

OH #494; William Hopkins  
OPEN; 384 pages

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE  
DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER LIBRARY

Legal Agreement Pertaining to the Oral History Interview of WILLIAM J. HOPKINS.

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 21 of Title 44, United States Code, and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth, I, William J. Hopkins of Silver Spring, Maryland, hereinafter referred to as the donor, do hereby give, donate and convey to the United States of America all my rights, title, and interest in the tape recordings and transcripts of personal interviews conducted on April 13, 1974, November 14, 1974, February 3, 1975, June 6, 1975 and August 18, 1976 and prepared for deposit in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library. This assignment is subject to the following terms and conditions:

(1) The transcripts shall be available for use by researchers as soon as they have been deposited in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

(2) The tape recordings shall not be available for use by researchers during the donor's lifetime. After the donor's death, access to the tape recordings shall be for background use only, and researchers may not cite, paraphrase, or quote therefrom.

(3) During the donor's lifetime the donor retains all copyright in the material given to the United States by the terms of this instrument. Thereafter the copyright in both the transcripts and tape recordings shall pass to the United States Government. During the donor's lifetime, researchers may publish brief "fair use" quotations from the transcripts (but not the tape recordings) without the donor's express consent in each case.

(4) Copies of the open portions of the interview transcripts, but not the tape recordings, may be provided by the library to researchers upon request.

(5) Copies of the interview transcripts, but not the tape recordings, may be deposited in or loaned to institutions other than the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

William J. Hopkins  
Donor

September 4, 1984  
Date

Robert W. Ware  
Archivist of the United States

October 3, 1984  
Date

INTERVIEW WITH  
William Hopkins  
on  
April 13, 1974  
for  
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library



This is an interview being taped with Mr. William Hopkins, Executive Clerk of the White House on April 13, 1974 in the Park Central Hotel, Washington, D.C. Present for the interview are Mr. Hopkins and Dr. Maclyn Burg of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library staff. The background noise is an air conditioner. I think it will not seriously affect the sound of the conversation.

DR. BURG: Mr. Hopkins, I now know that you were born in northeast Kansas, forty some miles north of Topeka, and that you graduated from high school in 1927 and in '29 went to Washington. If I remember the interview that Mr. Fred Dutton of the [John F.] Kennedy [Library] project had with you, you almost at once went into government service in Washington?

MR. HOPKINS: Yes, I had been working for the Burlington Railroad in Centerville, Iowa after having gone to business college for a year in Chillicothe, Missouri. And while in Chillicothe, I had taken a civil service examination. While I was working for the Burlington in Centerville I got a telegram one day from the Adjutant-General's office, one of those telegrams saying in effect, "Will you accept, if offered, a job in the government, grade-1, in the Adjutant-General's office?"

Well I hadn't been at Centerville very long then; so I wired back and said, "No, but keep my name on the list."



Well about four or five months later I got another telegram, this one from the Bureau of Naturalization, which was in the Department of Labor, saying the same thing. I started down to the Western Union the following morning going to send them a regret too, but, figuring that if I did it twice I probably wouldn't keep my name on the list, I changed my mind on the way down to the telegraph office and said, "I'll accept." So that meant that I came to Washington and started working for the Bureau of Naturalization in May of 1929.

BURG: You were a single man at that time?



HOPKINS: Oh, yes. I had just turned nineteen years old.

BURG: And Mr. [Herbert] Hoover had been elected in 1928 and inaugurated actually then in March of '29. So your arrival closely--

HOPKINS: My arrival was just the same year before the collapse.

BURG: Now how long did you stay with the Bureau of Naturalization?

HOPKINS: Well, I was with the Bureau of Naturalization until



I went to the White House which was in October of 1931.

BURG: Now what kind of work had you been doing in naturalization?



HOPKINS: Well, I was in the chief clerk's office there. At the White House in those years and subsequent years they had a great many detailed employees from the departments and agencies. The Bureau of Naturalization had a young man on detail working in the correspondence section in the White House, and he resigned. I think he went up to teach Spanish at Cornell; he was of Spanish descent from New Mexico. Working at the White House as chief of Correspondence was a man who was a brother of the chief of one of the sections in the Bureau of Naturalization. This young fellow had worked in the White House office for the brother there. So apparently he appealed to his brother to get a replacement, who in turn talked to the Commissioner of Naturalization. I was then working in the chief clerk's office right outside the commissioner's office, and I guess I was the first one they thought of so they asked me to go over to the White House temporarily. Temporary in my mind was about thirty days or something like that. The commissioner walked over with me and introduced me to Rudolph Forster and Maurice Latta who

were the executive clerks in those days and then took me up to Charles Wagner in the correspondence section where my work was to start.

BURG: Rudolph Latta, did you say?

HOPKINS: Rudolph Forster. F-o-r-s-t-e-r.

BURG: And the second name?

HOPKINS: Maurice Latta.

BURG: L-a-t-t-a?

HOPKINS: Yes. I worked in the correspondence section for most of the time until I eventually succeeded to Mr. Latta's job when he replaced Mr. Forster on Mr. Forster's death. That was, of course, a number of years later.

BURG: Approximately what time did that occur?

HOPKINS: Well, Mr. Forster died in 1943, and then Mr. Latta was promoted to Mr. Forster's job as the chief executive clerk. I think his full title at that time was Executive Clerk in charge of the White House Office. I became the junior Executive



Clerk, Prior to that of course when either Mr. Forster or Mr. Latta had been away, which was very seldom I might say, I had gone down to substitute. In fact, the year I was married in 1934, the minute I got back I was called on to substitute. Mr. Latta was away, and, at that time, they were rebuilding the West Wing, and the office was operating out of the executive residence as they call it now. We called it the executive mansion in those days. My desk, where I was filling in, was right in the corridor right off the East Room. And Mr. Forster of course was still alive then; Mr. Latta was on leave; so I was filling in for Mr. Latta. And coming right back off a honeymoon I was working until eight or nine o'clock at night which my wife couldn't hardly understand, but of course it didn't last very long which was very helpful.

BURG: Fortunate for the marriage. I can see that. Strange how women take that kind of view of things. Won't let a man get on with his job.

HOPKINS: She was good about it, and it worked out all right.

BURG: Since I know that Mr. Dutton of the Kennedy project covered quite well, I thought, some of the comparisons and



some of your career so that I know that's on the record, at the point when Dwight Eisenhower is elected in November of '52, what was your position? Your title, for example, before the inauguration, were you then Executive Clerk?

HOPKINS: I was Executive Clerk. In other words, I became Executive Clerk early in 1948. Mr. Latta had passed away, and I'm speaking from memory now, probably late in January. I was Acting Executive Clerk for a couple of months and became Executive Clerk, about, in March or April of 1948.

BURG: Now it would appear that that office has been exceedingly stable over quite some period of time, hasn't it? Because Latta succeeds Forster, and you follow in and take Latta's job. Then when Latta passes away, you then take his position which had been Forster's. So the three of you cover a long of span of the presidency. Mr. Forster I presume had come in--

HOPKINS: Mr. Forster and Mr. Latta both came in under the McKinley administration. Now they hadn't been in that position all that time. Mr. Forster had been in that area and at one time, back in the Theodore Roosevelt administration,





I think both their titles were Assistant Secretary to the President. But titles changed over the years. During the Wilson administration Mr. Forster was the, I'm not sure what his title was, I think it was Executive Clerk. Mr. Latta was then what they called the Record Clerk. And a man named Brehaney, as I remember, it was before my time, was Mr. Forster's assistant in those days. I think Mr. Latta was Mr. Forster's assistant from the end of the Wilson administration on up to the time of Mr. Forster's death.

BURG: Now is it safe to assume that the man who took over from you upon your retirement had served with you for some considerable period of time? Or was there break in precedent there?

HOPKINS: Well, there's a break to some extent. While I was Executive Clerk there were four different people who served as my assistant, all of whom, with the exception of the last one, are dead now. When I first took over as Executive Clerk following Mr. Latta's death, a young lady, Rena Ridenour, who had been at the White House since the Coolidge administration and was then serving as Assistant Chief of Correspondence, was the acting Junior Executive Clerk. We were scouting around for a



young man to take over. She was Acting Executive Clerk for a little less than a year I guess. Then Herbert Miller who was the Chief of Records, it was a job that Mr. Latta had had in his earlier days there, became my assistant as Executive Clerk. He passed away with a brain tumor. Then Wayne Hawks who was Chief of Records became my assistant as Executive Clerk. He had been at the White House for roughly twenty odd years. [He] had served, before being Chief of Records, in the communications office. In fact, he had been one of the communicators on President Eisenhower's train after the war over in Germany, in the signal corps. He passed away with a heart attack at his desk one day. This was in 1968, early in 1968. Then John Ratchford who had been Mr. Hawk's successor as Chief of Records came over as my Assistant Executive Clerk. When I retired, Mr. Ratchford had been in that job roughly three years, but they decided to bring in as my successor Noble Melencamp who had been a state department foreign service officer. [He] had been with the Nixon administration since before the inauguration having gone up and helped them some in New York before the inauguration and had been basically working in the correspondence area. He stayed



on the State Department roles and left the White House in less than a year after I retired. I think he's now in the foreign service in Moscow, I believe. John Ratchford continued as his assistant and is still the assistant today. The young man that's in my job I had now is Bob Linder from the Bureau of Management and Budget.

BURG: Did Ratchford spell his name R-a-t-c-h-f-o-r-d?

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Melencamp?

HOPKINS: M-e-l-e-n-c-a-m-p.

BURG: Now, there was one other name that you mentioned earlier, Rena--

HOPKINS: Ridenour. R-i-d-e-n-o-u-r.

BURG: Now it seems to me, Mr. Hopkins, that it would be very useful, although this will probably sound unusual to you, to have on the record precisely what your job was. Let us key it, again, to the Eisenhower administration. When the inauguration is over, if the President were to be



introduced to you on the 22nd of January, what tasks would he find you in charge of? What was the work at that point in your career?



HOPKINS: Well, the Office of the Executive Clerk and those operating units working within that framework provided continuity to the White House office from one administration to another. Within the framework of the Office of the Executive Clerk was the mail room where the mail is received and first read, the file room, correspondence section, the telephone and telegraph room, the records office, the office of Accounts Purchases and Personnel, the messenger office and duplicating section. Those were the basic areas within the framework of the Executive Clerk's office. We were there to serve loyally and to the best of our ability the President and the members of his staff. Depending on how the administration operated, and of course we did what they wanted us to do, but in most administrations many of the, in fact a greater portion of the official documents outside of the National Security area that went to the President, went over the Executive Clerk's desk both going in and coming out--to see that there were in proper order, that the timing was right and that sort of thing. When they came out, it was a matter



to make sure that they had been properly acted upon and then they were distributed to those areas where they should go. In other words, proclamations and executive orders would go to the archives, eventually, and all bills to the archives. If it was a matter of a bill that had been vetoed, to see that it was properly delivered to the congress and things of that nature. Also it was an office where, based on policy and precedent, the staff would sometimes look for guidance as to what had happened in the past and how particular documents or matters should be pursued.



BURG: You're a group of civil service people, not political. You have held your jobs and hold them under the civil service commission and are there providing certain basic kinds of services to whatever administration comes in, goes out. That's the task of the office. Let me do this, because I'm not at all sure it's ever been done, let's take a look at those various divisions within the office or departments. For example, the first one that you mentioned, I believe, was the mail room. Probably most people would think in terms of the company clerk in the infantry or what have you, and yet it seems to me that the White House mail room is of a

distinctly different order. Now I assume that that mail room is handling quantities of incoming mail, perhaps thousands of letters and, particularly, after some major speech or some major event, illness of the President, anything of this sort. I assume that we're talking about a unit that may have a number of people in it, and I'd like to know what happens now. Thousands of pieces of mail come into that room. What is the process then that goes on in the mail room?



HOPKINS: Well, as you say, the volume varies with current events. It's heavy all the time. It is extremely heavy when something happens that causes the mail to increase very much in volume. The mail room, when I was there, had a contingent of roughly thirteen or fourteen people that were on the White House rolls. We also had what we called a postal unit which were people on the rolls of the Post Office Department and was a unit that was created back in the Roosevelt administration, and they assisted and worked with and integrated with the White House employees.

BURG: Why was it deemed necessary to have them too, Mr. Hopkins?

HOPKINS: Well, they were experienced in handling and sorting mail for one thing. They worked closely with the secret service in the security field. For instance, everything that came in the White House was fluoroscoped to make sure that there was nothing lethal in there and that type of thing.

BURG: Was this being done as early let us say as the Roosevelt administration?



HOPKINS: Yes, it's been done way back. And then they were very helpful in all areas of the mail room. In fact, many times when it came to be a matter of promotion, we looked to the people in the postal area when we had a vacancy in the White House contingent to move them up as a member of the White House contingent. In fact, the young woman who was chief of the mail room, retired here within the last six months; now the young man that is second in charge in that room is one of the former postal clerks. That was one way of recruitment. Another thing was that you had a volume of operation there that was tremendously heavy, and it was a little beyond the White House budget. In fact, back in President Truman's time, there was a survey made to see what

could be done about reducing the number of detailed employees to the White House with a view to bringing them on the White House rolls. As a result, practically everybody was brought on the White House rolls at that time with the exception of the postal detail. One of the reasons for leaving them on the postal detail was on account of the benefits and things that they had under the postal service that they would lose if they moved to the civil service rolls. That was one of the reasons. And, as a result, the postal detail has remained a detail every since. But as far as the volume of mail was concerned, it's tremendous. I think back in President Eisenhower's day we used to figure on a volume of twenty-five or thirty thousand a week, normally. If something unexpected happened or some event that brought forth a tremendous outpouring of mail, it would shoot up over night to maybe a hundred thousand, both telegrams and letters. And the method of handling, of course, in the mail room is sort of a funneling process. The more experienced people would scan that mail real hurriedly. With experience, they can pretty much tell by looking at a envelope whether it's something of some importance, comes from people of some importance. They are





familiar with the President's friends, people he writes to and that sort of thing, and they can pick out most of them. By doing that, they get over to the West Wing or the appropriate staff office in a matter of an hour or so the important mail, what is deemed the more important.



BURG: These would be judged, Mr. Hopkins, by quality of envelope and paper, return address, typed rather than handwritten, handwriting style--

HOPKINS: That type of thing and also sometimes merely by return name if the name is on the outside-- This is somebody the President knows or this is somebody that some member of the staff knows. In other words, it ought to move along quickly. Now of course you will, once in while, miss one doing that, but--. Then the rest of it is passed around to what we call mail analysts after having been opened by automatic machinery, and they read it. And if they find one of that type of course it's pushed right up to the chief of the mail room who moves it along in the proper channel. The other mail is read and fanned out several different ways. A great deal of it would have to come over to the Executive Clerk's

office. Some of it would go to the appropriate staff members. Some of it would be charged out to the appropriate department or agency on the theory that this is something the department or agency can handle better than the White House because they have a substantive answer. The residue would go up to the correspondence section.



BURG: Now if I was one of the staff assistants in the White House and a letter comes addressed to me, it is not opened but is simply delivered to me unopened?

HOPKINS: That's right. When it's addressed to the President, unless they have orders to the contrary, it's opened in there. Now occasionally a staff member will say, "I want my mail opened in the mail room." But that's not done unless they're ordered to do it.

BURG: So then it's parceled out. Some of this, because it would be from someone who had migrated to the United States and they're inquiring about naturalization, that is going to be attached to a buck slip of some sort and--

HOPKINS: And sent to the Department of Justice probably. We used to try and send it over once a day. We kept a record of all this mail. Before the days of the xerox machine it

was done on a stencil and then mimeographed. The way it was done, they'd merely have the name and the address and two or three words of what the letter was about. They would have a whole list of them on one stencil. That would be mimeographed, and then they would have enough copies for each name on there and put the appropriate copy in the appropriate place in the files. So if John Jones wrote you about his naturalization and wrote in a week later and said, "Last week I wrote you a letter, and I haven't heard from it," we could go to the file of John Jones and say we sent that letter four days ago to the Department of Justice.

BURG: And the Central Files would then contain the list that Jones happens to appear on. He may be one of sixteen or twenty or thirty names, Jones underlined, line down to the disposition, and it goes into the Central Files so that one has that check, and you can say this is what was done with it. It went here or it went there. I wondered about that because I was looking through the Central Files and encountered those lists, those mimeographed lists.



HOPKINS: Currently, since the advent of the xerox machine, you can make copies of those letters and put a copy of the letter in the file which is faster than the old system. It takes up a little more space in the files I might say. Of course many experts have come in and said, "You're wasting your time doing that. Just shoot this over to the Department of Justice. If John Jones writes in and doesn't tell you enough about it, that's just his hard luck." Well, we never felt that way. In other words, we felt, from the President's own interest, we ought to be able to know what we did with John Jones' letter and to follow up on it.



BURG: And similarly, Mr. Hopkins, if that letter was even subtly threatening, there were forms which were used that diverted that letter to the attention of the Secret Service.

HOPKINS: That's right. They were then given an opportunity to evaluate that letter. Some of them they would keep and others they would send back saying, "We're not interested." In other words, they would evaluate and say, "This isn't a threat," or "It's nothing of enough moment for us to get involved in." So they would send it back, in which case it



would be in other channels.

BURG: So the Secret Service by that technique were keeping touch with virtually every bit of mail that was in the least bit suspicious or threatening.

HOPKINS: That's right.



BURG: In some cases, simply the deranged person who wanted to write to the President and did.

HOPKINS: Some people are of such mentality and maybe deranged that you get a letter from them maybe every day.

BURG: I noticed there were some thick files where the same person kept writing back.

We've talked about the mail room. You did not say this, but probably the largest percentage of the mail would then go to the correspondence section?

HOPKINS: The largest volume of that retained in the White House would go to the correspondence section. It was what we called the miscellaneous residue. It covered everything, the whole panorama of government. It was the type of thing that

it was felt should be acknowledged from the White House and was not the type of thing that required personal attention, at least at that stage, of the President or a member of his staff. Now in the correspondence section, they may disagree with the mail room in certain areas and feel, well, this mail should go to a staff member. They would probably send it over the Executive Clerk's office and say, "I don't think we should handle this; maybe you should." In which case, we would probably reroute it to a staff member.

BURG: Was the correspondence section under your direction?

HOPKINS: That's right.

BURG: It was?



HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: May I ask, who made that kind of decision in the correspondence section? Was there a chief of that section?

HOPKINS: There was a chief of the correspondence section, yes.

BURG: And so as the men and women in the section examined the

mail, was it just routed to them? I assume you had a number of people doing this kind of work. What would happen? Would I as an employee of the correspondence section simply be issued a bundle of mail at eight-thirty in the morning or nine in the morning and asked to work through that? How would that occur?

HOPKINS: Well, that would vary. During the Eisenhower Administration, the young lady who I indicated was my assistant in the Executive Clerk's office for about a year, Rena Ridenour, was chief of correspondence, at least until the 1956 election. She retired early in 1957. It would go in there, and there was a central depository area for the mail that came from the mail room. Then it would be fanned through by one of her assistants. They would glance at it very hurriedly. In other words, we had a group of what we called correspondence clerks, and some of them had talents better in one area than others. We tried to get to one correspondence clerk the letters in which the person was either recommending somebody for a job or asking for a job. We tried to get to another correspondent[ce clerk] the type of letter that required maybe an innocuous but very friendly type of response. There were a number of these letters that were worthy of presidential



letters, a presidential acknowledgment. In other words, compassionate letters, the ones that had high praise for the President from particular groups or some, maybe, an old lady sending the President a pair of socks and that type of thing. We tried to get those to the people who were talented in writing nice, innocuous, friendly letters for the President's signature.

BURG: So we're not only talking about the letters coming to me as an employee of the correspondence section we're also talking about the other phase of my job not only to read them, but I am the one who will respond to them. I will type out the letter of response.

HOPKINS: Yes. Well, it was done in several ways. They would either be individually drafted or handled on the bases of a form letter text. Then we had a typing unit that would actually type the letters up which was all a part of the correspondence section. But a number of letters were prepared that way for the President's signature. If it was a letter that was such that it was felt somebody closer to the President could handle this much better than somebody in the correspondence section, that would be fanned up to the





Executive Clerk's office and, in all probability, turned over to Mrs. [Ann C.] Whitman.

BURG: Now is that mail basically mail addressed to the President?

HOPKINS: Yes.



BURG: On anything else, the other material's been segregated out, that which should go to Justice or to Naturalization or to go to one of the White House staff.

HOPKINS: The majority of that has been segregated out in the mail room. There would be some additional segregated out in the correspondence section, but not very likely.

BURG: So basically this is mail that was intended for the President, and then a decision has to be made as to whether this should be handled further up. Would it, for example, occur that one member of the correspondence section reads a letter; it is addressed to the President; they are going to draft the response. Would they make the decision there in correspondence to draft the response for the signature of Tom [Thomas E.] Stephens for example?

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Or Ann Whitman, depending on what they felt the circumstances were?

HOPKINS: Yes. In other words, if it was a matter relating to an appointment--

[Interruption]

BURG: I think we've made it reasonably clear what happens in the correspondence section. You will recall Lillian Brown, Rusty Brown? She was on the White House staff.

HOPKINS: Oh, yes.



BURG: My understanding is that she began there in the correspondence section doing this kind of work, typing out drafts of letters.

HOPKINS: Yes. I believe she was working in General [Wilton B.] Person's office at the end of the administration.

BURG: Yes. Then we can establish here sort of a cross check for scholars using your interview. They may wish to check

Rusty Brown. There again we have someone on the White House staff who can explain how things functioned. Now there were other units within your office that you mentioned.

HOPKINS: I might mention before you leave the correspondence section that, as I said, the miscellaneous residue went to the correspondence section, but a great deal had come over to the West Wing or to the appropriate staff office. In other words, anything that the mail room felt, "Now the President should see this," would come over to the Executive Clerk's office. Or a great deal relating to other staff offices, top level mail, in other words, from the cabinet members, from members of other government agencies, state officials and that type of thing, regardless of what it was about, came to our mail room, and then they would fan it out from there. If it was something relating to an appointment, I would send it on in to Tom Stephens. If it was something relating to a press matter and was of enough importance, it went on in to Jim [James C.] Hagerty's office. If it was something more or less of a personal nature, it went into Mrs. Whitman and that type of thing. Some of it I would divert and send it back to the correspondence section, "You can handle this."



BURG: So these are decisions that you are making, not being made in the correspondence section.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: And I've been thinking in terms of mail from outside, that is mail coming out of the country at large. But a certain amount of mail presumably was coming in, as you have suggested, perhaps a bundle of things coming in from Health, Education and Welfare, from State, from other executive departments of the government. These too would come into the mail room.



HOPKINS: Quite a bit of it would, yes. Occassionally it would be a hand carried job over to, well, if it was State Department it would probably come over to Pete [Paul T.] Carroll or Andy [Andrew J.] Goodpaster. But I would say volume wise, probably most of it with the exception of the State Department, came to the mail room.

BURG: The federal things, the things that came from here in Washington from various executive departments, was that franked material or were there sort of envelopes and routine



ways in which there was a sort of an intra-Washington mail delivery like



HOPKINS: Well they have what they called a one-stop system which is inter-governmental mail delivery. Some of it came that way; some of it would come through regular mail; some of it would come hand delivered. If one of the agency heads had something he wanted to get to the White House right away, it would come hand delivered. If he hadn't made previous arrangements, it would come to the mail room. Sometimes he would have a contact with a staff member and say, "See here, I got a letter that the President ought to see right away; I'm going to send it over to you. And he would have his messenger hand deliver maybe to a particular staff member. Sometimes we would get a call like that, other times General Goodpaster or somebody. As time went on I think the tendency was for more of that type of mail to come to General Goodpaster as Staff Secretary.

BURG: So I see then this business of it hits the mail room and a great deal of the segregation process--the important material, whether this is from friends out there in the

country somewhere, or whether it is the one stop federal mail delivery, that's routed out to the appropriate destination. Correspondence section is going to handle, then, the residue which is probably the mass of the mail in several different ways. Now among the groups that you spoke of as being part of your office, I believe you spoke of a message center.

HOPKINS: Well, we had a telegraph room. And of course we had the telephone room. The communications office, telegraph office, they do two things. They have the ability to send and receive. All the telegrams that come to the White House come through their facilities. Of course, that probably fluctuates even more than the mail.

BURG: And is particularly tied to events.



HOPKINS: Yes, very much so. And it's the type of thing that you've got to handle right away. There's something about a telegram that you want to read right away, not let it lay around for three or four days before somebody gets to look at it. They also have the ability to send all the telegrams that go out from the White House, go through that center.

BURG: What kinds of things typically might the White House send out in the form of telegrams?

HOPKINS: Well, it might be something that, from a time element, you want to respond to. Many times a message of greeting from the President would go out that way, and this is something, as I recall, it developed in the Eisenhower Administration. There was a feeling here that if the President is going to send a greeting to some small group, maybe he doesn't have to be bothered with it. We can send a telegram, and if we send a telegram it doesn't have to be signed so that it saves a person's time. Of course those would have to be approved on a high level by the appropriate staff member. In other words, anybody couldn't just up and draft a telegram and send it out on his own. He would have to have proper approval.



BURG: Telegrams then, by and large, are not going to be drafted in the correspondence section, more apt to be drafted by the staff.

HOPKINS: No. They have to be drafted by someone on the staff who deals basically in that kind of work. In other words,

a Fred [Frederick E.] Fox or somebody like that of the Eisenhower White House.

BURG: Telegrams might go out to support perhaps the candidacy of some particular Republican running for office in one of the states.

HOPKINS: And then, of course, suppose the President is calling a conference of some kind, and there isn't time to send letters. Then they send out what they call a book telegram. In other words it would be common language addressed to maybe two hundred people, and the telegram takes the form of two hundred addresses and the body of the telegram, that type of thing.

BURG: Now on the other side, if I hear the President make an address, maybe the State of the Union Address, and there's some particular feature of that that I want to strongly support as a citizen. I send a telegram to the White House supporting that particular portion of the address. My telegram is received by the messenger center, the communications center. What then happens to, in a sense, my vote on this matter, my expression of opinion?





HOPKINS: Well, in my time there, I'm not sure that they handle it that way now, I don't think they do, all those telegrams came over to the Executive Clerk's office. We asked the telegraph room, of course, to separate them, pro and con and miscellaneous. Suppose the President makes a speech, and during the night maybe a thousand telegrams will come in. You might have six hundred pro, three hundred con, and a hundred you can't classify either way--they're just more or less comment. You ask the telegraph room also to separate any names they recognize from important people, friends of the President, officials and that type of thing. Then we try to get there a little early and go through them again and see if we can pick up some names that maybe they missed. That's one of the first things the President or some member of his staff will want to know the following morning, "What's the telegraphic response?" That would ordinarily go into Mrs. Whitman broken down to the best of our ability. She would run through them again, probably pick out some names she recognized that we didn't, having been with the President <sup>so</sup> as long.



BURG: So it was a standard procedure that after any major

address or any major statement of policy even perhaps a press conference where sensitive things were the topic of discussion, you virtually knew there was going to be a telegraphic response as well as a letter response to this; so you were prepared through the message center. It was automatically done. They knew that the first thing they had to do was tabulate this.

HOPKINS: If it was a matter of, you know, we're going to have a heavy response, they arranged so that their personnel was a little heavier that night to help to take care of this.



BURG: How big an office was it generally speaking, the message--

HOPKINS: Well, it was relatively small; you had about seven people there I believe. That was only one of their responsibilities. They are also responsible for our transportation subject to the instructions from the press secretary when the president was in travel status. They took care of chartering a plane for the press and went on advance trips to arrange for press facilities and that type of thing. So sometimes our telegraph rooms or the communications office was stripped personnel wise. They had three or four of their men out on a trip someplace. So then it was a matter of either calling

for help maybe from one of the other offices, correspondence office or file room or, once in a while, calling for help from the signal agency, one of the fellows in the signal agency there.

BURG: They actually sent their people out on trips?

HOPKINS: Oh, yes.



BURG: Why was that done, Mr. Hopkins? Why their group?

HOPKINS: Well, traditionally that office had been the transportation office, and they were the ones that, speaking in the vernacular, wet-nursed the press on the trips, and still do.

BURG: Do you presume, only because they're in a form of communications, somebody made a decision further down the line: that's the way it would be.

HOPKINS: It's been that way ever since I was at the White House. In other words, when I first went there a man named Doc Smithers was in charge of the telephone-telegraph room, and he was the transportation man in those days.

BURG: Their work in this respect was totally tied to the press and handling arrangements for the press?

HOPKINS: Under instructions from the press secretary. In that capacity they worked with the press secretary.

BURG: So Jim Hagerty is the one who gives them the word, "We're going out to Minneapolis, and the press is going to want to go. Lay on an aircraft for the press, and one or two of you accompany that aircraft."



HOPKINS: Yes. And on account of the necessity of knowing what the lay of the land was, somebody from that office accompanied the advance party to see what the facilities were.

BURG: Would they be charged with such responsibility as lining up living accommodations for the press while they were--

HOPKINS: Accommodations, telephone facility and that sort of thing.

BURG: I'd never known that before. So if we get back then to the telegram, I could be reasonably assured as a citizen that my expression of opinion is going to be tabulated and



will reach some responsible member of the White House staff,  
the President's staff--

HOPKINS: No doubt about it.



BURG:--in the form of a summary probably the very next morning.

HOPKINS: Maybe in the form of the telegram itself. Many times the President himself would like to thumb through this whole pile of telegrams very hurriedly just to get the feel of them. And, of course, Mr. Hagerty would have a press conference early in the morning, and that's one of the things he would want to know, what the response was. Well we'd probably get a call from him, and we would say well Mrs. Whitman's got the telegrams. Well, he would probably run in there and thumb through them or maybe have them on his desk or something when the press was in or at least say we've gotten so many. And, of course, one of the practices I think of most of the press secretaries was to lay on a little heavy the percentages and the volume. I don't think Jim Hagerty was alone in that. I'm sure they've all done it to some extent.

BURG: I'm happy to tell you we've received p-thousand telegrams and eighty-five and a half percent in favor of us.

HOPKINS: Then, of course, what would happen subsequent to that was that Mrs. Whitman would pick out the telegrams that she wanted to handle herself or the President wanted to handle, people he knew. She would probably draft those herself. The rest of them would come back to the Executive Clerk's office to handle, and then it would be a matter of working with the correspondence section drafting up some basic drafts from which you could handle the volume, getting approval of those basic drafts from someone, the proper staff member, and then moving into them in volume.



BURG: So a letter is going to get back to me probably acknowledging the fact that I sent the telegram, thanking me for my expression of opinion. Is it your recollection that at any time you heard a disparity between the kind of results that you saw come across your desk and the kind of results that Mr. Hagerty announced? I'm thinking here of a circumstance where a thousand telegrams came in, and you knew darned well that what you had reported to him was that only

thirty percent approved the presidential action, seventy percent disapproved, and Mr. Hagerty did not give the figures that way.

HOPKINS: Yes, there were numerous instances, but I might say that he was not the only one. In other words, that happened in, I guess, practically every administration, maybe to greater degrees sometimes than others, but that was, I would say, standard practice.

BURG: So in your long service in that office, stretching from President Hoover right on through, there were times where you knew very well that there was a discrepancy between what had crossed your desk and what was being reported in the press room a short time later on by the press secretary. And this was commonly done.



HOPKINS: Yes, that was standard practice, I would say.

BURG: Now let me ask you this, which may be a very impossible question to ask, but does anything stand out now in your mind any time when this discrepancy astonished a man of your long experience in observing this kind of behavior?

HOPKINS: Nothing stands out in my mind, no. Many times, of course, it was obvious to us on the inside why a press secretary would respond the way he did. Sometimes he would say, maybe, "We're not in the numbers business; we're not giving out figures." Well, we would know why he was operating that way. Sometimes he would say it's too early. We knew what was back of such an answer. But, as I say, it was standard practice, and I think probably the newsmen sort of knew about as much about it as we did.

BURG: You saw grains of salt being taken throughout the room when the announcement came. Now, have I missed any other function of that message center, communications center?



HOPKINS: No, that's basically it. Since the time of President Roosevelt, prior to that, the telephone room and the telegraph room had been together. It was broken up and separated when President Roosevelt came in. Miss Hackmeister was brought in as the chief telephone operator, and, as a result, the telephone and telegraph room had been separated. In the early days, and this is before the Eisenhower Administration, the telegraph room took care of the transmittal of



all classified material. But that was changed during World War II.

BURG: Where did it move then, to the signal corps?

HOPKINS: It moved then to what we call the map room and the signal corps area. But prior to that, the telegraph room had to handle all the classified material. But that predated the Eisenhower Administration.

BURG: Well when it moved to the map room, can I assume that, in some cases, this classified material will be sent out coded?



HOPKINS: Oh, yes, always. Before the days of current equipment, it was a matter of having to sit down with a code book and then code and decode. I remember once, way back in the Hoover Administration, I was on a trip down in the Florida area. I guess it was after the election. It was after President Hoover had been defeated, and Doc Smithers, whom I mentioned earlier, was the chief of transportation and communications then. A telegram came in in code, and he and I sat up most of the night decoding that thing--just a matter of having

this code book and doing it word by word which is a pretty slow process compared to what they can do today.

BURG: Yes. Both of you had government clearances that permitted you to do this kind of work?

HOPKINS: Well, there wasn't such a matter of clearances in those days it was a matter of--

BURG: You sat in the office, and you did it.

HOPKINS: Yes.



BURG: Then, later on, the code machines and the much more sophisticated devices were used. So that kind of material, classified material out of the map room, is going through, may I use the term military channels? The signal corps operating it?

HOPKINS: Yes, I would say so.

BURG: That too is unusual to me; I simply hadn't known that. Now the White House switchboard was part of this setup, this communications office?

HOPKINS: No, it had been broken away in the Roosevelt days.

BURG: But did it still fall under your jurisdiction then as Executive Clerk?

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: So you were in charge of that too, that switchboard manned twenty-four hours a day.

HOPKINS: Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.



BURG: And by several different operators? That is, all throughout the twenty-four hours, we're talking about four or five operators I presume on that switchboard.

HOPKINS: During the heavy hours each position was manned. During the night, in other words, the third trick, unless something unusual was breaking probably manned by only one person. But others were reachable and could be called in on short notice. The telephone board was then in the West Wing, and during the Eisenhower Administration it had just about reached its capacity. General Goodpaster was negotiating with the telephone people trying to increase the facilities,

and they just couldn't do it in the West Wing; they didn't have any more room. But after negotiating with them quite a while, he finally decided (I suppose he had consulted with the President; I don't know that, but I assume he did) to ride it out till the end of the administration. So it was not until the Kennedy administration that the room was enlarged, moved across the street temporarily up on the fourth floor of the Executive Office Building. And it's now down in the basement of the Executive Office Building. There's a nine-position board, in other words, facilities much greater than they were before. Those boards were especially built. The one that was in the West Wing was especially built just for White House purposes and has facilities that the ordinary board doesn't have.



BURG: Could you describe what that board might have that a normal board would not have?

HOPKINS: Well they had all kinds of facilities for cutting in and getting help through the C & P operators that the ordinary board would not have.

BURG: C & P?



HOPKINS: Chesapeake and Potomac, the telephone company here in Washington. Not knowing too much of the technicalities, but they had a number of facilities that the ordinary board does not have.

BURG: Might one presume that a threatening call coming into the White House could be--

HOPKINS: Oh, yes, they could switch that immediately to the Secret Service.

BURG: Could be switched and could be traced back.



HOPKINS: And the telephone operators have built themselves up a reputation second to none. Each outgoing administration they'd get all kinds of praise from cabinet officers and others. At Christmas time they're always remembered, the operators are. In fact that's one of the tremendous problems, the change of the administration. The outgoing people when they're out they find that they have problems, telephone wise, and their tendency is to call the White House board and say, "Can't you help me get so and so." Even members of congress would do it, and the time comes when they just have to turn them off.

BURG: They were so used to an excellent kind of service from these operators, very skilled people, on those boards. Were they all women, Mr. Hopkins, or were there men on there?

HOPKINS: Men at night.

BURG: Now those people were trained by the telephone company or were they trained by your people?

HOPKINS: They all had telephone experience before they came here. They were either recruited from one of the other boards in town in the government or from the telephone company. But our chief operator used to always claim it took about two years on the job there to really become efficient.

BURG: And I can imagine some of the kinds of efficiency that you would want from operators handling that kind of work.

HOPKINS: You know many times the President, I don't know as President Eisenhower did but I know some of his successors did, they'd pick up the phone and say, "Get me so and so and so and so and so and so." Give them a whole list of people, and then they'd try to get them and line them up and keep



them happy till the President was ready to talk to them. It's a tremendous job. And they'd get a lot of crank calls, particularly the night operators, that they had to handle and be as friendly and judicious as they can be. And the same thing during the daytime. The operators get some people on there that are long winded, but they can't be disrespectful. They've got to be careful how they handle them because they're citizens, they're voters, and if they do get a little perturbed or hang up on them or something the chances are we'll get a letter from them saying, "See here, this operator was disrespectful to me," and so on and so forth.



BURG: Now do the operators' responsibilities extend any further than merely making connections? Do they keep any kind of log?

