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Fragile Coalition Interviews - William S. Cohen, June 17, 1975

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Congressman William Cohen (WSC) of Maine
June 17, 1975

DFS - This is the first interview with Congressman William Cohen of Maine on Tuesday, June 17. Present were Messrs. Lynch, Mooney, Shea, and Congressman Cohen. We begin at ten minutes after 4 o'clock.

WSC - I had just written an article for the Boston Globe dealing with the Bicentennial theme of "Allegiance to Whom?", which I thought might be of some interest to you in terms of trying to write something in 6 or 700 words which point up some of the lessons and some of the morals of the experience of impeachment.

I gave a speech at the National Jaycee's last February or March, which was inserted in the Record and I'll get that for you.

Let's go back to the Saturday Night Massacre in terms of what the impact was and my relationship with Elliot Richardson which was key to me and my relationship after he left office. We lived close together and we gave him rides in periodically and talked to him. He had an important role and acted upon me just from our discussions. After the Judiciary Committee had passed a bill to create an independent special prosecutor and I wrote an article for the Washington Post about two days before it came out on the floor, and following the publication of the article, they also wrote an editorial endorsing the article that I wrote, on why they shouldn't set up legislation to create a new special prosecutor. Much of that came about as a result of a conversation that I had with Elliot, just in terms of what the impact--what that would have on Jaworski and the proceedings at that stage. That would probably be a starting point for me, that article, because when the article came out, the issue took the bill off the floor. Jaworski stayed on, I can get you a copy of that. Broderick came up to me in the corridor and kind of facetiously said: "I just want to shake the hand of the man who singlehandedly reversed the editorial policy of the Washington Post" because up to that point, they had endorsed the concept of a new independent special prosecutor beyond the ability of the President to hire and fire from that position.

DFS - Going back perhaps even three months before that when Drinan introduced his resolution on the 31st of July....

WSC - That was typical of him.

DFS - Frankly what was your reaction?

WSC - I had no reaction, I thought it was not an untypical of him to do. He has always been kind of outfront on a number of issues, perhaps in some cases proven to be right by subsequent events and this has proven one of them. But then I had not given any consideration

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WSC - and it had no credibility at that point in my thinking... I know that he's a long time critic of the war, secret bombing of Cambodia, impoundment policies. I didn't really give it too much consideration, and I don't think it had any credibility at all, even within his own party or leadership until the massacre.

That little brief article on the special prosecutor describes an incident which had a great impact upon me - the evening of the disclosure of the 18 1/2 minute gap. We were sitting down and having dinner and Walter Cronkite was on in the other room. I turned to my oldest boy and for some reason, I don't know why, but I've never discussed Watergate with him, he is very bright and intelligent and he is in the Little League and reading spy novels and things.

DFS - Is he the one who broke his arm?

WSC - Yes, and asked him what he thought, and he said I think he is lying and didn't hesitate a minute and I looked across at my youngest son, who is very impressed with the White House and who has been to the White House and who did stand in tremendous awe. I was preparing a lecture to Keven about the need to presume innocence and must wait until all the facts are in and must not prejudge and before I could get all of that out, I was just putting my thoughts together and a little bit irritated at myself in not responding quicker than that, but I was shocked with what he said, he then broke in and said: "Dad, I wish we were living back in the days of Washington" which I thought was a terribly sophisticated statement for a ten-year old to make, and I couldn't respond to it, I couldn't say anything, I was afraid that if I should say that things weren't all that great back then, that I might lose him forever, that I would confirm the cynicism that was building up silently in a ten-year old boy and so that evening the meal ended in silence. I've since that time tried to go back and try to reconstruct and reflect exactly why I was unable to respond at that time or didn't want to respond, I guess, and what the implications were at that statement of going back into yesteryear, in looking at cherry trees and axes and honesty and so forth. The fact is that what was so important about that event to me was that throughout all this process when I had thousands and thousands of letters coming in: you're a traitor, a Judas Iscariot, and a number of other things that should not go in print, that voice is still there, the fact that the ten-year old boy had lost faith with the President and with the system. I don't know if we will ever recover him or there, but this was a concern to me, but nonetheless what he did was to remind me of the ideals that he saw in yesteryear. He had to go back that far to find some one who stood for honesty and in fact I think it only gave me a great deal of support during a lot of the deliberations when there were temptations to buckle in and be one of the boys and conform my conduct to those of my colleagues on the Committee on the Republican side.

