Because Moody was the incumbent senator and he was very close to the UAW. And the UAW, following Moody's death, just moved in and took over the McNamara campaign. But Jerry was always fascinated with Washington. He used to talk kiddingly about the day when he might go to Washington as an elected official. He very much desired to become a Senator someday. I think he would have been a great senator because he was so articulate and also so capable of persuading people to do things. I think he would have been a tremendous senator and would have been able to really give Michigan maximum return for the kind of input he would have given to that position. But of course it was never to be. But he worked very closely particularly during Johnson's year. Johnson would frequently call the office and talk to Jerry, invite him to Washington many times, invite him to the White House for dinner, things like that. And of course, as a result of his close relationship with particularly the Johnson administration, Detroit was able to receive a lot of financial help.

RB: In terms of getting the money out of Washington, was much of it dependent on personality factors, such as the mayor getting along with the president who perhaps can open doors?

JS: Oh, yes. Very definitely. Well, you might disagree with me but for example the Ponchatrain Hotel. Whether it was a good thing that it was built or not, it would never have been built if it wasn't for Jerry's relationship with the Johnson administration.

RB: Could you give us any details on that?

JS: Well, it is all so far back, I hate to try to be specific on it. That was built as I recall on a UDAG grant and it had been turned down. And as I remember, Jerry either called or in Washington spoke directly with Johnson. UDAG grants were not being given out at that time they had pretty much slowed down particularly for that kind of development. And Johnson was persuaded by Jerry to intervene and tell the people who were in control there that they should get it done.

RB: Did that kind of thing happen often to your knowledge?

JS: I couldn't say often and then again that was a period that my contact with the administration was strictly on a friendship basis because I was back practicing law or doing whatever I was doing at that time. But I would frequently visit with Jerry and in fact on different

occasions went to Washington with Jerry. When he would be going down, he'd ask me to join him. Usually when I would go down, it was for times he was testifying in the Senate or the House. I never was with him to the White House although on one occasion during the Kennedy administration he sent me to the White House for him, and another time I met Johnson because of Jerry. But my contacts were very limited in that sort of thing, so I can't give you a specific detail about this.

RB: In this period in the early 60's, particularly with the exposure that Mayor Cavanagh was getting in Washington, he began to get played up by the national press and became known as a rising star by various writers. Was this in any way a conscious public relations effort on the part of Cavanagh and Cavanagh people to increase his presence nationally, in terms of an ultimate goal of getting to Washington and putting him in political office?

JS: No. Jerry became the urban spokesman for America, I think. He was head of the US Conference of Mayors and the National League of Cities. He was the first person ever elected to both those positions at the same time. He drew a lot of media attention, magazines no longer in existence. For example, I can remember when Colliers came in and interviewed him, Look magazine did an interview, Life magazine did one, and among other things featured him as the one of the 100 outstanding young men of America. Many other magazines came in. Newsweek, for example, not only did an interview with him and on the mayors of America but singled him out as one of the most outstanding mayors of the country and did a cover with his picture on it. Henry Luce died that same time and they pulled the covers and did a picture of Luce instead and Jerry lost out. We had a stack of covers and they sent the rest of the covers to us. I have one of them framed, hanging in my den at home. But inside in the article they still had a picture of Jerry and a description of his abilities and he was outstanding. He was a tremendous mayor, and he was a strong presence in that National League of Cities and US Conference of Mayors. I was with him when he was no longer president, and Mayor Lindsey of New York had taken over and there too was a national figure. Lindsey could not run that organization at all in comparison with the way Jerry had done.

RB: Was it difficult to run?

JS: Yeah, but Jerry was like a master lion tamer. He really would control those sessions and could get things done. Lindsey was just overridden.

RB: He was another one of the rising stars among the mayors at that time.

JS: He was. But I don't think he was ever described as one of the five best mayors in the country and Jerry was on many occasions.

RB: Did not Mr. Cavanaugh have close relations with Mayor Wagner?