HOPKINS: Oh, yes, they do for the President and for certain of the top staff members.

BURG: Now these logs contain what kinds of data? The name of the caller?

HOPKINS: Basically who made the call, whether the call was

completed, what time it was, that sort of [thing]. Nothing about the content.

BURG: And do they, on any occasion, ever listen to conversations or is their job simply make that connection--

HOPKINS: And that's it.

BURG: And that's it.

HOPKINS: Yes.



BURG: So they're not privy to any of the calls whatsoever. And at the end of day I would assume their log sheets are collected--

HOPKINS: And sent over to the President's private secretary or to the proper staff office.

BURG: These become part of the permanent record?

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Could one consult these files, Mr. Hopkins, afterwards, say, in a presidential library, and be pretty well assured that on this day you have a full record of the calls made by



the President himself or made by Tom Stephens or by Jim Hagerty?

HOPKINS: I would say so, yes.

BURG: Sometimes our question may be, "Was the President there that day?" And the telephone log might be a clue to that sort of thing.

HOPKINS: Yes. Now you have to be careful of course, and I'm not just sure how this might show up on that log. Suppose that the President was at Gettysburg, and he made the call through the White House board, which they probably do because they have tielines you see to where the President is. If he wanted to call John Foster Dulles in London or some place, he'd call through the White House board even though he was out of town.

BURG: It's possible that the log might not indicate that the call originated in Gettysburg.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: So there too is another way in which the citizen can



make contact with the White House coming into this telephone switchboard. About all we can say there is that the call is given whatever disposition it deserves; it is routed. Let us say that a citizen calls, and he has some problem with naturalization; he wants to talk to the President of the United States because he's rather inexperienced in these things. Does the White House operator determine the content of that call and then route it properly?

HOPKINS: Yes. Of course if there's a doubt and this person insisted on talking to the President and they were doubtful whether he was somebody that should be put through or not, they would probably check with the President's private secretary. If they're not sure in their own mind that this was merely an ordinary citizen calling in about a naturalization matter which could be considered in the Department of Justice, they would try to encourage him either to call direct or to divert his call to the Department of Justice with his permission.

BURG: So that White House operator has got to make decisions of that sort?



HOPKINS: Oh, yes, very definitely.

BURG: A former White House operator stopped in at the Eisenhower Library this past year, and I talked with the lady and with her husband a bit, and I think perhaps it might be interesting for us to go back to her and talk about some of the kinds of decisions she would have to make, she having sat at that post for a number of years.

HOPKINS: I'm sure it would be.

BURG: I think we shall do that. Now among the other units that you mentioned I believe you spoke of the records office. Are we talking about now, say the White House central files or what kind of records are we talking about?

HOPKINS: No, no, the records office is the office where we keep the record of official presidential actions, enrolled bills, executive orders, proclamations, pardons, and that type of thing, and the record of the issuance of presidential commissions. Suppose the President today decides to nominate John Jones to be Attorney General. In the Eisenhower days, we would get word from Governor [Sherman] Adams that we want a nomination for John Jones. We would call over to the



records office and they would prepare a nomination which would say in effect, (this is on a form that is prepared by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing) to the Senate of the United States, "I nominate John Jones to be Attorney General of the United States." That's all it says. That would come over from the records office, be signed by the President. If it was something that Governor Adams wanted to discuss with the President, he would take it in himself, and, if it was something that had already been cleared with the President, there would be a covering memorandum that had been fixed up for Governor Adams signature which he would initial--

[Interruption]



BURG: Now you were saying that--

HOPKINS: We have the paper now with Governor Adams' covering memorandum on it to the President recommending that the nomination of John Jones to be Attorney General be signed. As I say, if it was something that the Governor has already cleared with the President and it's more or less proforma, now he'll probably send it in to my desk, in which case we would take it in the next time we were going into the President's office



with material to be signed and get it signed. We now have a signed nomination. The only problem now is when do we send it to the senate? That could be immediately or the next day depending on instructions either from Governor Adams or the press secretary, Mr. Hagerty. All right, it goes back to the records office. They make their record on cards of this action. The nomination is sealed in a special envelope addressed to the senate. It is sealed with sealing wax with the presidential seal on it. The appropriate information is furnished the press office so that Mr. Hagerty can announce it. And the chief of records or one of his assistants physically carry this up to the Hill. There they have to be recognized when the senate is in session, the chair recognizes them. They address the chair and say, in effect, "I have the honor to deliver to the senate a message from the President of the United States." This is handed over to one of the assistants who carries it up and gives it to the presiding officer. He in turn refers it to the appropriate committee of congress. When the senate has taken action, they send to the White House what is known as a resolution of confirmation telling the President that on such and such



a day the senate advised and consented to the nomination of John Jones to be Attorney General. We send that resolution of confirmation over to the Department of Justice.

BURG: That, by the way, has been hand carried back to the White House by--

HOPKINS: By a representative of the senate, and it is delivered to our records office. I was wrong in saying that particular one would go to Justice because this is a member of the Cabinet. We will then send that to the Department of State where a commission is prepared. A commission you've probably seen them, used to call them "bedsheets"; they're pretty good size. The form that takes goes back to the time of George Washington. The commission comes over and, there again, it would be in the group of material I would take into the President next time I went in. He signs it. It goes back to the Department of State to have the Great Seal affixed which, under the law, cannot be affixed until after the President has signed; we can't do it before. Then, if the Attorney General's going to be sworn in at the Department of Justice, the State Department will probably send it



[commission] over there to the executive assistant to the Attorney General. If he's going to be sworn in at the White House, it will come back to the White House so that it can be handed to the man at the time he's sworn in. The records office again would keep a record of that commission. They have cards which change in color each administration. In other words, the cards are all together. If you want to know who's been attorney general (this record has been kept and it has been kept on these cards since about 1913) you can go right to these cards and see them in succession there. So that they can be pulled out more quickly if you're looking for a particular administration, they changed the color of the cards each administration. The same thing is true somewhat in the enrolled bill field. If the President receives a bill from the congress, and there again it's brought down from either the office of the Secretary of the Senate or the office of the house administration depending on where the bill originated. It comes to our records office. They sign a receipt book brought by the messenger from the Hill as to the time it was received. They stamp on the side of the bill the date at which the ten days constitutional provision starts



tolling, and the bill is physically sent over to the Executive Clerk. They have fixed up at the same time and sent to the Executive Clerk a letter addressed to the Director of the Bureau of the Budget in those days advising him that bill number so and so entitled so and so has been received at the White House at such and such a date--please let the President have your necessary reports and recommendations. The bill is physically kept in the Executive Clerk's office. The letter goes to the Bureau of the Budget, and they fan out then facsimile copies of this bill to the appropriate departments and agencies asking them for their reports and recommendations. "Do you recommend that the President sign this bill? Do you recommend that he veto it," or what do you recommend? We try to get these reports and recommendations back to the President in about five or six days if we can so that that leaves the President a few of the ten days to take action. These bill reports would come back to my office addressed to the President with the supporting papers from the necessary departments and agencies. During the Eisenhower Administration then, the counsel's office reviewed these reports, either Garry [Gerald D.] Morgan or Mr. David Kendall





or Roemer McPhee depending on the situation at the time. When they were satisfied that the report was okay and that they were willing to recommend to the President that he follow the recommendations that had come from the Bureau of the Budget, they would come with those reports down to the Executive Clerk's office who would then attach the bill to the report. During the Eisenhower Administration, someone in the counsel's office physically carried these bills into the President most of the time. The President here had before him the recommendation. His counsel was there to explain anything further, and the President would probably act on it right at that time. Now if it was a bill that was contentious, in other words there was some recommendations for approval and some for disapproval, then it was a matter of the counsel's office in consultation maybe again with some of the departments and agencies that had already reported on the bill, other members of the staff, to evaluate this and make their own recommendations to the President. In which case, they probably would have maybe a lengthy covering memorandum setting forth their views. So, in that instance, it could go either way. The President might approve it, might



agree with his counsel. He might agree with a contrary recommendation from the Bureau of the Budget. If he agreed that it should be signed, of course he signed it. If he decided to veto it, and in those cases where there were contrary recommendations, there would undoubtedly be a veto draft with the papers that the counsel had taken in. In those cases where he vetoed, he signed the veto message and made no indication at all on the bill. When the counsel was done he usually brought all those papers back and turned them back to the Executive Clerk. We kept on our desk a stamp which had on it the words "approved" and the date. At that time we dated the bills which would show the date of the President's action. In President Truman's time, he kept that stamp on his desk and did it himself, but President Eisenhower did it otherwise so we kept a stamp at our desk. We thumbed through all these papers to make sure that they had been signed in the proper place because occasionally you would see a bill that had been missed somewhere. You had to watch that very carefully because you might be operating on your ninth or tenth day, and if the bill missed you were in trouble. So you had to make sure that all the papers were properly signed. In other words, if it was a veto, it was signed and signed on the



last page and not on the first page which would sometimes happen and that type of thing. And if there were any mistakes of that kind, you had to rectify them right away.

BURG: It's difficult to imagine that a mistake like that could happen, but let's say that it does and a bill that was intended to be approved is signed as though it were being vetoed or vice versa. Is it necessary then to go a long way back in the process and get a new copy of the bill or is there some remedial action that can be swiftly taken?

HOPKINS: No, very, very seldom if ever one was one signed by mistake. It's usually a case of maybe signing on the wrong page or something like that. In other words, if you have a veto message and it's three or four pages long, rather than signing at the end of the message they might sign on the third page. Or sometimes on a bill signed in the wrong place. That's what you usually run up against. In which case we would just leave that signature there and sign it again where he should sign it. Take it back into the President and say, "You must have the signature here." And they were always amenable to that, and there was no problem. If you couldn't



get back in yourself right away, you'd give it to the appointment secretary and say, "We need a signature on this right away. The President signed it at the wrong place." And the next time he was in to try to hurry up an appointment, he would slip it in front of the President and get it signed.

BURG: And no need for the President to line out that previous signature or do anything of this sort--

HOPKINS: Oh, no, no.



BURG:--just signs it correctly. Now when that process has been completed you have stamped "approved" on it with the date and that date always is the day he signs.

HOPKINS: The day he signs, yes. We had no problem in the Eisenhower days because they were all brought out immediately when they were signed. We did have problems occasionally in other administrations where sometimes they wouldn't get the bill maybe until a day or two later, and then we had to scrounge around and find out what the actual date of the signature was. But I don't think we had that problem in the Eisenhower days as I recall this.



Well anyway here the bills have been acted on and they are ready for further action. We then sent them back to the records office where they detached the bill file and retained the bill file in the records office. It did not go to central files; it stayed in the records office. Then they made up a list for the press office: "The President today signed the following bills." They would be identified by number and title. If the President was issuing a statement on that that was in addition to the bill list, then there would be a statement ready for stenciling for the press office. If it was a veto, of course, that was stencilled also, and that material was furnished the press office. Immediately when the press office releases that to the press, then the bills physically are sent down to Archives and reported down there according to bill number. The bill file of course stays at the White House. If it is a veto, the bill physically is carried back by someone in the records office, either the chief of records or one of his assistants to the house in which it originated with a message.

BURG: Reports in there as he did before that he has a message from the President of the United States and turns it over to them.



HOPKINS: Yes. Now if for any reason you're running under the tenth day and they're not in session, then it's a matter of having to make arrangements with the office of the Secretary of the Senate or the Clerk of the House to deliver it to their office, which under the Supreme Court rules, you can do in the ten days if they're not in session. And many times you have to do that, but the customary procedure is to be able to deliver it when they're in session and just deliver it on the floor. Now if the congress is out of session, then what is ordinarily a veto becomes a pocket veto and the President has customarily issued a statement then. The language of the message remains the same except you change the first sentence of it saying in effect, "I have withheld my approval from," and what you would ordinarily say to the Senate of the United States becomes a memorandum of disapproval. So it's just a matter for press information and congressional information as to why he vetoed it. But the bill itself remains at the White House, does not go back to the congress in the case of a pocket veto.

BURG: What is the disposition of it then? Is it put on file?



HOPKINS: Eventually it gets down to Archives or to the appropriate presidential library. Now, Mac, those pocket vetoes were held at the White House from the Roosevelt Administration up to, I guess, early in the Eisenhower Administration. They were eventually turned over to Archives. But they have been more diligent in turning over each administration now so they either end up at Archives or the presidential libraries' archives.

BURG: Now in the case of a vetoed bill, it goes back to the originating house, and let us say that it is passed through the necessary majority so that it is enacted into law. Is the White House then informed of this? Do copies of that bill come into the records office of the White House?



HOPKINS: Congress sends it directly to Archives in that instance. The official communication is between congress and the Archives. We get an unofficial notification and, of course, make a notation. There again, we have bill cards identifying each of these bills, and we have a notation there as to what happened. The records office keeps a record of each one of those bills so we can tell back, again,

to about 1913 what happened to particular bills. More or less the same procedure in connection with executive orders, proclamations, pardons, and that type of thing. Their record is kept in the records office.

BURG: Now the cards that are kept, it seemed to me, trace the course of that bill, dates and times to where the bill is and how it's moved. Those cards are kept there in the records office, still are there. Do you know, Mr. Hopkins, is it likely that they will simply continue to hold them there. I wouldn't expect they'd take a great deal of space. Is there a point at which old cards will go to the National Archives?

HOPKINS: Well, that wasn't contemplated when I left there, no. Now I'm not sure that Archives may not have microfilms of those.

BURG: And when you give 1913 as a cutoff date in the past, that's only because it was at that point that the file cards was instituted.

HOPKINS: That is when the system got started, yes.





BURG: Prior to that some other system was used.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Now I think there are other areas of responsibility that fell under your office--

HOPKINS: Our central files, for instance. That is just as the name implies. We take everything that the President or his staff are willing to give the central files, and we hope they will give us practically everything, but different staff members operate in different ways. Some are sort of packrats; they like to hold on to their files. Others don't want any files around at all, and they turn everything over to central files. We encourage them to turn as much as they can to central files because of the fact that then your central file is complete. You can get the whole picture when the President or the proper member of his staff calls for the file. If that is not done, you might have a piece in staff offices that is very pertinent, and if somebody looks through the file to make a decision it could change their decision completely if the whole file isn't there. But, as I say, that depends on the particular staff member how much the central file gets.



During the Eisenhower Administration, Central Files did not include Mrs. Whitman's file--she had specialized presidential files--and the file that General Goodpaster kept, and it wasn't voluminous, not nearly as voluminous as Mrs. Whitman's, of course. As I recall he only had maybe two or three file cases at the most. But then various staff members, some of them had bigger files than others. But that was one of John Eisenhower's problems I'm sure at the end of the administration--to go to the various staff offices and make sure that all these files were moved out. Then you have the problem which devolves on Archives: Here you've got not one set of files but maybe twenty-five sets of files, and they're not integrated.

BURG: Each one coming out of a various staff--



HOPKINS: Yes, but there's nothing much you can do about it. Even if the staff member decides six months before the end of the administration, "Well, I'm going to dump all these files on central files." Well they're so busy they don't have time to integrate them, and as a result Archives gets them just the way they were dumped.

BURG: In some instances they're going to come out jumbled up and out of the normal routine filing system used.

HOPKINS: Sure, and then the girl probably in the staff office is not trained in keeping files and maybe has a little system or no system at all.



BURG: Was it ever common for someone in a staff position at the White House, he handles material and perhaps he has to cope with a certain amount of correspondence across his desk in a given day. Did any of them use the technique of making xerox copies, or the equivalent of a xerox copy, of that correspondence and keeping that for his own files and sending the original correspondence immediately to the central files?

HOPKINS: Somewhat but, of course, that was before the days of the xerox. We had the thermofax, and we used the thermofax a lot in General Goodpaster's office and my office. General Goodpaster always said: "Never let your last copy get away from you," and, if he had to send a letter in to the President or something, he usually thermofaxed it first so he would have a copy available. Although thermofax copies didn't last too many months before disintegrating, we did quite a bit of that.

BURG: They're pretty flimsy and fade easily.

HOPKINS: Of course President Eisenhower was a great one for complaining about, well not complaining, but always talking about this business of file clerks keeping too much in the file. He was always growling about these thick files. If he came to a file, and if he saw two copies of the same thing in that file, you'd hear about it. And I remember the Christmas receptions that we used to have. On two succeeding occasions, two Christmases running, I remember he was talking to Mrs. Bonsteel, who was then chief of central files. He was telling her about this business of--didn't like these thick files. He says, "If an old lady writes in and sends me a pair of socks and you acknowledge, write and tell her thank you for the socks, there's no use keeping her letter. Just put my letter in there; that's all we need, that one letter; that's all we need. Get rid of the rest of this stuff."



BURG: And how did Mrs. Bonsteel feel about it?

HOPKINS: Well she'd say, "Yes, sir," and then hope he'd forget it. And his staff was the same way. I mean as long as he was



there, a member of his staff would thumb through these files and make sure they cut down as much as they could before they took them in to him.

BURG: Mrs. Bonsteel was in charge of the central files for the full two administrations, do you recollect?

HOPKINS: Central files, yes.

BURG: And do you remember her first name?

HOPKINS: Betty.

BURG: Yes, I think I've run into her name. She would have a staff of perhaps, how many people under her, Mr. Hopkins?

HOPKINS: Oh, it was quite a large staff, somewhere between thirty-five and forty.

BURG: And these central files were kept in the Executive Office Building at that time?

HOPKINS: At that time, yes. They moved out of the West Wing during the Truman Administration.



BURG: Now, do you think of anything else with respect to the central files? We know, for example, that the little lady who knits the socks and sends them in, that her letter is there in the central files in what would be called the alpha file?

HOPKINS: Yes, the alphabetical file.

BURG: And this is the same place where we would find these mimeographed lists of sixteen or seventeen letters, the names of those who sent the letters, that all is put into that too?

HOPKINS: Yes.



BURG: Now I was going to ask about the disposition of those files at the end of the administration. Those files are to be considered to be the President's or were, at least in the Eisenhower period, at that time, these are considered to be part of the personal papers of the President of the United States?

HOPKINS: That's right, and that's been so considered I think ever since the time of George Washington.

BURG: By precedent then and I think there were perhaps two supreme court decisions that seemed to make reference to that same sort of thing; so that at least right up to Friday this was all very clear that these were the President's property. So with the change of administration, the cabinets are emptied out and those files are moved perhaps to the National Archives or some place else for storage purposes. But Mrs. Bonsteel stays there; her staff stays there, and immediately they begin to receive the files--



HOPKINS: Yes. In preparation for this, of course, they have renumbered and remarked all their file folders so they can have new folders to put the new material in. About all they keep is a very small precedent file which is not complete by any matter of means, but it goes back for a number of years, and it occupies maybe three file cases.

BURG: What might we find in that precedent file, Mr. Hopkins?

HOPKINS: Well things of an unusual nature like, for instance, when Alaska and Hawaii were admitted to the Union and the steps taken to change the flag and that type of thing, something

of an unusual nature that happened

As I say, it's not complete by any matter of means, but it's merely a matter of watching things as they go, being aware that nothing of a classified nature is in there. If there's anything that seems to be something that would be valuable in the future years as a precedent, they would make a copy of it and stick it in the files.

BURG: Now at a period of transition when the transition is from Truman to Eisenhower or from Eisenhower to Kennedy, is it your recollection that either of the incoming administrations instituted any changes in the way the White House Central Files were set up and the way in which that part of the operation was conducted? Or did they simply accept the filing routine which was established before that?

HOPKINS: From the Truman to the Eisenhower, to the best of my recollection, they accepted it as it had been before. I know Governor Adams was unhappy, at first, finding that the file room was so far away from his office. In other words, he said, "When I want a file, I want it right now. I don't want to wait for an hour for it." But I don't think he ever had to wait for an hour.





BURG: Now that implies that in that staff of thirty-five or forty people that Betty Bonsteel was supervising, that they had, in effect, pages or runners. I would be interested in knowing what the process is when Governor Adams, who as I recollect had a bit of a temper, if the Governor says, "I want this file," what is the process then by which he is given that file?



HOPKINS: If the Governor himself or one of his girls call and says, "The Governor wants this file right now," we had a messenger stationed in the mail room. If he wasn't there, one of the clerks would pick it up and hand-carry it over to the Governor's office so he would get it right away. In other words, it wasn't picked out of the file and laid in a box so the next messenger that came around would pick it up. It was hand carried over even by Betty Bonsteel herself if it had to be brought over to him right away.

BURG: So the interval that the Governor would probably wait would be of a nature of five to ten minutes in getting any file that he needed.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Let me ask this simply as a point of information, supposing that Governor Adams asked not for one file but asked for a great quantity of them; he will need twenty or thirty file folders. Are these then brought over in some kind of vehicle? Is there a system of moving files from the EOB back to the White House where quantities of material are needed?

HOPKINS: The messengers had baskets on wheels which they used when they had large quantities of material.



BURG: So it could be handled that way. Let me ask you a further question, did this to your knowledge cause Governor Adams, for example, to be more reluctant to put material into the central files?

HOPKINS: No, I don't believe so in his case. I think he used the central files quite fully. I think he came to soon realize that he could get a file as quickly as he needed it. In his particular office, the girls that worked for him, I don't think they had over two or three file cases in their office.

BURG: And you single him out; he must have come to mind. Do you recollect at this point any other men or women on the White House staff who expressed doubts about the filing system or found any problems with it.

HOPKINS: No, not to my knowledge. Of course, Mrs. Whitman was under great pressure, as we know, and she kept quite an extensive file of her own, maybe bigger than she should have, I don't know. But, there again, I never heard her complain generally about the file service. There were instances of course where somebody called for a file, and for some reason it couldn't be found. Maybe the central files had never gotten it. You'd have complaints then, but there was usually an explanation for it, and, as a general thing, I don't think we had any great problems.

BURG: Mrs. Whitman would have hung on to things which probably closely related to the President's work and were of some enduring necessity and therefore had to be kept right there.

HOPKINS: Of course one thing about filing too is that once you start holding onto something, you tend to have to hold onto more because it ties in with it, and the more you hold on to, the more you have to hold on to.



BURG: Is there another area of your office which we have not touched upon? Did you mention personnel, Mr. Hopkins? Did you have a personnel section?

HOPKINS: Yes, we had an administrative office, personnel section. We called it Accounts, Purchases, and Personnel. Personnel was more or less autonomous although it was under the same umbrella as the accounts office. And the personnel office, of course, dealt with White House office personnel; it had nothing to do with recruitment for presidential appointments and that sort of thing.

BURG: But these were the people who would fit into your organization.

HOPKINS: Yes. They took care of the payroll or personnel changes of anybody that came on the White House rolls or anybody that was detailed to the White House office. There again many times the White House personnel, the top level personnel was brought on, and for some reason or other it needed very prompt action, and this office had to provide action. In other words it wasn't a matter of letting everything take its course, and they worked closely with--





[Interruption]

BURG: You were saying that they worked closely.

HOPKINS: --closely with the civil service commission and, although, possibly being at the White House there would have been an opportunity to bend the rules now and then, we leaned over backwards not to bend the rules--the civil service rules and regulations as far as appointments and that sort of thing to the best of our ability.

BURG: And the purchasing section was within that general office?

HOPKINS: Accounts and purchasing, yes. Frank Sanderson was there first and after his death Carson Howell took over.

BURG: What was that last name?

HOPKINS: Carson Howell. H-o-w-e-l-l. Frank Sanderson was there during the entire first term of Eisenhower. In fact, there's a very interesting story connected with Frank Sanderson. I think he was one of President Eisenhower's favorites in the



office. He was a notary public and swore in many of the people who were sworn in at the White House office during President Eisenhower's first term. At the beginning of the second term, it fell on Sunday as you may recall, and the word was that President Eisenhower wanted a very private ceremony on Sunday and then a public ceremony the following day, and he wanted Frank Sanderson to administer this oath in the private ceremony. But Frank Sanderson had a heart attack in the previous fall, and there was some doubt as to whether or not he was going to be able to do it. So just out of an abundance of precaution, since anybody from a notary public on up could administer the oath, we were asked to make arrangements to get a notary public commission for Governor Adams, which was done. But, and I can't vouch for this, I had heard, I don't know whether there's any truth to it or not, that when word got around that the President wanted Frank Sanderson to administer this private oath, the word came down from the Chief Justice, "I either administer that one or I don't administer the one the following day." Whether there's any truth to that I haven't the faintest idea. But that was what I heard. Anyway, the end result was that



the Chief Justice administered the private oath; Mr. Sanderson and his wife were present as guests, and Governor Adams did not have to use his notary commission. In fact when I retired, in cleaning out some files there, one of the things I ran across was this notary seal of Governor Adams; so I sent him a little note and sent it to him.

BURG: You did. Did he respond to it?

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Was he amused by getting that?

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Oh, that's an interesting story too.

HOPKINS: Frank Sanderson was around a few years after that. He retired early in the Kennedy administration, and died sometime later.

BURG: Now as long as we're talking about personnel and that part of the office, obviously, at least I would think it would be obvious, you would not be personally approving the hiring of somebody who is working in the central files, one



of the file clerks, or someone who is going on the White House switchboard. But were there particular jobs within the province of the Executive Clerk where you yourself would be making the selection of people to come on?

HOPKINS: Well, we ordinarily made the selections of the people in the operating units. In other words, most of those selections were by calling and getting in touch with one of the departments or agencies and telling them what we need and have you got a person that you can detail over here? Then after they were on detail a while and they seemed to be the type of person we could use, if we had a vacancy, then it was a matter of asking this person, "Would you like to come on the White House rolls?" And, if they were willing to come on, then it was a matter of preparing the necessary papers and making a recommendation to, during the Eisenhower days it was one of the staff members of Governor Adams' set up, who would physically sign the appointments. Back in the Truman days I signed them, but this was changed during the Eisenhower days. So it would be Charley [Charles F.] Willis or one of his successors that would personally sign the appointment papers for those in the so-called operating units.





And most of the people in those offices were people that came from one of the departments or agencies--occasionally somebody from outside of the administration wanting to find a job but that was the exception rather than the rule.



BURG: And you used the detail idea to give you a chance to evaluate their performance before you made a further move.

HOPKINS: It was much better that way. If you just bring somebody on cold and put them on the White House rolls and something goes sour, then you don't know what you're up against from the standpoint of how that person reacts; what you might run into in the way of publicity and that sort of thing. It's better for the person and better for the White House, it seemed to me in those days, to have this trial period first. That way the person wasn't hurt. If it didn't go right, they had a job to go back to, and nobody was hurt.

BURG: So it wouldn't be too often that you yourself would be making the evaluation on an employee. You had chiefs of these various units who would do that. Can you give me, at this date, any statement concerning the kind of person that you wanted, you, as Executive Clerk of the White House? Was

there any kind of guideline that you could provide to your unit chiefs as to what kind of man or woman are we looking for? Did you have any higher standards, let's say than you might have in hiring for the State Department in a clerical job or something of this sort?

HOPKINS: We had contacts in the various departments and agencies; we would rely to a great extent on the details on the judgment of these contacts in the departments and agencies. We needed people who, using President Truman's term, didn't get "White Houseitis" right away--in other words, want to spend all their time in the main lobby watching the VIPs come and go. We had to get people who were not overly qualified. If we needed a good typist, a stenographer, in our correspondence section who might sit there for days at a time typing letters and occasionally get an assignment out to one of the staff offices to serve in a secretarial capacity, we did not want somebody who was a grade ten or eleven serving as secretary to a commissioner in the department knowing that she would be dissatisfied right away. We didn't want them overly qualified or under qualified. We wanted the person to realize what they were getting into and try to feel



that they were happy there. We couldn't use anybody who was ambitious to the extent to feel that they should be in charge of the office within sixty days because the White House just doesn't work that way.

In fact that was one of our greatest handicaps in staffing the operating units of the White House office, and there was never any solution for it, and I don't think there ever will be a solution for it. A new administration comes in. People that come with the President are, when they come in at least, they're gung-ho; they're probably ambitious; their loyalty goes to the man and not to the office; so that if he should leave office their interest in the White House goes by the wayside many times. They're ambitious to get out into a private industry and benefit from their experience in the White House. Working in the operating units, although you will have numerous occasions where some of the girls will have an opportunity to work up and become staff in the immediate staff office, many others will not. And over the years, one of the great problems of this is that to be conscientious with the employees you cannot definitely promise them, "Now you work hard, do your best, go to school, and you stay here



at the White House you will end up as Executive Clerk." You can't promise them that because of the fact that at the White House we are classified but not competitive. So you come in some day and the President doesn't like the looks of your necktie, he can say you're out. A new administration can come in, and they can say, merely because this particular girl or individual is working for this particular staff member in the previous administration, "We don't want her around here any more." It might be the best one we've got, but, merely from that previous association, they didn't want her.

BURG: Now would that mean, Mr. Hopkins, that that girl could be transferred to other work within your office or would they actually say--

HOPKINS: Maybe, depending on the situation.



BURG: They might say, "We don't want her at all."

HOPKINS: We've had situations where they don't want her at the White House because of the fact that she worked for such and such a staff member in the previous administration. That's



rare, but it's happened.

BURG: Now what would your action be in a case like this? Was there a way in which you could help to place that girl elsewhere in the federal service or were you forbidden to do that? Did she have to try to do that on her own?

HOPKINS: No, ordinarily the administration was very helpful in doing that with a few exceptions.

BURG: The incoming administration?



HOPKINS: Yes, the incoming administration. Now the first real experience we had in that area was when the Eisenhower Administration came in, not in that particular area about not wanting this girl. As I mentioned earlier, it was during the Truman Administration most of the White House employees were brought on the rolls. The detailed group was discontinued with the exception of the postal detail. So when the Eisenhower Administration came in most of the employees there were on the White House rolls, that meant the girls in the staff offices and everything else. But after pleading and doing everything we could we finally got a representative of the Truman

Administration and the Eisenhower Administration together, laid out this problem, and they agreed that they would do everything they could to place any girls that they could not use. In other words, the Truman Administration would do what they could before they went out; the Eisenhower Administration, anything that was left over they couldn't use, they would do what they could do to place the girls. It worked out very well.

BURG: Did that set any kind of a precedent then for transition to the Kennedy Administration?



HOPKINS: Yes, yes, that was done to the extent possible every administration since then that I had anything to do with.

BURG: Do you happen to remember who the two people were from the Truman and Eisenhower administrations who worked on this problem?

HOPKINS: It was Don Dawson, and, as I remember, it was General Persons. But it was Don Dawson for the Truman Administration, I know.

BURG: We are interested in these transitional phases as you understand.

HOPKINS: I'm not positive about General Persons; that's my recollection. I know Don Dawson was. Mr. Steffen, who was the so-called office manager that came in with the Eisenhower Administration, was right in the thick, of course, of carrying out this program once the Eisenhower Administration came in. I don't think that he negotiated with them on working this out before.



BURG: And at the other end of the Eisenhower Administration, again, was it put in the hands of a couple of people, one out of the administration, one out of the Kennedy?

HOPKINS: Yes, and in that administration of course General Persons was the liaison with Clark Clifford, and a man named Dick McGuire who worked very closely with Ken O'Donnell [Kenneth O'Donnell], was the representative that worked closely on the personnel area. I recall Dick McGuire setting in what we called in those days the Fish Room, now called the Roosevelt Room, and he interviewed, personally, every girl in the staff offices and others that had been in

the Eisenhower Administration who wished to stay at the White House. Some of the girls, their loyalty was with the administration, and they had other commitments, and they were gone. But those who wished to stay, he interviewed each one, and, as I recall, it worked out very smoothly.

BURG: Now have we passed over any other unit that was part of your general charge during the Eisenhower period?

HOPKINS: Well, we haven't mentioned the Messenger and Miscellaneous Services Unit.

BURG: That's one unit?



HOPKINS: Yes. Miscellaneous services is basically the duplicating area, in other words, where they mimeograph all the releases from the White House, messages to congress, and statements for the press. Basically they are at the beck and call of the press office because that's where the pressures are to get this stuff out.

BURG: Would they do texts of speeches, of addresses, pre-speech handouts containing the text of the addresses, this kind of thing too?



HOPKINS: Oh, yes. And of course their messengers, they serviced within the White House and, of course, all over town. And they had regular runs all over the city, and, probably, some days, they would deliver several hundred pieces of mail throughout Washington. That office, in those days, was covered seven days a week and they were always covered at night, at least until the President retired for the night.

BURG: Who was it that ran that office during the Eisenhower period?

HOPKINS: Orris Nash, I believe, was the chief of it during the Eisenhower days. He's dead now.

BURG: Now if I can ask you this, as you hark back, who in your organization did you lean on most heavily for support? Who were the people that, to you, were your mainstays, if I can put it that way?

HOPKINS: Well, I had to lean very heavily on the records office. I had to lean very heavily on the administrative and personnel office. I had to lean heavily on the correspondence section, and, of course, to a certain extent on the mails and files. I had to lean on all of them in fact.



I had to lean on the messengers. Suppose the President is going to address the congress. Say he's going to speak at noon, and the messengers may get this stuff to mimeograph at nine o'clock and every ten minutes from then on Jim Hagerty or Murray Snyder or somebody is on the phone, "When are we going to get this?" In the meantime, some other office, the speech writers are making changes in it so they have to throw out this page, and they don't tell the press office about that. And the heat's on. You lean on all of them.

BURG: Thank you so much for your time this morning,  
Mr. Hopkins.



This interview is being taped with Mr. William Hopkins at the Park Central Hotel, Washington, D.C. on November 14, 1974. The interviewer is Dr. Maclyn Burg of the Eisenhower Library staff. Present for the interview Dr. Burg and Mr. Hopkins.

Page 89

DR. BURG: Now, Mr. Hopkins, in this second interview, just prior to our turning on the recorder, pointed out to me that the White House permanent staff was, in his words, conditioned to like the incoming administration because as a permanent staff it would be their duty to work for the administration, to do everything in their power to aid, assist it, and so their viewpoint at the outset would be one of doing everything they could to cooperate with and assist their new bosses. And therefore he said he did not know how objective he could be in looking over some of the members of the White House staff during the Eisenhower Administration but would do the best he could keeping this thought in mind.

Now you have before you your White House staff book and I have a list of those same names. The first name I have of course on my list is Sherman Adams. Now your work brought you into contact with Adams at various times. His reputation is of course that of an abrupt man, a man who seldom, "Hello," or, "Goodbye," when he picked up the phone--he gave his message and that was it. He had a reputation too of being caustic from time to time. Some of those who worked with him saw that



as an exterior, a facade, and many have indicated that underneath that he was a pretty soft-hearted man, that there were examples of that showing. How does that conform to the view that you had of him in your relationship with him?

HOPKINS: Well, I think what you've said conforms fairly well with my observations of him. He had a reputation of being brusque and all businesslike. I think, as time went on he tended to mellow. Personally I liked Governor Adams very much.

BURG: Did you see signs of the mellowing during the eight years? Did you think that his attitudes changed? Well not the full eight years because of course he did have to resign that position. But did you see a mellowing process taking place during the period of time he was in the White House?

HOPKINS: I think so. But I think there again that was a mellowing process and also getting to know the man better and feeling more at ease when you were around him. The office in which I worked was one door removed from his office. And of course one of the things in which he was very active as the top staff man in the office was in the personnel field.





We kept in our office a set of books which delineated all the presidential appointments and the background. In other words, under what law they were appointed, what their term should be, who was eligible for appointment, and things of that nature. Many times Governor Adams would have a phone call or something about a particular job and he would walk through his outer office into our office and ask us a question. He wanted an answer; he didn't want, "I'll look it up." He wanted an answer. And that set of books and our personal knowledge based on quite a bit of research--we were ordinarily able to give him an answer. But in that area you had to make sure that your answer was right. In other words, you knew the minute that Governor Adams left your office he was going back and make a commitment to somebody on what you told him. If you gave him the wrong information you were in trouble.



BURG: Mr. Hopkins, that set of books, was that kept in previous administrations? Are we talking about a file that you had or that was--

HOPKINS: It was a set of books that we worked up during the Truman administration. Prior to that time, my predecessor --

for instance I can recall when questions would come up about a particular appointment matter, he would go to the U.S. Code and sometimes take a half a day to look up these things because, as you know how laws were amended and changed you had to go from one book to another and follow the history of the job for instance. So we reduced all this to several volumes. And thank goodness we had them, because, the way Governor Adams operated, without them we would have been hard pressed to respond to his queries.

BURG: So you had only really created those books in the Truman period?



HOPKINS: We had them before the Eisenhower administration came in.

BURG: Now when the Eisenhower administration went out, the books remained; they had been amended during those eight years.

HOPKINS: Oh, yes, we kept them up all the time and they're still there. It was a tremendous job to do it, but that was one of the things that I got started when I became executive

clerk because I saw the need for them. And of course all you have to do is to look at a copy of the Congressional Directory to see how the volume of presidential appointments has bloomed in the last generation. Look at a Congressional Directory for instance in the Hoover Administration; look at one today and see how many additional jobs are there; it's not in the same league at all. In other words there's probably more presidential appointments in the foreign field today than there were in the whole government in President Hoover's time. And the law in each case is specific--the term, who was eligible, who appoints the chairman, all kinds of details in there that you either know or don't know. And it's either black or white; it's not gray. When you get ready to send a nomination to the congress, and of course these were prepared at Governor Adams' direction, after consultation with the President of course by Governor Adams. And if you send that nomination to the Hill and make a mistake, the only way you can get it back or make a change in it, ordinarily, is to ask the President to sign a withdrawal and resubmit the nomination. Well that's kind of embarrassing. So you try to hold that type of thing to a minimum.