DFS - I think you were widely commented upon as the first Republican who leaned towards impeachment. Frankly, do you think it was justified and if so, how did you get into that particular image?

WSC - Well, Because initially the reaction on the part of the Republicans was that this was an ideological war and it was them against us; there was no basis and fact for the impeachment investigation, that this was being used by the Democrats solely to embarrass the Republican President that they couldn't defeat, and to take away that which the electorate had given him. And I didn't see it as that, I guess it's is bec because I don't have much of a political background, I don't like partisan politics. I have never been part of partisan politics, even when serving the city council, as a mayor, a non-political thing. And there didn't seem to be enough concentration of what's right and what is really the truth. That they really didn't want to get the truth and the hesitancy to adopt these procedures, but it was always kind of a tension on our part that they are out to get us and I did not feel that they were out to get us though there were some hard-core partisans, I don't think there is any question about it, but I found myself in a position as King. Should that prevent me from trying to see what I think is right? And I must admit that the firing of Richardson had a great impact upon me, because I don't think he would have resigned if he felt that Cox had engaged in gross improprieties which would warrant his dismissal. Other aspects, I guess, from my own training in the law influenced me. I did a lot of prosecution, i knew how the defense worked, and a lot of examination and I just felt that during the course of the process that if we were really after the truth that it would come out and I would have no hesitancy to adopt procedures calculated to bring it out. I made that clear, I guess, initially when I supported Jenner. Railsback and I were I think his only defenders almost from the start. He got off to a very bad start initially and almost before we got back from Christmas vacation he was in trouble with the Committee and I think that Railsback and myself were the only two who would consistently stand up and say that you know that these things have got to stay in and that what he id doing is right. I think the other thing was the early vote on the sending the subpoenas to the President when he didn't comply. The vote would have been a 19 - 19 split, and that was when where I felt that I didn't really have much choice but to vote for it because I felt that many if not most agreed that in fact the President had not fully complied. Again they saw it as a political ploy and a setting up of the President for future count or allegation of an impeachable offense and implied that no Republican should support that. There was a long conference that afternoon, I can't recall the date, was it April, or March and I think most agreed that he had not complied. That we at least ought to give him the opportunity to see where it goes from here. I made a suggestion that what if I sent my own letter to the President setting forth fully why I don't think it's compliance. And they said no. Then I came back to my office and wrote that letter any-

way and submitted it that night which went down to glorious defeat, I think 27 to 11. And then I came to the ultimate choice of whether or not I felt that there had been compliance and clearly it was no. I was disappointed with my colleagues, frankly, when the vote came down - they saw fit to say no as far as sending the letter and I didn't like being put in the position of being the only one, but given the alternative of saying yes, he had complied in essence, I really didn't have that much choice.

DFS - Another man has made the remark that Gerald Ford at his hearings for Vice President, had brought his life to the Committee, whereas Nixon had sent his lawyers. Do you think that's a justifiable dichotomy?