JS: Yes.

RB: How did they happen to get to know each other so well?

JS: It was through a person name Julius Edelstein. Julius occupied the position of executive secretary. I don't know what the title was in New York. Julius was a very -- he is now at City College of New York -- a brilliant individual. I can't tell you because I can not recall how he and Jerry came into contact. But it was through Julius who is still a friend of Jerry's wife, Cathy, writes to her, calls her, and so forth, comes here to visit her on occasions, who introduced Jerry to Wagner and they got along very, very well. Like one time, Wagner and Julius came here to Detroit. A group of us got together, it was really interesting, because Wagner himself was a very interesting person.

RB: Did Mr. Cavanaugh learn alot from Mr. Wagner? Wagner had been in office for awhile.

JS: Well, I think he acknowledged Wagner's abilities. He admired Wagner, so I'm sure he did have an influence on Jerry.

RS Relations with the Michigan Democratic Party. Could Mr. Cavanaugh be categorized as something of a mover and shaker within the state Democratic Party while he was mayor?

JS: Not really, although he was certainly a shaker in the Democratic Party more than a mover. You see, when Jerry ran for mayor the first time against Miriani, the UAW supported Mirianni viewing Jerry as just a total upstart. And they were somewhat taken aback, I guess, I better say they were in a state of shock when Jerry won. The relationship did not start out too well because they had backed Miriani and they didn't like the idea of someone running against and then beating them. That was even worse. So, they had no relationship with Jerry and they didn't trust Jerry because they didn't know who he was or anything else about him. They knew he wasn't one of their men. And the UAW, of course, at that time was the dominant force in the Democratic Party. So if the UAW was suspicious of you, your relationship with the Democratic Party wasn't too good. And Jerry did not defer to the Democratic Party. He was a

life long Democrat. He espoused the ideals of the Democratic Party probably better than the Democratic Party did itself and the Democratic Party made one of its tragic mistakes in this state, in my opinion, by not really moving behind Jerry.

RB: Why was that?

JS: Well, just from the beginning because he did not cowtow to the party or to the UAW at the start. Although a little later he developed some very fine relationships with top people in the UAW.

RB: You mentioned Walter Reuther the last him.

JS: Yes. He good relationship with them.

RB: Was there any effort to strengthen relationships between Mr. Cavanagh and the UAW in the political realm?

JS: Well, I think there developed a very good relationship between Jerry and Walter Reuther, Doug Fraser, Leonard Woodcock. It certainly seemed to me that they had a very good relationship. But the thing never really jelled because, when Jerry decided to run for the Senate, and now he had established pretty good relationships with the UAW but they weren't going to support Jerry against G. Mennen Williams. Williams had long and deep ties into the UAW and they owed it to Williams to support him and they tried to talk Jerry out of running. But he decided to run, as you know, and away we went. Williams had too much support out of the party, out of the UAW, and out of the common folk. You have to remember too that just a short time before Jerry had been elected mayor and had said that if he were elected mayor he would serve out the term. He didn't put a qualification on that, and when the press faced him with that problem, he broke one of his cardinal rules. He denied having said it. Well, they had him down as having said it and they just began to plague him with the fact that he said he wouldn't leave office and would serve out the term which was unfortunate. He had a rule and he said never lie to the press. Unfortunately, maybe he forgot that he said that or thought it was something nobody would remember. But they remembered it too well. I think that hurt him badly in that campaign because throughout the thing it would be thrown in his face constantly, or printed in the papers constantly, that he had said that he would not leave office until his term was finished.

RB: Do you think Mr. Cavanagh made a mistake taking on Soapy Williams?

JS: Yes.

RB: Did you tell him so.

JS: Yes.

RB: How did he react?