BURG: Did Governor Adams, when he entered the White House with the administration, did he know that this system existed, that you had these books, that you were geared up to --- ?

HOPKINS: Well, I'm not sure whether he necessarily knew we had this set of books, but he knew that we were the focal point and the place he could get answers to this type of question.



BURG: You don't recall anyone from that administration after the election and prior to the inauguration, during the period of transition, coming in and asking about this kind of thing?

HOPKINS: Well, not specifically. Before the inauguration of course, I had a meeting with Governor Adams and Charley [Charles F.] Willis, his assistant, in the cabinet room. I think they were looking me over. And they were asking about how long I had been there, what my experience was, what the areas of the executive clerk entailed and that type of thing. We have to remember that the Republicans had been out of power for twenty years. Rightly or wrongly they probably felt that--well here these people have been working for Democrats for twenty years; they've all come in the government



under Democratic administrations; can we trust them? Are they loyal? And I well can see how they would feel. One of the things I was able to tell them was that I had come to the White House in the Hoover administration. I've always felt, and I may be wrong, that that had something to do with their willingness to let me stay on. And by staying on of course that meant that all the operating groups that work under the executive clerk were kept intact too. So they had such information as they needed. We prepared books showing all the people on the staff. We prepared maps showing where the available office space was, how it was utilized under the previous administration, and all areas of administration of that kind in which an incoming administration is interested in the first instance. That's their primary concern as they come in: where are we going to be housed, what are our facilities, how much money is in the budget, things of that nature.



BURG: Now this was at least one occasion where Adams and in this case his assistant, Charles Willis, who is handling patronage had a conference with you prior to the inauguration itself. Did Adams come back again to talk with you or did you just have that one conference prior to--

HOPKINS: Just that one conference. Now before the inauguration, of course, there was a man who was appointed as office manager, and that was the first time that we had an office manager as such, who came as a representative of Governor Adams and was on the scene for a number of weeks. His main point of contact, of course, was with Dr. [John] Steelman who had been designated by President Truman as the liaison for the Truman administration with the incoming White House group. And Mr. Steffan was on the scene for, oh, a matter of weeks. He had been previously the vice president of some bank up in New York I think. And many pre-inaugural details were worked out with him of course.



BURG: Now, by and large, with your experience with Adams, do you recollect now any time when Adams expressed dissatisfaction with the way your office handled the many affairs that it had to handle because my recollection of our first interview was that we were talking of five to seven major activities

that the office of the executive clerk--

HOPKINS: Nothing that I recall him expressing directly to me. Of course I heard, indirectly, that one thing he was very much concerned about when they first came in was the fact that the file room was over in the Executive Office Building, what we used to call the State-War-Navy Building. It had been over there for some time; in fact it had been out of the West Wing since the time in the Truman administration when there was an effort to enlarge the West Wing. And Governor Adams, I was told, felt that when I want a file I don't want it a couple of hours from now, I want it right now. And if these files are going to be across the street and maybe a quarter of a mile away they're not going to service me. Well I think he soon found out that it was no great problem because we made every effort--if we had a call from Governor Adams' office to get that file there immediately, it was hand-carried over by the chief of files if necessary.

BURG: We're talking now about the White House Central Files.

HOPKINS: Central Files, yes.



BURG: It seems to me that either you or someone else remarked that you probably had about five minute service in getting a file once the call for it had been made and getting the file back over there and on to Adams' desk.

HOPKINS: If it was an urgent call, yes. We got them over there as promptly as we could. Of course, as I say, Governor Adams had a reputation of being brusque and when he asked for something he wanted it now, and I can see why he would; he was a busy man. On occasion I know he would be brusque with the girls in his office. I used to see some of the girls occasionally in tears. But I don't think any of them held it against Governor Adams. The whole staff from my observation was very loyal to him, thought very highly of him, and he was fair. He wasn't--

BURG: He'd be brusque with everybody.

HOPKINS: I recall the first staff meeting that I attended and I think it was the first staff meeting of all the staff they had, after the inauguration, was held in his office. And one of the things that impressed me at the time was the fact that he said they had to be decisive. In other words,





no wishy-washy approaches to problems. Be decisive; make up your minds and stick to it. That's the way he operated, and I think the staff realized that, and it was probably good for them.

BURG: Did you attend his staff briefings which he held I think in the mornings around eight-thirty? You were one of those who had to be there.

HOPKINS: Yes, that's right.

BURG: Now this for example, his instructions to them to be decisive, by that can we assume that he didn't want bucks passed; that when things reached a man and they were that man's province, he wanted that man to make decisions about things.

HOPKINS: I think so.

BURG: Were there other areas that seemed to cause him concern with respect to how the staff functioned? You know one can tell, it seems to me, if a man is getting up in front a staff meeting which is being held almost daily or a weekly basis and the same thing keeps coming up, "You're not doing this." Does anything like that come to mind?



HOPKINS: No, nothing specifically. Of course these staff conferences were held quite frequently. My memory is a little hazy on this; it seems to me that for a good time they were held every morning, and of course they were held in his office only for a short time and then they were moved over to what we used to call the Fish Room, (I think they called it the Conference Room in the Eisenhower days) and they were presided over by Governor Adams, sometimes by General Persons, and others. But there again, it was a large group that came in. And over a period of time, it was my feeling at least, they tended to degenerate because they had a lot of briefings for one thing, briefings from various officials in government, briefings on the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency] area and the foreign area and the Federal Communications [Commission] and all that type of thing and the atomic energy area. Some of the briefings would cover what you may have read in the paper a week ago. So sometimes they tended to degenerate; a lot of them were very helpful. I think when they had staff meetings about office matters, they were very helpful. Now I did not think that they were as useful as the meetings that were held in the Truman administration because in the Truman



administration the President himself was there, and that makes all the difference in the world.

BURG: The physical presence of the President of the United States, I suppose it invokes a seriousness and a solemnity perhaps that you wouldn't have ordinarily, but this did not happen under the Eisenhower administration. The President never attended these briefings that Governor Adams ran.

HOPKINS: No, not that I recall for the whole staff. He may have had staff meetings of course of a different nature but the general staff meetings that I'm referring to, not to my knowledge.

BURG: All right, let me ask you for a homely piece of information. Just pick one of those staff briefings, these early morning things which as you suggest were occurring daily, at the beginning at any rate. Did you all know it was going to be at eight-thirty so just automatically you were going to go to the Fish Room?

HOPKINS: Oh, yes. And of course in any big group like that there is always from time to time a few stragglers and they



were put on the carpet from time to time for being stragglers. It was a lot like the schoolroom approach you know.

BURG: I have a recollection, it may have been from [Robert] Gray's book [Eighteen Acres Under Glass] or it may have been from Sherman Adams himself, I think it may have been Gray, that on one occasion shortly after he had been appointed Elwood Quesada, General Quesada, was late and Governor Adams made a caustic remark I think when he entered the room, "I'm so happy you could join us, General, and please sit down."

HOPKINS: That could very well be.

BURG: I haven't asked Quesada that yet and I'm going to have to ask him if he knows that he transgressed in that case. So you all assembled first in the room and Adams came into the room.

HOPKINS: Yes.



BURG: Any kind of greeting from him on those occasions? A good morning or--

HOPKINS: Well sometimes, and sometimes not. One of the things,



not at these meetings, but one of the things that I remember if you'd be going home in the evening and happened to get in the elevator with Governor Adams his usual comment was, "What have you done for your country today?" That was a little hard to answer sometimes.

BURG: That would put you on your mettle, wouldn't it? The photographs seem to indicate, Mr. Hopkins, that there was a fairly good-sized table in that room, it may have even been a round table, but that you all tended to be at one side of the table or one end of that room.

HOPKINS: We were back in front of the fireplace and the seats were facing the wall nearest the door which you entered, not the wall on which the door was but the door that lead on in to the lobby; you were facing that way.

BURG: Then Governor Adams took a seat facing you--

HOPKINS: His back would be to the lobby.

BURG: Now, because this sometimes makes a difference, for example I understand in the governing body of the Soviet Union, the equivalent of the congress, there really isn't



much space for writing or handling matters because you're only there to listen and to make a few notes as to what you're to take back to your constituents, vis-a-vis the American congress where you've got a large writing surface and desk facilities because you're there to make decisions. May I assume that in this circumstance you did not have desk space but rather were there to hear what Adams had to say?

HOPKINS: This was it. And he would call on members of the staff from time to time for comments and briefings of various kinds, they had been prepared in advance, but it wasn't a matter of making decisions and that sort of thing at this conference.

BURG: No debate on things. Governor Adams--



HOPKINS: No debate, sometimes discussion maybe but no debate.

BURG: I was wondering if Governor Adams would throw out a proposition, something having to do with the staff or the staff mechanisms, and ask then, "What do you think?" "Should it be done this way?" "Should it be done that way?" Were there discussions of this kind?

HOPKINS: Not to a great extent as I remember it now.

BURG: Now in the meetings that you attended of this sort, Mr. Hopkins, did you ever hear anyone within the meeting blow up at Adams or Adams' ideas? Did anyone ever grow visibly angry?

HOPKINS: Not to my recollection, no..



BURG: How about Adams himself? Ever see him pretty angry about a sin of commission or a sin of omission on the part of those of you gathered there?

HOPKINS: Not to my recollection; I don't think that was the place for it. If he was angry at them he would probably call them in and express his feelings at his desk rather than in the conference.

BURG: Was that your impression that he was the kind of man who tended to draw the offender aside? He might be blistering perhaps in privacy, but it would be done in private?

HOPKINS: I would think so. I never recall hearing anything like that at any of these meetings.

BURG: Well we would have to draw a distinction between his normal everyday abrasiveness and this special occasion when he was really angry.

HOPKINS: But of course any man in a job like that and his public image of course was, in many instances, people felt-- well he's the real President of the United States, which of course was not true. But, there again, that develops all kinds of pressures, all kinds of demands, all kinds of requests coming to him that if he didn't have that public image would have maybe gone to somebody else or maybe not come at all. So he had all kinds of pressures and you can see why you have to blow up from time to time.

BURG: Yes, indeed. And in order to get the amount of work moved that he had to move it's quite clear he shortened up on the amenities, the courtesies of life, to save time and to keep things moving.

HOPKINS: He had to.

BURG: May I ask you about how long one of those meetings usually ran?





HOPKINS: About a half hour as I recall.

BURG: And then the frequency of them dropped off later on in the administration?

HOPKINS: Yes. I'm not sure whether they--it seems to me that as time went on along the latter part of the administration, this may have been after Governor Adams left, that it was on call rather than having it scheduled.



BURG: I'm wondering, are we talking about a radical change. You were having them literally daily. Did it fall off to the point where it was once a week or once every two weeks or were they still held with some frequency until they reached a point where they said, well, listen let's--

HOPKINS: They were held with some frequency. But many more and more of them became briefings rather than discussion of staff problems and that type of thing.

BURG: Now can you advance a reason why the content should have been changed? Was it, do you think, that the staff procedures had fallen into a working routine that was successful?

HOPKINS: I think that that has a great deal to do with it too, yes. I think that as they, over a period of time, were more sure of themselves what had been problems early in the administration were no longer problems; they became routine. And the meetings would tend to engender less and less interest and maybe the turnout was not as good as it had been before. In other words, if you had a busy man and he says, "If they're just going to have a briefing or nothing that I'm interested I'm not even going to take the time to go this morning," I think that's a natural evolvement of anything of that nature.

BURG: So attendance was not compulsory?

HOPKINS: No, it was desirable and it wasn't compulsory, no. In other words if you didn't show some morning, they didn't take the roll or anything like that.

BURG: Was it generally understood that certain of you, however, pretty well ought to be there each time? You in your position for example, was it sort of an unwritten law that Mr. Hopkins should be there?

HOPKINS: Well, I'm not sure that it was but you sort of felt



a compulsion or a feeling that you should be there mainly as a matter of garnering information maybe. I'm sure if I hadn't shown up some mornings I wouldn't have been missed. But it was a feeling that--well this is the meeting and you should be there. Something may transpire that you should know and you won't know if you don't go. But I do think too over a period of time that the tendency was for a greater and greater percentage of those who came to be junior officers rather than the senior men. In other words the senior men were the busier men and developed the feeling--well there's nothing going to transpire that's of any interest to me and I may not go.

BURG: Well, we're dealing with a lot of people. May I ask you is it your recollection at this date that early on in these briefings, the first six months, twelve months of the administration, you would find a high percentage of senior men and no junior men?

HOPKINS: No, you'd have your junior men and your senior men.

BURG: All right, fine, and then as time passed it is the



senior men who tend to fade from those meetings and the junior men continue to be there.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Okay, fine. I'm happy to have that nailed down. I'm sure that we're going to come in contact with Governor Adams many times in our discussions; who is the next man on the list that strikes a bell with you?

HOPKINS: Well, Jack [Z.] Anderson, who was a former congressman from California, very likeable, knowledgeable man. I think a great deal of his activities related to the congressional area but he was--

BURG: How did your paths cross? In what respect did your work your assignments on permanent White House staff touch Mr. Anderson's work?

HOPKINS: Well, not to any great extent. Of course anybody dealing in the legislative field as he did a great deal and made many trips up the Hill keeping in touch with congressmen and senators, they're interested in knowing many times what's the status of a bill that has come to the President for action--





Do we know anything about when a particular nomination is going to the Hill and that type of thing. That's the type of query we get from anybody in the area.

BURG: So you would see Anderson in this regard?

HOPKINS: Yes. And his office was in the West Wing so that we saw him more often than we would some people maybe that were housed in the State-War-Navy Building.

BURG: Now you've spoken of his knowledgesability. Is that the quality that stands out in your mind when you think of Anderson? A goodhumored man?

HOPKINS: A very goodhumored man. And my reaction was he was very knowledgeable, politically.

BURG: Who is the next one down the line?

HOPKINS: Well, Phil [Phillip E.] Areeda was a young man when he came there. As I recall he came first to work for Dr. [Gabriel] Hauge. And later came in the counsel's office. He was a Harvard graduate and law background. And probably somebody that in those days we'd describe as an egghead, I



would say. He was a very bright young man. In fact, I recall reading some of the speeches he wrote for Dr. Hauge and the language he would use you'd practically have to have a dictionary at your elbow to understand some of it. But he was a very bright young man. And I think he's back at the White House now.

BURG: It could be. In your opinion and your observation, did he seem to be a popular man in that staff? I'm asking for a very coarse judgment, popular, noticeably popular versus noticeably shunned.

HOPKINS: Well, I wouldn't say he was--he was well liked. I don't think he was quite as personable maybe as or not quite as much of a hail fellow well met as some of the other young staff members. But he wasn't shunned or anything; he was well liked.

BURG: I was interested because you used a term out of that period of time, the term often used for someone who is an intellectual and exceedingly bright. Let us put it in focus of that administration. There are of course historians who



have remarked that that administration didn't have much intellectual quality, but you have described Areeda and Areeda's background; clearly he is out of that intellectual realm. But your observation seems to be that he was happy there and working well with other people--

HOPKINS: Oh, yes, yes.

BURG:--not set apart not isolated because of his intellectual qualities and his language.

HOPKINS: No, I wouldn't say so. My general impression of the Eisenhower group was that they worked well together. I saw very little what you might call backbiting and that sort of thing.

BURG: Yes, indeed, that's what we might call it. May I ask you, since I've not met Mr. Areeda, may I ask you if the language he employed in Dr. Hauge's speech--

[Interruption]

BURG:...the language of the intellectual in his normal speech  
Mr. Hopkins replied, "No, he did not." Now who is next on our list?



HOPKINS: Captain Aurand is the next one here.

BURG: Evan Aurand.

HOPKINS: Yes. He was the naval aide to the President, and in fact he succeeded Ned Beach as I recall. Ned Beach, Captain Beach had been the first naval aide to the President.

BURG: Yes, let's talk about the two men together here. You're right; Aurand did succeed Beach. You knew both men. What is your general impression of those two men?

HOPKINS: Well, they were both very fine gentlemen. They were different personalities. I think Captain Beach was more of the studious type; he was a writer and--



BURG: Yes, a number of very fine books as a matter of fact dealing with underseas warfare.

HOPKINS: Yes, yes. And of course he later after he left the White House I think was commanding officer on the first submarine to go around the world under the ice you know.

BURG: Yes, Nuclear Submarine Command, right.



HOPKINS: Captain Aurand was a little more of an extrovert I think than Captain Beach was. He was a good public relations man for the Navy. He was always praising the Navy. The Navy ran the White House mess you know, and, of course, those who ate down there used to give both Ned Beach and Captain Aurand a hard time.

BURG: The quality of the food?

HOPKINS: Well, the quality of the food and they would accuse them of getting larger portions from the staff mess you know than anybody else--the dessert came around they always got the biggest one, that type of thing. So they gave them a hard time, but they took it well and held up their own end of the stick all right I think.

BURG: I was going to ask which one of the two men fought back best?

HOPKINS: Well, probably Captain Aurand. As I say, he was always plugging the Navy--everything the Navy did was all right. Another thing, for a while down there, they used to rotate the pictures on the wall, Navy one month, maybe Army



next month, and that sort of thing. Well, I think the Navy finally won out in that deal too, but there was a little competition in the military area.

BURG: Now those pictures, just because it is an interesting detail, and I've not been in the White House mess or ever recall talking with anyone about the setting itself. Were these oil paintings out of the White House collection? Or were they brought in, for example, from Navy collections or Army collections? Were they photographs?

HOPKINS: Well, I don't think they were; there may have been an original or two. Most of them I don't think were. And I think they probably got them from the National Gallery; that's where many of the pictures that were in the office came from rather than the White House collection. There were maybe a few from the White House collection but not very many. Most of them got it from the National Gallery.

BURG: Did they tend to run to portraits of Army and Navy commanders out of the past?

HOPKINS: No, mostly ships and things of that kind rather than personalities.



BURG: How about the Army stuff that went up on the walls?  
Colored prints of soldiers for example, uniforms?

HOPKINS: I don't recall any pictures of commanding officers  
or anything like that.

BURG: Now may I ask, were the mess attendants themselves  
naval ratings, seamen or--

HOPKINS: They were. Most of them were seamen; at that time  
most of them were Filipinos who were attached to the  
Williamsburg.

BURG: To the presidential yacht?



HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Can I ask you, was a naval officer or a civilian in  
charge of the mess, the purchasing of food, overseeing the  
entire mess operation?

HOPKINS: Yes, I can give you a little bit of background on  
the White House mess. It really got started as a White  
House mess in the Truman Administration. Before that there

had been a small table that would seat not more than four people downstairs in a small room with an icebox and stove, and my predecessors, Mr. Forster and Mr. Latta used to eat down there most of the time and the cooking was done by a White House messenger. Once in a while in the Roosevelt days Mr. [Stephen T.] Early or Mr. [Marvin] McIntyre would join them at this small table, but that was unusual. When the Truman Administration came in, one of the men that came in with President Truman decided that they should have a staff mess; so they moved our file room to another area in the building (not our file room but our, I guess it was the small messenger room at that time, anyway it was down on the northwest corner of the West Wing), and they installed there a table that would seat about, oh, sixteen or so people, one large table. And the cooking was still done by this same messenger, a man named, John Pye. He had an assistant, one man from the Williamsburg, a Filipino; I don't recall his name offhand. John Pye, himself, was quite a character. I remember that he didn't like to have thirteen people at a table, and if he was going to have thirteen at the table he would stand out in the hall and the first person that came





along he said, "How about eating lunch today?"--the first staff member--and they would come in and have lunch. And this was family style. Also, in this room I recall, it hadn't been in existence very long as the staff mess, and one day the word was sent out that the President was coming down to eat there. And John Pye was all in a dither--we didn't even have any drapes on the windows, nothing but venetian blinds as I recall. And we had no money to buy drapes or no time either as far as that was concerned. So I got a hold of Frank Sanderson who was then our administrative officer. He made a little trip downtown to one of the five-and-ten cent stores and bought a set of plastic drapes, which you may know, the kind that you can cut off any length you want. We put them up and nobody knew the difference. Everything was fine.

BURG: No hemming problem or anything.

HOPKINS: No hemming problem or anything so everything was fine.

BURG: This was during the Truman Administration?



HOPKINS: This was during the Truman Administration. Well when the time came to renovate the White House during the Truman Administration and it became necessary for the President to move over in the Blair House. The doctor's office having been in the White House proper, they felt that the doctor's office should be as close as possible to the Blair House. And the closest spot in the West Wing was the area where we had the staff mess. So that meant that the staff mess had to move and the doctor occupied that area. So the staff mess moved around to the general area where it is now which had previously been the White House file room and subsequent to that, for a short period, the Map Room after it had moved out of the mansion as such. But it continued in the same fashion, one large table, everybody sat around family style.



BURG: May I ask at this point what kind of silverware, china, was this very plain almost Navy issue, heavy pottery sort of--

HOPKINS: Yes, yes, it was nothing like they used over at the mansion, very, very plain. But then many of the staff began to feel that the menu was too heavy; in other words John Pye

was a traditional southern cook. So they decided they would have sort of a steam table where you could fix your own sandwiches or have a pot of beans and frankfurters and that sort of thing. That went on for a short time rather than family style.

BURG: Prior to that you had no selection as to menu? It was whatever--

HOPKINS: It was whatever was on the menu.



BURG: There would be a course, a main course, and that's what you had.

HOPKINS: Yes. Well that went on for a little while. And then there was a discussion among the staff as to what is the purpose of the staff mess. Some people--well we went down there to eat and get away from our desks; others went down there so they wouldn't have to go out and be cornered at a hotel by some lobbyist; others wanted to transact business at the mess. So the way that was decided they put a couple of small tables so if you came down merely to eat and chat with your fellow employees you sat at the big table,

and if you wanted to transact business and bring a guest you sat at one of the small tables. And, about that time, discussion was started as to maybe enlarging the mess a little or getting it more formalized and the question came up, who should run it? Prior to that time Mr. Latta had been the treasurer of it he had sent out the bills; he collected the money and turned money over to John Pye to buy food out at the grocery stores and that type of thing. After Mr. Latta died, I took it over and usually did it on my lunch hour. Well there was long discussion as to who should take it over. Some people wanted the Army to take it over; General Vaughn didn't want anything to do with it. Some people wanted the Navy to take it over; Admiral [Robert Lee] Dennison didn't want anything to do with it. But they finally pressured him and he got an opinion from the JAG [Judge Advocate General] as I recall that it would be appropriate to establish a captain's mess at the White House. So that's the way the Navy took over the White House mess.

BURG: Why did they call it a captain's mess?

HOPKINS: Well that's the way they could do it legally apparently.





BURG: A mess established for officers of that rank.

HOPKINS: As I recall, that was the decision of the Judge Advocate General of the Navy; that's the way they could do it.

BURG: And really there only was one captain, naval captain, in the White House, the naval aide for President Truman.

HOPKINS: Yes, at that time he was an admiral. So it was done and it wasn't long of course before they put in additional tables, the mess was enlarged both physically and the number of people eating there, more and more help was brought in from the Williamsburg to assist, and it tended to grow. They then had their own people from the Williamsburg who bought the food and did the accounting and issued the bills and things of that nature. And then they had in the office a small auditing committee. I was a member of that auditing committee for a number of years, and about once every month or every two months we'd meet with this representative from the Williamsburg and go over the books and decide that maybe they had plenty of money--they could either reduce the price of the meal by a nickel or they had to charge ten cents more



or that type of thing and see who wasn't paying their bills and what to do about collecting and things of that nature.

BURG: Did they retain the steam-table approach?

HOPKINS: No, no, This was service entirely when the Navy took it over.

BURG: Did they operate from a menu?

HOPKINS: Yes. You had a choice. And of course as far as the food and everything was concerned it was an improvement, no doubt about it. As time went on, and from administration to administration, of course, the mess tended to grow all the time. I'm not sure whether this started immediately, but it wasn't long before they had to limit the people who could join the mess. When you joined the mess you paid a certain fee, maybe twenty-five dollars. They use this as a revolving fund to buy food and things of that nature. At the end of an administration of course that fee was turned back to the people as they left the White House. It's my recollection that at the end of the Eisenhower Administration rather than turning that fee back they decided that they would



buy each of the members a silver frame for framing a picture you know. And I think that's the way they returned the fund in those days rather than returning cash. I think in subsequent administrations they just turned the cash back to the departing members.

BURG: Now then during the period of the Eisenhower Administration, the mess is a menu kind of service operated by basically people from the Williamsburg. Did they still retain a large table and then a number of small tables or had they by this time gone to just small tables?

HOPKINS: Well there was one table, as I recall it, larger than the others. I don't know whether it was a round table or a square table in that administration but there was one fairly large table, not as large as the original table which would hold sixteen, eighteen or twenty people, but this would hold maybe, oh, ten or something like that. And the rest of them were smaller tables.

BURG: Am I correct now that by that time it was by invitation to the mess? That is, you could become a member of the White House mess but you had to be asked or was it that you



had to register your desire to be part of the White House mess?

HOPKINS: Well, the way it worked was basically the top staff were automatically eligible. Then how far down do you go? You only have capacity for so many people to serve in a particular period of time, second echelon maybe third echelon. And then sometimes the exceptions to that, particular staff member who wants somebody in his office to be on that list. Well, in the early days there was room for that, but, as time went on, in subsequent administrations, they had to be very strict as to who was on and who was off. And it developed over the years that many times--in other words people in the Bureau of the Budget, the top men, would like to eat there. Everybody would like to eat in the West Wing of the White House of course. At times if you would look around in there in subsequent administrations you'd find more people from other agencies, the Bureau of the Budget, Council of Economic Advisers, places like that than you did White House staff. So as time went on they had to limit it very strictly. And one of the criticisms, and I think they have overcome that





now but they hadn't overcome it in the Eisenhower Administration, was the fact that no women were members. It was men only.

BURG: By design?

HOPKINS: By design, yes. And some of the top women, Mrs. [Ann] Whitman, for instance, and some others, I can't see why they shouldn't have been eligible, but they just weren't, that was all.

BURG: They weren't? Now there was no distinction drawn between the political side of the White House and permanent staff, but it would mean--

HOPKINS: Well as a practical matter very few of the permanent staff were eligible because of the fact that the political staff more or less filled it up. I ate down there, two or three others of the permanent staff.

BURG: Basically it would be the top people of the permanent staff who had a chance and fewer of them than of the political staff.



HOPKINS: And of course it had many advantages eating down there in those days--you'd become better acquainted with some people that you didn't come in too much contact with in your official capacity during the day; you keep your eyes and ears open and you learned a lot of what was going on, things that you should have known and no other way of finding out. And the more you knew you could anticipate and be ready for things that otherwise you would be out in left field when it transpired; you wouldn't be able to cope.



BURG: All right, let me ask this one final question about the mess. When you went down there, Mr. Hopkins, you walked into the mess, there are a number of small tables and one larger table, would it be normal for you to seek for the group that you always ate with or would you be there simply looking for a vacant spot?

HOPKINS: Sometimes one, sometimes the other. If there were plenty of spaces, you probably sat down with the group you ordinarily ate with at this bigger table. Many times of course people that ate down there would bring visitors. For instance, Mr. [James C.] Hagerty, the press secretary, would

quite often have visitors. And other staff members would have visitors and they would have their own table. So you tended to stay away from those tables, unless there was no other vacancy. But you could sit anywhere.

BURG: Now was there any tendency to cliquishness, cliquishness in the sense that the routine that people could fall into of, "We four always sit there at that table," or did it break up enough so that you got full advantage of this feature you described to me where you would meet people that you didn't have a great deal of contact with; you would have a chance to talk with people that you didn't run into in the ordinary routine of your work?

HOPKINS: No, I wouldn't. The only cliquishness I would say would be basically the people who sat at this bigger table. You'd generally find the same people there day in and day out. They came down there to exchange jokes and tell stories and josh with each other and that type of thing.

BURG: Do you remember the personnel or any of the names of the people that commonly were there during the Eisenhower Administration at that big table?



HOPKINS: Well, I can't say that I do. I do know that many times top staff would be at that table. For instance, some of the interesting stories you used to hear--Meyer Kestnbaum for instance who was one of the staff assistants and had been at one time I believe head of Hart, Schaffner and Marx, he was a great raconteur. And he could sit there and he could stretch out a five minute story for a half hour. Clarence Randall would occasionally sit at that table and of course he was a very interesting individual, had been the head of one of the big steel companies you know at one time and had made a nation-wide broadcast in opposition to one of President Truman's actions at one time. So he was a very interesting individual.

BURG: Would Tom [Thomas E.] Stephens be found there?

HOPKINS: Tom Stephens, oh, yes. Tom Stephens was a past master at humor and the type of fellow that you never could tell when he was pulling your leg and when he was serious.

BURG: A dead-pen artist. Well, we'll hit him later on in our list. That's a very good summary of that mess and some





of its features. We appreciate having that. Well, we looked at both Aurand and Beach, who's the next man on our list?

HOPKINS: Well, J. William Barba, Bud Barba. He was a young man who was a protege in effect of Bern [Bernard] Shanley, I think. He had been with Bern Shanley's law firm up in New Jersey. And was in the counsel's office, dealt a great deal in handling of legislation that came to the White House and worked on things in general that would come to the special counsel's office. He was a young bachelor in those days as I remember; he used to get kidded about that quite a bit. I think he's later married. But he was a nice young fellow.

BURG: How about Stephen Benedict?

HOPKINS: Stephen Benedict I believe worked for Dr. Hauge when he first came there. He was a very knowledgeable young man too and, as I recall, later became an assistant staff secretary and worked basically in the area that Mr. [Roger] Steffan had. Mr. Steffan had stayed only a year and a half or so and later went on some kind of an assignment to Taiwan. He died in '55 or some such time. So Steve Benedict was in the area of office management and that sort of thing, worrying about keeping people happy--space, furniture.



BURG: An unflappable kind of man handling that kind of job?

HOPKINS: I would say so, yes.

BURG: Calm in his work.

HOPKINS: Yes, a very nice young fellow.

BURG: Did you know John Stewart Bragdon?

HOPKINS: Not too well. He'd come through the office and we'd have a speaking acquaintance of course and he ate down at the mess. He, I believe, graduated from West Point in President Eisenhower's class and was a well-known engineer. As I say, I didn't know him too well.

BURG: Who is the next man on your list that--

HOPKINS: Well, let's see, Dr. [Arthur] Burns of course was with the Council of Economic Advisers. I just had a speaking acquaintance with him, but he was a very scholarly man and of course was back at the White House during the Nixon Administration before he was made head of the Federal Reserve System.

BURG: You knew him chiefly to speak to and had no close acquaintanceship with him?



HOPKINS: No.

BURG: Who is the next man?

HOPKINS: Well, Pete Carroll, General Carroll, was the first staff secretary. He had been with General Eisenhower, I think over in SHAEF, and when the administration first came in he had an office in the East Wing as defense liaison officer. And then after the Eisenhower Administration had been there a few months they had a study made by Carter Burgess who had been in the Defense Department, I think, and the State Department. He had set up a staff secretariat in the State Department under General [George C.] Marshall. In other words, sort of the staff secretariat based after the military system.

BURG: Because he had also set up a staff secretariat in Africa during the war too.



HOPKINS: Well anyway he came over and made a study, and his assistant in working on this I think was Brad [Bradley H.] Patterson, as a result of which they issued several booklets and they decided to adopt the staff system. And one of the

new jobs under the staff system was the staff secretary. So it became desirable I think to have the staff secretary over in the general area where the executive clerk's office was. I remember Pete Carroll calling me up one day and saying they had made this decision and he would have to move over that way and indicated that we would have to do something to make space available to him. The impression I got was this was something that could be done in the next couple of weeks or so. And when I got back from lunch that day I had another call from Pete saying, "Are you ready for me to come over?" Well that kind of hit us between the eyes of course. We were in a room I guess about the width of this one and maybe --I don't know how long this room is, maybe fifteen feet; ours was maybe twenty or twenty-two feet long.

BURG: And perhaps twelve to fifteen wide, all right.

HOPKINS: Yes. We had three people in the room, myself, my assistant, and our secretary, and this room was also used as a passageway for Governor Adams to go to the President's office. And the appointments secretary, Tom Stephens, or Bern Shanley, whoever happened to be appointments secretary,





to go to Governor Adams' office. In other words it was the passageway back and forth to the President's office. If they didn't go that way, they had to go through the lobby and everybody saw them, because that's where the press men sat. Well this room wasn't very big for additions; so what do we do? Herb Miller who was my assistant, well the only thing we had to do was move Herb out. Where do we move him? There was no office space available any place. Well it ended up we moved Herb down into an office occupied by the official reporter, Jack Romagna. The office was full with Jack alone, but we squeezed Herb in there and their office with all their files and all their paraphernalia was no bigger than those two beds. I switched my desk over to the area in the office where Herb Miller's desk had been and put Pete Carroll's desk where I had been and closed one of the doors that went off the lobby. He brought his secretary in so we now had four people in this office and still had passageway. Well you probably sit in each other's laps in there, but that went on for nearly a year. General Carroll was a very knowledgeable man, very intense, very serious, but he was very capable, no doubt about it.



BURG: No lightheartedness there, no relieving--

HOPKINS: Well, some, yes, I would say some. He and Art [L. Arthur] Minnich used to, Art was his assistant in those days, but Art again was downstairs; there wasn't room for him upstairs. But he was much more intense than most people I had worked with. But he was very congenial; I mean we got along fine. And there was a very unusual situation; I had never been faced with that before you know.

BURG: Approximately how old was General Carroll at that time?

HOPKINS: Well, let's see that was--how old was I then? That was '55, '52, I guess he was in his late forties.

BURG: But he was to die very shortly.

HOPKINS: He had a heart attack but he came back to the office and then had another attack and died after the second one. But there again even after he came back you had a feeling that he would let up a little bit you know, but you didn't see any evidence of that. He was just as tight when he came back as he was before he went.



BURG: Putting in pretty long hours, Mr. Hopkins?

HOPKINS: Oh, yes, long hours. Anybody that worked in the White House put in long hours. In other words you had to get there early to be there well before the President and they stayed there until the President left, and it was long hours. And many times they stayed there after the President left if they didn't have their work done. But of course President Eisenhower leaned on General Carroll a great lot and gave him many assignments of various kinds. And General Carroll had quite a bit of talent as a writer too and he had been, I think, sort of the chief of correspondence in the chief of staff's office at one time. So he had a great deal of ability.

BURG: Yes he did. I remember his War Department work. I'm going to just make a note to myself so that I remember to ask Dr. Minnich to give me a little sketch on Carroll. We don't have a great deal of information about him, regrettably, because of his untimely death.

HOPKINS: Well, Art Minnich you know worked over there in the Defense Department too, and I think he may have known General Carroll over there, I'm not sure of that though.



BURG: Yes, he did. I believe it was because of General Carroll that he was drawn into the campaign and the campaign train. And Carroll I believe--

[Interruption]

BURG:--and his work and who would be the next man?

HOPKINS: Well, Earle [D.] Chesney is the next one. He was one of General Persons' assistants when General Persons was congressional liaison man, and Mr. Chesney during all that time was one of the assistants in the congressional liaison field. He was a very personable man. He had been in the White House years earlier for a short time I think in the Hoover Administration, I may be wrong about that, in the usher's office. And he was a very talented cartoonist. I think he'd had a cartoon series of some kind during the war when he was in the Navy. But he was a very personable, very likable fellow, and I think was ideal for his congressional liaison work.

BURG: The kind of man who could speak with congressional types and got along with them.





HOPKINS: Yes, he could get along with anybody; I'm sure of that.

BURG: Had Chesney ever had any political experience that you know of? Had he ever served in an elective office for example?

HOPKINS: No, he had never served in a elective office; I'm sure of that. Now how much background he may have had up on the Hill or other places I'm not too sure. I knew at one time, but I don't remember.

BURG: You didn't know him from his time in the Hoover Administration?

HOPKINS: No, I did not.

BURG: You were not in contact with him then? And Mr. Chesney is now dead I understand.

HOPKINS: Yes, that's true.



BURG: It's a pity; I'm not sure that anyone got him; it's too bad. Who is next?

HOPKINS: Well Dale Crittenberger who's also dead incidentally, I think. He was a young assistant to General [Robert] Schulz over in the military aide's office.

BURG: Well, I'll check with Bob Schulz. It seems to me that there may have been two Crittenbergers, Dale Crittenbergers listed in a Who's Who, one Junior and one Senior.

HOPKINS: Well, the other was his father, I think. His father was a General Crittenberger; I know that. Now whether his name was Dale I forget, but I think--he's not listed as Junior here--but I think that was Dale's father.

BURG: I think the father had taken part in the Italian campaign, perhaps a corps commander there and he--



HOPKINS: Yes, I think he was well-known to General Eisenhower.

BURG: Yes. So this was the son, and it's your feeling that the son is now deceased.

HOPKINS: Yes, I'm sure. I don't know whether he was killed in a plane accident; I think he was.