WSC - Well, I wasn't all that pleased with the Ford hearings, quite frankly. I think, again going back, you want to know why I was always pegged as an odd one, go back to the Ford confirmation hearings. I really don't think the Republicans were interested in going into facts dealing with the qualifications, cause he was one of ours, they had known him, they were friendly to him and they had known him to be a good man and that was it. But, if you go back and look through the records of the Ford confirmation, I think, that you would be surprised at some of the questions being asked by our side and even on the other side. In fact, I was criticised by some of my colleagues for the types of questions that I asked, and I can recall of being rather tough on Gerald Ford in some of the questions especially under the notion of taping. We had a rather sharp exchange at one point. I can dig that out, I saved that portion of the Ford confirmation where I was troubled about the judge. I guess that was really the first real point of discontent on my part with my colleagues that I felt that rather offended and outraged by the notion of setting up a meeting between a presiding judge on the case and a secret meeting and discussing it or even not in discussing it, but just making a proposition offer of the directorship of the FBI. I felt that was one of the most serious allegations, frankly, that had come out during this entire time and I wanted to know what Gerald Ford's attitude about that was, and he initially passed it off lightly and said well I don't think it was actually an offer to promotion, I think it was a demotion and I recall not being too satisfied with that. We had a restriction the first day, it was five minutes, I recall, and I didn't really have time to go into it with him, but when I came back the second day, when we had ten minutes and I went back to that point, he said he was just trying to inject some levity and I appreciated it. But really wanted to come back to what he felt of the ethics in that situation, and again he said he was concerned about it, but he didn't feel that it amounted to that much as I recall. I guess I used that opportunity to make a little speech about what I thought about it and it caused a little strong

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language between us but I know that Hutchinson was not too pleased with my remarks, I got some static on the floor for it. 1-2 H
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- TM - To you, was it similar to a juror acknowledging that a position from the federal government had been offered to him?
- WSC - Yeah, I felt that an individual approached in this way was wholly indefensible. Remember, I carried on like Faust, I can remember, I said Mr. Ford, I have a question following up what Seiberling said when the Ellsberg case was dismissed. You expressed some regret that the prosecution went awry because it obscured the fact that Ellsberg stole government documents and had them published. I ask you about Mr. Erlichman visiting Judge Burn twice, arranging meetings to discuss the possible appointment to the FBI directorship position. And one meeting in which the President dropped in to say hello. Could it be considered in your opinion unethical or illegal tampering with the judicial process? Then Ford's response, saying he considered it to be a demotion rather than a promotion. But I'm more concerned with the ethics involved in talking with the presiding judge in the course, of perhaps one of the most major trials of this decade which indicated, at the very least, lack of discretion and perhaps poor judgment. And I said I would like to express my own reaction to this, it's one of the most singularly destructive acts of the judicial process that I can think of because I think it was calculated to influence the impartiality and neutrality of the presiding judge in one of the most historic cases of the decade. It brought to mind another quote, and I want on to John Mitchell's statement -- watch what we do, not what we say. They got pretty heavy....
- DFS - In other words, it illustrates two points: your reaction to Ford's answer and also another reason so early on you were looked upon as--
- WSC - I guess I provoked some of the senior members of the Committee, on my side, perhaps, with that kind of question and did the same throughout the hearings on the Ford confirmation. I took a rather aggressive role in questioning witness, and because I felt that it was treated as sort of a pro forma thing and no one was really giving that much thought to the historical implications of the 25th Amendment. Not just because it was Jerry Ford they knew and loved, but what's the test we're going to use?
- DFS - McCall's magazine quotes your wife as saying you were "most" upset by the IRS evidence and by the Judge Byrne incident. Is that correct?
- WSC - Well, I had been involved in a case where the prosecuting attorney had a unilateral meeting with the judge to discuss an item and it went through three or four years of court procedure and finally helped get a case reversed at the circuit level, so perhaps I was a little bit more sensitive on that issue than some of the other members of the Committee. Others didn't see it as that. Chuck Wiggins, for example,

WSC - will take the attitude that in that case no federal judge can ever be approached for a position within the government without being accused of compromising his position. I think you draw distinctions when you take the Ellsberg case with as much notoriety as that had. I wanted to see him prosecuted too, he should have been prosecuted for taking and revealing government secrets, but he should do it within the letter of the law and the spirit of the law. So I wanted to see him prosecuted and I think that they interrupted and they intervened with the judicial process and it is really one of the abuses that I found so offensive and in fact, I had even suggested that we should call Judge Byrne in to find out why he went after the initial approach. The second approach was something else.

TM - Okay, you do recall February and March of 1974, when the Committee staff, the White House and the Department of Justice staff issued reports on "What is an impeachable offense." How and when did you arrive at what is an impeachable offense? Do you recall what that memorandum that circulated is?