JS: Quietly. I think I would best describe it, when I told him I didn't think he could possibly win the Senate. I told him, "you're not going to be able to carry Detroit because you're not going to be able to carry the black community. If you can't carry Detroit, you can't carry Wayne County; if you can't carry Wayne County, you can't carry the state. And the reason is Williams has too much strength in those places. He's an old friend that they owe support. They like you, they admire you, they want to see you go ahead but Williams is ahead of you in line; and a chance for the Senate, they feel he deserves it." I honestly felt Jerry would have been a much better senator than Williams who I also happen admire. Williams is a fine, honest and honorable man, but I think that Jerry would have been just a tremendous person in the Senate. So when I said all of that to him, he just sat there quietly. I think he then said, "well let's talk about it next week back in Detroit." Because that conversation took place in Washington and he said, "now let's just go to dinner," and we didn't talk about it for awhile. Then we had another meeting in Detroit involving a lot of his friends and political appointees, about twenty in number, and with two exceptions everybody at the meeting said you can't win. Williams is too strong. Well, one of the fellows, Cliff Sullivan, despite the Irish name, had a very strong relationship in the Polish community. He said to Jerry, "the Poles are going to vote for Williams. There's just no way you're going to get a Polish vote there; they are solidly behind Williams." When that meeting was over, Jerry and I went back in his inner-office and I said, "well, do you think after hearing all that that you're convinced that you ought to not try this one?" Then he said, "no, I'll think about it some more." It was a week later that he announced that he was going to run.

RB: So it was an individual personal decision on his part against all the advice of his counselors?

JS: Right.

RB: Last week I had the opportunity to interview Mayor Cavanagh's brother Paul and one thing that his brother repeatedly pointed out in the interview was that one of the predominant traits of Mr. Cavanagh from the time he was young was a distinct stubbornness. Once he had

decided that he was going to do something, he was tenacious about it no matter who opposed him. Is this another instance of his stubbornness clouding his judgment?

JS: Well, I wouldn't describe it so much as stubbornness. He would analyze something and if he felt that it was the right thing, he had the courage to hang on to it in spite of a lot of advice. Usually advisors are always advocating caution and Jerry, if he felt that something was right, was going to do it regardless. Sometimes things that he did as mayor of the city, for example his push for open housing, push for increased city taxes. Those things were the sort of thing that everybody said, "you don't want to do that because everyone will be mad at you." He'd say, "it's necessary or it's the right thing. Therefore; we're going to do it." He would do it. All the nay sayers and all those who would say that everyone is going to be mad at you for doing that, that wouldn't effect him at all.

RB: And then again he had beat the oddsmakers in his first campaign and came out of nowhere and won.

JS: That's right. He had analyzed it correctly. He wasn't just jumping in there for the fun of it. He had said to me, "I can win this election and I'm convinced I can win it." And he convinced me after awhile, not that it matters whether he convinced me or not but his arguments began to make a tremendous amount of sense. He was just not afraid to stand up to anybody. Maybe that's why his relationship with the UAW wasn't as good at the start as it might have been, because he wasn't afraid to tell them what he thought. He wasn't waiting to hear what they wanted him to do; he was telling them what he was going to do. I think some of the older union people, particularly on the second or third level, somewhat resented that and made for his relationship from the start a little difficult. His relationship became very good with them farther along, of course. But they didn't support him when he ran for the senate; they didn't support him when he ran for the governor. Jerry was much maligned. It was tragic reality, how people lied about him and others believed what was said. It hurt him badly because he was really a fine, fine individual. Lou Gordon, for example, said an awful lot of things, he was a very popular commentator and said so many things that were untrue. He pushed him and people believed him. They would say, "he wouldn't say those things on the radio or television if they weren't true." That's alot of baloney too.

RB: What was all of that business regarding Mr. Gordon and guy behind the rubber tree?

Wasn't this supposed man behind the rubber tree revealed?