BURG: Do you happen to know about when, Mr. Hopkins?

HOPKINS: Well, I'm just guessing now; it hasn't been so terribly long ago; I would say within the last seven or eight years.

BURG: All right. We'll see if we can't run that down.

HOPKINS: Bob Schulz could tell you.

BURG: Yes, Bob could probably give us a hand. All right. And who's next?

HOPKINS: Well, General [Robert] Cutler whom I didn't know too well. I used to see him down at the mess quite often; he used to come through the office; he was very genial, a great storyteller. He had a reputation of having a terrible temper. I never experienced it.

BURG: Did you hear others speak of--

HOPKINS: The office gossip was that he would throw inkwells at his secretary and that sort of thing. I say I never experienced it; I don't know whether it was true or not. But he was very congenial. I know several times they would have staff parties and he and Tom [Thomas E.] Stephens were the life of the party ordinarily.



BURG: I see. The two men play off one against the other.

HOPKINS: Somewhat. And they'd like to sing you know. I used to hear at one of these parties maybe General Cutler and Tom Stephens and Jim Hagerty were--

BURG: Warbling together. Where would staff parties of this sort take place? There at the White House, or how would that be handled?

HOPKINS: Sometimes down in the mess area sometimes--I was forgetting--we went someplace, one of the hotels one time, but I don't remember where it was. But nothing elaborate you know, just for maybe a Christmas party or some occasion they'd get together. Maybe sometimes it would be some top staff member leaving or something of that nature.

BURG: I was going to ask you on what occasions you'd have parties of that sort. I meant to ask you too, was liquor served in the White House mess?

HOPKINS: No, no, absolutely not.

BURG: Absolutely not.





HOPKINS: Now I think in later days and you may have to get way up to, I'm not sure when, I think quite a bit later they started serving beer occasionally, but not in those days, no.

BURG: On whose say so, Mr. Hopkins? The orders come down from the very top.

HOPKINS: Well, I'm not certain but I very much have a feeling it was; everybody knew Governor Adams' attitude. In other words, there was to be no liquor in the office, and he didn't like people smoking at their desks either.

BURG: Oh, he did not?

HOPKINS: No.

BURG: Did he ever say, presumably with his personality he would have said it once, did he say why he did not want them smoking at their desks?

HOPKINS: If so I never heard it.

BURG: Is it possible that it may have been Adams, but is it possible that the fact that this was a Navy mess said that



there was no liquor? The British Royal Navy of course is a wet navy; ours has always been dry or has been in past years.

HOPKINS: Well, that I don't know. I had never heard the question raised in fact; I just don't know.

BURG: Yes, the liquor simply wasn't there.

HOPKINS: Just wasn't there that was all.

BURG: Now General Cutler is now deceased.



HOPKINS: I believe he did die here a year or so ago. I'm not too sure, but I believe he is. I think he is; I'm not positive.

BURG: I'm not clear, but that's something that we can look into. It's interesting that, on the one hand you have a story of a man with Cutler, a violent temper, violent enough to--

HOPKINS: Well, as I say I never experienced it, but that was the reputation.

BURG: You never saw it. He never turned that on you.

HOPKINS: Oh, no, no.

BURG: You found him personable and congenial.

HOPKINS: Very much so.

BURG: That's interesting too. We'll have to look more deeply into that. Next man.

HOPKINS: Well, let's see, Mr. [Frederick M.] Dearborn, I didn't know him. I knew him by sight and to speak to him, but one thing that struck me odd during the Eisenhower Administration was that when he died the flags, by Presidential order, were lowered to half-staff which, so far as I knew at the time, he was the lowest ranking man that the flag had ever been lowered to half-staff by the President. In other words it struck me as a little unusual. It may be that who was back of that who made that recommendation to the President I don't know. But I know that's one of the things that--

BURG: Now this was done for Fred Dearborn?

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Well, that's interesting, Joseph Davis who is a member



of the Council of Economic Advisers, you did not know him?

HOPKINS: No, I didn't know him.

BURG: Okay. How about Joseph Dodge?



HOPKINS: Well he was Director of the Budget and, there again, I just had a speaking acquaintance with him because he would come through the office quite often; sometimes he would bring over and leave at our desk a paper that would require presidential action subsequently after it had been passed through the staff--in other words, an allocation or a supplemental appropriation request and that type of thing. Of course Mr. Dodge had been a banker, and one of the things that was impressive from our standpoint when he first came in office was that he had made a commitment to the congress, as I recall, that during the Eisenhower Administration the President's emergency fund would not be used as it had been in the previous administrations. In other words, there had been some criticism of things for which the fund had been used. The end result of that was that, during the early days of the Eisenhower Administration, they had to be so circumspect because of Mr. Dodge's commitment to the congress that there



were many times hidebound for funds. And the result was, that after General [Andrew] Goodpaster came to the White House as staff secretary, we conceived the idea of requesting another special fund which became known as special projects.

BURG: Because that other money was simply too tied up in this promise.

HOPKINS: Yes, because of this commitment. Now that was one of the things that of course was of much concern to all of us during the Eisenhower days.

BURG: This special projects thing went through and the funding arrived.

HOPKINS: It went through and was in existence for a great many years. It has been knocked out now, I might say, very recently.

BURG: Well there was no way to get around this thing because Dodge had committed himself.



HOPKINS: Yes. And certain things which, as far as I knew, and I think everybody who had anything to do with that fund

was entirely legitimate and was the purpose for which it had been conceived, but there was criticism of certain things for which it was used. I don't recall any particular areas, but I know that many times things come up that require the President to have funds available to him, and in subsequent years there have been different funds set up of various kinds such as the disaster aid fund and things of that nature which years ago they didn't have.

BURG: Interesting to know. There may be a way for me to pursue that a little further too. Was William G. Draper known to you?

HOPKINS: Yes, I knew Bill Draper. He of course was the President's pilot and his Air Force aide. A fine fellow. He didn't impress you as being the military type. I don't know just when he got in the Air Force, but I don't think his background was entirely military. But he was a very personable young fellow. Of course he's deceased now you may know too.



BURG: Yes. By saying that he didn't strike you as being the military type, Beach and Aurand did affect you that way?

HOPKINS: More so than Draper, yes.

BURG: Now what sets them apart in your mind as the military type?

HOPKINS: Well, that's a little hard to describe or a little hard for me to say, but they have certain qualities and certain approaches to certain things, a little more rigid in certain areas I think.

BURG: A little more parochial in an approach perhaps, at least that would be the stereotype that one might think of. But Draper, maybe it's because Draper was an Air Force officer. They always do tend to be a little wilder. [Laughter]

HOPKINS: May be. But he was a very fine fellow. I liked him very much.

BURG: Now speaking of military types, the next name on my list is John S. D. Eisenhower. He came in fairly late to work with Andy Goodpaster.



HOPKINS: Well this small room I was telling you about--when Andy Goodpaster came in, he had an engineering background

you know, and he got out his slide rule and says, "Here, this is too crowded; we got to do something about this."

BURG: Too many bodies and a little bit of floor space.

HOPKINS: So the end result was that they took some space off the lobby, made a private walkway which the office occupied by Governor Adams and the office occupied by General Persons would use in going to the President's office, either through the appointments secretary's office or direct through the main door. They widened the office we were in by half maybe. In other words, it was, say, fifteen feet wide and now it probably became twenty-two or something like that; in other words it was basically a square office. General Goodpaster, and I'm a little off in my timing here as to just when all this happened, but General Goodpaster, eventually at least, occupied what had been Governor Adams' outer office. Art Minnich, by that time, had moved upstairs and then there was desk space for Colonel Eisenhower in the room Art Minnich and I were in. So in that room we had Art Minnich, myself, Colonel Eisenhower, my secretary, Colonel Eisenhower's secretary and, I guess, by that time also General Goodpaster's





secretary had moved into the other room. In other words, we occupied two rooms there, the staff secretary, the executive clerk, and the defense liaison officer. Of course General Goodpaster had the two titles, And I believe that John Eisenhower's title was assistant staff secretary, the same title that Art Minnich had. John is a fine fellow in my book. He didn't throw his weight around at all; he could have. Had his feet very much on the ground and was very down to earth. I liked him very much.

BURG: You found him to be a courteous man.

HOPKINS: Very much so, very much so.



BURG: Well, that's the impression that I have of him too. I keep forgetting we fly back from here on the same plane. That definitely has been the impression that I had. You were working at very close proximity with him in that same office. When he went there, to the White House, did he seem to feel at ease fairly fast or did you notice him having to pass through any kind of transition? He had been in the Pentagon prior to coming to the White House, and I wondered if the change of style had upset him or whether he seemed to just fit right

in and fall into the White House routines fairly quick.

HOPKINS: He seemed to fall into it fairly quick. I know that he was a little critical at times of some of the things that are written for the President. In other words, "This doesn't sound like the boss," or my dad or whatever he called him you know. And of course he had a feel for a lot of that stuff. I think he worked into it fairly quickly. As I say, from my observation, he got along very well with everybody and didn't throw his weight around at all. Everybody liked him very much.

BURG: Seemed to be liked.

HOPKINS: Yes, very much.

BURG: I was thinking by then he had probably been teaching at West Point; I think he put in a stint teaching English there.

HOPKINS: Yes, I think he had.

BURG: And I believe he is a man who is concerned about syntax and would have an eye for the phrase and probably for his father's style, English style.



HOPKINS: And he probably inherited some of it. His father was a good writer you know. He could probably write better than any President that has ever been in office I would think. I mean do it himself, because he had a lot of experience in the war departments. He came up through the ranks; he used to do a lot of writing for General [Douglas] MacArthur you know.

BURG: Yes, right. I've seen some drafts. In fact I acquired a draft plus the ultimate letter that went out while Eisenhower was Chief of Staff, and the party giving me this actually had been given a copy of the draft in Eisenhower's handwriting showing the enormous amount of additional structuring and work that he did on a fairly short kind of congratulatory, thank-you-for-your-fine-service letter.



HOPKINS: I used to take certain types of material in for his signature. Many of the letters that I would take in had to do with personnel matters, in other words somebody resigning or an appointment letter or something of that nature. I would stand there you know as he was signing this stuff, and sometimes he'd find one that didn't strike him just right and

he would edit it. Many times you know you'll see a person edit a letter and you can say, "Well, that's all right but what difference does it make. It's no improvement, it's just a change." But it seemed to me that you could analyze President Eisenhower's editing and you could find a good reason for every change he made.

BURG: That's interesting. So a word might be strengthened.

HOPKINS: And you could understand why he made the change. Sometimes people edit and I can't understand why he made it just because he likes this phrase better than the one we had; it makes no difference. But you could always see a reason for President Eisenhower's changes. I was always amazed at his ability to do that.

BURG: It's interesting to have that from you. You saw an awful lot of that from a number of different Presidents from Hoover on. And I'm very glad to get this impression that you had of John Eisenhower in that position too. Now did you meet the brother, Milton; did you have anything much to do with him?





HOPKINS: No, no. We used to see him around there quite often and see him down in the mess but I had no contact with him.

BURG: No contact with him.

HOPKINS: He had an outstanding government career of course.

BURG: Yes, yes, indeed he did, starting with Roosevelt I guess. Now let me ask you as long as we're mentioning this, I was asking you whether you'd seen him much during the Eisenhower Administration. Do you recollect him from your time in the Roosevelt years?

HOPKINS: Not personally but by name, yes. In other words, during the Roosevelt years, when he was down in agriculture, he was much more prominent in the public eye than his brother. You heard of Milton Eisenhower right along, but you never heard of Dwight D. Eisenhower in those days.



BURG: Well, I wondered if you'd run into him in his earlier phases of the government career. The next name I have is Harris Ellsworth.

HOPKINS: I had no contact with him at all. I saw him around the office.

BURG: How about Frank Sterling Evens?

HOPKINS: Well he was a young man over in the military; I believe he was in the Air Force, wasn't he?

BURG: Yes, they have him here--air aide.

HOPKINS: I didn't know him too well except occasionally he would bring things over for Bill Draper, things that required presidential signature, nomination lists of general officers or commissions that required presidential signature and that sort of thing. So we had some dealings with him but not a great lot. Again a very personable and likeable young man.

BURG: How about Bill [William Bragg, Jr.] Ewald?



HOPKINS: He was another bright young man with a wonderful background and a good writer as I recall. My main dealings with him I guess was down in the White House mess. In other words, his work was such that we didn't come in contact too often in our daily operations. But as I say, he was another one with a wonderful background and a fine young fellow. In fact I've seen him a couple of times in the last year. He's writing another book about the Eisenhower days, and he's come up to see me a couple of times.

BURG: Oh, I see. He's here in Washington, D.C.

HOPKINS: No, he's up in, well, right out of New York City. I forget the town he's in, but up in that area.

BURG: All right, we should be able to chase him down then if we want to make contact with him. Fine, thank you. Now is Arthur [S.] Flemming next on your list?

HOPKINS: Well, there again I knew Dr. Flemming, had a pleasant speaking relationship with him. Officially we didn't come in contact a great deal. Of course here again is one of the people who's had an outstanding career in government. He's been in and out many times, many top jobs. HEW [Health, Education, and Welfare] I guess is probably the highest one, but he was head of the Civil Service Commission for many years. And of course he was, I think, a friend of the government employee, and we all had very high regard for him. He's very likeable fellow, and he's the type of man--two or three times he would come back to the White House after he had been there in the Eisenhower days and he would go out of his way to look you up and just say hello you know.



BURG: I see. An easy man to know.

HOPKINS: Oh, very much so.

BURG: You found him an easy man to speak with.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: And interested in, well, because he was civil service--

HOPKINS: He was interested in people I think, and I think he was a friend of the civil service.

BURG: Okay, very fine. Did you know Frederic [Ewing] Fox?

HOPKINS: Oh, yes, yes, I know Fred Fox. He was a minister. He had an office over in the East Wing, and his main area of activity, at least as it came to my attention, was basically in the area of preparation of letters of greeting and that sort of thing which is a volume operation in the White House and getting more so all the time. And it takes somebody with a great deal of capacity as a writer and willing to do a lot of research so that you don't send greetings and letters of praise to the wrong people.





BURG: Now can you describe to me the kinds of things he would have to do, letters of greeting to people for example on their birthday, this kind of thing?

HOPKINS: Well, to some extent that type of thing, but every large group in the country that has a convention or an annual meeting, they want a letter from the President to read at their convention or their meeting. Many times they want presidential commitments in these letters. It's a very touchy field. And for instance the AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor - Congress of Industrial Organizations) is going to have a meeting some place; they would want a letter for this. And they may want a presidential commitment or would like to have one. So it's a very careful operation. And he didn't do all this of course, but he was instrumental in a great deal of it. That type of thing where any policy matters were concerned had to get clearance from the necessary departments and agencies and had to go through top staff and all that sort of thing.

BURG: How did he come to that job, Mr. Hopkins? How did he happen to be chosen for that job? Do you happen to know?



HOPKINS: No, I can't say that I do.

BURG: Do you know what his religious faith was by any chance?

HOPKINS: I can't say that I know that either. I don't know whether this book tells or not. I was thinking Presbyterian [Congregationalist], but I'm not sure.

BURG: My list doesn't happen to say. He seems to have done that work from about 1956.

HOPKINS: Congregational, it says here.

BURG: Do you know if he's still alive, sir?

HOPKINS: Oh, yes, he's up at Princeton.

BURG: I see. At the theological school up there, do you think?

HOPKINS: No, I don't think so.

BURG: There's one attached to that campus or adjacent to it.

HOPKINS: I should know what he's doing up there too because I get a Christmas card from him each year but I don't.

BURG: He's with the university?



HOPKINS: Yes, he's with the University at Princeton.

BURG: And so if we needed to contact him we could get his exact address from you. You're in communication with him.

HOPKINS: --- - - - his address. He was very knowledgeable and very likable and fine young man. He used to get teased a little bit about his background and that sort of thing, but he could take it; he was all right. And one of our big problems in the Eisenhower Administration, particularly after General Persons became the chief of staff, was letters from children. A child writes in; they've got no inhibitions at all; they ask all kinds of questions. If you really answered their letter you could write a book. Many times I think it's the fault of the teacher. It's very easy for a teacher to say, "Now we're going to have a little project, and in this project you're going to write to somebody in public life, and you're going to ask them certain things, and this will keep you busy for the next two weeks." Well that takes the heat off the teacher, and the first thing the child thinks about, "Who do I write to?" Well the first name that pops in his mind is the President of the United



States. So in comes a letter. Sometimes you might receive a dozen letters very much alike from the same school. They ask all kinds of questions. Well General Persons was very interested in those children's letters of course and was insistent that the replies be responsive. And to be responsive, sometimes a short response would be two pages. I remember many times we would handle these letters to a great extent over in the correspondence section and prepare letters for General Persons' signature or whoever it may be, and it would get to General Persons' desk and he would say, "This is not responsive." And he would bring it in to Art Minnich to dress up. Well Art would slave over these things--well it was just impossible. We didn't have time, and we knew we weren't doing a good job as far as the children were concerned, and we knew we weren't doing what General Persons really wanted. So I appealed to Fred Fox one time and I said, "Fred, we've got to do something."

Well Fred said, "I'll fix you up something."

So he started to work, and the theory was we were going to get up a booklet, and we were going to keep a record for a period of time of all these questions that came in from children, and that we were going to try to prepare a booklet





that would answer a lot of these questions, in a general way at least. We'd have information in there about the President or about the Constitution or about the flag, general information for a child so that if they asked specific questions that we couldn't answer or didn't have time to write in detail we'd send them a pamphlet and say, "This will be helpful to you and will answer a lot of your questions." Well Fred helped and worked on that for a good long time, but we never did get it wrapped up until the Eisenhower Administration went out. So when Fred left he bundled all that stuff over and sent it over to me and said, "Here it is." Well it wasn't until the Kennedy Administration that we finally got that off, but Fred started it.

BURG: And that did take some of the pressure off you then?

HOPKINS: Yes, it did later, but not in the Eisenhower Administration. Fred got it started and we carried it on and finally got it licked.

BURG: Very interesting to hear that General Persons wanted those letters, even though they were going to children and there's no mistaking a child's letter, to respond to the child's questions.



HOPKINS: Yes, it was very interesting.

BURG: Well, I suppose Dr. Minnich will be able to give me another viewpoint on that.

HOPKINS: I'm sure he will.

[Laughter]

BURG: Interesting. Well it sounds like Fred Fox would be a good one to speak to.

HOPKINS: Yes, I'm sure he would be.

BURG: How about Clarence Francis?

HOPKINS: I didn't know him very well. There again, I used to see him down at the mess and that sort of thing but not--

BURG: All right. And Walter George.

HOPKINS: No, he wasn't there too long. He was brought down from the Hill you know. - He'd been a senator for years and years. I don't think I came in contact with him at all.



This interview is being taped with Mr. William Hopkins at the Army and Navy Club, February 3, 1975, Washington, DC. Present for the interview: Mr. Hopkins and Dr. Burg of the Eisenhower Library staff.

DR. BURG: When you and I finished our work the last time, we had reached Andrew Goodpaster in our list. Goodpaster's one of those, I would imagine, that you knew pretty well, you would have a certain amount of contact with him.

MR. HOPKINS: Yes, we had contact with him. He was staff secretary as well as defense liaison officer. And in his capacity of staff secretary, when he first succeeded General [Paul T.] Carroll he was in the same room that I was in where the executive clerk had been, and later his office was right next door to ours. And the assistant staff secretary remained in the same room that I was in. In fact, when General Goodpaster succeeded General Carroll, he looked around and decided that the room was too small for the number of people in there and he being an engineer officer got out his slide rule and decided on some changes. In fact I guess that was probably one of the first major changes in the West Wing. What he did was to enlarge what had been the executive clerk's office by about half. This change also provided for a private corridor from the area of the offices occupied by Governor [Sherman] Adams and General [Wilton B.] Persons, to the



President's office, and this space was provided by taking it off of the lobby. So the lobby lost maybe a fourth of its space and we got this corridor, enlarged the office in which General Goodpaster was in as staff secretary and provided a little anteroom in the area of General Persons and Governor Adams. So the executive clerk's office prior to that time had been an office, oh I would guess, twenty feet by fifteen feet. And in there we had General Carroll, his secretary, myself, and a secretary--so there was four of us, which meant four desks, and it also served as a passageway from Governor Adams' office in through the appointment secretary's office into the president's office. So Governor Adams and his predecessors, all previous administrations, used this as a passageway all the time; so it was a very--you didn't have much more room in there than you have in here.



BURG: Perhaps ten feet. Or, do you mean the distance here, which would be more like five feet?



HOPKINS: This area here, yes.

BURG: Five feet perhaps.



HOPKINS: So it was crowded. And then when General Goodpaster came in, it was arranged so that Art [L. Arthur] Minnich also had a desk up there. And later on, General Goodpaster moved into what had previously been the anteroom of Governor Adams so we had a little more space. But it was an open-door policy. In other words, General Goodpaster was working in the next room with the door open most of the time, unless he had people in there for some reason, or was doing something that required concentration or secrecy. So it was, we were all working there together.

BURG: You were observing him.

HOPKINS: Oh, yes. He was a very competent man, no doubt about it. I was always greatly impressed with him how he could husband his time. Sometimes he'd be working away and maybe President Eisenhower'd left for the afternoon to play golf and General Goodpaster would come in and say, "I'm going home for an

hour." And he'd be back in a hour and he would say that "I've chopped some wood and I've done this and I've done that," and he didn't waste any time. I was always very much impressed with that. I didn't operate that way.



BURG: Very few of us do operate that way. Was he able to reach his home and--

HOPKINS: Well he lived over in Virginia. I'm not sure just where, but it wasn't very far.

BURG: So in an hour's time he could get there and do some useful work and get back.

HOPKINS: Oh, yes.

BURG: Was he keeping pretty long hours at the White House?

HOPKINS: Oh, yes, very much so. He kept long hours. Oh, I would just say roughly from maybe 8:15 in the morning till 7:00 at night, something like that. That's just a general pattern, varied somewhat. But he was very much involved, of course, in addition to staff secretary work, which he only did certain

phases of that, Art Minnich did quite a bit of it and later on John Eisenhower, both of them. But he was greatly involved in the defense liaison area as well as with the national security area. In other words, in the days of Gordon Gray and others, Bobby Cutler, they conferred quite often with General Goodpaster and he took many things in for the President to see and act on in the national security area.



BURG: Am I right in thinking that Goodpaster had a Ph.D.?

HOPKINS: Yes, I think he did. I think from Princeton.

BURG: And so did Art Minnich.

HOPKINS: Art Minnich did, yes.

BURG: And John Eisenhower, graduate work, I know at least the M.A. level. And somebody once remarked that it was unusual the amount of academic prowess in that office and yet Minnich and Eisenhower for example, much of what they did, I guess, were the kind of mechanical tasks. Would that be a fair assessment?

HOPKINS: Well, some of it. Now Art, of course, he was, in



many respects, an assistant to Governor Adams and later General Persons. He did a lot of preparation of special letters and that type of thing for them. He also was the main person used in taking notes, except for cabinet meetings, for meetings of the congressional leaders and other meetings in the Cabinet Room basically. Many times the meetings in the President's office that were of the nature that related to things in which General Goodpaster was involved, he took notes. But Art, that took up a lot of time and then Art was engaged in later years on the editing of the tapes for the Public Papers of the President.

BURG: Right.

HOPKINS: That required quite a bit of time.

BURG: I remember that.

HOPKINS: So in effect he had two offices: one up in the same room in which I worked and one downstairs. And he kept busy without a doubt.

BURG: Now did you ever notice, those opportunities, because you were a busy man, opportunities that you might have had to



see Goodpaster in action, did he ever give any evidence that he had difficulty adjusting to working in the civilian kind of environment having been military?



HOPKINS: No, I don't think so. I think he had less trouble that way than his predecessor did, General Carroll. In other words, they were different types. Goodpaster was basically or gave you the impression of being very calm and easy going and never tended to throw his weight around. He was approachable. Other than maybe his very precise habits in work habits, you wouldn't think of him as an officer at all, if you didn't know him. He did have very precise work habits. In other words, he was always writing memoranda for the record. Whenever he was in on a presidential conference he came out and wrote a memoranda for the records. I'm sure that the Eisenhower files are just full of them. It seemed to me in many cases that he overdid it, but then that was a matter of opinion.

BURG: It was such a strong habit though that even in situations where one might not think this was necessary, he was going to

write the memoranda.

HOPKINS: Yes.



BURG: Sitting where you did, in that particular corridor, could you form a judgment as to who seemed to have--I'll use the word unrestricted access to the President, maybe that's not the word I want--but does it stick in your mind who seemed to be able to get in and out of the President's office from the staff with the greatest regularity. We've seen more recently in the Nixon administration I think, it looked as though entrance to the President was rather restricted. But in the Eisenhower administration I get the impression that some were able to move in and out and consult with the President with some degree of freedom.

HOPKINS: I think so. I think this business of restriction to the President, and you even read about it in the current administration--I don't know how true it is. But in those days there much less restriction. I think it was tending toward that way in each administration, but in the Eisenhower administration for instance, all the top staff could get in with no trouble at

all. In fact, they'd get in either door which meant they walked in without announcement. In other words they could go in through Tom [Thomas E.] Stephens office if he was there or through Ann Whitman's office. And it was a matter, basically, of sticking their head in the door and seeing if he wasn't too busy and walking in.

BURG: So we know men like Adams, of course, could do this, but also men like Hauge, Gerald Morgan, Jim Hagerty--

HOPKINS: Yes. I think Jim Hagerty--well he came in both ways, because in those days there was the President's office and then there was a little washroom which later became a little anteroom after the President had his heart attack, then the appointment secretary's office and then the executive clerk's office or the staff secretary's office--which you called it in the Eisenhower days--and our doors were always open. In other words, it was an open-door policy. So from where I sat you could look right in and see Tom Stephen's desk or Bern [Bernard M.] Shanley later on, and see who was going in the President's door. Did that for years. Of course, Jim Hagerty would come bouncing in and say to





Tom Stephens, "Is anybody with him?" If the answer was no, walk right in.

BURG: And so that's how it was done, particularly by Tom Stephens.

HOPKINS: Or many times Governor Adams, I know, would pick up the phone and ask Tom Stephens, "Is the president alone?" If he said yes, here'd come Governor Adams right through our little passageway and go on in.

BURG: Even though there was the staff organization, staff concept, which sometimes has been reported as in effect shielding him, holding down access to him, your observation would be that access was still pretty good,--

HOPKINS: Yes. I would say--

BURG: --in the administration.

HOPKINS: --the access was not quite as broad maybe as President Truman's time. In other words, it didn't go quite as deep in the staff.





BURG: As it had in the Truman period.

HOPKINS: Yes. But there was access, no doubt about it. Any-  
one who needed to see him could get in.



BURG: The next name I have on my list is Gordon Gray. Did you  
know Gray?

HOPKINS: I knew him, not too well. But he was an extremely  
friendly man and of course you know his background. He was a  
man of considerable wealth, but he was common as an old shoe. He  
was always very friendly and I think a very able man. I always  
had a very high regard for Gordon Gray.

BURG: The next man--Robert K. Gray.

HOPKINS: Well, Bob Gray was a young fellow when he came to the  
White House. I can well remember the first time I ever saw him.  
I think he was brought over to the White House by--Fred Seaton  
brought him over.

BURG: Yes.

HOPKINS: He was from Nebraska, as was Fred Seaton, and I know I

was called up--I forget whose office it was, I don't know whether it was Bryce Harlow's or who--anyway. I was called up there to be told, now this is Bob Gray and he's going to be working with us. And he was probably in his early 30s in those days. But he was a very bright young man. I'd say a little ambitious maybe. He was a go-getter, lots of pep, vim, and vitality.



BURG: Do you think that his ambition, which you've mentioned, one thing that I continually hear as I speak with members of that staff is the fact that so many of them make the observation that few on the staff seemed to be promoting their own interests or had any interest in promoting their own careers, but rather that they had worked for the cause that they were engaged in and that there was very little back stabbing or climbing or anything else. I also get the impression that Gray was an exception to that; that the ambition that you speak of was to others on the staff a distasteful amount of ambition.

HOPKINS: Well maybe to a certain degree; not overly so I would say. So far as I know, he got along well with all members of the staff but I have a feeling that there was a little more per-

sonal ambition there than in the average.

BURG: Now he took over the job that Maxwell Rabb had--

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: --as secretary of the cabinet.

HOPKINS: But now before that, when he was there first, he had been an assistant to Governor Adams, as I recall. I believe he succeeded Charlie Willis in that job, in other words the personnel area, before he became cabinet secretary.

BURG: Well he might have, then Robert Hampton--

HOPKINS: --Bob Hampton succeeded him later in the personnel area, but Bob Gray was in that area for--I think he succeeded Charlie Willis.

BURG: That's possible, I'd forgotten that.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Now Rabb, Rabb had had various assignments connected with minority rights as well as his cabinet secretary's position.



HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: But it's not my impression that Gray took over all of Rabb's duties--



HOPKINS: No, as I recall it he didn't get involved in the minority area and I don't recall right off who did. But I don't think Bob Gray

BURG: Fred Morrow had--

HOPKINS: To some extent, yes.

BURG: Now one more question about Gray. One of the criticisms I've heard voiced of him was that unlike Rabb when he set up cabinet agendas, Gray tended to throw into those agendas a number of things that other, perhaps more senior members of the staff, thought were poor planning on his part or these were matters that were being taken care of in other ways and did not need to be discussed by the cabinet or were blown out of proportion by Gray--that is they were not of cabinet importance, a whole series of things. Was that your impression?



HOPKINS: Well I think, I think there may be some truth to that, but I think there's a reason for it, too. Of course, Brad [Bradley H.] Patterson was the assistant during all this time, both when Max Rabb was there and when Bob Gray was there. And here they had this cabinet system where each week they had to come up with an agenda. And believe me, sometimes they really had to reach. There just wasn't that much material around. So it was a matter in many cases of reaching to--what can we have to put on the cabinet agenda. Sometimes they'd go around the office asking people. It was a job to try to come up with something many times. And I think that's probably one of the reasons for this.

BURG: Mr. Hopkins, does it seem to you that that situation came to prevail as we moved deeper and deeper into the administration?

HOPKINS: Yes, very definitely so.

BURG: That in the early years there was plenty and so Rabb might not have had difficulty setting up an agenda that was worthwhile but that Gray did have the difficulty.

HOPKINS: I think that's a natural tendency as time goes on,



these things sort of tend to peter out you know, and to try to continue it beyond it's real need, maybe you've got to reach to keep it going. Then, too, jealousies between the Departments tend at times to keep items off the agenda.



BURG: Now it interests me as it must have interested you, too, one solution to that would be to stop having, say, weekly cabinet meetings, if you're stretching that far to get an agenda. Could you tell, was it the President himself who was saying now we're going to keep on having those cabinet meetings each week or was some senior member of the staff saying that this is probably just a good idea to keep--

HOPKINS: Well that I really don't know. I have a feeling maybe it was just one of those things that was just going along of its own weight and nobody was really raising the question: Is this something we should continue to do? I just don't know. I do know that there was a very definite feeling among the people in the cabinet, secretariat, for instance, that it was an institution that once it had been installed in the White House that no President could get along without.

BURG: The cabinet.

HOPKINS: Cabinet secretariat. I had discussions along toward the end of the Eisenhower administration with Brad Patterson and others in which they were interested: Now how do we proceed so that there'll be no hiatus when the new administration comes-- keep this moving along? Here we've got a cabinet secretariat that has been very valuable to President Eisenhower and I'm sure no other President can get along without. My advice to them was, if you want to continue a cabinet secretariat, get it out of the White House. You'll never continue it if you keep it here, because of the very nature of it. It's something new, something the Democrats have not had, they're coming in and get it over someplace, but get it out of the White House office. Well it wasn't done and came President Kennedy, did not have a cabinet secretariat. They later had a man whom they sometimes gave what they called cabinet secretary duties, but it was not in the same league with what the Eisenhower administration had. They've had them since that time. In other words, in President Nixon's time Alex [Alexander P.] Butterfield was known as cabinet secretary part of the time. But it was, the concept was not the same at all.





BURG: Was it your thought that had it been placed, let's say in the Executive Office Building, that that might have been the proper--



HOPKINS: That might have been helpful--

BURG: --place to house it. Why physically removed from the White House?

HOPKINS: Well, I don't know. It was my experience that in a change of administration, anybody within the grounds that worked in the office, was suspect from a standpoint of loyalty and that sort of thing--you worked so closely with the previous administration. If you did not work within the grounds, in other words, if you worked over in the Bureau of the Budget, where much policy was developed and from a policy standpoint they were much more important, in my mind at least, than we who worked in the grounds--but they were far enough removed that they were not suspect from the loyalty standpoint. In other words, when the Eisenhower administration came in, sometime prior to that Governor Adams was down and he and Charlie Willis were together and they called me into the Cabinet Room and asked me about some questions. I



may be wrong, but I always felt that maybe the only reason I stayed on, and by my staying on the people under me stayed on, was that I had come there in the Hoover administration. I may be wrong; I don't know. But I always felt that that was very helpful. And if I hadn't come there at that time, because the Republicans had been out of power for twenty years, and everybody was suspect. And of course, our purpose was to serve the President and his staff loyally and to the best of our ability regardless of who they were, and in a matter of six months or a year I think we gained their respect. But you can't expect to have it overnight. It just takes time and the only way you get it is not to push yourself. You sit back and sort of let things take their course. And of course when you see that they want something done, do it to the best of your ability and if you see them do something they shouldn't do, at least make a suggestion. But never suggest that this is the way we used to do it. I made the mistake early in the Eisenhower administration of that--of saying that to a few people and I found right off that it was the wrong thing to do.

BURG: Do you happen to remember who it was you were talking to when you--



HOPKINS: Well, basically I would say maybe some of this was even before the inauguration. Roger Steffan came down as, he was going to be the office manager. That's the first time we'd ever had an office manager, we didn't really know what an office manager was going to do. We didn't think the office was quite big enough to need an office manger. In fact, such managing as had been done had been done by the executive clerk on direction from the top staff man in previous administrations. But we had lots of discussions, and we worked basically with Mr. Steffan and he with John Steelman who was the liaison from the Truman Administration. But there were many things about--I don't recall anything specifically--but that's the general impression you got. Never say that this is the way we've been doing it. In other words, this is one way to do it and you may have a better way but experience tells us maybe this is worth considering.

BURG: Let's look briefly at the other end of the scale as the Eisenhower administration is moving out in that period before the inauguration, '61. Did you encounter any similar problems with the Kennedy people who came down and talked about--



HOPKINS: Not so much so. Not so much so because of the fact that the liaison people with the Kennedy group, at least some of them, were either people that I'd known in the Truman administration or those that I was talking to were reporting to people that I'd known during the Truman administration.

BURG: I see.

HOPKINS: In other words, quite a few of our contacts, at least personnel wise were with Dick McGuire who was working in effect for Kenneth O'Donnell but getting many of their ideas from the standpoint of contacts and how to make the approaches and that sort of thing from Clark Clifford, who'd been in the White House in the Truman administration. So from that standpoint it was very helpful. And that was another thing that was very much impressed upon me as these transitions came and went was that, during a period of transition or from the election to the inauguration, you in effect were working for two groups. But you have to remember that your real boss is still the ones that are in, but you've got many requests coming in from the incoming group. But never try to hurry the outgoing group out. In other words, continue





to serve them just to the best of your ability right up to the last minute, because in four years or eight years, you may see them again. And if you don't, it'll catch up with you.



BURG: So you're using their procedures, lame duck or not, right through the morning of January 20 and then you shift over without, in the meantime, offending the group coming in. I can see that one would have to do that. Then your thought is that if the administration in power has come up with any administrative techniques for the White House, the idea of staff secretary and a secretariat, cabinet secretariat, and they feel that these are the best ways administratively to handle it, it's better to move the institutions like that--for example the cabinet secretariat--to move it out from the building, physically from the building, and then there might have been some chance of it carrying over into a new administration by a different party.

Let's take a look at the next name--Homer Gruenther.

HOPKINS: Well, he was in the congressional liaison area--

BURG: This was Al Gruenther's--



HOPKINS: Al Gruenther's brother. He was a very fine fellow in my book. I think a lot of people felt that he didn't carry near the weight or have as much on the ball as his brother did--



BURG: Yes, I've heard that. I've heard that.

HOPKINS: That may be true. But from the work he was doing, I think he was well liked up on the Hill. He had a lot of experience up on the Hill, and, again, he was common as an old shoe. He could talk to anybody and meet anybody on their own level. He was very close with Tom Stephens. He worked for General Persons. He fit very well in the niche he had, no doubt about it. And also he was the glad hander in the East Wing. Saw a lot of these groups, you know, that came from the Hill and that sort of thing and he was very good at it.

BURG: So your feeling was that in doing this work, the glad handing--that's interesting because I knew that it was Homer Gruenther who often took the tours through--

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: --the congressmen's wives who were sent down there to tour

the White House, the insider's tours, and he handled that. And it was he who attended a great many of the functions up on the Hill that others perhaps couldn't find time for or did not want to take on.



HOPKINS: So I think he generated a lot of good will that way.