WSC - I recall. After reading it, the first thing I read was the collective materials on impeachment, then went back and read Benjamin Butler's definition and so forth, and read almost all the cases and commentaries and Storey and everybody else. I think I became satisfied fairly early in the investigation that an impeachable offense was not confined to a criminal offense and I recall it was Noton and he came in one day and said what's your Committee doing and I said we are trying to define an impeachable offense. There are those who argue it must be strictly construed and I gave him a very long esoteric discussion of the polar extremes and there are those in the middle and I added light-heartedly that perhaps it's like Frost said about love, it's indefinable but it's unmistakable, I'll know it when I see it. Well, the New York Times for consideration of space or out of malice, I'm not sure, cut off my long dissertation and they quoted me as saying that impeachment was like love, it's indefinable, but it's unmistakable, and that was reprinted in every paper, and it got to be a joke calling all impeachments like love. So I learned a good lesson from that, not to make statements of that nature. I think that earlier on after reading the selected materials in the cases that I was open to be persuaded the other way. But I was personally satisfied that the meaning of impeachable offenses was not confined to crimes.

DFS - You say in your opening statement, quoting Somers in 1690, that it is extraordinary, something not lightly used. Do you consider it to be an integral part of the check and balance system? Extraordinary but integral?

WSC - Well, it's the ultimate weapon, it's the ultimate resort that Congress has. If the abuses become so great there is no alternative. I suppose an integral part, but I suppose it's like the nuclear reactor system that you have, you don't push that button until it's the very

end and I think that's the way we approached it, with a kind of fear that we all had about what are the implications of it. All you have is what I call is the color chromatic image of heroes, and heretics and demagogues and demigods depending upon what your politics are.

- TM - In looking at this, is there a degree of belief when it comes to a standard of proof, clear and convincing, beyond a reasonable doubt?
- WSC - Yeah, I came to clear and convincing as a test. I thought it had to be more than simply probable cause for the reasons that I said.
- DFS - Was that even before Mr. St. Clair suggested that clear and convincing standard?
- WSC - Yes, I was prepared for it. I thought it different than a grand jury situation, particularly in view of the fact that was being conducted partially in public. This really was to be differentiated from it; it had certain facets of a grand jury investigation, but by the very nature of everything being publicized in the evening news, it approached civil proportions and civil test and I thought in view of the implications of what it means, you just don't lightly put a President on trial based upon probable cause. It has to be something more than the next standard test to be clear and convincing. Preponderance of the evidence would be the next test, I guess, but I went even further than that.
- DFS - You have said that there were two standards of judgment, the facts and the Constitution. Well, let's pretend that you have the facts and you have the Constitution - now about it if the American people had not agreed? In other words, that it was simply not sellable, wasn't so believed? Is that a third standard of impeachment?
- WSC - Not to me it isn't. No, in fact I had fully prepared myself not to come back to Congress, if I didn't think it would be acceptable to my constituents. I don't know what the result would have been had the President not resigned and had this matter gone on or had I been asked to be a prosecutor. There was talk about that at the time.
- DFS - A manager in the Senate?
- WSC - A manager in the Senate, if there were to be a conviction. I had a violent reaction when that story came up back in my district. Saying it's not enough that he's a judge, now he wants to be a prosecutor. And what I said was that I would have to give it a very long serious consideration before I would ever agree to do something like that. Many people dropped off the emphasis that I had placed on it. I didn't

really want to do it. And it was looking like I would really give it serious consideration to be a manager, and it's pretty bitter.