JS: I'm trying to think of his name. He was secretary of the Water Commission for a short while, Phil Langwald. He was a friend of Lou Gordon and Jerry found out that a lot of information was going to Gordon from the inside of the administration and he began to suspect that Langwald was the one who was passing things on to Gordon. We had appointee meetings regularly, we would have a breakfast session where all the appointees would attend and various problems would be discussed. Gordon seemed to have information that came out of those meetings. As I remember it, was ultimately pinned down that Langwald was the source. Whether he admitted after awhile or whether Gordon admitted it or what, but anyway it became an established fact the Langwald was the one.

RB: Did the mayor ever confront him directly?

JS: Oh yes, yes and discharged him. The reason they discovered the man behind the rubber plant, I forget who coined that expression, but he was supposedly seen lurking behind a rubber plant over in the lobby of the Book Cadillac Hotel. A conversation was going on and he was listening to it.

RB: There was something of a crackdown on crime during Mr. Cavanagh's first administration. Was this something he directed? It wasn't a harsh kind of a crackdown similar to what had gone on during the Miriani administration but there seemed to be a certain acceleration by the police to clean up Detroit. Was this part of a Cavanagh administration program or was there something else going on?

JS: Not while I was there. I don't recall any particular effort to crack down on crime. Every mayor pushes a crime problem and crime is always a problem in the city and every mayor sooner or later is urging the police to do more about it. I think one of the things Jerry was trying to do with the police department was his efforts to hire more black officers, which constantly met with resistance.

RB: How do you explain racism in the police departments?

JS: Well, I suppose it is an unfortunate thing, but in a community such as ours they're going back to the 60's is that a lot of the problems the police dealt with were problems that arose in the black community. The reaction of the police officer frequently was one didn't exhibit an awareness of the racial problems and the racial background. Police dealt more harshly

with the black suspect than they might with the average white person. It was greatly resented in the community and the community viewed the police officers as the enemy, the army of occupation. The only way you are really going to overcome that was to have more black police officers. So the force itself became more balanced and, I suppose too as white officers worked with black officers they would become more understanding hopefully of the black problem. But it was very difficult. I remember Jerry telling in my presence the head of the police department, that he wanted the next class to have 50 percent black officers. It didn't. I think it only hit about 25 percent. That was their idea of really doing as the mayor told them. They just were very resistant to that sort of thing at that time.

RB: How did they go about resisting a mayor? A mayor is supposed to be the most powerful figure in the city. How does a police department not follow the directive a mayor has given them and get away with it?

JS: Well, I suppose there are lots of ways. They could always claim that they can't find the right applicants or that the applicants don't always measure up to the standards, and just drag their feet. This is always true of private corporations; it is certainly true of government. A mayor, a governor, a president has to issue a thousand orders and if the one to whom the order is issued really doesn't think it's too good an order, doesn't think the one issuing it is going to be to observant to see whether or not its carried out, it frequently is not going to be carried out. You have to remember the city of Detroit has a great tradition of civil service and I use that sarcastically, I assure you. A civil servant's attitude is, "mayor's come and mayor's go, but we're going to be here long after this one is gone and I don't like his program and I'm just not going to push that sort of thing." And they don't. It's very difficult to get some of these things through civil servants. People think civil service is great but I think any mayor could accomplish an awful lot more if he could appoint more people and not be stuck with the people who are there under civil service. I used to advocate the idea that, let civil service do the hiring but let the mayor be able to discharge people if he feels they are not doing there job. Let the civil service replace them so the mayor can never appoint his friends if that's what you're trying to accomplish but at least you can get rid of the incompetent people.

RB: So there could be a balance?

JS: Yeah.

RB: The mayor was overwhelmingly re-elected in November 1965, his star apparently was is rising. Then the 1967 riot came along. Do you think there have been any popular misconceptions about that riot, either how it started, how it was dealt with, how it was wrapped up, that you've ever felt needs to be clarified in the public record?

JS: No, I can't say that. You certainly know how it started. I suppose the thing should have been handled far differently then it was when it first started. Had it been handled in a better fashion, maybe it would've been kept on a much smaller scale. The reaction of the governor, namely Romney, was incorrect against Jerry's urging to do something about it.