BURG: And remained there for quite some period of time. I've forgotten the amount of time he was--

HOPKINS: He was there even in the early days of the Kennedy administration. I don't know how long he stayed on--he stayed on for some months.

BURG: So from the beginning of the Eisenhower administration, actually several months into the Kennedy administration. But I knew that some people viewed him as a lightweight, partly because, I suppose, they were comparing him with General Gruenther whose intellect is pretty well regarded.

HOPKINS: Of course I don't think Al Gruenther could have lasted ten minutes in the job that Homer had. They just weren't, they were just opposite that's all.

BURG: Evidently it was not necessary to Homer Gruenther's ego to be handling the great affairs of state. He seems to have been a man who saw his own potential and stayed in that position, happily stayed in it. You never saw him moping around the place--

HOPKINS: No I never did.

BURG: --saying I wished to heaven they'd give me a mission to Moscow or something.

Now this next man on my list, James Hagerty, I suppose that one could say a great deal about him over a great period of time. Did you have fairly close contact with him?

HOPKINS: Well I would say I knew him fairly well, yes. Of course, that was one of the jobs of the executive clerk's office, operating either directly or through the records office which is under the executive clerk's office, to feed the press secretary information regarding presidential actions on documents, nominations and that sort of thing so we had to work closely with his office in that regard. And Jim Hagerty was a very capable man. In other words, he and Steve Early were probably the top press men in my time there, at least.



BURG: As you saw them from the Hoover administration--

HOPKINS: Yes, and they were very much alike. They were very--

BURG: Oh, were they?

HOPKINS: Yes.

Burg: What characteristics did they share?

HOPKINS: Well they were very decisive, positive, made positive--

[Interruption]

BURG: --Hagerty taken anything out of his office but you had seen Early do this. You figure Hagerty was capable of doing that if the occasion arose.

HOPKINS: Yes. As I say, he had a tremendous background, of course. He had been with Governor [Thomas E.] Dewey for many years. I heard him say one time that he had probably been involved in more presidential campaigns in a press capacity than any man in history, and I think that was probably true at the time at least.





BURG: Do you think, and this would have to be just your own observation of things from your particular position, had it ever struck you that Hagerty could have done more in the way of publicizing accomplishments in the Eisenhower administration? At least one scholar, whose work I've recently read, suggested that, by and large, the picture that emerged in the press nationally of the Eisenhower administration did not perhaps do justice to some of the things accomplished in the administration. Would that judgement be correct in your eye or subject to modification?

HOPKINS: Well I don't know. I never felt that way particularly. Of course in subsequent years, you know, there's been this argument that you need a press secretary and you need a public relations office. Nixon administration tried it, I'm not sure it was successful. And I do think that the two are so intertwined that it's got to be about one man. I thought Jim Hagerty did a pretty good job myself.

BURG: That was your feeling?

HOPKINS: Yes.



BURG: Well it's also been suggested to me in other conversations that some of what was accomplished, some progress made, for example if I used an instance, some of the progress made in racial affairs here in the District, turning segregation around, that these things were done not by fiat, but they were done by persuasion--slow process of persuasion in the hotels and in the restaurants and contacts between people in the administration and in some of the service industries in the District--and that when things are being done by persuasion, you're not really able to stand up then and have Jim Hagerty call a press conference and lay it on the press that that's what you're doing.

HOPKINS: Well, of course, in those days what you're talking about is basically what Max Rabb was doing behind the scenes; before that the same thing had been done behind the Scenes, got its start in the Truman administration, David Niles, Philleo Nash, and then Max Rabb sort of carried on. But I'm not sure in my own mind whether the state of the country was such at that time that it would have been desirable to give so much publicity to what was being done or what was being accomplished. I think



it might have been counterproductive.

BURG: So politically the wisest move, in your estimation, might just have been what was being done. Do it, accomplish it, just rule it out as something you're going to take a great credit for because, across the country at large, you might do yourself political damage by closely identifying with it. Probably a reasonable judgement, too.

John Hamlin is the next man on our list. Did you know him?

HOPKINS: I didn't know him too well, no. I used to see him down in the lunchroom occasionally and that sort of thing, but I didn't know him very well.

BURG: Robert Hampton.

HOPKINS: Well Bob Hampton succeeded to being the assistant to Governor Adams in the personnel area after Bob Gray moved over and took the cabinet secretariat and, we worked very closely with Bob Hampton in all matters relating to presidential appointments. In other words, once the determination was made as to







who was going to get the job and the background checks had been made, then we got usually advice from Bob Hampton as to what was to be done and on the basis of that the proper papers were prepared and moved on through for Governor Adam's okay and the President's signature and on up to the Hill. Bob Hampton also was the one who signed all actions relating to personnel actions in the civil service staff in the White House. So when we made recommendations to the Governor for promotions, we usually worked through General Goodpaster and for Bob Hampton. And he was a very capable young man, I would say, and very easy to work with and a fine fellow.

BURG: Here we have a prospect to compare Charles Willis, Robert Gray, Robert Hampton. You saw all three. Do you now think back to any differences in the operating style of those three men? Does Hampton, for example, stand out in your mind in any way as being distinctly different from these other two?

HOPKINS: Well, not too much so. And there was one other man in this job and I'm not just sure, I think Ed [Edward T.] Taft, you talked of seeing him.

BURG: Yes.



HOPKINS: He had this same job for a relatively short time, and then his health went back on him. It was a hard job in this area working for Governor Adams. Of course Governor Adams mellowed as time went on, but he expected perfection and he wanted it. And this is a hard area to work in. In other words, many times just the matter of trying to find someone who is qualified for a particular job and get somebody lined up and for one reason or another it fell through--either he didn't want it or he wasn't qualified or there were some other reasons that he shouldn't be appointed--and here Governor Adams was working under pressure: You get articles in the paper, this job's been vacant for so long, what's the White House doing, and all that sort of thing. So there was all kinds of pressures in this area. Charlie Willis being the first one who had worked with Governor Adams before the inauguration--I don't think Charlie had had any government experience before that so far as I know.

BURG: No. His only government service was--

HOPKINS: --and he was a little more dogmatic I would say in his



approach. He got credit for this Schedule C operation, you know, that was criticized, finally ended up as a Schedule C operation. But it was very much criticized as trying to circumvent the civil service procedures and that sort of thing. Bob Gray came in: I think his was a little more relaxed operation than Charlie's possibly. In fact Charlie Willis, going back to him, he had a very small office. His chief girl was Sheila Tunney and--

BURG: Tunney?

HOPKING: Tunney. And she, in my book, was one of the best that ever came to the White House. She was tops, really. I've lost track of her, but she was a very good girl. As I say then Bob came in. He was fine, did very well in the job. I do think that Bob Hampton had a little better feel for it than some of his predecessors, was a little more relaxed in it and I think he did a very good job. He'd had some personnel experience over in the State Department or War Department, one of the two.

BURG: I think State.



HOPKINS: Air Force I guess it was, maybe.

BURG: But also Department of State. He'd been there five years.

HOPKINS: And then of course Bob stayed on shortly after the Kennedy administration came in, because here you had a group that was going to maybe centralize more of the personnel operation in the White House than the Eisenhower administration had done. In other words, move more of what the national committee had been doing into the White House area. And Bob, I think, offered to stay on and give them such expertise as he had for a short period of time. There were two, Dick McGuire was in charge of the Kennedy operation in that area and one of the ladies working under him was Dorothy Davies. So Bob worked closely with them, particularly Dorothy Davies in the very early days of the Kennedy administration. And along came a vacancy on the Civil Service Commission and the Kennedy administration started looking around for a candidate and they finally decided, I guess in that area, well here we've got him right under our nose. Bob was nominated and confirmed as a member of the Civil Service Commission.

BURG: Did Sheila Tunney stay with that personnel operation up





into Hampton's tenure in the job.

HOPKINS: No, she left as I recall when Charlie Willis left.

BURG: Left the White House entirely.

HOPKINS: Yes. She was a very capable young lady.

BURG: One thing that strikes me too would be that that job, I would guess, became easier to manage. Probably Willis would have had the toughest job because he's the one that's got to find Republican types to fill patronage jobs and as it moves on to--I don't remember whether it went to Tait and then to Gray-- but as you move through time towards Hampton's tenure you've got a lot of those jobs filled and the heavy pressure--

HOPKINS: Oh, yes. The heavy pressures are the first year of an administration. And of course in addition to filling the jobs, you've got all kinds of recommendations and applications coming in which take time to handle and to handle in such a way that you're not going to make anybody feel that they're getting the bum's rush, particularly those who feel that they're entitled to something from what they've done in the campaign.





BURG: It struck me that in Willis' situation that first year or so, it was inevitable he was going to be shot at by Adams and others in the Eisenhower administration; shot at from the Hill, the people there who wanted their favorites put in; shot at by the party at large. And it struck me after I'd met Mr. Tait, that Mr. Tait seems to be a man of no small amount of sensitivity and that that would be a harsh role--

HOPKINS: It was a harsh role for him. I always felt that maybe that was one of the things that caused his problems from the standpoint of he just, his health--

BURG: At least if not a nervous breakdown, driven almost to the edge of a nervous breakdown.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: That's interesting to know and interesting--

HOPKINS: You have to remember that in the Roosevelt administration very much of what Charlie Willis was doing was done at the national committee. In the Truman administration, a certain amount of it was done by the national committee, but some of it



was done by Don Dawson and his assistant. In other words, two men and probably three girls. But Don Dawson of course did many other things too. Along comes the Eisenhower administration and you have Charlie Willie's operation which, and his successors, Bob Hampton, Bob Gray, and others, and this stayed a relatively small operation, maybe two men and three or four girls, something like that, occupying two or three small offices. You get up into the Kennedy days and its progressed from there, getting more so each administration, moving practically all of the personnel operation that used to take place in the national committee over to the White House. And you get up to the Nixon administration and probably now, I don't know how many people they've got, but I would venture to guess they've probably got twenty.

BURG: The tendency has been the enlarging of the White House staff.

HOPKINS: I'm not sure in my own mind it's a good thing. I think a lot of that that's done at the White House would be to the President's best interests to have it done at the national committee, myself.



BURG: One gets the impression that in the Eisenhower period, I believe fairly early in the administration, they were, to some extent occupied in holding the national committee out of patronage, were slapping the wrists--

HOPKINS: Yes. You hear discussions, many people feel, well, if the national committee does it, they're just going to get a bunch of political hacks. You're not going to get as good people. Well I'm not sure that that's true. It may be in some instances, but I'm not sure as a general observation that that's true. If you have the right man as chairman of the national committee and he has a definite understanding with the President, I'm not sure that that follows.

BURG: Particularly I suppose if that man in charge of the committee has looked at the kind of search procedures that the White House is employing, let's say, Willis would have employed under Sherman Adams, one would think that it would be possible for the national committee to say, "Ah hah, we see the kind of people you're looking for, and why you're looking for that kind of people; we can do that kind of searching out, too."





HOPKINS: And you have to remember also that when they fill a job, one man's happy and maybe fifty who wanted the job are unhappy. Well if it's done at the White House, who are they unhappy at? They're unhappy at the President. If it's done at the national committee, they're unhappy at the chairman which is to the President's advantage.

BURG: Indeed it is. Yes. In trying to rally his party or have his party's support, it's far better to have somebody else carry the can. And evidently that did not occur to them in the Eisenhower administration.

HOPKINS: Well the trend has been the other way. So maybe we're wrong.

BURG: I will never admit that myself. [Laughter]

Bryce Harlow. Of course there is an exceedingly well known name.

HOPKINS: Well Bryce is a very fine fellow in my book. He's intelligent: he's got all kinds of good background. He had many years up on the Hill, you know; Carl Vinson, -- Bryce was





sort of a protege of his. Mr. Vinson was chairman of the House Armed Services Committee for years. And I think Bryce worked over in the general staff during the war and came up to the White House originally in the congressional liaison area and I believe was probably a deputy assistant to the President at the end of the administration. He was very intelligent, probably knows congress as well as any man alive. He's a good writer. He's very incisive in his writing. He used to help write some of General Eisenhower's speeches, and you could look at a draft and tell it was Bryce Harlow's language.

BURG: You could?

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Using the language with an economy of phrase and--

HOPKINS: And very, very decisive.

BURG: Did you ever see drafts that you could recognize as Harlow's coming back with the President's interleavings?

HOPKINS: Oh, I think so, yes. The President used to do a lot



of editing on all of them.

BURG: And I understand that he was not much for the rhetorical flourish, that writing such as Bryce Harlow's probably appealed to him--

HOPKINS: Yes, it probably did--

BURG: Direct, to the point, and keeping out the adjectives and adverbs.

HOPKINS: And I'm sure Bryce did some writing for him after he left the presidency.

BURG: I see. While he was at Gettysburg?

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Now it seems to me that Harlow was moved out of that congressional liaison work about the time that Emmet Hughes left as a speech writer. It seems to me Hughes was only there for about a year.

HOPKINS: About a year he was there, yes.



BURG: And I think Harlow moved out and perhaps moved into that line of work. I notice in my staff list here that Harlow then was deputy assistant to the President, as you suggest, for congressional affairs '58-'61. He was listed as an administrative assistant '53 - '58. Can you recollect during that period '53 - '58 what his major duties were. A part of that would, of course, be the speech writing.

HOPKINS: As I recall at least, when they started out, the congressional liaison shop was in the East Wing. Emmet Hughes was also in the East Wing. And General Persons felt that they were sort of out in left field over there and he moved to the West Wing, as I recall it, about a year or so after the Eisenhower administration came in, maybe longer than that. And although his title was changed, I think he was very active in the legislative liaison field all the time.

BURG: Stayed with it.

HOPKINS: Yes. And then he became the chief man when General Persons succeeded Governor Adams, as I recall it.



BURG: [Gerald] Morgan pretty well ran congressional liaison. I think Morgan and Harlow had been brought in almost simultaneously.

HOPKINS: Morgan and Harlow had come in and Homer Gruenther--

BURG: Then Gruenther then added to that--

HOPKINS: That was the three, yes. And then of course Morgan later became counsel.

BURG: Did Harlow become, in effect, sort of the man in charge of the West Wing? Do I have that right? It seems to me that Adams thought I really ought to have somebody in one wing--it seemed to me it was the West Wing or the East Wing--who was sort of overseeing what was going on in that end of the White House.

HOPKINS: Well I don't think he did in the West Wing because Adams was there and then General Persons.

BURG: All right, then it must have been the East Wing.

HOPKINS: Now it may have been the East Wing, because that was





something they inherited somewhat because Dr. Steelman was sort of in charge of the East Wing in the Truman days. He sort of looked after if anybody needed space or was unahppy with this or anything else, Dr. Steelman was the one that had the last word. So I think, and I'm not just sure in my own mind whether we ever had anybody that quite answered that description in the Eisenhower days or not in the East Wing. If so, I don't recall at all.

BURG: I see. I'll check that out someplace else and see if Harlow got that kind of an assignment, and I should be looking to see if it was anything like Steelman's position.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Could have been ex-officio manager of that end--

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: --someone that you could go to, and in this instance he would not be distrubing Sherman Adams--it would be that Adams had delegated some authority and, "Okay, you assign space," and do things like that.

HOPKINS: Of course, early in the Eisenhower administration Mr. Steffan as office manager would worry about both the East and the West Wing and the Executive Office Building. After he left,



there were different ones that carried through some of those duties. Mr. [Stephen] Benedict did for a little while, as I recall, and I think one or two others. And of course in the latter days, Fred Morrow as sort of the executive officer for the special projects, looked after the special projects area in the Executive Office Building.

BURG: I hadn't known that.

The next name, Karl G. Harr, Jr.

HOPKINS: I didn't know him too well. I used to see him a lot. I knew him to speak to and I saw him down in the White House mess but I didn't know him, too well. He was a very positive character it always seemed to me and a nice fellow but had very specific ideas.

BURG: Strikes me as being a tough minded type.



HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: If one were looking for a stereotype of the business leader with a driving kind of personality and get the job done, this kind of attitude, he strikes me as being that kind. But your contacts with him were fairly--

HOPKINS: Very limited.

BURG: Did you see much then of another one of the senior staff people--Gabriel Hauge?

HOPKINS: Well we used to see more of Doctor Hauge than Karl Harr, quite naturally. But Dr. Hauge, he was a scholarly type. He was in the economic area. He was, I think, one of the close advisers, one that the President, Governor Adams and others relied on very heavily.

BURG: Clearly he did, and beyond just economic affairs evidently.

HOPKINS: I think so too.

BURG: It seems to me his opinion was sought in many different matters. And he would be one of those people who had pretty direct access to the President--

HOPKINS: Yes, I would say so.



BURG: --in and out as he wished. Did you see him at lunch, the White House mess, for example, Did you ever eat with him, have a chance to find out what kind of a man he was on a person-



to-person basis?

HOPKINS: Well, I don't recall any specific time at lunch. Of course we ate down there and, everybody, it was sort of a period of camaraderie down there. But he was very personable, very down-to-earth, nothing put on about him at all. I had a very high regard to Dr. Hauge. I remember one time he invited a number of us out to his house. I believe it was about the time Roemer McPhee got married. But he was very personable and as well, very capable, very capable.

BURG: And a man who seemed to get along well with the other people on the staff?

HOPKINS: Yes.



BURG: Did the rest of the staff seem to share your high regard for him?

HOPKINS: I think so, I always thought so. I thought everybody had a high regard for Dr. Hauge.

BURG: Stephen Hess, can you tell me anything about Hess?



HOPKINS: Not too much. When he came to the White House he was a very young fellow.

BURG: I think maybe one of the youngest staff people there.

HOPKINS: As I recall, he was there a year or so. And then of course he came back for a while, you know, in the Nixon administration, worked with [Daniel Patrick] Pat Moynihan for a year or so. But by that time he'd developed some reputation as a writer and a thinker and a panelist I guess and a Brookings [Institution] man and a few other things. But when he was at the White House he was just starting on his career.

BURG: And doing speech writing I believe.

HOPKINS: Some. I think, yes.



BURG: Working on some speeches. He worked fairly late in the administration.

HOPKINS: Yes, it was.

BURG: Yet you found him a personable type.

HOPKINS: Yes, I would say so.

BURG: Now we've spoken of the fact that Robert Gray, another one of the very young--in fact there were not a great number of very young men on that staff, that is, men in their thirties. The average age ran reasonably high in that staff among the senior types and--

HOPKINS: Probably. Yes, there were a number of course in their thirties but they were in the minority.

BURG: Yes, and placed down, well down on the scale. And Hess would be down in that group.

Leo Hoegh (and I will remind my transcriber that that's H-o-e-g-h) was not really in the White House.



HOPKINS: No, his office was over in the Winder Building which is the building just across 17th Street from the State, War, Navy Building, or Executive Office Building.

BURG: How's that spelled? W-i-n-d-e-r.

HOPKINS: W-i-n-d-e-r. Winder Building.

BURG: Yes. Defense Mobilization--

HOPKINS: A famous old building, you know. It was a hospital during the Civil War. He was a former governor of Iowa and head of Defense Mobilization so I didn't know him except to speak to and see him down in the mess and that sort of thing. I always had the feeling that he was well thought of on the staff, by the staff, and others with whom he dealt.

BURG: I'd have to check it. I think he may have come out of the SHAEF background, that he had seen service--

HOPKINS: Well I'm not sure about that.

BURG: --in the European Theater.

HOPKINS: He was a former governor of Iowa, I know that.

BURG: Well he had a military rank, too. I think he--

HOPKINS: See if there's anything in here--it may say, I'm not sure.

[Interruption]



"During World War II he rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the 104th Division and one day in the fall of '44 he had the privilege of briefing the SHAEF commander." Well, that's interesting.

BURG: Yes. Well, I'd forgotten that part of it.

HOPKINS: Yes. This is Fred Fox's "Bible".

BURG: 104th Division was, I think, the Timber Wolf Division, Oregon Division, originally. I think we have some material on Hoegh at the Library.

Emmet Hughes? One of the few Democrats on the staff, brought on for speech writing duties.



HOPKINS: Yes, he was a speech writer in the early days. I guess he was there about a year. He had been with him before the inauguration, I think. I didn't know him very well. I had a meeting or two with him in the very early days on administrative matters.

BURG: How did he strike you at that point?



HOPKINS: Well he struck me as a very bright, savvy young fellow and so far as I knew at the time they all thought very highly of his work. I do know that after he left there, the administration was very unhappy about the book he wrote.

BURG: Yes. Yes. You heard that being discussed, then, among the staff.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: As you look back on it, this may be an impossible task, but do you remember any of the staff who were especially vociferous about their dislike for that book?

HOPKINS: No, I can't say that I do.

BURG: But it was spoken of--people were outspoken in their criticism of the book.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: You never heard directly from the President, for example--

HOPKINS: No.



BURG: --how he felt about it. I think he was irked with it, too.

Now Rowland Hughes.

HOPKINS: Oh, he was director of the Bureau of the Budget and of course was not located in the White House office either. But, as I say, just a matter of seeing him come in and out.

BURG: I thought it might be like that.

Now, the next man, however, is one of the senior people in the staff, C. D. Jackson. And I would assume that you had contact with him on occasion.

HOPKINS: Well, not a great lot, no. He had his office over in the Executive Office Building. He was there, I guess, about a year. I always had the feeling, and I don't know how I got this feeling, that he had a very low opinion of bureaucrats. I do know, or I got the word indirectly somehow, that he thought it was terrible that people who had been in a previous administration were the ones over whose desk letters that went into the President flowed--in other words, my office. So as a result of which I never was too effusive about my feelings about C. D.



Jackson. As I say, I didn't know him well at all.

BURG: You never heard that he modified his opinions over--

HOPKINS: No, I never heard one way or another.

BURG: Was his reaction, the reaction that you had heard about, atypical?

HOPKINS: No, I wouldn't say it was typical. No.

BURG: Most of them seemed to--



HOPKINS: At least the information that came to me, it wasn't typical.

BURG: Most of the staff seemed to adjust to the fact that, well, yes, you were going to have a permanent group in the White House; they would have served other administrations; but that their loyalty was not to be questioned. So Jackson stands out in your mind in that respect.

Now, William Jackson.

HOPKINS: I didn't know him very well.

[Interruption]

BURG: I just mentioned [Neil] Jacoby--Council of Economic Advisers.

HOPKINS: He was in the Council of Economic Advisers. I didn't know him very well.

BURG: And I wondered if Arnold Jones might not fall into the same category.

HOPKINS: He was a member--

BURG: Budget, again.



HOPKINS: --deputy director of the Bureau of the Budget, I believe. And I knew him on a speaking acquaintance. He was a fine fellow from my book. I sort of felt a kindred spirit because he was from Kansas as I was and--

BURG: Oh he was, I'll keep that in mind when---. Now is he still here in town?

HOPKINS: I don't really know. I don't even know whether he's



living or not. While he was deputy director of the Bureau of the Budget, he was named to the Board of Directors of TVA. But I don't know.

BURG: We should be able to trace him down if he is still alive. And I notice that the next man on the list, Roger Jones, also deputy director of the budget---

HOPKINS: Roger Jones--I can't say enough in praise of him. He, I've always looked upon Roger as being a career man, he was in budget for many years, he was later chairman of the Civil Service Commission; he was later deputy secretary of state, and then went back and worked in budget as a consultant for a while. In my earlier years, during the Truman administration for instance, Roger was assistant director of the Bureau of the Budget for legislative reference. In other words, the area in the Bureau of the Budget that does the coordinating on all legislation--enrolled bills and that type of thing. He's a fine fellow to work with. He's as knowledgeable as anybody in government that I've ever met.

BURG: Knowledgeable in a very broad sense or--



HOPKINS: Very broad sense.

BURG: --not just necessarily the budget and budget affairs.

HOPKINS: Very broad sense. I have a highest regard for Roger Jones.

BURG: You had known him from the Truman Administration on?

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: And you would know him, what, through reputation and during the Truman period because of his work with you. It would be very close work with you--

HOPKINS: Yes, and then during those years, as I say, he was assistant director for legislative reference, he was later deputy director of the budget. And many times we had problems, we'd call up Roger as we did one of his predecessors and chat with him and talk things out. So as I say we worked fairly closely with Roger and we philosophized many times about White House matters--many times on the matter of the White House budget, the matter of all the support given the White House



office whether it should be in one package or diversified and things of that nature.

BURG: The White House budget increased over the period of time that you were associated with him. Did he ever comment on that or express concern about that? It seems to me that in your service in the White House that budget for White House staff climbed and climbed and I think you and I mentioned just a short time ago up into the Nixon administration where an office that had been staffed by perhaps two people and three secretaries, you suspect it probably now had twenty people in it. Did he ever comment on that?

HOPKINS: Well we philosophized about that. We both felt, I think, that maybe the White House was a little niggardly in the amount of money that was available to it compared to some of the other departments and agencies. I know I felt, and I think he did too, that that was probably a good thing.

BURG: Keep it a little emaciated.



HOPKINS: Yes. When I first went to the White House, for instance,



speaking only from memory now, I think the White House budget was something under \$200,000. Now--I don't know what the new one going in today is--but last year it was something over sixteen million. There's some things that account for that. I can well remember in General Goodpaster's time, we were getting up close to the two million mark and I did everything I could to keep it under two million. I don't think I succeeded, as I recall. But I always felt that, from a public relations standpoint and everything, it was good to keep it down. I felt it was good to have a little worn furniture in the lobby and that sort of thing. In other words, we didn't have a king, we had a democratic president. I think the approach turned around 180 degrees in later years but I'm not convinced in my own mind yet that it wasn't a mistake.



BURG: Particularly when an administration comes in and is going to pare out the needless expenses and winds up with a far higher budget than the preceding administration.

HOPKINS: In the Eisenhower days, for instance, when they came in, Joe [Joseph M.] Dodge, who came in as director of the Bureau



of the Budget, went up to the congress and in their discussions he made a commitment that they wouldn't use the President's emergency fund for certain things that they had been used for in the Truman administration. That was an emergency fund that was over and above the regular White House appropriation. As time went on in the Eisenhower administration, they got in all kinds of a bind. They just didn't have money for this, money for that. The President wanted to set up a special commission for someone to make a study for thirty days, sixty days--where's the money come from? We haven't got it. It was all kinds of a problem. That was what ended up in the creation of a special projects fund, which General Goodpaster was very much involved in as I was, to some extent. And it was used for special projects. If we had something come up that we were a little doubtful about, we went to--I remember on numerous occasions going to Gerry Morgan, who was then President's counsel, and saying, "See here, they want to do so-and-so with special projects". Maybe Max Rabb wants to throw a big dinner down at the Mayflower for a group of people he's working with and the bill's going to be \$1,000 and he hasn't got it and he wants to pay it out of special



projects. "Can we do it?" And, as I recall it, the answer always came back from Gerry, "No!" So Max just had to find an angel someplace or pay it out of his own pocket or not have the dinner. There were many occasions like that. We were very circumspect and careful what we used that for. As time went on, it was used quite extensively for personnel that were brought in for special purposes. Now what is a special purpose and what is a regular member of the White House office staff is a matter of opinion. So there were probably some instances in which we were using special projects money whereby if somebody looked at it dispassionately they would say, "See here, you shouldn't use that for special projects. That should come out of the White House office budget." Well the White House office budget just wasn't big enough for it. So it may have been in some cases used for personnel matters, presidential appointees where there was some question, I don't know. Anyway, the end result was, subsequent to the Eisenhower administration--in fact in the Nixon administration, where the feeling was--now we're going to have an honest budget, whatever that means. They were going to quit detailing people: they were going to move over to the White



House office budget, as opposed to the special projects budget, anybody that there was any question at all that was there on more or less permanent basis rather than coming in for two or three months. Mr. Harlow in his congressional capacity in the Nixon administration was very much involved in that and the end result was that they increased the White House office budget quite sizeably. They submitted what they referred to as an honest budget and as of today they have no more special projects budget--it's been knocked out by congress. And the White House office budget is now, as last year, was over sixteen million or so.



BURG: Well I remember that during the Eisenhower administration, I think in the eight years he set up about eleven presidential advisory commissions of the equivalent of these advisory commissions. I remember there were about seven of them particularly, and out of those seven I believe two they had difficulties funding. One may have been funded out of special projects. I assume that what happened was that a need arose and the budget was already set for that year, the White House budget, and yet a need arose and he wanted to form the commission and the only way to do it



Was to find the money in this way.

HOPKINS: Sometimes those special commissions, by its very nature, could be funded by one of the departments or agencies. If it was something related entirely to health, the logical thing would be to fund it out of HEW [Health, Education and Welfare].

BURG: Who would not be too happy about having their budget raided either.



HOPKINS: Oh, not happy, no. But what happened as a practical matter, time and again the President would decide to set up a special group for some purpose. It would be done by executive order. The executive order would be entirely silent on who pays for this. The men would come to town they'd need offices; they'd need this; they'd need that. Where's the money coming from? And then it was a big hassle. Finally I kept prevailing on the Bureau of the Budget: When you write these things, put in there who's going to pay for it. Well, they would say many times, "We haven't got time. That takes time to work that out. Here the President's going to do this, he wants this executive order



over there in forty eight hours; we just haven't got time to stick that kind of stuff in there. We can't work it out." But in later years they got so that most of the time there'd be a provision there who's going to pay for it. That's the way it should be done.

BURG: Later than the Eisenhower administration?

HOPKINS: Later than the Eisenhower administration. Otherwise it's always a hassle and, again, three times out of four something would be set up and the department or agency or somebody would appeal to the Bureau of the Budget, "We haven't got money for this. How do we do it?"

"Well, maybe the White House has got some money." And first thing you know the special projects would be tapped. In other words, budget didn't have any other ideas either where the money was coming from. So it was a continuing problem.

BURG: If we went back a moment to Roger Jones--may I ask you, out of the various people, deputy directors of the budget and other people in budget that you worked with during the Eisenhower period, was Jones perhaps your favorite? You would have had to



work with several--Dodge being one.

HOPKINS: Well we didn't work with Dodge very much.

BURG: Didn't you?

HOPKINS: No. Because he would be, on his level he would be working with Governor Adams.

BURG: I see.

HOPKINS: Yes, I would say he was--



BURG: For that period of time, Roger Jones. Can I ask you this, too? Were the two of you of similar age?

HOPKINS: Well roughly. I think maybe Roger's a year or two older than I am. But roughly the same age, fairly close.

BURG: So what attracted you was simply the kind of expertise that he had, his wide knowledge of government affairs in general.

HOPKINS: And he was very conscious of the need to take special pains in dealing with the presidency and that sort of thing, was very interested in government organization and I'm sure he was

well liked personally. He was a very personable fellow--I'm sure he was well liked by all of his staff. He had entre to all the offices.

BURG: He did?

HOPKINS: Yes. And the mere fact that he was appointed chairman of the Civil Service Commission by President Eisenhower shows that the staff thought pretty well of him.

BURG: Dr. Chester Keefer, I notice on my list--he may not be on yours, Bill--had been special assistant to the secretary of health and medical affairs and was adviser to President on poliomyelitis. My assumption is that you would have virtually nothing whatsoever to do--

HOPKINS: No. I used to see him occasionally down in the mess.

BURG: How about David Kendell who'd been on the national committee and--

HOPKINS: Well, he was another very fine fellow. He was very friendly, very capable, again, could meet anybody on their own level. Nothing put-on about David Kendall at all--he was a fine,





fine fellow and a very knowledgeable fellow.

BURG: Was there a particular way in which you contacted him, or had contact with him?

HOPKINS: Well, he was in the general counsel area. A lot of the dealings with him was in connection with legislation and that sort of thing. In other words, when the enrolled bills came over to the White House after the Bureau of the Budget had coordinated the recommendations, they went up to Dave Kendall's office and either himself or working with one of his assistants, Roemer McPhee or somebody,--

BURG: McPhee was an assistant to Kendall, at that stage.



HOPKINS: Yes. And problems would come up from time to time. I recall one instance in which the General Accounting Office wanted to come in and make a audit of the White House. I forget offhand the nature of the audit, what they called it. But anyway, in talking to these representatives from the General Accounting Office I asked them just what this type of audit meant and asked them some specific questions. In other words, if the



President wants to make a trip to Europe, does this audit mean that the General Accounting Office determines whether this is necessary or not? Well, their answer was, "Yes," which just flabbergasted me.

BURG: Puts a little bit of a restriction on the elected official.

HOPKINS: Anyway we went up and had a little chat with Dave Kendall who knew the comptroller general. And after a little discussion there, that was the end of that.

BURG: Was that GAO audit unusual in your experience in the White House?

HOPKINS: That type was. The General Accounting Office comes in periodically and audits our payroll and that sort of thing which is to be expected. But I forget the technical name for the type of audit they were proposing. Anyway, it was not done.

BURG: Now, did it ever strike your mind that that particular audit had any political implication or overtones, since it was a little different?



HOPKINS: No, I never felt that it did. I felt that these people who were engaged in this area had performed this type of audit in various departments and agencies and were probably operating under their express authority under the law, just didn't have the feel of the nature of the office of the presidency.

BURG: I've known of other instances where the GAO found itself having to do work with agencies, units of the government they didn't truly understand, and my impression was that in those instances, which are modern--they're within the past five years or so--they took the trouble to come in and check first and see what kind of a unit is this before they proceeded. But in this instance, they evidently did not do that.

HOPKINS: Well, they didn't come in. This was preliminary discussion they were talking about.

BURG: Oh, it was.

HOPKINS: They wanted permission to come in. So it was from that stage that we talked to Mr. Kendall and it was--

BURG: Oh, yes, I see. So indeed they were doing just that.



HOPKINS: Oh, yes. Yes. They were circumspect about it. It was just a case of our thinking that it was something that, in view of the nature of it and what they were proposing, was just not appropriate.

BURG: I can see that, too. Now, I run into the next man on the list--Meyer Kestnbaum, with some frequency, yet he never has received a great deal of publicity it seems to me, and his name is not as well known perhaps as some of the others. What can you tell me about him?

HOPKINS: Well, I didn't know him too well. The main place I used to see him was down in the White House mess. He ate many times at the general table. He was, I think, a former president of Hart, Schaffner and Marx. And he was a great storyteller. I know Al Toner and some of the others used to eat at that table and if you get Meyer Kestnbaum started, he'd keep you in stitches the whole period. And he could stretch out a story that I could tell in two minutes, if I could remember it, for a half hour.

BURG: Perhaps get a larger laugh--





HOPKINS: And get a good laugh--

BURG: --as a result, of having stretched it out.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Now there was a Kestnbaum, I think they actually call it Kestnbaum Commission. It took his name, ultimately.

HOPKINS: Yes, I think there was at one time. The commission on Intergovernmental Relations.

BURG: Of course, yes. I couldn't think of it's name. That's right.

HOPKINS: I remember one story he used to tell, and I've heard him tell this two or three times, and it took more time each time. It was about the fellow who wasn't feeling well and he goes to the doctor and the doctor says, "Well, I don't know just what's wrong with you, but maybe we ought to take out your tonsils." So he takes out his tonsils. Still doesn't feel well and goes back again and the doctor has another suggestion or two and in the process he has two or three operations--nothing helps him. And the doctor finally says,





"Well I don't know what to do. I suggest you take a cruise in the Caribbean for a month or so, maybe it'll make you feel better."

He has headaches and his eyes kind of pop out, nothing helps him at all. He has his teeth out and nothing helps. So he gets ready for his cruise and he goes to the haberdashery and starts ordering some clothes and gets some underwear and some ties and some shirts and the fellow says, "What size shirt do you wear?"

And he says, "I wear 14½."

And the guy looks at him and he says, "Sure you want 14½? How about 15."

"No 14½'s all right."

"Well all right. But you know if you get these shirt collars too tight, they give you headaches and poppy eyes."

[Laughter]

BURG: And Kestnbaum dropped that one on you.

HOPKINS: As I say, he told that one in a half hour.

BURG: Oh, that's funny. Now, he died then before the end of



the administration.

HOPKINS: That I don't remember, I don't know for sure. He was in and out: he wasn't there full time as I recall.

BURG: He would come in as a sort of special consultant.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: I think he died in late 1960, it would have been. Clearly you found him amusing and interesting type, but must have been very capable.

HOPKINS: Oh, I think so, yes.

BURG: And somehow just not much has ever been said about him or mentioned about him. Now how does one pronounce the next man, Robert --

HOPKINS: Kieve.

BURG: He'd been active in the campaign and then was a special assistant--

HOPKINS: He worked for Emmet Hughes when he first came in the



White House.

BURG: Oh, did he?

HOPKINS: He was with Emmet Hughes.

BURG: Helping speech write?

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: When Hughes left, what happened to Kieve? Did he stay on or change jobs or stay in the same--

HOPKINS: He stayed on a while but I'm just not clear in my own mind; it seems to me that he came over to the West Wing for a while. Let's see what this says. I'm not too clear.

BURG: He was a special assistant from '53 through '55.

HOPKINS: He stayed on some time after Emmet Hughes but--but not too long, you see. He was only there two years. So he stayed on I guess a little over a year after Emmet Hughes left. I'm just not sure in my own mind what area he was in after he left--whether he helped out Emmet Hughes successor some or not, he may have.



BURG: Bryce Harlow took over some of Hughes' work for a time. I wonder if Kieve may have remained there with Harlow?