- DFS - Would you say that as a matter of fact between February 1974 and the first of August, did the facts precede the theory or did you come, however unspokenly, to a theory of impeachment before the facts?
- WSC - Well, I came, first I started with a definition in terms of do we confine ourselves to conduct which is criminal. That was really kind of an academic discussion. Because most of the allegations were criminal. But at least I wanted to have a framework in which to deal with the questions of what I would be looking for in terms of factual patterns fitting into that definition, so I started first with the definition and what I thought it would entail with the abuse of power. Within that rather vague context, we then tried to assess how do these factual patterns fit within that framework. I felt that I really never had much doubt about the secret bombing whether that amounted to an impeachable offense, because I felt that there was Congressional ~~implicity in it~~ You can actually discover that they passed a resolution allowing it to continue for 45 days, which I thought would be ultimate hypocrisy to remove a President for an act which they concurred in substance. And similarly in impoundment, I felt that he had clearly exceeded his powers by impounding funds and in dismantling offices, but I also felt that Congress contributed to the fact by continually overspending and I really wasn't about to vote for any impeachable act on something that Congress had some complicity in. So those are the areas that I could weed out rather easily. The milk deal frankly, however, was one that troubled me. It was even further complicated by the fact that I had received a donation from one of the milk cooperatives; I can't say what the name is but we can get that. Gerald Ford was the one who helped arrange and get me a ~~contribution of about \$60,000~~; I was in debt when I first got here. I recall talking with him one day on the floor and he said how are things going in Maine and I said fine, except that I owe an awful lot of money. And if he could possibly arrange for me to go on speaking tours or doing anything which would generate money from those who normally contribute to a Republican candidate. I need help. Then I saw him two or three weeks later and he said: "Bill has anyone stopped by to see you about contributing something?" and I said "no", and he said, "they will because I put you on a list of people who need support and shortly after that some people from the milk cooperatives came in. I didn't talk to them I was going out on the floor; they sat and talked to my aide at the time and I got a \$3,000 contribution from it and it was a short time after that - a matter of a couple of days - I received a call, it was from a Congressman, I didn't know who it was, it was in the first two months that I was in Congress and I didn't know enough - it was an intern taking the call from his Congressman and I picked it up and he said, "Hi, Bill, I understand you interested in co-sponsoring a bill to increase milk parity" and I said, "I don't know who you have been talking to but you have got the wrong man, the

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milk

WSC - wrong guy. ~~I have no intention in cosponsoring anything.~~ I hung up - I came up fuming at the thing. I went out and talked with my aide and said to Bill, "Did you have any conversation about this?" He said, "No." I just did a slow burn and I expected to hear back on it, that a complaint would be made, that here we contributed \$3,000 to this man's campaign and he won't even support a measure to co-sponsor it. ~~I never did, it was just dropped.~~ I filed disclosures of who contributed to my campaign and it never came up again until the Ford confirmation when there was a rumor that was being pursued by some reporters that Ford had been kind of a bagman for the milk industry and I had received a call since I was one who had received a contribution and I invited them in and told them the exact story that I told you and so they started writing it up at that point and it proved out that he had not in fact been a bag man. He didn't intercede in any way, he just put me on the list: this guy needs help and that was the extent of it.

I was concerned as an element of an impeachable offense as to whether or not they had in fact increased the parity as a result of receiving the pledge of 2 million dollars or whatever it was, I was concerned about the conversation between Connelly and the President.

DFS - Would you mind, Congressman in taking a look at number 4. Some of this may have a rather uncomplimentary ring. When we say political, we don't necessarily mean political in the sense of being bought, but voting one's district or having a popular support, but you already answered that, you didn't vote as you would think the people did but on facts and the Constitution....?

WSC - Well, let's put it this way, the political situation was such, the Republicans were opposed to my position with very few exceptions were people who had some trust in me as an attorney or how I had performed in office in terms of fairness. There weren't all that many, but the volume of mail that I was getting after a while was such that I just stopped counting it. For a while there was just hundreds of thousands of letters that came in and they were keeping a tally of how many for and how many against. And I just reached a point where I stopped counting; I was satisfied that there were more opposed than for, I tried to go back and articulate the position without coming off as being arrogant and that I'm going to impose my own judgment and not take into consideration yours. I kept soliciting the abuse through my newsletter and my radio programs and so forth. But I tried to make it clear that in the final analysis that I'm the only one who could make that judgment. I had kind of promised them early that either just before I had reached my decision or just after I would go back to the State and explain in some detail why I reached that conclusion. I felt that if I made the decision and I went back and I couldn't persuade them that I had done the reasonable and the right thing, then I didn't deserve to sit in Congress.