RB: Was this entirely political in your estimation?

JS: Yes.

RB: What was Mr. Romney trying to accomplish or not accomplish?

JS: Well, whatever his own reasons were of course were, I have no idea. He did not want to be put in a position of calling on President Johnson to send in troops and things were badly out of control and he needed the troops. And strangely enough, as I think we mentioned, in the face of Jerry's urging he asked for the troops, he was later to say he was caught by an indecisive mayor. He tried to blame it all on Jerry for not taking the action and here Jerry was right on television with the whole thing tape recorded, with them sitting there looking right at the people and Jerry urging them to call on the President to send the troops in and Romney vacillating back and forth.

RB: How did Mr. Cavanagh react as his city literally was blowing up around him?

JS: Well, during those particular days Jerry stayed almost exclusively over at police headquarters and we didn't see him much. I think I only saw him a couple of times until the riot essentially was over. I believe on Thursday he was in the mayor's office rather than at police headquarters. He was pretty grim, but he wasn't running around hollering and waving his arms. He was his usual calm self and making judgements about what we should do and he was making judgments already about trying to restore the city. He and Walter Reuther had a conversation that morning about getting help from the UAW to clean up the city.

RB: Was the mayor shocked or surprised?

JS: No, I think I told you that he was not shocked or surprised, contrary to what many people have alleged, because he told me in advance that Detroit could blow up. I can't

remember if it was after the Watts riot but we were talking about this one day. In fact, it was in the conversation about the Senate campaign because he said things can happen here. He said, "right now I come off a recent election, my popularity is high but we could have a riot in this city because the potential is there for it. If that were to happen that would put me in a much tougher position in the eyes of the public." He was aware that it could happen, and he was concerned that it might happen. But even the so-called black leadership felt it was not likely to happen here, because there was a feeling among many black people that Detroit was one of the cities that was more aware of black concerns than any other. They had a very good relationship with Jerry Cavanagh.

RB: What was the interaction between the mayor and President Johnson during those days?

JS: I was not with Jerry, so I can't say.

RB: I was curious because you mentioned that he and Johnson had a very close relationship?

JS: Right. I have no idea, if they exchanged phone calls during that time or not. If I did know at the time, I don't recall.

RB: Were there any particular black leaders who the mayor was trying to work with during the riot to try to quell things, Horace Sheffield, for example, who was an old ally?

JS: Horace Sheffield and some of the ministers from the black community at that time tried to regroup the city.

RB: Following the riot, is it correct to assume that the mayor's relationship with the black community changed? Was it any more tense? Did the mayor himself feel differently about the black community in any way after the riots?

JS: No, not at all. I would say that the relationship was somewhat different in that the black community, having seen the effects of the riot, was determined that they were going to get the various rights that they felt had been withheld from them. So there was a lot of urging that things be done and blacks spoke more militantly, but so did whites at that time. Remember there were two things going on. You also had the Vietnam situation which was causing all kinds of unrest, particularly among young white people. So there was so much tension in the city in spite of the fact that Jerry was an open advocate of getting out of Vietnam which caused him to

break his relationship with President Johnson. President Johnson was very upset with Jerry for having taken publicly such a position. So I think there was more tension generated over that issue at the time than there was over the fact that the riot had been going on. There was considerable effort, however, to regroup in the city. A big plan was developed under Richard Stricthardts about what could be done to the areas that were badly hurt by the riot --, Gratiot, Jefferson, Mack, 12th Street, Linwood -- and how commercial developments might be started in those areas and better community relations and so forth. Then New Detroit was organized. So there were a lot of very positive efforts, many of which did not really materialize as had been hoped because instead of all of the new commercial developments in the areas that were hurt some of the others continued to deteriorate. 12th Street and Linwood did see some improvements, certainly on 12th Street where there were shopping centers but commercial development was stagnant for awhile.

RB: Were there obvious reasons for that or other reasons?