HOPKINS: I just don't remember.

BURG: It doesn't stay in your mind. I'll see if I can find out. Now the next man, a scientist type, James R. Killian, special assistant--

HOPKINS: Well, I didn't know him too well either. I used to see him in and out of the office and that sort of thing. He was a very high type man and well, one of the top leaders in the scientific field, of course for years. MIT--

BURG: Ph.D. and MIT, that's right. Arthur Kimball.



HOPKINS: Well he was there. He worked, I believe, with the Rockefeller group in this government organization--

BURG: So it would seem. I noticed I have him listed as staff director of President Advisory's Committee on Government Organization which would have been the Rockefeller group.

HOPKINS: Yes, Rockefeller group. He was a knowledgeable young



fellow. I would say, he'd been around in government quite a bit. In fact he was back there somewhat in some connection in the early Nixon days: I don't know whether he's still--he's probably retired by now: I haven't seen him in recent years.

BURG: Yes, I have a feeling it went back, too. He would have worked with Rockefeller and Milton Eisenhower. In fact, those would have been the three, probably the three top names in that commission. So Kimball's work largely would then be with the various portions of the executive, the departments--

HOPKINS: Yes, in other words, fringe as far as the White House office operation was concerned. One of these special groups that worked under the umbrella of the White House office, but was not really a part of it, is what I'm trying to say.

BURG: Now I think I've got various ways of finding out more about Kimbell and about his work from some of the people in agriculture for example. That was one group that I know that they worked with. The next man, also on the scientific side, George Kistiakowsky.



HOPKINS: I knew him by sight and saw him around quite often.

BURG: But this man, James Lambie, you would have--

HOPKINS: Oh yes. I sat right beside Jim Lambie in the latter part of the Eisenhower--. In other words, he succeeded Art Minnich as assistant staff secretary when Art left before the end of the administration. And before that Jim had his office in the EOB: he was contact man with the Advertising Council. He was involved in any special campaigns put on by the Red Cross, groups of that kind you know, and involving public liaison work. And then he came over as assistant staff secretary in the latter months of the Eisenhower administration. He was a very fine fellow--capable. I liked Jim very much.

BURG: So he was actually working in your office--

HOPKINS: In the last part of the administration.

BURG: --shared an office.

HOPKINS: Our desks were right side by side.

BURG: A man that you seemed to have liked.



HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: I notice you call him Jim immediately.

Let's do the final man on my page, it's probably about all we'll have time for, interesting type, Arthur Larson.

HOPKINS: Well I didn't know him too well. I do know that he was a scholarly type. I always had the feeling that a number of the staff took sort of a pale view of some of his ideas and approaches.

BURG: Did they find his approaches too divorced from the realities of political operations?

HOPKINS: I think that might have something to do with it, yes. I believe he later went over to USIA [United States Information Agency] for a while and then he was a--he may still be down at Duke, one of these schools down--

BURG: Yes, yes, I think that may be. Some of that may have been brought on because he had written one book, A Republican Looks at His Party, and then later on wrote the book which, in



large part, evaluated a portion at least of the Eisenhower presidency--I think a favorable, very favorable report.

HOPKINS: Yes, I think so. But I never had the feeling that he was really on the inside with the rest of the staff, or some of the staff at least.

BURG: And to the best of your knowledge, the only thing that you can suggest is that perhaps the lack of real political know-how and knowledge of how things were done.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: But not a man that you have much personal contact with.

HOPKINS: No.

BURG: Well I think our time has run out on us: so on our next session we'll start with Albert N. Leman, that's the next name on my list and I thank you very much for your time today.





This interview is being taped with Mr. William Hopkins in the Army-Navy Club, Washington, D.C., June 27, 1975. Present for the interview are Mr. Hopkins and Dr. Maclyn Burg of the Eisenhower Library staff.

DR. BURG: Bill, when you and I had our last session together, we were just ready to take a look, I believe, at Albert N. Leman, who'd been a member of the headquarters staff during the '52 campaign. You may never have met him.

MR. HOPKINS: Well, I met him; I didn't know him well. He was in the press office for roughly a month or six weeks, I believe, early in the administration and then moved over to the Department of Commerce.

DR. BURG: So he was with [James C.] Hagerty very briefly.



MR. HOPKINS: So he wasn't at the White House very long.

DR. BURG: Yes. So there would be very little that you could tell us about him. Did you see Henry Cabot Lodge with any frequency at all? I suppose he would only be in and out.

MR. HOPKINS: In and out. I never saw him with any frequency, no. And the only reason I would see him at all was that, in those days, the executive clerk's office, later the staff

secretary's office, was adjacent to the office of the appointment secretary with the doors open and you could see people sitting in there waiting to go into the President's office.

BURG: So there would be very little of use that you could tell us about him. Now would Eugene Lyons' work in personnel management in the White House bring him into contact with you?

HOPKINS: Very little. Very little. His office, of course, was in the Executive Office Building, and in the nature of his work we had very little dealings with him in the executive clerk's office. Same mess and that sort of thing, but officially my contacts with him were very limited.

BURG: How about Edward McCabe, whom I assume that you would see around frequently.

HOPKINS: Oh yes. He worked in the West Wing, upstairs. He was a very knowledgeable and likeable young fellow in those days. He was a lawyer. I believe he was made one of the administrative assistants in the latter part of the administration. He was a fine young fellow. He had known the Chief Usher,



as I recall, during his military career, and I always liked Ed McCabe very much. In fact, I noticed in the paper just the other day where he's now one of the consultants to President Ford.

BURG: Oh, he is? The last time I was here, I don't think that had occurred, but twice now I've not been able to make contact with him to start sessions. He was a law partner in the same firm with Roemer McPhee and Gerald Morgan.

HOPKINS: Ed McCabe's a fine young fellow with a fine firm.

BURG: I'm hoping to contact him on this trip. The next McCabe, Gerry McCabe, Office of the Naval Aide. There's no indication on my list as to how long he might have been there or what position he held.

HOPKINS: Well this book may indicate how long he was there. I don't know. We had contact with him from time to time, ordinarily in relation to the White House Mess. He was--

BURG: Oh, that was one of his responsibilities.





HOPKINS: Yes. Well, it says in this book that he came to the White House on July 28 of 1960 so--

BURG: For only a few months.

HOPKINS: Only a few months in the Eisenhower administration. As I recall he may have stayed on sometime after that into the Kennedy administration. I'm not too sure of that.

BURG: Well there should be ways of checking into him. The next name I would expect is very well known to you. Mary Jane McCaffree.



HOPKINS: Yes, she was the social secretary to the First Lady, and, of course, her office was in the East Wing. Most of our dealings were by phone rather than personally. Of course I knew her well and met her on a number of occasions. She was very very cooperative, very knowledgeable, very helpful.

BURG: What would be the nature of the things that the two of you would have to consult on or work together on?

HOPKINS: Well sometimes it would be a matter of budget, some-



times a matter of personnel, that sort of thing. In view of the nature of her duties for the First Lady, the Chief Usher would be her main contact in the White House rather than on the office side. But matters of personnel and that sort of thing would involve the executive clerk's office.

BURG: Because she had a small staff working with her?

HOPKINS: Yes. And of course they were budgeted out of the White House office and matters of that kind would come to me, matters sometimes of equipment, that sort of thing, if they needed more equipment than they had or replacements etc.



BURG: I see. Now the next name I have on the list is Kevin McCann.

HOPKINS: Kevin McCann, of course, had been with the President prior to his inauguration. I think he had probably been with him over in SHAPE.

BURG: Yes, he was.

HOPKINS: Yes. And he was basically a writer I would say.

I'm sure the President had great confidence in him. He was a good writer. He assisted on many of the President's speeches.

BURG: Had been President, I think, of a little college, Defiance College.

HOPKINS: After that, Defiance College, after he left the White House.

[Editor's Note: McCann held this position with Defiance College both before and after his White House Service.]

HOPKINS: And then, of course, I think he helped the President a great deal from time to time after the President left the presidency up at Gettysburg.

BURG: Yes. And Kevin is still up there.

HOPKINS: The last time I saw Kevin, I think, was at the retirement for Jim Rowley of the Secret Service, and it was the same old Kevin whom I always liked and enjoyed very much. He had quite a sense of humor and was very expressive and didn't hesitate to express his views on lots of things.



BURG: Would you say that McCann was a fairly popular member of that staff?

HOPKINS: I think so. I think so.

BURG: It seems hard, from what I know of him, the occasions I've met him, it seems hard to imagine him not fitting in immediately in almost any kind of a group. A very outgoing kind of personality.

[F. Moran] McConihe--that man I don't know at all. He's listed in my list as a consultant to the President in 1956. Can you tell me anything about him?

HOPKINS: Well he wasn't at the White House very long, as I remember. I may have come in contact with him a time or two. Of course we usually do when they're put on the rolls. Either they come over to the executive clerk's office to be sworn in or something of that nature or get information from them for appointment matters, but he wasn't there too long. It's my recollection, and I may be wrong on this, that he was principally in the housing field while he was there at the White House. I think he later became commissioner of public buildings,





and I think his background was in real estate.

BURG: So that's probably what his consulting work was. Have you ever seen him around Washington, D.C. since?

HOPKINS: No. I've seen references to him in the paper over the years. I'm not sure whether he's alive yet or not.

BURG: I didn't know. I have no data on him.

Paul McCracken as a member of the Council of Economic Advisers, would you have seen much of him?

HOPKINS: Well, principally when he was waiting to go in to see the President or in the White House Mess, he used to eat over there. He was an economist. Very friendly and very capable man in my opinion.

BURG: Outgoing?

HOPKINS: Yes. To a certain extent. I think he worked with the council in the Nixon administration. He was chairman of it.

BURG: That's right. I think he was. Yes, yes of course. Now





Henry Roemer McPhee, you would have seen quite a bit of him.

HOPKINS: Yes. I knew Roemer very well and I've seen him from time to time, of course, since being in the Eisenhower administration. He was a young lawyer. When he first came to the White House, as I recall, he worked for Gabe Hauge, and subsequently moved over to the West Wing and worked in the counsel's office. And sometime, quite sometime I guess, before the end of the Eisenhower administration, he was appointed as associate special counsel. So he was, basically, the second man in the counsel's office. He worked quite extensively, as I recall, in the security field. A great deal on legislation and enrolled bills and things of that nature, and was a fine young man. Very knowledgeable.

BURG: Some of those things brought him into contact with you especially.

HOPKINS: Oh, yes, in the enrolled bill field.

BURG: When he had the counsel's office. So, from your viewpoint, the kinds of contacts that you had with him, you found



him to be a very capable--

HOPKINS: Oh, yes.

[Interruption]

HOPKINS: I don't know whether you've already interviewed Roemer or not, but he had some very interesting experiences in the enrolled bill field. He, on occasion, made a trip to Europe to take some enrolled bills to President Eisenhower to get them signed within the ten day period. I recall one other interesting incident. In those days, and this goes back to the time of President Wilson, there was a procedure developed whereby, when bills came down from the Congress when the President was out of the country--and this was in cooperation with the Congress--in other words, a program worked out ahead of time--bills were received for forwarding to the President. The theory was that by receiving them that way, the ten days would not begin to toll until such time as they were in the President's personal possession. So that they could even be held until such time as he returned from abroad and the ten days would begin to toll the day he got back. Well if my memory serves me correctly, there was one bill-- the President



had been abroad and there was an effort to get it signed within the ten days because he'd come back within the ten days. My facts may not be too accurate on this, but I do know that Roemer made a dash to try to reach President Eisenhower just before he took off in a helicopter on the south grounds, to get this bill signed within the constitutional limitation. And he missed him. The end result was that this bill ended up in the court of claims. The people who were affected by it took it to the court of claims. I think they eventually lost, but it was an interesting case.

BURG: And I assume that Roemer was not allowed to forget that this had happened.

HOPKINS: Yes. Yes. I'm sure Roemer followed that case very closely.

BURG: I'll bet he did.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: I bet he did. I'll have to ask him about that and these





other incidents where he actually had to take a bill overseas.

HOPKINS: Yes. He took a number of bills overseas, I'm sure.

BURG: I hadn't known that. Who worked under Roemer by the time he'd gotten into the counsel's office and was, in effect, second in command there? Do you happen to remember who would have been under him?

HOPKINS: Well I don't know as he had anybody under him except the girl in his office, as I recall. Of course, he worked under the counsel, Dave Kendall in those days or Gerry Morgan, I'm not sure. Both of them were involved at one time or another.

BURG: Yes, I think they were.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Yes. I don't remember the timing on--

HOPKINS: I know they were both in that position, but the timing I'm not too sure of. I think he worked under each of them.





BURG: But no one would have been under him.

HOPKINS: No.

BURG: Now, I. Jack Martin, who was administrative assistant to the President for about five years.

HOPKINS: Well he came in, of course, with the President. He had been an administrative assistant, as I recall, to Senator [Robert A.] Taft, and was one of the men in the congressional liaison office with responsibilities, liaison with the Senate. And, of course, his experience up on the Hill made him very knowledgeable in that area. A fine young fellow. He was eventually appointed by the President as a judge of the court of customs and patent appeals as I recall it. I well remember when the matter of this nomination was pending, word got around for some time that he was a candidate for the position and that probably he was going to be nominated, and he used to drop by our desk probably once a day to see if there was any news today. And, of course, time went on and went on, but finally it broke and he was nominated and confirmed and served some time. He died as a member of the court as I recall.



BURG: Yes.

HOPKINS: Died fairly young.

BURG: So you would have seen quite a bit of him.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: And presume saw him in the Mess.

HOPKINS: Oh, yes.

BURG: Did he tend to be a serious man or was he one of these rather affable--

HOPKINS: He was rather affable I would say.

BURG: Easy to get to know and--

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Did you kid him while he was sweating out--

HOPKINS: I don't know as I ever did, no. But I know others did. It got to kind of be a joke, you know.



BURG: There's nothing like sitting there waiting and waiting, especially if he's coming down to check into it every day. I know the news would get around very fast.

Charles Masterson, about a three year period as special assistant. Do you remember what his work was in the White House?

HOPKINS: Well he worked over under, the former governor of Arizona, ah--I know what his name is as well as I know my own-- Howard Pyle. He and Stan Rumbough, as I recall, were the two assistants under Governor Pyle. My recollection of Charlie Masterson was that he worked principally on what they called-- I believe it was called a fact sheet. Anyway it was a paper that they had fixed up on a regular basis for distribution throughout the office and distribution other places in government, giving information on the status of certain programs and certain happenings of that kind.

BURG: So this is not to be confused with the Staff Notes--

HOPKINS: Oh, no. No.



BURG: --that Al Toner--

HOPKINS: I'm not sure that Staff Sheet was the name of the paper he fixed up. I can see it--it was a blue heading and all that type of thing, but I'm a little hazy. But that was basically what he was doing.

BURG: I see. And throughout his time in the White House I would suppose.

HOPKINS: Yes, and he undoubtedly had other responsibilities under Governor Pyle.

BURG: Bob Merriam.

HOPKINS: One of my principal recollections of Bob Merriam was that he was deeply involved in the activity relating to the change in the flag when Alaska and Hawaii were admitted to the Union.

BURG: Oh, really?

HOPKINS: Yes.





BURG: Redesigning it from its forty-eight to the fifty stars.

HOPKINS: Yes. He was the liaison in that area. And of course this is the first time that there had been a change since Arizona was admitted to the Union. In fact, information on how it was to be accomplished was rather vague as I recall. And of course Bob Merriam had a number of other duties. He, as you may probably know, was the son of the Merriam who had made a report back in President Roosevelt's time that had resulted in the creation of the executive office of the President.

BURG: I didn't know that he was the son of that man. So you had known the father, I presume.

HOPKINS: I had met the father a time or two. In fact I was at a table with him down in the White House Mess on one occasion. I forget who had invited him, and he was a very interesting old gentleman.

BURG: Do you remember anything else about Merriam's duties? I notice that, particularly in the White House, he'd been concerned with inter-departmental affairs the last couple of



years of the administration.

HOPKINS: Yes, I think that was his main responsibility.

BURG: Would that have put him under a particular man, do you remember?

HOPKINS: Not that I recall, no. Not that I recall. Of course they all worked under the general umbrella of the assistant to the President. In those days I think that was probably--at the time I recall him specifically it was when General Persons was the assistant to the President.

BURG: Yes. Right after Adams.

HOPKINS: Yes.



BURG: Now, L. Arthur Minnich. I know that your recollections of him would be fairly strong because the two of you did--

HOPKINS: Yes. We worked right side by side for a number of years. When he was in the military, I think he worked in the office of the secretary of the general staff, and I would assume that that is probably why he eventually got involved in

the Eisenhower campaign and came to the White House in the early days. As a result of the plan submitted by Carter Burgess for the creation of a staff secretariat, General [Paul T.] Carroll was made staff secretary, and Art Minnich had worked with General Carroll over in the office of the secretary of the general staff. And Art was assistant staff secretary. In the early days, his office was downstairs in the West Wing because, when General Carroll moved over in his capacity of staff secretary occupying the same office, the same room that I did as executive clerk, there was only room for--well, we had four desks in there and that was very crowded. So in that room was General Carroll, myself, General Carroll's secretary and my secretary. After General Carroll's death, General [Andrew] Goodpaster came in and there were some changes made which enlarged the office in which the staff secretary and the executive clerk sat. And that made it possible for Mr. Minnich to have a desk up in this office, and he maintained his office in the basement area. In fact his secretary remained down there and he rotated between the two spots. In other words, if General Carroll was going to be away from his desk for a while, Art would come up and take his spot there. In other





words, he worked out of both places. Downstairs basically he involved himself, I think, in dictating notes he had taken in meetings, I think, in the President's office and otherwise. And also he worked with the Archives' people on the Public Papers of the President. Working upstairs he was engaged mostly in staff secretarial duties--filling in for General Goodpaster or working on correspondence or drafts of various kinds for Governor Adams or General Persons as the case may be. His background was history and he was a very knowledgeable and capable young man, I thought. And working in that atmosphere you felt that you were part of the team. So I always had a high regard for him.

BURG: He evidently had pretty broad responsibilities--

HOPKINS: Yes, he did.

BURG: --in the work that he did.

HOPKINS: And I think he was well thought of, and I'm sure that Governor Adams and General Persons had great confidence in him.





[Interruption]

BURG: Now Minnich worked with you, pretty closely with you with respect to the messages and papers, and I think you and I have talked a bit on tape about that cooperation. In fact I think I've gotten some leads from you as to questions to put to Mr. Minnich about the particular ways that this task was carried out. In fact I believe I asked him if you had found it necessary to put new staff on, more staff on in your operation in order to handle the additional burden of work that the creation of Public Papers of the President would incur. And he said he didn't think that you'd had to.

HOPKINS: Well that's true. Of course I was always opposed to empire-building. And one of the things I'm rather proud of was the fact when I left the White House, the executive clerk's office was no bigger than it was when I came there, relating to my job. In other words, there was the executive clerk, an assistant or whatever you want to call him, and one girl. As things increased in volume, we farmed out more than we did before. In other words, things that we used to do personally maybe we had the Records Office do, or the Corre-



spondence Office do under our supervision. But we didn't increase the size of the executive clerk's office.

BURG: And we're not talking just about the Eisenhower administration.

HOPKINS: We're talking about all of them.

BURG: When you came as executive clerk, when you received that promotion, and that takes us back--

HOPKINS: Well that was in 1948. I was in the executive clerk's office as the junior executive clerk since 1943. When I first came to the White House, there were two men, they both had titles of executive clerk. One of them was senior to the other one. That was before the West Wing had been renovated. They had an office adjacent to the appointment secretary's office, the appointment secretary's office was adjacent to the President's office. But they had no secretary in their own office. If the junior executive clerk wished to dictate, he either called a girl up to his office from the correspondence section or he walked down to the correspondence section and



dictated down there. If the senior executive clerk had something to, he very seldom dictated--he wrote his instructions out or a letter out in shorthand--and the man under whom I worked when I first went there, Mr. Wagner, could read Rudolph Forster's shorthand. And that's the way Mr. Forster gave his instructions, in shorthand to Mr. Wagner and Mr. Wagner read them and carried them out. So they didn't even have a secretary in their office. When the West Wing was renovated, the room was a wee bit larger and that was when they first had a girl in their office. So when I first went down to the executive clerk's office full-time, Mr. Latta, who had succeeded Mr. Forster, myself, and one girl. And that's the way it was when I left.

BURG: And that's the way it stayed. So just that staff was handling the finding of the certifiable copy of whatever public papers would be going into the publication. Then you worked with a team from the Federal Register I understand, in compiling this set.

HOPKINS: Now what do you mean by that?





BURG: National Archives and then, I think, the Federal Register were handling the actual putting together then of documents, many of which came from your office into the final format which would become the set of volumes, The Public Papers and Messages of the President.

HOPKINS: Well, that isn't exactly how that worked. After the decision was made that there would be The Public Papers of the President, there were a number of meetings--and the ones at the White House as I recall were chaired by Art Minnich--as to what should be included and what should be excluded--what do you use as your raw material? And the feeling was that your raw material would come from things that had been released by the press office. In other words, if there was a letter say from the President to a member of Congress that had never been released to the press, it would not go in this public papers. This was material that had been released. But it would bring them all together so that at the end of an administration you wouldn't have to rely on press releases which have a way of getting away from everybody. They're individual pieces of paper, but this way you'd have them in





book form. And these meetings were chaired by Art and the ultimate decision was that we would rely on the press release material to work as a basis for what was put in the volumes. Now that means that everything that we handled that had become in the public domain got in there. For instance, all executive orders and proclamations, with very few exceptions, are released to the press. All the President's speeches. Every statement regarding a bill, every veto message were raw material from the press releases for inclusion in the book. The decision was also made that since this was the public papers of the President, with few exceptions at least, statements by anybody else, even though they were released by the press office, would not get in there. In other words, a statement by a press secretary or a cabinet member using the White House as a forum and things of that nature would not become a part of the public papers. Now, when it got to be a matter of inclusion in the public papers, Art of course listened hour by hour and day by day to press conferences to make sure that they were correctly interpreted and transcribed and things of that nature. The people at Archives were deeply involved in this and would, in



all instances, check the press release against the best evidence. In other words, when they got ready to include a proclamation, rather than saying all right, here's a copy of the press release, we'll insert that, they wanted to see the official copy that we had in the White House, the carbon copy, to compare it, to make sure that the press release was absolutely correct. There were even instances of course, when, if there was any doubt about the carbon copy, they would go to the original in the Archives and check it out. So they used the best evidence rule and

[Interruption]

BURG: --meet with the Archives' people--

HOPKIND: From time to time to go over press releases to determine what should be included and what should be excluded. They would have listed these chronologically, all the press releases, everything that, say, comes out in the course of a year. And then we would go over these piece by piece, and the decision would be made: Well this is a press conference; there's no doubt about that going in. The next one might be a statement



by the press secretary: Well, that's out. But the decision would be made on each item as to whether that was going to be included or excluded.

BURG: This is a meeting that Minnich would run, you would attend--

HOPKINS: Yes. And people from Archives would be there. If there was any differences of opinion it would just be discussed. There were a number of instances where Mr. Minnich had to discuss the matter with Jim Hagerty or somebody like that as to the final decision. There were sometimes cases in which there were questions, you know, as to the press conference--in other words, what did the President actually say, the tape wasn't clear or something. And there were cases where you had to undertake further research to try to resolve it.



BURG: Yes. Mr. Minnich says that on some occasions he had to go to people who were knowledgeable in that area, that particular area, and would haul them in to listen to the disc recordings that had been made in the hopes that they would be able to determine what name, or what word had appeared at that point.



HOPKINS: And this was a tremendous undertaking and Art, of course, was plowing new ground. This was the beginning of this operation. And many things he did, of course, set a precedent for the future.

BURG: About how frequently do you think you met on that project?

HOPKINS: Well I can't say specifically. We met many times, I know that.

BURG: But it was not on a regular basis?

HOPKINS: No.

BURG: You met as need determined.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Do you happen to remember, too,--

HOPKINS: And Art took the lead in what was done.

BURG: About how many National Archives people usually seemed to be connected--





HOPKINS: Three as I recall that we would meet with.

BURG: Do you remember who they were, Bill?

HOPKINS: Yes, I do, but I--I should know their names.  
I'll just have to try to think of them--

BURG: Well I can check it out through my sources too.

HOPKINS: -- . Dr. [Daniel J.] Reed was  
one of them. His boss was Dave Eberhart. And as I recall  
there was usually a lady along in those days.

BURG: That I can run down, I'm quite sure.

Robert Montgomery. Doubtless you've been a fan of  
his movies. Did you ever have anything much to do--

HOPKINS: I've seen some of his movies. He, of course,  
was in and out. He wasn't there full time.

BURG: Had no office space there.

HOPKINS: Well he had an office he used upstairs in the West  
Wing. I saw him a time or two, but I had no direct contact with  
him. I do know that the girl that was assigned to him, it sort



of went to her head, and it didn't do her relationship with the other girls in the office much good.

BURG: Oh, really? She considered herself a cut above the average after that experience. Well that's a pity. Wasn't anyone able to shape her up, or was it just decided to let it go?

HOPKINS: Just let it go, I think.

BURG: Did she ever recover from her--

HOPKINS: I'm not sure that she ever did.

BURG: That's interesting, That's very interesting. We thought it'd be intriguing to talk with him since he, we presume, would have been one of the first people to ever have to consider a President's television image, if I could use that word.

HOPKINS: I believe that's the first one that surfaced, at least. I don't know whether there were any before that or not.

BURG: Well we thought we might check with the Truman people and



see if it had occurred there. But I think Eisenhower must have been the first one with any extensive need for someone like that.

Now here I notice Charles Moore listed as a consultant, '53 to '60, and my notes indicate his work for the President was largely extra-curricular. And a special note that he helped to draft Sherman Adams' TV resignation statement. Did you ever encounter--

HOPKINS: Charles Moore?

BURG: Charles Moore.

HOPKINS: No. His name doesn't mean anything to me.

BURG: Doesn't mean a thing. I'll find out through other ways.

Malcolm Moos? I assume that you did have some contact with him, did some work on speeches.

HOPKINS: Yes, he was a very scholarly man. He had his office in the East Wing. He was a speech writer, worked on speeches. I always thought highly of him. He, as I say, was a scholar and he later became president of the University of Minnesota.





In fact I saw something about him in the paper just the other day. Got involved in this project the former president of the University of Chicago has out on the west coast and apparently has just run into financial difficulties or something.

BURG: And so you saw Moos' name in connection with that.

HOPKINS: Yes. But as I say, Malcolm Moos was always very friendly. He was the type of fellow that when he came back to the office, which he did a time or two, he'd always come around and say hello--which we always appreciated.



BURG: Just make the rounds of all his former associates, close associates. Gerald Morgan.

HOPKINS: Well Gerald Morgan is another one of my favorites. He was, in the early days of the Eisenhower administration, on the congressional liaison team working under General Persons. He later became special counsel to the President. He later became the deputy assistant, that's what he was at the end of the administration. He was a very knowledgeable man. One of the type that I would say was methodical to the extent that he



didn't jump to conclusions but thought things through.

BURG: Does a particular incident stick in your mind that causes you to think of the fact that he usually thought a thing through? Or is this just based on long knowledge of him?

HOPKINS: Well principally based on long knowledge of him. I know we used to, when he was counsel, later when he was deputy assistant, we used to go to him a number of times in the matter of the use of White House funds. The President had a special projects fund which was created during the Eisenhower administration, and under the language of the statute the purposes for which it was to be used were limited. Many times there were requests to use it for purposes which we questioned, and if we questioned them we usually suggested that the person wanting it go and talk to Gerry Morgan or we went ourselves. And I always felt that he came up with a decision that was constructive and probably in the President's best interest in making sure that it was not used for things that it was not intended. He, of course, was very active in the enrolled bill field when he



was counsel to the President, and we had a number of contacts with him in that regard.

BURG: He's one of the people on that staff that you single out, not only because you perhaps had a little more contact with him than some of the others, but also on the basis of ability.

HOPKINS: Yes. He was a very able man in my opinion.

BURG: He strikes me as being a rather shy man. Is that an incorrect judgment on my part?

HOPKINS: Well I think that's the impression he gives you, yes.

BURG: Don't know whether to use the word "shy" or "reserved".

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Or both. I found him to be a very shrewd--

HOPKINS: But he's somebody that I would have great confidence in. In fact if I wanted legal advice, I would certainly trust his, I think.

BURG: In a staff full of lawyers, you would tend to single



him out. That's interesting to know, too.

The next man, of course, has a most interesting career,  
E. Frederic Morrow.

HOPKINS: Well there's another fellow that I have a high regard  
for. He, I think, had been somewhat active in the Eisenhower  
campaign.

BURG: Yes, he had.

HOPKINS: And as I recall, originally had a position over in  
the Department of Commerce.



BURG: I think there was not a place for him in the White House  
staff originally.

HOPKINS: And the matter of bringing him over to the White House  
staff, as I recall, hung fire for a number of months and was  
finally resolved and he came over, and he was tied in somewhat  
closely with Governor Adams. I think Governor Adams was  
responsible for bringing him to the White House. He was a very  
able fellow. He could write beautifully. I often wondered  
why they didn't use him more extensively in writing presidential



speeches. But occasionally I would read speeches he wrote-- he went out and made a few speeches--and they just flowed. They were beautiful, I thought. In his later days there, and in fact the last two or three years he was there, he was administrative officer for special projects, which had gotten to be quite an operation in the White House office, these things that were not of a permanent White House nature. In other words, special commissions that were appointed for a particular purpose that were short lived or people who are brought on as consultants and that sort of thing, they were under the special projects umbrella, and it got to be a problem both from the standpoint of money and from the standpoint of equipment, from the standpoint of space. They were always needing something and it got to be a full-time job, basically. And Fred was the administrator for special projects in the latter days and was involved in that type of thing, among other things. He dealt somewhat with the minorities and--



BURG: Worked with Max Rabb--

HOPKINS: Max Rabb in that area, yes.



BURG: If they had not done that, Bill, would the special projects, the administrative work connected with him, would that have fallen to your operation?

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Had you recommended that somebody be given responsibility to handle them rather than to have them placed with you, or do you remember how that came about?

HOPKINS: Well I don't remember specifically how that came about. I do know, of course, General Goodpaster was involved in the creation of the special projects operation, and he became aware, I'm sure, that this was more or less getting out of hand because there were more demands and lots of them would come to him. Before Fred Morrow got involved, I guess he took care of some of them, pushed some of them over our way, and I'm sure there was a realization that they needed somebody just to sort of bird-dog this thing.

BURG: So it was definitely not a make-work kind of job.

HOPKINS: No, I don't think so.



BURG: But something that was getting to be a problem and would have been a rather heavy burden on your resources. Was there ever any comment that you heard or that you can now recollect during that period of time when his appointment to the White House was hung up?

HOPKINS: Nothing that I recall at least.

BURG: Can you tell me who his chief friends seemed to be on the White House staff? For example, I suppose that he was in the Mess frequently. Of course, that Mess, as I understand it, you people switched around all over the place. So it would be hard to say--

HOPKINS: Oh, yes. He'd sit--as far--it's pretty hard to say. I think everybody liked Fred Morrow. I don't know of anybody who didn't.

BURG: And nobody or no group of people that he seemed to gravitate to more than any other.

HOPKINS: No. He was the type that I think everybody enjoyed. He was friendly, good story-teller. I remember him telling one



time about a trip he took out to Kansas City, as I recall. He was standing at, I think it was a bus station or a railroad station waiting for a taxi cab, and some lady came up and saw him standing there and said, "Boy, will you go in and get my bags and bring them out here?" She thought he was just one of the hired help. It didn't bother him, though. He just told about it and laughed, you know.

BURG: I see. Did he tell you what he did? I trust he didn't go in and get the luggage, the bags.

HOPKINS: I don't think he did.

BURG: That would be a high-priced red cap if they got Fred Morrow to do it.

Now the next man I note, Frank Nash, died in 1957. He was a special consultant, '56, and died the following year. Do you remember him, anything much about him?

HOPKINS: Frank Nash. I'm a little hazy on that. Is that the gentlemen that--there was one person, when he died, that President Eisenhower ordered the flag at half staff. It was





a surprise to me at the time, but I'm not sure whether this was the man or not. The name Nash doesn't quite ring a bell.

BURG: This was done for, as you remember it now, for someone on the staff and was not a common thing.

HOPKINS: Not a common thing for anybody that far down the line in government. But I'm not positive that that was the man that I'm thinking of.



BURG: All right. We'll see if we can find him, check it out. Next man was a pretty important man and one that you would have encountered, I'm sure, Don Paarlberg.

HOPKINS: Yes, he had an office in the Executive Office Building. He was an economist. And very friendly and I'd say rather reserved, shy might be the word, but he was a very fine man. He's now, of course, down at the Department of Agriculture.

BURG: Brad Patterson, you would have know him very well I expect.

HOPKINS: Yes. yes. I knew Brad. He had worked with the gentleman who had submitted the recommendations for the



creation of the staff system in the White House.

BURG: With Burgess that is.

HOPKINS: Carter Burgess, yes. And then came to the White House after the staff system was inaugurated and became the assistant in the cabinet secretary's office. And of course in that capacity first worked under Max Rabb and then Bob Gray--don't know if there was anyone else that was in that capacity. Anyway, Brad was the assistant during all that time, and, of course, was really the fellow who carried on the office I think. Worked up a number of the position papers and agendas and things of that nature. He was very energetic. In fact somebody told me at one time when I guess he was in the State Department before he came to the White House, somebody told me that while he was in the State Department he was known as "Breathless Brad" because of his energy and all his pep and vitality.



BURG: He was still like that when you knew him in the White House.

HOPKINS: He had lots of energy, yes. And was a go-getter, no doubt about it. And of course he's worked around the fringes ever since. He was in the Treasury awhile, you know, and he's

been back in the White House now for a number of years and I think he taught for, at least had some lecture courses down at G. W. [George Washington University]. He, I think, is an avid mountain climber--

BURG: Still?

HOPKINS: Still possibly. I'm not sure. He used to go with his children every year, I think, out West and do some mountain climbing.

BURG: That does testify to a great deal of energy.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: I say as one who gets tired just looking at a steep climb. How about John Patterson? Does that name ring a bell with you?

HOPKINS: Yes. He used to eat down in the Mess quite often. I guess he was in the Civil Defense setup for a while. He was a protege, as I remember, of Senator Dirksen.

BURG: Oh, he was?



HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: I hadn't known that. And do you think got his position in ODM and similar things through his--

HOPKINS: He had a number of presidential appointments subsequent to the Eisenhower administration, and I always felt that the Dirksen connection had something to do with it. I didn't know him too well except sitting at the same table with him a number of times at lunch. I remember one time he passed around these little, it's the shape of a coin but it's a screwdriver.

BURG: Yes, yes.

HOPKINS: It's a key chain thing.



BURG: Right. I've seen them.

HOPKINS: Passed some around to the people at the table. In fact I saw it just the other day--I've still got it. I thought of John Patterson then.

BURG: Have you seen him since? Do you know what he's doing now?

HOPKINS: No, I do not.

BURG: So you don't--

HOPKINS: I doubt very much whether he's still in government. He must be in his seventies now. I may be wrong. Well, let's see, it says here, born in 1902 so he's--

BURG: 73.

HOPKINS: 73 or so years old.

BURG: So probably retired.

HOPKINS: Yes.



BURG: Amos Peaslee.

HOPKINS: I saw him in the Mess a few times, but I hardly knew him at all.

BURG: Is he still alive, do you happen to know?

HOPKINS: I don't know. I don't know.

BURG: Wilton Persons.



HOPKINS: Well of course General Persons was there during the entire Eisenhower administration. Of course he had been congressional liaison man with the military before he ever came to the White House. He knew President Eisenhower personally.

BURG: A fair amount of experience on the Hill.

HOPKINS: Oh, all kinds of experience on the Hill and he had the congressional liaison office at the beginning of the Eisenhower administration, and of course subsequently succeeded Governor Adams as the assistant to the President. He was a fine man. He was the type that would leave you alone. In other words, expected you to do your work. One thing that always impressed me about General Persons was his interest in the mail, particularly letters from children. Children, you know, have no inhibitions at all when they write to the President. Many times it's because they have a lazy teacher. In other words, the teacher can give the class a project to write to some public figure and on the basis of your response prepare a paper and you've got a month to do this. Well the teacher can sit back and wait and the kid says, "Who do I write to?" And the first person that



pops in the head is the President of the United States. And they write asking this question and that question and the types of questions that, if you respond to them fully, you could write a book. Well in those days a great volume of the mail was made for General Persons' signature, which meant it went into his immediate office for him to sign, or somebody who was delegated to do it. So he would see a number of these children's letters. And, because of the great volume of mail, it wasn't possible in many cases, in fact most cases, to respond fully to all these questions. In other words, the correspondence section who prepared most of these responses many times would thank the child and either say they didn't have the information or they would send them something, responding to one question hoping that this would take care of it so they would have something for the class. But General Persons would see this letter and he would say, "See here. This kid asked this and that and you haven't said anything about it." And he'd bring these letters out to Art Minnich and say, "we've got to do something about this." And then poor Art would sit there and have to write a two page letter to this kid.