JS: A lot of the merchants were afraid to do business in the area after the riot. They lost heavily. Furniture stores were particularly subject to burning and looting and maybe deservedly so, since they were selling shlock furniture in many instances at outrageous prices. I think during the riots a lot of the records of those people who owed money went up in flames.

RB: Did the mayor think that Detroit's business community and financial community responded to the extent they should have?

JS: No, they did not respond to the extent that they should have. There were some that did step forward, but he felt that there was a lot more time given in words than in anything else. Of course, you can't blame everybody for not coming up with all the money to handle all these things. They have their own concerns.

RB: Very often analysts point to the fact that Henry Ford and Ford Motor Company did a lot to try to rebuild Detroit, building the Renaissance Center for example. But many analysts question whether General Motors and Chrysler did as much as they could have considering the fact that they are based here. Was there any particular reason why Ford should have stepped forward more than General Motors or Chrysler?

JS: Because Ford was Henry Ford. You had one man who could really do the moving and shaking and he did. Also Mrs. Ford, his mother, was very civic conscious. The two of them

were a tremendous help in the city of Detroit. Henry Ford really gave a lot of effort to the city and deserves a lot of tribute for what he did and to my mind has never really received all the recognition, as much as he has received, that he deserved for all that he did.

RB: Can you give some examples?

JS: Well, take the Ren Center itself which was a tremendous endeavor and one that wouldn't have gone forward except for him personally. He was actually on the phone himself working to bring people in, to raise the money, to get the best architect to design the building. This is something he conceived and he promoted, as I understand it. I think he deserves tremendous amount of credit for it. Other things the family did such as the Ford Auditorium, and the money and effort they gave to the Institute of Arts. They have done an awful lot for this city. The General Motors people, to my mind, and I can't speak with authority on this but I have never been aware of their presence in those things anywhere near the same extent. But again there is no one at General Motors who is a Henry Ford. And as big as the top men are at General Motors, I don't think they ever had the community clout that Henry Ford had. And Chrysler always had its own problems. They too like General Motors never had anybody who was able to put that much pressure on. There was a fellow named John Leary at Chrysler who was very close to Jerry and did everything he could to help in the business community. He was a tremendous man too. But he didn't have the clout that Henry Ford had, of course, but he was very, very helpful. Chrysler was always trying to be helpful during Jerry's administration.

RB: But their resources were rather weak, is that what you're saying?

JS: Yes.

RB: And if I understand correctly, General Motors always assumed a certain corporate aloofness?

JS: Yes.

RB: There are certain individuals associated with General Motors, however, very prominent names in Detroit's history, the Fishers for example?

JS: It might be unfair to General Motors to put it that way, but the reason I do is during the time I was there I can remember Jerry having meetings, conversations, phone calls and so forth with men like Walter Cisler from Edison who was a frequent advisor, Ralph Mackeleny from the Gas Company, Henry Ford himself. But I don't recall anyone from General Motors

having that same kind of relationship. It could be that some of them did and I just was not aware of it.

RB: Part of the attempted revival of Detroit in the years after the riot was the New Center area near General Motors World Headquarters. Was that financed by General Motors?

JS: Yes, General Motors did a lot in that area and has continued to do a lot to keep that area on the same good level it has been on since they took that position. But if I'm not mistaken, they did that on their own. That was not something done in connection with the city. General Motors saw it as a need to be done in that area and with a certain amount of civic responsibility wanted to do something. They went in and spent their own money and fixed that area up and they continued to maintain that area.

RB: But they were acting as loners, in that regard?

JS: Yes. Not loaners of money but acting alone. Yes. That was just my observation. I certainly don't speak with authority.

RB: There were press reports following the riot that merit some comment. I believe it was shortly before the riot broke out that the mayor also began a personal crisis with the announcement of divorce proceedings from his first wife, Mary. The press tried to make a connection between the riot, and his own personal crisis, to portray him as one who was immersed in despondency following the riots. Can you react to that?

JS: Sure, if the press said that, they were sailing in a sea of nonsense. There was absolutely nothing to that. Certainly it was a personal crisis. He felt the divorce situation keenly, but he rarely, rarely even spoke of it, other than to his attorney who was representing him at the time. He just didn't talk much about that. He was not at all critical of Mary Helen in that regard, I can recall one day I was in his office, we were going over something and I got up to leave and he asked me to stay. He said go close the door and I got up to close the door. I came back and sat down and that was the first and only time he ever went into this divorce situation. He spoke at some length about it and how upsetting it was, how badly he felt about all of this, how unfairly he felt it was, the papers, particularly the News, has run stories that he felt were totally not only unfair but invaded an area that should have been private. He felt that certain people, Lou Gordon for example, and to a lesser extent Mary Beck, involved themselves in it to try to make the situation worse than what it was. Mary Helen and Jerry both had certain

problems as a result of a person being in the public life as Jerry was. It is tough on a women to see her husband or a husband like Margaret Thatcher's husband how he faced all of it, because they're gone so much, the pressures on them. Jerry could have been to ten meetings every night and he would make one or two which would make eight organizations mad at him because he didn't get to those particular things. Yet he would have to be out late many times and Mary Helen, I'm sure, found it difficult with several children to be raised and with Jerry gone as much as he was. So it was an unfortunate situation and it was made more unfortunate by the fact that Gordon was trying to take political advantage of him and set up certain things to make Jerry look bad in relation to the whole thing.

RB: I would imagine that these things couldn't have happened at a worse time. At the same time he's going through a personal crisis, the riot poses a civil crisis and a political crisis, a crisis on many levels to him?

JS: I think he was reacting quickly and decisively and trying to overcome the effects of the riot. He didn't sit around and wring his hands. He gathered community leaders together, black and white, and tried to get a lot of things happening as a result. As I say, he had Strickhardt draw up a master plan of what they might do, things of that nature. But at the same time the domestic situation was there and, as you say, there was many things hitting at the same time.

RB: As one of the mayor's closest advisors and friends what effects did you see this having on him?

JS: There's no doubt it wore him down, and tired him. It was not the same in the last days as it was in the first halcyon days.

RB: In what sense?

JS: Well, I think he grew tired of the constant criticism, particularly I keep referring to Gordon. Gordon put out so many false accusations, stuff you just couldn't be refuting all the time. He kept saying how close he was to the Mafia. It was a common joke among those of us who were there, the appointees, that if we had this great relationship with the Mafia why couldn't we get any money. We were flat broke all the time and supposedly the pay-off of the Mafia and none of us knew a Mafia and wouldn't know one from a horse. It was just a constant joke. But it was going on television saying that it was this particularly prominent Mafia member

-- one of the Giacolonis had Jerry's private number to his desk, and could call him directly all the time. There was not a private phone on the desk. The whole thing was just absurd. Every phone went through the secretary. Jerry had a private phone but it went through his secretary first, and there was no phone that only he could answer. She never heard of a call coming from anyone like that. So many people believed that, plus all the accusations about his personal life alleging all these things about women. That used to get him down. He wouldn't even allow a woman to come near him. When we would be out there, there would always be a couple of police officers and security guards, and I remember one of them bringing a woman over to the table to meet Jerry. She said she always wanted to meet the mayor, so he brought her over and introduced her to Jerry and Jerry was really upset with her. He said, "I don't want any women being allowed to come near me and you bring this woman over to the table and that will start another story." There was a time when my wife and I were out to a football game. By god, if we didn't hear a few days later that he's out with my wife. It was just constant, bizarre, and so unfair. I think that sort of thing began to get to him.

RB: Did these factors, what you call a certain tiredness of all of this, account for his decision not to run for a third term?

JS: Oh yeah, sure. Very much so.

RB: Are you describing a certain burn-out on any level?