BURG: Persons never realizing, evidently, that that one letter he'd seen was only one of a thousand like it.

HOPKINS: Well may be or, he was just compassionate as far as these letters were concerned. And, we could agree with him. But anyway, that was really what generated the project which took two administrations to complete, to have what we call The Children's Booklet. We said, "We've just got to do something about this. If we respond fully as General Persons wants, we're going to bog down the whole correspondence operation. What we need is a general booklet that has responses to ninety percent of the questions these kids ask so that if they write in, we'll send them a booklet. Just mail it out with a little slip on it. 'Thank you for your letter; the President's glad to hear from you and this booklet may be of interest.'" So we talked to everybody we could think of to see if we couldn't generate something, and Fred Fox agreed to take on the project. And Fred labored and he labored and he did a lot of good, but the end of the administration came and we still didn't have a booklet. So he turned the material all back to me. Kennedy administration comes in and we still have the problem. With



President Kennedy coming in the mail jumped up again. First real increase, except for current events, that has happened since the Roosevelt administration, but now it was up another fifty percent. So we're worse off than we were before. So, we turned this whole Fred Fox package over to a young fellow who had replaced Fred Fox in the Kennedy administration. And he fiddled around with it for a while, but by the time he had left he had really not come up with anything concrete either. And then General [Chester V.] Clifton, who was the military assistant, heard of this and got interested in it. He had a friend who was with the Saturday Evening Post, and he worked out an arrangement with the Saturday Evening Post that they would print this in color and give the White House a certain number if they were permitted to put it on the bookstands and sell them. So with the basis of what Fred Fox had done and what his successor in the Kennedy administration had done and working closely with General Clifton, we finally got something firmed up and got a booklet printed. It was a beautiful thing. I think we got 250,000 copies of it, and it was very helpful. We figured it could handle maybe eighty percent of





the children's mail. Of course it didn't take long for that portion to be depleted. The Saturday Evening Post came on sad days, and then it was a question of getting new copies and paying for them out of White House funds, which were limited, and the book degenerated into fewer pages, fewer answers, black and white, printed at the Government Printing Office. And I guess they still have one there but it isn't what it used to be. But General Persons' interest in children's mail was really what got it started.

BURG: Two hundred and fifty thousand copies, they didn't go very far.

HOPKINS: No. No.



BURG: That's an interesting story about Persons. You found, of course, that his style was considerably different from that of his predecessor, Sherm Adams, in handling the same responsibilities.

HOPKINS: Yes, I would say, somewhat. They were both fine gentlemen though, and I have high regard for both of them.

BURG: Operating in different ways.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: I've been told for example by people who knew Adams very well, worked with him, they've smiled and told me that there were times when he literally grinned in anticipation of calling up a department to find out "Why hasn't something been done? Why wasn't this done?" That the smile would creep across his face as he reached for the telephone, and I got the impression that Persons would rather avoid making himself obnoxious where Adams would go out of his way.



HOPKINS: Well there might be some truth in that, basically in the earlier days. I think Governor Adams mellowed a lot as the years went along.

BURG: Oh, do you?

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: So he's not quite like that in the latter years that he was there.

HOPKINS: No.

BURG: You found no problems in working for either one of those men?

HOPKINS: No. I think they were fair. I always felt that Governor Adams was a little bit more demanding than General Persons, but if you responded he was fair and square. You didn't have any trouble.

BURG: How about Val Peterson?

HOPKINS: Oh, Val Peterson wasn't there too long. He came right in the early days of the Eisenhower administration and stayed only a very few--I don't know whether it was a matter of a number of weeks or very few months. He was the former governor of Nebraska, and, of course, was a very likeable fellow. We used to see him occasionally. We didn't have too many dealings with him, but we did some few as I recall in the early days. But as I say he wasn't there very long.

BURG: Yes.

HOPKINS: He was later an ambassador, was it Denmark; or one of those countries.



BURG: Denmark, yes. I think what we had better do then is stop, starting with David Peyton on our next session. That pretty well finishes our tape for today, and I thank you so much for coming down to work with me this morning.





This interview is being taped with Mr. William Hopkins at the Army-Navy Club in Washington, DC, on August 18, 1976. Present for the interview are Dr. Maclyn Burg of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library staff and Mr. Hopkins.

DR. BURG: When we were last working, we were running through the White House staff book, in effect, just checking name by name to get either your impressions of people, or their work styles in the particular jobs that they did; or, in some instances, to get their present whereabouts. It seems to me that the man we were ready to start with was David Peyton. Do you remember him?

MR. HOPKINS: Yes, I remember Dave. He was an assistant to Bob Hampton in the personnel area. Bob, of course, was one of the successors to Charlie Willis at the White House. I didn't know Dave very well but, as I say, he was there at the White House for about a year, year and a half, at the end of the administration, and was a very personable young fellow.

DR. BURG: One of the younger men on the staff.

MR. HOPKINS: Yes.

DR. BURG: Do you happen to know what he did after the White House?



HOPKINS: No, I do not.

BURG: Okay. Thomas Pike.

HOPKINS: I didn't know him very well. He had an office over in the Executive Office Building and he was in the area of special assignments, as I recall. But, as I say, I never did know him very well.

BURG: How about Douglas Price?

HOPKINS: Doug Price was a very personable young fellow; very friendly, very astute, I think, and was one of the so-called young group in the White House that--and he was, I would say, politically oriented.

BURG: My notes indicate he was active in the '52 campaign and then, ultimately, came to the White House; was there for a fair period of time, as a matter of fact.

HOPKINS: Yes. He was a very--he was a boat enthusiast as I remember.

BURG: And is still here, I think, in Adelphi, Maryland.



HOPKINS: I do not know. I haven't seen nor heard of Doug Price for years. I just don't--he was a very fine young man at that time.

BURG: And Howard Pyle?

HOPKINS: Howard Pyle, of course, was at one time governor of Arizona before he came to the White House, and I always had a very high regard for him. He was, I thought, very knowledgeable, very capable, and I'm sure that in his area the President relied on him a great deal. It was basically, I think, in the area of federal-state relations and that type of thing.

BURG: Stayed with it for quite some period of time. I'm not sure whether he replaced Clarence Manion. Manion had that job, very briefly, at the very outset of the administration.

HOPKINS: I remember--I couldn't answer that; I don't know.

BURG: Okay. And Elwood Quesada? Did you see very much of him?

HOPKINS: Not a great lot, no. He--

BURG: Given the nature of his job.





HOPKINS: No, he was over in the Executive Office Building. I used to see him come through the office; I had a speaking acquaintance with him, of course, at that time. I haven't seen him for years. But, of course, he had a military background. I'm sure he was highly qualified and very well thought of.

BURG: Yes, well, that's the impression I have, too. Max Rabb?

HOPKINS: Well, Max, in the early days--he, when we first came in, he was an assistant to Governor Adams and his office was right next door to mine.

BURG: Oh, it was?

HOPKINS: Yes, at that time. And Max was very personable; lots of pep, vim and vitality, and while on a project, I think he kept hammering away at it till something happened.

BURG: Not a quiet, reserved kind of person--

HOPKINS: No, I wouldn't say so, but a fine fellow.

BURG: --a going machine.





HOPKINS: Later on he was, got involved in the minority areas and was also, subsequently, secretary of the cabinet. But he--

BURG: Actually, Fred Morrow, I guess, worked with Rabb toward the end.

HOPKINS: Well, to some extent maybe, not too much. At least in the areas that I was knowledgeable. Fred did work with him, I'm sure, in some of the minority areas and that type of thing.

BURG: Yes, okay. By contrast Clarence Randall, the next man on the list--and you've told me that there's a possibility that Mr. Randall has died in the last year or so--a very reserved kind of man, I think.



HOPKINS: Yes, I didn't know him very well. I use to see him occasionally down in the White House mess, in which he ate very often. He had a reputation of being a high caliber businessman. I'm sure he--that was his background, his area. Of course, I'd heard of him, prior to his coming to the White House, because of the speech he made, very derogatory of President Truman, after President Truman took his action in the steel case. And I'm sure some of us felt--at the time of

his speech, at least--that he went too far, talking about a President of the United States.

BURG: It was a harsh speech.

HOPKINS: Yes. Of course, that was a matter of opinion but, as I say, I'm sure he was a highly-qualified man and was one that could counsel the President and give him very good advice.

BURG: You didn't have a great deal to do with him during that period of time.

HOPKINS: No.



BURG: James Richards? He was only there as special assistant for about a year.

HOPKINS: For some reason that name doesn't ring a bell right now. You don't know what area he was, do you?

BURG: No, I don't. I don't. It was a very brief tenure. They gave him personal rank of ambassador, if that's any kind of a clue. But I would have to check the records myself to--

HOPKINS: The name doesn't ring a bell.

BURG: All right, fine. The next name may be familiar to you, Nelson Rockefeller.

HOPKINS: Well, I didn't know Governor Rockefeller very well. Of course, his office was over in the Executive Office Building and he was in and out, but what little contact I had with him, I was highly impressed. I did a few menial office chores for him when we were over in Geneva for a few days, at the Geneva Conference; he was one of the President's advisers there and I came in contact with him a few times there. I've always had a high regard for him.



BURG: You have. On those occasions did you find him easy to work for?

HOPKINS: Very much so. Very much so, yes.

BURG: He comes across so many times in public occasions as rather abrasive.

HOPKINS: Well I didn't have that impression in what little personal contact I had with him. Just the opposite, in fact.



BURG: You found him easy to work with, and to work for?

HOPKINS: Yes. He was always appreciative of anything you did for him and easy to work for. As I say, I didn't know him very well and I had very little contact with him, but what few times I did, I was highly impressed.

BURG: Right. Okay. Stan Rumbough, with [Charles] Willis, one of the founders of Citizens for Eisenhower.

HOPKINS: Well, when he was at the White House, and he wasn't there too long as I remember, he was one of the assistants to Governor Pyle. I'm not too sure, and I don't know whether I ever knew exactly the areas he worked in, but he was a very personable young fellow. He was married at that time to the-- her name slips me; she's an actress [Dina Merrill], she's the daughter of Mrs. Davies of the Post family, you know? Post cereal family?

BURG: Yes, yes. I should know the name, because we remarked on it. It came as quite a surprise to some of our staff who hadn't known that.





HOPKINS: As I remember, at that time he used to eat quite often in the mess, and he and some of the young fellows he was working with were talking about an idea he had. It was either--he'd started, or was talking about starting, a company that manufactured dispensers for ketchup and mustard and that sort of thing, plastic bottles. How that ever came out, I don't know, but [Laughter]--

BURG: Do you suppose it was their experience in the White House mess that convinced them that there was a market?

HOPKINS: Could be, I don't know. [Laughter]

BURG: I'll be darned. You don't remember who he was talking to about that, do you?

HOPKINS: Oh, no, no.

BURG: Well, the next man on the list would have been, late in the administration, undoubtedly one of the youngest men to serve in any capacity in the White House--Chris Russell.

HOPKINS: Yes, he was an assistant to Al Toner. They prepared this daily listing of upcoming events, sort of anticipatory of



what might happen, or what was going on in the departments, for the information of the President and other members of the staff.

BURG: Right. And you would see him; his office was in the White House, I believe.

HOPKINS: They were in the East Wing.

BURG: Yes, with Al.

HOPKINS: Either he or Al, of course, would personally bring the papers over each evening and give them to either General Goodpaster, or to me for him as the case may be. So I saw him there; I saw him in the staff mess quite often.

BURG: I would imagine he has not changed much; he's very good natured, pleasant, bright guy now--

HOPKINS: Yes, that's my impression.

BURG: --and I don't think he would have altered.

HOPKINS: I don't think I've seen him since he left the White House, but as I say, I was--



BURG: He looks very much like his picture.

HOPKINS: He does?

BURG: There hasn't been--time has been good to him! And he is now with State Department. How about Raymond Saulnier?

HOPKINS: Well he was chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers. Again, I didn't really know him, except a speaking acquaintance. He used to eat in the White House mess. I'm sure he was very knowledgeable in his field. In fact, you see his name in the paper every once in a while yet, commenting on matters of economic interest.



BURG: Right. Still sought after for his opinions and for his advice. Robert Schulz.

HOPKINS: Well Bob, of course, was the--came with the President, and had been with the President since, I guess, his days over in Europe. And was really a, probably one of the closest, if not the closest, personal aide to the President; he did lots of his personal things for him.

BURG: The transportation man.



HOPKINS: Transportation--he was a transportation expert, and he was congenial, helpful. He was extremely loyal to the President I would say, and if the President wanted something, Bob found a way to get it.

BURG: On occasion, Bob's methods have irked people or turned people off. I think, usually, when he was in pursuit of that loyalty, and with full intention to get done what the President wanted done. Did that ever cause problems for you, personally?

HOPKINS: Not for me, no. I knew that that situation existed with some of the staff members. Maybe it was a question of interpretation of what the President really wanted, which is sometimes a question, as you well know.

BURG: On occasion Bob may have misinterpreted a Presidential remark.

HOPKINS: Yes, but as I say, from my standpoint, no problems at all.

BURG: Were there fairly frequent occasions where it was to you that Bob came for assistance in solving some of his problems?





HOPKINS: There were occasions, but I don't think I was the principal one, by any matter of means. I'm sure I wasn't. But there were occasions.

BURG: By and large, your relationship with him sounds to have been pretty good.

HOPKINS: Yes, I was--very good. I never had any cross words, or any reason to feel put out at anything Bob did, as far as I was concerned.

BURG: Did you ever have to go to him?

HOPKINS: Yes, oh, yes. Yes.

BURG: For assistance or help in settling something?

HOPKINS: Yes. And he was always very helpful. In fact, he was one of these fellows that, if he felt that it was a legitimate request, I think he'd go out of his way to help you.

BURG: Well that's good to know, because as you've remarked, General Schulz was with the President throughout, and stayed with him literally till the day the General died.



HOPKINS: Till the very end. Yes.

BURG: Yes. Fred Seaton was over there, former Senator from Nebraska. What can you tell me about him?

HOPKINS: Well, Fred Seaton, of course, came to the White House after being Assistant Secretary of Defense. It was my ill fortune to show him the space which he was going to occupy in the West Wing when he came to the White House. [Laughter] He'd been over in the Pentagon and had an office that probably occupied a quarter of an acre or something, I don't know, I never saw it, but I know it was a big one.

BURG: I wouldn't be a bit surprised.

HOPKINS: And he came over to the White House and we took him up to the office, which had been sub-divided, and it hadn't been very big to begin with! There it is! [Laughter] Well, Fred took it good naturedly. But he used to kid us about it. He was very personable and very knowledgeable. He had a lot of political instinct, I think.

BURG: Yes, had been Senator, newspaperman.



HOPKINS: Senator. In fact, he--I found out later that his family was related to the family of the editor of a little county paper from my country out in Kansas. And we had some dealings with him at the time of the McCarthy hearings, when he was still over in the Pentagon. I knew him a little bit before he came to the White House, but he was a very fine fellow.

BURG: Your dealings with him during the McCarthy hearings-- what would be the nature of the contacts with Mr. Seaton at that time?

HOPKINS: Well, merely in the custody of some of the files that they had in the Pentagon which they felt were better off in the White House some place.

BURG: So they moved them out of the Pentagon and, in effect, you stored those files for that period of time. Were the files extensive in quantity?

HOPKINS: No, I wouldn't say so.

BURG: I would expect that you did not examine those files.



HOPKINS: I never opened them. I didn't know what was in them.

BURG: Did they come to you sealed?

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: In envelopes or--

HOPKINS: It's my recollection that they were in envelopes; I'm not positive of that, but that's what I remember.

BURG: Sealed down. Where would they be kept then, Bill, in the White House?

HOPKINS: They were kept over in the shelter.



BURG: In the shelter?

HOPKINS: Yes, the old shelter, which was under the mansion itself.

BURG: That's a term that I am not personally familiar with in respect to the White House. Was it a like an air raid--

HOPKINS: Well, it's like a so-called air raid shelter, yes.



BURG: An air raid shelter; so sub-basement, concrete structure.

HOPKINS: Basically. It was built at the time they built the East Wing.

BURG: Yes. And this was locked storage of some sort?

HOPKINS: Oh, yes. Locked storage.

BURG: Was it guarded, or was it simply guarded by the internal security arrangements of the White House at large?

HOPKINS: By the internal security arrangements, I guess you would say, because they had stationed in the shelter certain military personnel involved in communications and that sort of thing. So it wasn't a question of having a guard on the door or anything, but it was under security.

BURG: Was the move made with complete secrecy? That is, were measures taken, security measures taken, to transfer those files secretly from the Pentagon to the White House? Do you remember?

HOPKINS: It's my understanding that was the way it was done, yes.



BURG: You got in on it. You were told they were coming, I assume, and the time at which they would arrive, and then your task was simply to see to it--

HOPKINS: Store them.

BURG: --that they were taken down into that shelter and placed there.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Do you remember how long they were held in the White House?

HOPKINS: No, I really don't. It was a matter of several months, I know that.

BURG: Yes. And if you had to estimate the quantity, Bill, would you say that the files ran two linear feet, or four linear feet, or one file drawer?

HOPKINS: Well, I'm a little vague on that at this time, too. I would say that two linear feet would be more nearly the size of them, but I just don't remember.



BURG: So that could presumably have been brought over in an ordinary automobile and carried in.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: All right. Fine, thank you. Bern Shanley.

HOPKINS: Bern Shanley, right after the inauguration it was announced--or not announced; it was a fact--that he was coming in as Special Counsel to the President. And then it had been anticipated, I believe, that Mr. [Arthur H.] Vandenberg, [Jr.], a son of Senator Vandenberg, was coming in as Appointments Secretary. Now that didn't materialize, so Bern Shanley was shifted over from Special Counsel to Appointments Secretary and served in that capacity for a number of years. And of course Mr. Shanley, as I recall, was in and out of the White House. He was out and then came back.

BURG: He was supposed to have the job that ultimately went to Tom Stephens, is that right?

HOPKINS: Well Tom Stephens was Appointments Secretary.



BURG: Vandenberg was to have had that job but--

HOPKINS: Yes, but, as I recall, Bern Shanley took it over before Tom Stephens came in.

BURG: Yes, yes, that's right. My thought is that Stephens follows Shanley on that job.

HOPKINS: That's right, Shanley, yes.

BURG: And the job of Special Counsel, that must have been the one that went to Gerry Morgan?

HOPKINS: Ah, yes. Subsequently.

BURG: Yes, subsequently. Okay.

HOPKINS: Mr. Shanley was a very personable man, a political animal, I would say, but just as friendly and nice man as I ever worked with.

BURG: Did you have a great deal to do with him?

HOPKINS: Well, considerably when he was Appointments Secretary. It was through him that we got into the President's office when





it was necessary to carry things in to be signed, and his office was next door to ours. In other words, the Appointments Secretary's office, then the Executive Clerk's office, then Governor Adams' outer office, then Governor Adams' main office. So we were just in a row there, so we--and it was an open-door policy in those days. We could sit at our desk and see where Bern Shanley was at his desk and whether he was working, or on the phone, or what he was doing. And he was a very--

BURG: But the political background there was strong.

HOPKINS: I would say so, as you probably know, I think he ran for Senator in New Jersey since then, since he left the White House.

BURG: Right. That's right, he did.

HOPKINS: But he was a very fine man. He had a large family; I forget how many children, but he was a family man. I had a high regard for Bern Shanley.

BURG: Okay. Rocco Siciliano.



HOPKINS: He had his office in the Executive Office Building and he was in the personnel area. Fine young fellow in those days; he's been back in government since then, as you probably know. And I think he was very capable and he was on the way up in those days.

BURG: I get the impression that Siciliano has a pretty good sense of humor.



HOPKINS: Yes, I think so. I never--I don't think I was ever exposed to it very much, but I've heard that.

BURG: Of course. He was over in the Executive Office Building, so you didn't see him often.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Howard Snyder, the President's physician. At least, I think most people know him best for that role.

HOPKINS: Yes. Well, he occupied the position of the President's physician, of course, and had his main office over in the Executive Mansion. He was sort of the fatherly type. Very helpful, and seemed to want to do everything he could to help anybody.

And, of course, his assistant Dr. [Walter R.] Tkach was the same way. I think that the rank and file of the staff, if they needed any medical advice or assistance or anything, felt free to go to them; more so than any of their predecessors or successors. As I say, he was the fatherly type and was always somebody you felt, well, if you had any problems you could go to.



BURG: Available to literally all of the White House people, as distinct from the upper-level staff?

HOPKINS: I would say so, yes. Dr. Tkach, particularly, and I think that was under the direction, of course, of General Snyder. Just an example of General Snyder's desire to be helpful-- Howell Crim, when he was chief usher in the latter days--

BURG: K-r-i--?

HOPKINS: C-r-i-m. He had emphysema and it was getting more progressive all the time. He wanted to stay on a little while longer and Dr. Snyder called me over one day and wondered how we could work something out. In other words, he was interested



in Mr. Crim as a person and didn't want to say, "Well, here, your're beyond your effective working days; out you go." So a special arrangement was made whereby Mr. Crim became a special assistant in the Executive Mansion. Mr. [J. Bernard] West, his assistant, was promoted to chief usher, and as a result of that, Mr. Crim's knowledge and counsel and advice was available for several months more in the White House, in the Executive Mansion.

BURG: I see. As a result of Dr. Snyder's--



HOPKINS: Of Dr. Snyder's intervention.

BURG: Yes. Do you suppose that Dr. Snyder had been given instructions of that sort by the President?

HOPKINS: Oh, I just don't know. It could be; I don't know.

BURG: You never heard him say.

HOPKINS: No.

BURG: Well, I think that's most interesting that this medical service would be available to any of your people. It isn't



just available to the Bern Shanleys, for example, or people of this sort. One of your secretaries could go to Dr. Snyder or Dr. Tkach and discuss medical problems with them.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Most remarkable, I think. How about Murray Snyder?

HOPKINS: Well he was another one that was very high on my list. He, of course, was the assistant to Jim Hagerty. But he was a sort of a fireman in addition to that. He substituted on the appointments secretary's desk a number of times when--I don't know whether it was the gap between Mr. Shanley leaving and Mr. Stephens coming in, or exactly when it was--but he subbed on the appointments secretary's desk a number of times, I know. Also when General [Paul Thomas] Carroll died, before General [Andrew J.] Goodpaster [Jr.] came in, he was on General Carroll's desk as staff secretary, acting staff secretary. And in that capacity, he and I sat right across the desk from each other.

BURG: I see. About how old a man was he at that time?

HOPKINS: Well I'm just guessing now, I'd guess in his late thirties. Maybe early forties, but late thirties, I would guess.



BURG: He was a man that you liked very much.

HOPKINS: Oh, yes.

BURG: What qualities about him?

HOPKINS: Well, he was very calm. In that regard he was very different from General Carroll.

BURG: Oh? [Laughter] Was Carroll excitable?

HOPKINS: Carroll was a little excitable; very efficient, but when he wanted something done, it's gotta be done right now. He and [L. Arthur] Art Minnich used to go round and round on that area. But as I say, Murray was a good writer and later, of course, he moved over to the Pentagon, was the chief spokesman over there for some time. Of course, he passed away, I believe it was--was it early in the Nixon administration? I believe it was. [Ed. note: Mr. Snyder died November 2, 1969]

BURG: You may be right.

HOPKINS: I know the last time I saw him, he was pretty well crippled up; he was walking with a couple of canes.



BURG: I see. Elmer Staats.

HOPKINS: Well, Mr. Staats, of course, was over in the Bureau of the Budget. My first contact with him was when he was assistant director for legislative reference. In other words, that's the area in the Bureau of the Budget that makes recommendations to the President on whether to sign or veto legislation. And all of those recommendations came to the Executive Clerk's desk first when they came from the Bureau of the Budget, so we used to have considerable contact in those days in that area. He was later Deputy Director of the Budget. In fact, I think he left and came back as deputy director at a subsequent time. He was very efficient, very knowledgeable. I think maybe he was--rubbed a few people the wrong way.

BURG: Oh, did he?

HOPKINS: But I was always highly impressed with Elmer. He's now, as you know, Comptroller General of the United States, which is one of the more important jobs in this government. It seems to be getting more important every day, if you can believe what you read in the papers; all the reports they're





turning into Congress now as a result of congressional requests.

BURG: The thing that put some people off about him, was it his methods, or was it that he, by the nature of his job, had to make some decisions, recommendations, that were not pleasing to those who were supporting measures on which he would have to recommend, "No"?

HOPKINS: Well it might have been a little of both, I don't know. I really don't know. I used to hear, on occasion, some of his folks over in the Bureau being a little derogatory about Elmer, but I thought many times that some of the things they said weren't really justified, and maybe a little case of he was one step ahead of them or something.

BURG: So, in some instances, it sounded to you as though it was personality conflict?

HOPKINS: I would say so, yes.

BURG: But in your dealings with him, you saw none of that.

HOPKINS: No. No, he was always fair and square in all of my dealings with him and I was always very favorably impressed with him.





[Interruption]

BURG: The next name on my list--is John Stambaugh, who was perhaps in and out of the White House a couple of times.

HOPKINS: I never knew Mr. Stambaugh very well. I used to see him and sometimes eat at the same table in the White House mess and hear some of the discussions, but as I say I never knew him--

BURG: You have no strong recollections of him.



HOPKINS: No, no.

BURG: How about Tim Stanley? Another one of the very young men in the White House at that time.

HOPKINS: Well, as I recall, he was, at one time, [Albert P.] Al Toner's assistant and, as I recall--I may be wrong now--but, as I recall, he was there ahead of Chris Russell.

BURG: It's possible that he was, because I notice that he was a special assistant, '57-'59, and I believe that Russell replaced--

HOPKINS: That's my recollection.

BURG: --Stanley.

HOPKINS: That's my recollection. As I say, he was probably a little more reserved than Russell, but, again, a knowledgeable young man. And they had to be knowledgeable in the Toner area, and they had to be going after the departments all the time to get this material. It was a matter of finding out what departments had material that would be helpful to these reports they were making, and then a continual effort to drag it out of them! Just keep plugging away--and I think that was where he was helpful to them.



BURG: Although the material was useful, it wasn't always forthcoming?

HOPKINS: Oh, no. Many times it wasn't, for some more reasons than one. Sometimes one of the departments would feel, well here, our best interest is to keep this off a list like that for the time being; some other department might encroach on our bailiwick. For one reason or another, they would drag their feet. And if you didn't keep prodding them, first thing

you know the whole source just seemed to dry up. So that was one of Al's big jobs, to keep prodding, keep making contacts, keep after it, getting it here and getting it on time. Because if it had to be in the report which they were to deliver at six o'clock, if it came in at seven, it wasn't any good. And if it didn't come at all, and should have come, that was something that he might read about in the paper next week, and then somebody would jump on Al Toner and say, "How come you didn't-- we didn't know about this?"

BURG: Yes. And I think one of Toner's defenses was to point with pride to the fact that, "Notice! That department hasn't been represented in these reports," so that a call went from higher up, which sometimes got a little result. [Laughter] Maurice Stans.

HOPKINS: Well he was Director of the Bureau of the Budget. I was trying to reconcile in my mind the sequence there. The President had three directors--and maybe it was more than that--of course, Mr. [Rowland R.] Hughes was the first one. I believe Mr. [Percival F.] Brundage succeeded him, and probably





Mr. Stans after that.

[Ed. Note: Joseph M. Dodge was director 1953-54; then Hughes, 1954-56; Brundage, 1956-58; and Stans, 1958-61.]

BURG: From 1958 through '61.

HOPKINS: Yes. I didn't know Mr. Stans too well. We had a speaking acquaintance. He was always very friendly to me and I had a high regard to him and still do.

BURG: Can you compare him with Staats as far as operating style was concerned?



HOPKINS: He was probably a little bit smoother than Mr. Staats.

BURG: In personal relationships?

HOPKINS: Yes, yes. But a very capable man. His background, of course, was in accounting, and I'm sure he's a good man for the job.

BURG: Yes. Harold Stassen, that perennial candidate. He was there roughly three years, 1955-58, special assistant on disarmament.



HOPKINS: I used to have some contacts with Governor Stassen. In fact, there were certain findings that the President had to make from time to time, under the Foreign Operations Administration, whenever certain materials were going to be released to foreign governments. Governor Stassen developed the practice of bringing the papers for signature by my desk and leaving them with me and giving me any instructions that were necessary. I would pass them on in--or take them on in many times, personally,--to the President, and then when they were ready, see that they were hand delivered to Governor Stassen. But on many occasions, he'd bring them over personally.

BURG: Was his office in EOB?

HOPKINS: It's my recollection that for a while he had an office both places, in EOB and up at the Miatico Building on the corner of H Street and West Executive Avenue.



BURG: What was the name of the building again?

HOPKINS: Miatico, I think it is.

BURG: Do you remember how that was spelled?

HOPKINS: M-i-a-t-i-c-o. I think it's on the building.

BURG: Still there?

HOPKINS: I think so--yes, the building's still there. It's a relatively new building.

BURG: Were some of the executive branch people housed there during this period of time?

HOPKINS: Just this office, as I recall, at that time. This was, of course, before the days of the new Executive Office Building.

BURG: Yes. So he had offices both in EOB and in this building.

HOPKINS: That's my recollection. Foreign Operations Administration, I believe they called it in those days.

BURG: Do you have any strong impressions of him and his personality and business style?

HOPKINS: I didn't have enough dealings with him to really form any impressions. Of course, there was a great deal of internal criticism of him, I would say, when he made that effort to dump Vice President Nixon. But that sort of faded away and--



BURG: That's the sort of thing that cropped up in the White House among the staff people; a certain amount of resentment about that. Do you happen to remember at this late date the names of any people who seemed particularly upset about Stassen?

HOPKINS: No, I can't say that I do. Anything I heard was probably scuttlebutt and not so much direct comment.

BURG: This was at the White House mess?

HOPKINS: Yes, yes.

BURG: It must have been spoken of rather openly.

HOPKINS: Oh, I'm sure it was discussed a great deal, yes.

BURG: Without regard for whether any of Governor Stassen's friends might be in the room at the time? [Laughter]

HOPKINS: But, as I say, what few dealings I had with him, I was--I had no complaints at all.

BURG: Okay. The next man, it seems to me,--I'm sorry, I'm a little ahead of myself--John Steelman would be the next man.





HOPKINS: Well, of course, John Steelman was just a holdover from the Truman days and there was an understanding that he would hold over for a short time to sort of be the bridge between the two administrations. He was there to counsel and advise with Governor Adams; he didn't stay very long. I do know that, one of the things I remember--and this is a little on the frivolous side, I would say--Doctor Steelman, in the Truman administration, had held any number of jobs. And therefore, he had a number of Presidential commissions. And he was desirous of getting a Presidential commission signed by President Eisenhower. And apparently Governor Adams had promised him that he'd get one. So we were given instructions from Governor Adams' office to have a Presidential commission prepared, which we did, and took it in and gave it to Governor Adams. And Governor Adams stuck it in his bottom drawer. And from time to time, I'd get a phone call from Doctor Steelman saying, "Have you got that Presidential commission yet?" "No, not yet." And that went on for some time; a matter of two or three weeks, as I recall. Anyway, subsequently, Governor Adams relented, took it in and got it signed, and Doctor Steelman got





his commission. But I know there was a gap of several weeks there before it happened.

BURG: Dr. Steelman didn't really have much time. My notes here indicate that he resigned March the 5th, 1953. So if that commission were going to be given to him, there wasn't a great deal of time after the inauguration in which he could have gotten it.

HOPKINS: No, no. And as I say, the feeling was that some senior staff member, as a holdover, would be helpful. Of course, the same thing existed, to a certain degree, when Colonel Goodpaster stayed on a little while at the end of the Eisenhower administration when President Nixon came in. In my own view--

BURG: President Kennedy.

HOPKINS: Or, President Kennedy, that's right. In my own view, that arrangement, in both instances, does more harm than good.

BURG: Oh, really? Why do you think that?



HOPKINS: Well, it was my feeling that a staff officer, a senior staff officer, doesn't have the whole picture, maybe not as well as somebody in my position did. And as a result, they get some advice and opinions and expressions of what happened that are either a little biased or not weighted just right. That may be a biased view, but that was my feeling.

BURG: So that a Steelman attempting to advise Eisenhower people, even though he may have held several jobs--

HOPKINS: As to how the office operated, that's what I'm talking about; not policy but office operation.



BURG: Which is one of the key things, if not the key thing, that the new administration has got to know. Exactly how does the White House function in terms of its permanent staff. And you think that it didn't work too well as Goodpaster tried to smooth the transition with the Kennedy team?

HOPKINS: Well, I didn't have as distinct a feeling in the Goodpaster area, because I think his area of expertise that he passed on, at least, to the--

[Interruption]

BURG: We've just been interrupted by a telephone call. Mr. Hopkins finished his remark about General Goodpaster, saying he was not quite so concerned about the transition, and General Goodpaster's work in transition, because that was limited primarily to foreign affairs, rather than to the inner workings of the White House office, per sé. We are interested in that because we intend to do something in the way of a conference, before too long, on presidential transition at the Eisenhower Library. So, having your comments about Dr. Steelman and General Goodpaster, is very useful to us. Were you asked, either when the Eisenhower people came in or when they were on their way out--was your opinion sought on transition?



HOPKINS: Well, I wouldn't necessarily say it was sought. They came to us with many questions and many--of course, when you speak of transition, are you speaking of the White House office, or are you speaking of the government as a whole? The White House office--when they first come in, they're interested in space, they're interested in money; that's the two things before



they get there. How do we get the people on the rolls? If we have a piece of paper, if the President wants to issue an executive order, how does he do it? How do you handle pieces of legislation? What do you do with it once he signs it? That--paper--flow. But before they get there, space and money and how do we get on the payroll?

BURG: A fairly simple, straightforward kind of thing.

HOPKINS: Yes. Now each administration feels, I'm sure, that the outgoing administration feels, well, here's the new President coming in; he's naming his staff. It won't be long till I'll be hearing from him, and he'll want to come in and see me and see how to run the government; know how I operate and get my advice. Sometimes that happened; more and more often, it doesn't. And I think that the incoming administration is full of pep, vim, and vitality; they've just won an election; they feel they know more about it than the people that are going out, and they're not as anxious to talk as the outgoing people think they are. That, I think, may be more true in the White House office than in some of the departments and agencies! Of course, the top level, the outgoing President and the incoming President usually get





together, and two or three top staff. But to say all down the line, in all levels of the Presidential appointees on the White House Staff, who sit there and expect their counterpart to come in and ask their advice--it doesn't always happen.

BURG: Can you think of any examples, again either from Truman to Eisenhower or Eisenhower to Kennedy, where these people immediately below the President, the top staffers, did get together to assure a smooth transition? We know that Steelman stayed on to assist; we know that Goodpaster stayed on, momentarily, to assist--any other cases come to mind?

HOPKINS: Well, in the Eisenhower days, of course, Mr. Steffan, whose name we'll reach on this list very shortly--

BURG: Yes, Roger Steffan.

HOPKINS: --was designated--by Governor Adams, I assume-- before the inauguration, to be sort of the contact man and he was the contact with Dr. Steelman before the inauguration. And he was around the White House numerous times, I would say,



before inauguration--maybe in the, oh, three or four, six weeks prior to the inauguration--making contacts, sort of getting the feel of the place. He was supposed to be the office manager. We never really had an office manager, as such, up till that time. There was a little incident out in the lobby one day. Mr. Steffan was out there, near the receptionist's desk, and President Truman wandered by, and he'd been hearing some stories--and I didn't personally hear this, but I was told this was what transpired--he said something to Roger Steffan to the effect that, "I hear you're pushing my people around. I don't like it." And walked off. So that's the type of thing you've got to watch for.

BURG: In your observation, had you seen Mr. Steffan pushing anyone around?

HOPKINS: No, I can't say that I had, but--

BURG: Had others talked about it?

HOPKINS: --I'm sure that some of them felt that; that he was probably asking questions, and maybe issuing what some people



construed as instructions, I don't know. But there again, in my position during that period between the election and the inauguration, we had to tread on ground pretty carefully. In other words, regardless of how Mr. Steffan might have approached us, we had to be careful because we were going to be working for him in another two or three months, possibly. And also, we couldn't give the outgoing group the feeling that, "Here, we're working for Mr. Steffan right now rather than you," because we were still working for them for two or three months, and we had to look down the road a little ways. They might be back in here in four years or eight years, and that happened many times. And the fact that we were able to make both the incoming and the outgoing group feel that we were doing the best we could for both of them, saved us in subsequent years. If we had turned our backs on an outgoing group because they'd been defeated, or were leaving, and said, "All right now, we're going to devote all our time to the incoming group, even though Inauguration Day is not here," those people would remember it.

BURG: Did you take any special measures with the permanent





White House staff to remind them that this--

HOPKINS: Oh, I counseled them, very definitely, yes.

BURG: Did you do this in some kind of group meeting, or did you go desk to desk and--

HOPKINS: No, desk to desk; the supervisors of the various areas, yes.

BURG: --and asked them to pass that word down. Of course, they'd be aware of it, too, I'm sure.

HOPKINS: Oh, yes, yes.