JS: Well, it wasn't really a burn-out because you have to remember that he was ready, willing and full of zest to run for governor. Also he very seriously considered running for a third term. He and I had been in New York on some particular thing and we spent a great deal of time that night talking about plotting out winning another campaign for mayor. He felt sure he could win and I felt certain that he could. It wouldn't be like the other campaigns, but there wasn't anyone out there that was going to beat him. With all due respect to Ed Cary, a fine guy and good councilman and Mary Beck, they were talking about running against him, neither one of them were going to beat him. There were a lot of people who were critical of Jerry at that time but we took our polls, and our polls showed that there was enough support there regardless.

RB: Then why not run?

JS: Well, I think again I described to you when he told me that he wasn't going to run, I believe I did. Let me mention it to you again. Again sitting in the office and I asked him some

question about what is he going to do that particular weekend, because it was already time to start thinking about mending fences where they had to be mended and going out and campaigning. And he sat there for a moment and then he said, "I'll show you what I'm going to do." He got up and he was sitting behind the desk and he came around and sat beside me and opened up his diary of schedule of events. I remember there was a picnic down on Sunday and he took a big pencil, a big heavy black pencil, and he drew an x through it and through the next picnic and the next affair. He said, "now you know what I'm going to do about running for mayor." He said, "I'm not going to go, this is it." Sure, I think he felt frustrated. He felt that he had provided real leadership. He felt he was a national figure, that he was recognized as an outstanding mayor everywhere but the city of Detroit. Certainly that wasn't true of all people, because a lot of people knew how good he was. But so many people had believed so many of these darn stories and he had been hurt by the divorce. The whole thing was so public and he was hurt by that. He felt personally hurt. The riot hurt him because he felt that he had really tried to move this city in the right direction and he had done a lot. He felt the riot was uncalled for and unfortunate and tragic and hurt the city badly. All those things bothered him. But no he wasn't burned out, because as I mentioned he thought he could go on and do well in the law practice. So he decided to go into practice, that was going to be his future for a while but he got into practice and he decided after he got out there for awhile that he loved politics too much and he'd run for governor. That time that he ran for the Senate, Governor Williams' people were urging Jerry to run for governor and he just downplayed the idea of running for governor. But when the Senate was no longer within his reach and his love of politics was so strong all of a sudden the governorship seemed to make some sense to him. Unfortunately, we took polls and it showed that he wasn't in good position, too much damage had been done to his reputation. We felt that the polls showed us he could not win, but he refused to believe him. He felt he could turn that around. Then of course he became ill and was out of the picture for awhile. He had an operation, he was in the hospital recuperating, and it slowed him down. But he was determined to run and he would have been a good governor. Jerry was one of the outstanding political figures this state has ever seen. He had an ability to win people over. He was one of the most articulate men I have ever seen or heard. He was the kind of person who always made you aware of his presence. Even after he had left office, even after he had been out of office

for some time, he and I would get together every few days for lunch or dinner. Whenever we would walk into a place, heads would all turn. They knew Jerry Cavanagh. Whether they liked or disliked him, they all would be aware that he was there. When he walked into a room, you knew he was there.

RB: Some people call that charisma.

JS: He had charisma. He defined the term. He had so many things going for him that were helpful in that way. Not only did he have a ready wit, he had a fantastic memory. He hardly ever forgot a name, no matter how obscure the moment of meeting was. And other things had to impress people. He was a very impressive man. He was quite a raconteur. You could sit and talk to him for hours; that was one of his weaknesses. He liked to sit and talk for hours. But he had a lot of ideas; he was not afraid to stand up to anybody. I can remember one time I was with him in Washington and there was Senator Haruska of Nebraska who began to jump on him for something Jerry had said. I think it was relative to Vietnam and he read a statement that Jerry had made. And he said something to the effect, he said, "I have absolute proof that this is a statement that you made on one occasion," Jerry stood up and said, "Senator, you're absolutely incorrect. That is statement I have made on at least ten or twelve occasions, not one occasion." Nobody ever made him back down.

RB: That seems like the proper note upon which to conclude the interview. Thank you.