BURG: So it was just a reminder. I might ask you this; it's a little off our basic theme, but you saw a great number of transitions. You had to tread carefully during quite a number of lame duck periods from November until January. Does any one transition stick out in your mind as being very, very tough for you during one of those lame duck periods?

HOPKINS: Well, I suppose for me, personally, the worst one was



the incoming Eisenhower administration. Now there were several reasons for that. My predecessor had died in 1948, early in the year, so I was named Executive Clerk in 1948, about at the beginning of the Truman election year. President Truman, when he first came in to succeed President Roosevelt, had a study made by George Allen, whom you may know, or know of--he's the man who wrote the book, Presidents Who Have Known Me.

BURG: Yes. Hilarious man!

HOPKINS: Yes. That study recommended that everyone be brought on the White House rolls on the theory that if you were detailed to the White House, your loyalty was divided between the White House and the department which paid you. I never bought that thesis, but, anyway, that was the recommendation and that was followed. So at the end of President Truman's administration practically all the operating staff--that's the messengers, stenographers, the typists, the file clerks--were all on the White House rolls, with the exception of a detail group from the Post Office department in the mail room. Well, that



presented problems we had never had before, because before that, at an end of an administration, those who were on detail if they wished could move right back to the department. And when the new administration would come in, they weren't there. If they wanted them, they could come back, but they still had a job. But if they were on the White House rolls and the new administration didn't want them, the question was--did they have a job? Many of those people had come to the White House, not because they wanted to, but because they were told to. In other words, the White House went to a department and said, "We need a good typist; we need a stenographer." The chief of that office picked out the person he felt was the qualified one to be detailed and they would detail over to the White House office. So that was one problem we faced at the end of the Truman administration. Also, the Democrats had been in power for twenty years. The Republicans are hungry. We didn't know what the situation would be at all. We wondered if any of us would stay. Some time before the inauguration, Governor Adams was down in the office--I don't know who he'd come to see. Charlie Willis was with him. Anyway, before they left they called





me into the cabinet room and asked me a number of questions about the background, and a number of things about the office. One of the things that came out was that I'd started in the White House under the Hoover administration. Now, I always felt that that was about the biggest plus I had; I may be wrong. And the papers always talk about a large contingent of people that are working for the national committees, you know; that they're all looking for White House jobs, and that the future's uncertain. So, before the inauguration, I went to Donald Dawson, who was Mr. Truman's personnel man, and told him about this problem we had, as far as all the people now being on the White House rolls, and that something should be done--if it was conceivable that it could be done--so that these people wouldn't be hurt. They shouldn't be penalized for having worked at the White House. Well, he contacted his counterpart in the incoming administration and they worked out a program where the Truman administration was free to find jobs in the departments and agencies for such of the people on the White House rolls that wanted to go back to the departments and agencies. And that if there were any who wanted to go back when the inauguration



transpired and nothing had been found for them, the Eisenhower administration would continue that effort and find places for them. There were a few exceptions, some exceptions to that. Of course, many of the girls that had worked in the staff secretary--or not the staff secretary, but the senior staff offices--had come in on a political basis. They had been emotionally involved with an administration and they didn't want to stay at the White House. They didn't want to go into government, so they found jobs elsewhere, or left for one reason or another. But the whole program worked out very well. And with very few exceptions, those who wanted to go back to the departments and agencies were permitted to; those who wanted to stay and take their chances, most of them got to stay. There were a few occasions in which, because a particular girl had worked for a particular staff member, they didn't want her in that particular office any more, but, by and large, it worked out very well. And that is the program that has been followed by subsequent administrations.

BURG: That was the toughest of these transitions to carry out, for you.





HOPKINS: I would say, because of the fact that the Democrats had been in power for twenty years; and that was my first one, doing it alone; and for various reasons.

BURG: Eight years later, did the Eisenhower people make the same kinds of arrangements with the Kennedy people, to help the same kinds of people?

HOPKINS: Yes, they did. They did. And there, again, I revert back to what I said earlier about being very careful how you deal with the outgoing administration and the incoming administration, so that outgoing administration does not feel that you're giving them the bum's rush. Because the people that I was dealing with with the incoming Kennedy administration were some of the same people who had been there in the Truman administration.

BURG: I suppose so, yes. So it paid off.

HOPKINS: Very definitely it paid off.

BURG: If you had your way, if you were to make the decision or recommendation, what would you recommend to both outgoing and



incoming administration to assist in the transition, particularly with respect to the problems that you think that these administrations typically ask about? Where do we get the money? How do we get people on the rolls? What would your recommendation be to aid in that part of the transition?

HOPKINS: Well, I think, by and large, it's worked very smooth in the past. I don't know that too much can be improved on in that area. Of course, one of the things I have felt for the past few years, long before I left there, that one of the best things to do would be not to load so many people up in the White House office. I think they have too many.

BURG: Yes, I think you and I have discussed that before. You feel that there's been a great proliferation in the White House office in terms of its staffing.

HOPKINS: I think so.

BURG: It's really your feeling that, even under the circumstances twenty-some years later, the same job could be done with far fewer on board.



HOPKINS: I think so, I think so.

BURG: Life in this quarter century, the twentieth century, has not gotten so complex so that it requires enormous numbers of people in the White House and Executive Office Building.

HOPKINS: I think they do too many things in the White House that should be done someplace else.

BURG: Can you give me an example?

HOPKINS: Well it's a little hard to be specific. In the economic area, for instance, the President now has his economic adviser, and you have a council of economic advisers. Why you need the two, I don't know. The whole purpose of the Council of Economic Advisers when it was created by statute, of course, was to advise the President in that area.

BURG: So it's that kind of doubling up on effort, redundancy--

HOPKINS: Yes, lots of the things that are done in the White House in the so-called counsel's area--I mean the legal counsel's area--years ago used to be done in the Department of Justice. I think if they'd been done in the Department of Justice,





maybe, in the Nixon administration, things would have been better. That title, anyway, was first given, of course, in the Roosevelt days when Judge [Samuel H.] Rosenman came down, and he had been a former Supreme Court judge in the state of New York, and he was basically one of Roosevelt's top speech writers. It wasn't, at least as I conceived it at the time, wasn't a legal job at all; it was a writing job, and coordinating the writing. He was given the title of "Special Counsel" because he'd been a judge, and from there on it's sort of taken off and moved over into the legal area. Now whether that's necessary or not, I don't know, but I have questioned it.

BURG: That's interesting. In fact, you watched that transition occur.

HOPKINS: Yes.

[Interruption]

BURG: All right, we'll move back to Roger Steffan. He was there a pretty brief time.





HOPKINS: Yes, he came in as office manager and, as I say, he was the first so-called office manager, or at least anyone of that title, that we had. There's been a staff member or two that have operated somewhat in that capacity before. He was a New York banker, as I recall, and was a little on the taciturn side. It took you a little while to warm up to him. After I got to know him, I liked him very much. He was fair. He was a little set in his ways, maybe, and in his capacity as office manager, I recall my assistant, Herb Miller, he told Herb Miller, "I want you to keep that cabinet room spic and span. Make sure everything's all right." So Herb Miller kind of watched the cabinet room. Anyway, Mr. Steffan came through one day and told Mr. Miller, "There's a paper clip on the cabinet room table in there." [Laughter] So that--

BURG: So Mr. Miller got to go in there and--

HOPKINS: Take the paper clip off! [Laughter]

BURG: --pick up the paper clip! Mr. Steffan had observed it, could presumably tell him where it was on the table, but he didn't pick it up himself.



HOPKINS: In the early days Mr. Steffan had a staff meeting of the so-called operating groups over in his office--as I recall, it was once a week--and they sort of went over the agenda and saw how things were going, how the mail was being handled, whether we were up to date, and if there were any problems. It served a purpose, getting all of the group together. That's the only time that has taken place while I was there. I used to think we ought to do it under my supervision, but we never really got around to it and more or less dealt with them one on one, and I think that worked just as well.

BURG: During the transitional phase, did you find Mr. Steffan understanding, cooperative? That is, you clearly had some problems that you would have to discuss with him.

HOPKINS: Oh, yes.

BURG: He's your first point of contact.

HOPKINS: We wanted a number of reports on a regular basis that we had never found necessary to make up before. That all took time and effort, and I'm sure that some of us felt that they



served no useful purpose--some of them didn't--but he wanted them so it was our duty to supply them. Also, one thing that I remember about him, if he picked up the phone and says, "I want you to do so and so," and you say, "Yes, sir, I'll do it," it wasn't enough to do it. You had to pick up the phone and tell him it was done.

BURG: Was that consistent with him?

HOPKINS: That was consistent, yes.

BURG: He died in '55, so as long as he was there--he would have had an opportunity, for example, to know you from the transitional phase, past the inauguration, and for the succeeding years until 1955--but he continued to do that, even though he knew you and knew, I presume--

HOPKINS: Yes, that was a part of his method of operation. But he mellowed and I came to have high respect for him. We got along all right. And he was very fair; I think he leaned over backwards to be fair and, of course, in the early days we had some problems. Just as an example, the lady who was the chief telephone operator, Miss Louise Hackmeister--





BURG: Hackmeister?

HOPKINS: Hackmeister, we called her Miss Hack. She had worked for the telephone company, as I recall, and came down to the White House as chief operator with the Roosevelt administration, and had been there through the Roosevelt administration, and had been there through the Roosevelt and Truman era. But she and another lady there, Lela Stiles, were more or less politically oriented. In other words, come a campaign, they would go off the White House rolls and go on the rolls of the national committee and work with the committee, and then, after the election, they would come back on the White House rolls. They did that several times. So they were politically oriented, no doubt about that, and Democratic-oriented. So Mr. Steffan indicated that they had to go, and I can see why, but he gave me the job of telling them. So that was the kind of relationship we had in the very early days of the changeover. And all those things are hard, and all the other pressures; it was a hard job for all.

BURG: Later on, would he have done that himself?





HOPKINS: I don't know. He might have. But, as I say, I had high respect for him, we got along fine. He was very fair, and anything that we ever asked of him, or to do for any of the people, that I felt in my own mind was justified, I think he went along with it.

BURG: I see. Who replaced him on his death? Or did they change the operating procedure?

HOPKINS: They never had one that was quite as full time in that field as he was. Now for a while, just trying to think of the young fellow, let me see, maybe we passed it here. Steve Benedict was in that area for a little while, but he never pursued it to the extent that Mr. Steffan did. In other words, there again, I think that after Mr. Steffan left, and he left after a period--I'm just guessing now--a year and a half or so; in fact, I think he took a job out in Taiwan or someplace, out in the Pacific, and died out there, I believe. Some of those things that Mr. Steffan did evolved on my office. A little later, the special projects fund, which occupied some of his time and was a special fund under which some of the more or less less-permanent groups operated, Fred Morrow took over as administrative



officer there and handled a number of those areas, so it was one of those things that sort of evolved into various phases.

BURG: Right. So after Mr. Steffan left, things were done a little differently.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: All right. John Stephens. I'm not sure that you would have known him at all. He was an assistant or a consultant to Clarence Randall.

HOPKINS: No, I didn't know him.

BURG: He would not have been there very long, I think. [Thomas E.] Tom Stephens, on the other hand, I presume that you had quite a bit to do with.

HOPKINS: Oh, yes. Tom was the Appointments Secretary, again in the office next to the President, and my office was next to that. He was a political animal, I would say. Had been active in the New York area in the Dewey campaigns and--he and Jim Hagerty and that group. A very fine fellow. A practical joker. He was one of those fellows that you could never quite tell



whether he was pulling your leg or not. But a grand fellow. In fact, I saw Tom when I was down in Florida, last March, I guess it was. He's living in Clearwater area now.

BURG: And in good health.

HOPKINS: Good health, yes. Seemed to be. Same old Tom. He had a, practically, a vegetable garden growing out on his balcony. It was good seeing him.

BURG: Can you give me any examples of the Tom Stephens' humor? His gallery, of course, his art gallery, is now on display at the Eisenhower Library.

HOPKINS: Oh, is it out there?

BURG: Yes.

HOPKINS: It was in the corridor, you know, at the White House.

BURG: Right. His paint-by-numbers things that he got--I mean, it's odd to walk along and see a paint-by-numbers picture, done in oils, and signed "Ezra Taft Benson"! [Laughter] And there are many famous names! And, of course, not all of them were





paint-by-numbers; some of them were done--for example, Milton Eisenhower had one in the collection, a piece of serious art; Mrs. [Percival F.] Brundage had a piece; and Tom Stephens himself had one. It seems to me that it was called "A Soldier and His Dog," and it shows a half-opened door, and through it, you can only see the end of the soldier's bayoneted rifle and the tip end of the dog's tail going out the door! [Laughter] But he actually was pulling some of these funny things? For example, I think Robert [K.] Gray, Bob Gray, tells of being approached by Tom Stephens shortly after Gray came on staff, and Stephens escorted him to the President's door, indicating to Gray the President wanted to see him. And he held the door open for Gray, and ushered Gray in, and Gray thought Stephens was stepping in with him to introduce him. But the door closed behind him and he was left standing there in front of the President, and the President looked up and said, "Well, what do you want?" [Laughter] And Gray had nothing to say, and had to cover himself somehow and get back out of there! [Laughter] Now does that ring a bell with you? Is that the kind of thing that Stephens actually did?





HOPKINS: I wouldn't doubt it a bit. I wouldn't doubt it a bit. He used to, when the President would come over in the morning, Tom would go in to see if he wanted anything, and he'd generally look around to see if he had an audience, and before he opened the President's door, he'd cross himself. [Laughter] Then he'd come back out and the question was, "What color of suit does he have on this morning?" If he has a brown suit, he's in a good humor. If it's any other thing, you better be careful.

BURG: Was there any evidence to show that that worked?

HOPKINS: I dont know. [Laughter]

BURG: But Stephens would pass it around.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: He was the one who passed that story around. And the story, like the suit, may have been cut from whole cloth.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: There may have been no truth to that, whatsoever.

HOPKINS: None at all. Another thing that I always figured



that Tom engineered; I'm not sure he did. They used to have staff meetings in the morning, presided over by Governor Adams. And all the staff would be there. And one morning they were introduced to the aide to Chiang Kai-shek, who was visiting in Washington, and they thought it would be nice to have him come in and talk to the people and tell them something about Taiwan, one thing or another. So this guy comes in all dressed up as a Chinese general, and it was General Persons' birthday. They recognized, made reference to the birthday and then introduced the Chinese general and entered into a discussion; there were questions from the audience and Governor Adams asked him some questions, and others, and he was very critical of everything about the United States. Critical of everything we did, about the army, and you could see General Persons, who was on the front row, just getting redder and redder. He was getting madder and madder. Everything the General said was critical. Well, it developed the Chinese general was Al Wong, a Secret Service agent. [Laughter]

BURG: And Stephens had set it up!



HOPKINS: I think Stephens had set it up, yes. [Laughter]

BURG: Did Wong confess this deception before the end of the meeting?

HOPKINS: Yes, yes, yes. And so we all got the benefit to see how General Persons reacted.

BURG: And what did Persons say when he found out?

HOPKINS: He was flabbergasted.

BURG: He could take it.

HOPKINS: Yes, he could take it. [Laughter]

BURG: Any other Stephens' stories come to your mind?

HOPKINS: Nothing at the moment. You know, there were two Tom E. Stephens: the artist--and Tom had this famous painting of President Eisenhower and used to tell his visitors, "I painted it. If you don't believe it, look at my name on it."

BURG: Yes. I know it still causes problems today. And





particularly because of the Stephens art collection he had out there in that corridor. A funny man, a very funny man! Our next person was on the Council of Economic Advisers, and he may not have been a man you ran into. Walter Stewart.

HOPKINS: No. I didn't. I use to see him occasionally, but I didn't know him.

BURG: He was there about a year. Lewis Strauss, Admiral Strauss.

HOPKINS: Well, I had a speaking acquaintance with him. I didn't know him too well, of course. He was an aide to President Hoover when President Hoover was in the Department of Commerce, years before he became President. In fact, I think that was Admiral Strauss' first job. Anyway, he used to come by my desk, occasionally; we'd chat about President Hoover. He knew that I'd come there in the Hoover administration. He was a fine gentleman.

BURG: But your contact with him was fairly limited. [Richard W.] Dick Streiff would have been a rather young officer at that time, associated with Bob Schulz.





HOPKINS: Yes, he was with Bob Schulz. He was a fine young man. Very helpful and congenial, and do anything in the world for anybody if he possibly could. And I always had a high regard for Dick Streiff.

BURG: Okay. [Edward Thomas] Ed Tait had been on the campaign train and then was a special assistant in the White House.

HOPKINS: He was there for not too long.

BURG: About a year.

HOPKINS: I believe he--well, he had [Charles F.] Charlie Willis's job; he succeeded Charlie Willis in that job.

BURG: Yes. That's right he did. He did succeed him.

HOPKINS: And his health broke down. He had to leave after--it was a year, or maybe a little less than that. Around that.

BURG: Was it your impression, Bill, that it might have been the strain of the job?

HOPKINS: Well, I really had no way of knowing. I'm sure that



some people in the office felt that way. He was a very conscientious young man, and it could very well have been. I just don't know.

BURG: Because, sitting in that hot seat could not have been a pleasure for the man who had the job.

HOPKINS: Oh, no, no. That was a tough job, no doubt about that.

BURG: Willis--from what I know of Willis and the one meeting I've had with him--Willis is a very tough kind of man who had come out of a fairly tough war. He had been in that special squadron that attempted to knock out the missile sites in France, the same outfit that Joe Kennedy, Jr., was in. And even though time had passed and the worst of the Republican scramble for preference would have been over, it still would be a tough job on a conscientious man.



HOPKINS: Oh, yes, and that's a tough job, yes. And, as you say, Charlie had--he could probably take more of that than the average person could, and Charlie had a good girl with him. A girl named--oh gosh, her name was on the end of my tongue just a minute ago. Can't think of it now. Anyway, she was top one

of the best we ever had in the White House.

BURG: Well, we'll keep that in mind and try to match that--in fact, you may have mentioned it to me earlier--and we'll try to match that up. That's quite a high recommendation. And you think that her presence, undoubtedly, was of great assistance.

HOPKINS: I'm sure it was and she was the type that could kind of keep Charlie quieted down.

BURG: I see, yes. She took the edge off some of his enthusiasm.

HOPKINS: Yes. [Laughter]

BURG: All right. [LTC. William W.] Bill Thomas was pilot of the Presidential plane over quite some period of time, but would you have seen much of him?

HOPKINS: Not a great lot, no. No, I saw him in and out of the office, but not too much.

BURG: Walter Tkach you've already told me something about him.

HOPKINS: Walter Tkach is one of the finest fellows that have ever been around the White House in my opinion.





BURG: And he was with Mr. Nixon, too, I believe.

HOPKINS: He was President Nixon's doctor, yes.

BURG: He was then the Howard Snyder of--

HOPKINS: Yes, he was the Howard Snyder of the Nixon administration, yes. And--

BURG: A man who impressed you a great deal; you have quite a bit of affection for him. [Albert P.] Al Toner, we've talked about a little bit.

HOPKINS: Yes. He came back, you know, for a while in the Nixon administration, early in the Nixon administration, doing the same type of thing he did in the Eisenhower administration. That didn't last too long. I think the feeling was that, probably the way President Nixon and his staff operated, the type of thing that Al was producing didn't serve the same purpose it did under President Eisenhower's staff so, as I say, it didn't last too long.

BURG: I see. Was Ralph Tudor there?





HOPKINS: Ralph Tudor?

BURG: Yes. He was undersecretary of the Interior--did he hold any White House--

HOPKINS: Not that I know of.

BURG: He may be on this list erroneously. But Tracy Voorhees, does that name ring a bell?

HOPKINS: Yes, yes, he was there a time or two, and I believe maybe he might have been back there once after the Eisenhower administration. He was on special projects of various kinds.

BURG: Right, I notice that. Among other things, the chairman of the President's Committee for Hungarian Refugee Relief.

HOPKINS: Yes, that was usually the type of thing he was in.



BURG: Right. All right. Henry Wallich.

HOPKINS: He was a member of the Council of Economic Advisers, as I remember.

BURG: Right, about one year.

HOPKINS: I didn't know him at all, I would say. I used to see him in the White House mess, but other than that--

BURG: In the last year W. Allen Wallis was on as a special assistant to the President. He had been doing work along the lines of economic advice, I think.

HOPKINS: I didn't know him too well. But, he had an office over in the Executive Office Building. I believe he's the president of the college up in Rochester, or some place, now.

BURG: I see. How about Wayne [B.] Warrington?

HOPKINS: Well, he was the one, you know, we were talking about earlier. We learned he'd--he--

BURG: Learned he'd disappeared.

HOPKINS: He worked for Governor [Howard] Pyle and was a very personable young fellow. I always thought very well of him.

BURG: And you remarked that you had--

HOPKINS: Very articulate.



BURG: --you had seen him just a matter of a few months ago here in Washington, DC, or--

HOPKINS: Quite some time ago--probably more than two years-- When I was out to lunch I had a chance meeting with Mr. Warrington on Pennsylvania Avenue near the Roger Smith Hotel. I had not seen him since his White House office days. We had a nice chat recalling old times. I was glad to have seen him. A few weeks later I was shocked to read in the newspaper that "Wayne Warrington" had "disappeared" the significance of that I did not know and do not know to this day.

BURG: All right. Gerald [H.] Weyrauch. I'm not sure about the pronunciation of that.

HOPKINS: Well, he was in the naval aide's office and my main contact with him, he was involved somewhat in the White House mess and we used to deal with him. I was on a little auditing board. We audited the mess funds and I dealt with him in that capacity.

BURG: No strong memories of him, aside from that.

HOPKINS: No. He was a nice, young fellow.

BURG: Anne [Williams] Wheaton.



HOPKINS: Well, she was Jim Hagerty's assistant. She had many years of background with the national committee. I believe she was the first woman senior staff person in the press office. And I thought was very, very capable. I think maybe sometimes it's a little--at least in those days--it's a little hard for a woman to take a man's place in the White House briefings, and that sort of thing, but I think she did an outstanding job and I always had a high regard for her.

BURG: People seem to respect her?

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: And did the men doing similar work seem to have a high regard to her competency?

HOPKINS: I would say so.

BURG: Interesting to have a woman doing that kind of work and achieving, I trust, respect from her professional colleagues.

HOPKINS: I think so. More in those days, possibly--

BURG: Yes, exactly.

HOPKINS: --than today.





BURG: That's what I was thinking of. That's a long way before Barbara Walters and Cassie Mackin and others. All right. I think Morris Washburn is our next person.

HOPKINS: Morris Washburn?

BURG: Yes. What I have here is a rather transitory, very contact with the White House--"chairman, Treasury Department Continuing Committee to verify transfer of fiscal assets." The period mentioned is 1953 to '64, but it doesn't sound as though that's somebody that you saw around the White House. All right, Samuel--

HOPKINS: Speaking of Washburns--

BURG: Are you thinking about Abbott?

HOPKINS: Abbott, yes. Is he in here?

BURG: No, I don't see him.

HOPKINS: I don't see him in here, no.

BURG: I don't either. But he was there in the White House?  
Abbott Washburn?



HOPKINS: For a while, yes. Not too long, but he was there. I didn't know him too well. I think his office was over in the Executive Office Building, too, as I recall, and I'm sure that Jim Lambie and Art Minnich and that group knew him pretty well.

BURG: Okay. So, Samuel Waugh--doesn't look as though there'd be much contact, real contact, there, either. I don't know that he would be considered White House staff.

HOPKINS: Samuel Waugh.

BURG: Samuel Waugh, yes. I show him as assistant--

HOPKINS: That name sounds familiar, but I can't place him.

BURG: Assistant Secretary of State, Deputy Under Secretary of State, later on president, chairman of the board Export-Import Bank.

HOPKINS: I don't see why he'd be under White House--

BURG: Nor do I, unless he had some kind of economic consulting duty. Clyde [A.] Wheeler, however, was there for a couple of



years. For, perhaps, about three years.

HOPKINS: Yes, he was up and worked in the area with [Edward A.] Ed McCabe and some of those. He, I believe, ran for Congress after he left the White House. He was--

BURG: From Oklahoma.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: Have any strong impressions of--

HOPKINS: I didn't know him too well, but I'd say he was a young man moving up in those days, and--

BURG: Now, it seems to me, vice president, if I'm not mistaken, of Sun Oil. One of their vice presidents, and located here in Washington, DC. Ann Whitman, of course. Secretary to the President, 1953 to '60.

HOPKINS: Well, I certainly knew Ann Whitman. And, as I've said many times before, she could turn out more work than any two people I ever saw in my life. And she was a hard worker, and efficient, and I'm sure she served President Eisenhower very



well. She was a little abrasive at times, maybe. Taskmaster. But she could do so much work herself, she expected other people to do a little, too.

BURG: So she was a woman who set pretty high standards--

HOPKINS: Oh, yes.

BURG: --in performance of her duty. Did her abrasiveness ever cause problems for you, personally? Was it ever directed at you, particularly?

HOPKINS: I wouldn't say so. I never took it that way; maybe she meant it that way, but [Laughter] I don't know. I did get off to a bad start with her, I might say. It wasn't her fault; it wasn't my fault. Right after the inauguration, Governor Adams had a staff meeting. Whether it was the first day after or second day after--anyway, he sort of got everybody acquainted and gave them a little lecture about being decisive and doing a good job, and sort of went around the room seeing who was doing what. And he asked me how material had gotten into the President for signature. And I told him that with the





Truman administration, the practice had been that I had taken in a great deal of the official documents, myself, and certain types of mail, Presidential letters for signature. Certain types, not too many, had moved through the private secretary's office, but that, in the Truman administration, many of the staff people, rather than interrupting the President to get something signed, would bring it to me and I would take it in, maybe twice a day. He says, "All right, for the time being we'll continue it that way." Well, Mrs. Whitman had expected all this, or a great deal of this stuff, to move through her, and even long before that meeting was over, I saw that things weren't going so good. [Laughter]

BURG: Showed in her face?

HOPKINS: Yes. So I made it a point to go around and have a little talk with her as soon as I could. And told her that I was there to serve them and any way she wanted it done was all right with me. Well, she sort of pushed it off, you know, "Well, Governor Adams said it's that way, let it be that way, as far as I'm concerned. I don't care!" Well, anyway, I made a point



of sending her practically all of the correspondence, letters, even some of the official stuff that came through. And I would take in proclamations, executive orders, commissions, and that sort of thing. So it was one of those things that evolved itself; it worked out very smoothly after a while, but it just took a little time.

BURG: She seemed content with that arrangement?

HOPKINS: Yes, as far as I know, yes. And there were some times when, for some reason or other, I couldn't get in to see the president and I had something that just had to be signed. I would go to either Tom Stephens or Mrs. Whitman, say, "Can you slip this in as soon as the next appointment comes out and get it signed, because we've got to have it in the next ten minutes," or something. And they'd be glad to do it.

BURG: I see. So your working relationship with her over that eight year stretch of time was, by and large, a good one.

HOPKINS: Yes. It was--

BURG: Cooperative?



HOPKINS: Yes. And, of course, she would send quite a bit of material over to our correspondence section to be typed up. Sometimes it would be stuff that she had drafted on the typewriter, sometimes it was letters that needed to be rewritten--she had changed or the President had changed--and that sort of thing, you know; and we sort of served as a go-between between her office and the correspondence section. Made sure that they gave her material priority, because if hers got delayed it was the President asking her where it was, it wasn't a staff member, and as a result, she had to have top priority with everything that came from her office. So we did everything we could to see that she got it, knowing that the President had a reputation as being a little short-fused, sometimes, you know; and you could tell in Mrs. Whitman's reaction, sometimes, that she had been catching it, so she would pass a little of it on. And we realized that she had a problem, and rightly so, and it was our job to make sure that it was kept to a minimum at least, any delays, as far as she was concerned.



BURG: Yes, the longer she had to stand under that hot shower, the longer you had to stand under it. I understand. Ralph



Williams was assistant naval aide to the President, late in the administration, '58.

HOPKINS: Yes. He was basically, I think, a writer, too.

BURG: Oh, I see.

HOPKINS: Yes, if I remember right.

BURG: We've talked about Charles Willis to some extent. He handled patronage in the White House in the initial years of the administration, working under Sherm Adams. Is there anything you want to say about--

HOPKINS: Well, as I say, Charlie, he and I got along fine. He was an idea man. I remember one idea he had was that they were going to get rid of all of our colored White House messengers. They were going to adopt a system like they have up at the Capitol of page boys. Have young people in, constituents of Congressmen and others, and they would be our messengers. We'd be responsible for housing them, feeding them, their education, one thing another. And I told Charlie, "This just won't work! The responsibility these messengers have of getting stuff all over





town; we just rely on them to the nth degree. You just can't do it." Well, he was insistent. Well, we just outwaited him, that was all, and it never developed. [Laughter]

BURG: Did he take that to Sherm Adams?

HOPKINS: I don't know whether he did or not; I assumed he did. But, anyway, it didn't transpire.

BURG: Nothing ever happened.

HOPKINS: Just a matter of, basically, outwaiting Charlie. But, as I say, he was full of ideas. But I still think that was a bad idea.

BURG: One of the obvious weaknesses is that your pages would be coming in, and evidently would be rotating in that job, whereas your messengers were permanent people who knew the city.

HOPKINS: Knew the city, could get around, and you'd be amazed at the responsibilities of these so-called messengers--responsibilities those fellows had. One time, just as an example, and this was in a subsequent administration, they developed the practice of--when the President was going to send a message to Congress



or anything--they would send advance copies of it. And advance copies in volume. So that if the President was going to have a message on the floor of the Congress at noon--

[Interruption]

BURG: Okay. You were saying that if the President had to have a message on the floor of Congress at noon--

HOPKINS: --the effort was to have copies on the desks of the members--at least the friendly members--when they came to the office in the morning. And I reiterate that this incident I'm talking about now took place in a subsequent administration. The messengers also provided our duplicating service. So they might get a message to Congress, as an example, at nine o'clock at night. They would duplicate that in the thousands and carry up to the Hill enough for every member of Congress and certain others--maybe as many as five or six hundred copies. They would do that, maybe two, three o'clock in the morning. Get it up to the post office, the House post office and Senate post office, so that they could be distributed on the first delivery, which is a delivery that takes place before the members get to their



offices. These were messengers that had worked all day and were paid on the basis of a forty-hour week, overtime not to exceed eight hours, but much of it a contribution, because they were loyal to their job, worked hard. Well, on one instance, for some reason or other, the messengers couldn't take this package up. So we turned to the garage, and one of the drivers from the garage took it up. He delivered at the wrong place, put it in the wrong pile or something, because he was new on the job. It all came back in the mail two days later. Had never been delivered to the Congress. So that's the type of thing that these messengers were responsible for. They delivered, oh, as high as four or five hundred individual pieces around town a day, many of them highly classified, had to take receipts for them, and all that sort of thing. In other words, it was a job that you couldn't give to young people who were going to be there for a course of six, eight, or ten months. It was people you had to rely on, very definitely, and, as I say, the messengers performed one of the most important jobs in the White House office, and still do.

BURG: And you beat Charlie Willis on this by splendid inaction.





HOPKINS: Yes. [Laughter]

BURG: And nothing happened. Do you have any other examples of Mr. Willis and his ideas?

HOPKINS: No, I can't say that I do, offhand.

BURG: Okay.

HOPKINS: You've probably heard of the incident that Charlie was out taking his flying lessons, to keep up his license or something? And Governor Adams wanted him for some reason and says, "Where's Charlie?" Or, "I want Charlie." Some little thing that didn't amount to a hill of beans, but the girl--I think it was Ilene Slater, I'm not sure; it was the Governor's principal secretary--didn't ask the Governor why he wanted Charlie. She just says, "I'll get him." So they phone; got Charlie down out of the air, he come rushing into the office, and it didn't amount to a hill of beans. [Laughter]

BURG: And the Governor says, "Where's my pencil sharpener!" [Laughter] Which I presume Charlie took with complete, quiet





efficiency, whatever it would be. Oh, that's funny! Well, we have one last name on my list. This man, Philip Young, advised on personnel management for a period of time. He had been chairman of the Civil Service Commission.

HOPKINS: Well, he had two hats. He was still chairman of the Civil Service Commission and had his White House office over in the Executive office building.

BURG: Oh, was running both?

HOPKINS: Running both.

BURG: I see.

HOPKINS: I didn't know him too well. He came to all the morning staff meetings and used the White House lunch. Very personable, likeable fellow. He was the son, you know, of the Young who had been president of one of the big steel companies.

BURG: Oh, yes, I see. I didn't know that.

HOPKINS: But he was very knowledgeable, and certainly had an "in" in the White House office, no doubt about that. And the two hats.



That was a sort of a carryover from the office that had been first created under President Roosevelt, when Mr. William McReynolds was the first man in the personnel area in the White House. He had been, I believe, an assistant secretary of the Treasury at one time; if not an assistant secretary, one of the highest jobs in the Treasury Department before he came to the White House.

BURG: Now, let me ask you this. Are there further comments about the President, his operating style, your contacts with him, that you would like to put on this record?

HOPKINS: No, I don't know that there are.

BURG: You've mentioned his short fuse, which we know that he had. In previous interviews we may have discussed this a little bit. It seems to me that by and large it was never directed at you, personally.

HOPKINS: No, I don't think so. I never felt that it was. I, maybe, got some little indirectly a time or two, but I do know, early in the administration, General Carroll came to me and says, "The President wants to know just what you do."



Well, that's not a very simple question, or it wasn't to me. A few things like that that were a little disturbing at the time, you know, but it worked out all right. I think I have mentioned earlier that my wife worked for General Eisenhower when he was Major Eisenhower--back when the Major worked for General MacArthur when General MacArthur was Chief of Staff.

BURG: Here in Washington, DC, in the War Department at that time.

HOPKINS: My wife was secretary to the executive for reserve affairs, and at that time Major Eisenhower did not have a secretary assigned to him, so she filled in and served as his--did some of his secretarial work in addition to her own boss's. So the first time I ever met Major Eisenhower was, she took something out to him when he was in Walter Reed having trouble, I believe, with his football knee.

BURG: This would be about 1935 or '34, somewhere in that range.





HOPKINS: Well, it was about '3---, either late in '33 or early in '34, because she was still working for him when we were married and he came to our wedding. But, of course, he didn't know me very well, but--

BURG: Now when the question was asked as to what you did, you made your reply to General Carroll?

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: And he took your response back to the President. Had you met the General, the President, at that time? Or did you--

HOPKINS: Oh, yes. This was after--this was some days after the inauguration, because we'd all been called into the President's office, as I recall, it was the evening of Inauguration Day, or late in the afternoon. It might have been the following day. And a number of the staff were sworn in there--Frank Sanderson, who was then the administrative officer, administered the oath, and I held the Bible as the various staff members took their oath.





BURG: I see.

HOPKINS: And the President gave them a little pep talk and, as I recall, one of the things he stressed was taking care of their physical being. In other words, getting out and getting some exercise once a week, and that sort of thing, carrying back to the days when the military used to get their afternoon off for exercise, you know.

BURG: It's the same advice that Marshall had given to him, while Eisenhower was in North Africa.

HOPKINS: Probably.

BURG: Was there an occasion when you could speak to the President about the fact that you knew him from back in the 1930s, and to remind him of--

HOPKINS: Well, I don't know as I ever did. He used to ask me, occasionally, about my wife. I think he--

BURG: So he knew?

HOPKINS: Oh, yes.



BURG: He remembered.

HOPKINS: Yes. In fact--oh, he remembered her very well, of course. He, before he went to Europe, when he was chief of the planning section, my wife went down to say hello to him.

BURG: In 1942. Was she still in the War Department at that time?

HOPKINS: No, she left the government before our oldest child was born, early 1938.

BURG: I see.

HOPKINS: And my younger brother went down with her--he was in the service at that time--and the General gave him some good advice and that was that. Then, when he came back from Europe, she came down to the office; he came in to see President Truman you know, the first time back after the war. And she stood in the lobby and he greeted her like a long-lost friend. So he recognized her.



BURG: That's a remarkable memory. I've heard others say this sort of thing. So he remembered her, then, approximately ten, it wouldn't be quite ten years would it? When he's President, he--

HOPKINS: Well, it be close to ten years, yes, because he left the State, War, and Navy Building, you know, back in what, '35? Along in there?

BURG: To go to the Philippines.

HOPKINS: Yes, yes, yes.

BURG: And was back there in '41, '42, basically. And then again around 1946, '47. And remembered her, and as President of the United States could ask you how she was doing.

HOPKINS: Yes.

BURG: That's one of the nice things about that man, I think.

HOPKINS: Oh, yes. Yes. He was a very fine fellow.

BURG: In closing this off, I'd like to put on the record our very deep thanks to you for doing this series of interviews. There have been four or five of them, if not six of them. Each one of them has meant that you've had to come from your home into downtown Washington, DC, to meet with me on my ground, and they've been long sessions and taxing sessions, and you've done



each one of them graciously. And whoever uses them ought to know that that's been the kind of help you've given us. We appreciate it very, very much.

HOPKINS: Well, thank you very much. I've been glad to do it; I've enjoyed it.

BURG: Well, thanks so much, Mr. Hopkins.