DFS - You did that on a Sunday night, as I recall --

WSC - That's right, it's a Sunday night, but I told them this early, months ahead of time and mine was a continual process of going back, news interviews and programs and trying to explain to them that I had done the right thing.

DFS - ~~Your wife recalled one of the less savory comments, "May a thousand camels relieve themselves in your drinking water."~~

Laughter

WSC - Well, I tell you, the mail got so bad, that the staff stopped showing it to me, it was so vicious and violent, antisemitic, it was obscene. I got my share of rocks in the mail. But it was really of a violent nature. I got one threatening call. There was an ugliness throughout the mail. The staff used to tape some of the pungent letters and that was one of them which I thought was rather compressed a man's anger and outrage and it was a quote of a very few words. I got his message!

DFS - How about the various media, for example Time Magazine or Newsweek or you name it? Did you read any of these consistently do you think or did they have any effect on you or were they just for informational purposes?

WSC - I didn't read them other than when they were quoting me. I couldn't move outside my door and my phone never stopped ringing; there was always somebody wanting to look, what's happened today. - What are you going to take up today? I had a pretty firm rule that I would be happy to discuss anything I could publicly. I would discuss moods, I would discuss my own perceptions of things, but I would not discuss anything before the Committee but I wouldn't reveal any information to them that was not a matter of public record. I had a very embarrassing experience, shortly after we commenced the hearings or the investigation. We got these looseleaf volumes that John Doar was preparing and one of them was so thick, that he used to have a summary in the front part, a plastic folder to set it apart so you will be able to close it down. Which I did and I stuck the summary in the front part here and I was taking my night books back to my office over in Longworth and I went through the door at the end of the meeting and I had five or six books and I was really struggling with them and there was a mob outside, and I just kind of pushed through and as I pushed through I felt something let go on my arm and I started to panic and started to step back and I was really angry about it, and they all kind of got back and I looked around on the floor and I couldn't see anything so then I started to walk away and I said, "No, I better go back," so I retraced my steps back to the Committee room looking on the floor and saw nothing. And

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WSC - I said, well, it must be my imagination. I went outside and got in my car and drove over to Longworth from the Rayburn building, I went upstairs and started to take the materials out and I looked and the entire middle section from the first summary of the second book was gone and I remember breaking out into a sweat at that point, saying "My God, you know someone is going to print that," It didn't contain any confidential information, but it, because all statements would have a footnote 1, 2 or 3, which were contained in the actual tabs. The fact is that I was concerned about was my own credibility. That I would be labeled as a leak, that there would appear on the front pages and the very first or second night out that this would happen. I ran back to the Committee office and I got them to open it up because all the rooms were locked at that time. We looked all over the place and we couldn't find it. I didn't know what to really think at the time. I really felt someone had stolen it, but I wanted to double check without accusing anyone. I couldn't find it, I tried to get a hold of Jenner. I didn't locate him that night until about 9 o'clock. and I told him what had happened and so he called security and they went over and they opened it up and they started the search and he got back to me about 11 o'clock, 11:30, 12, 12:15 they were still looking and he called. He had called Doar at that point and apparently had made a call to all the news media saying that the material had been taken and they would request that they not publicize anything that had been taken. Well, it never showed up, we canned everything for days, looking to see if there was any indication that someone had some material, and it never showed up. I told Hutchinson the next morning the first thing about it, Podino was informed about it, I made a statement I guess the following day, but I was sorely embarrassed to say the least. From that point on, I refused to take my books outside. I left them at my desk and had them put away until the final weeks. I was so distraught about that whole episode that I felt very cynical about the reporters and all that. I just felt that a first class reporter would never have done something like that, that it kind of soured me on the press. Let me get back to your original question, this is a little divergence from it. The only thing I looked for from the press is that if they quoted me. I wanted to make sure that it was accurate - that they would not take some things out of context. Aside from that I didn't read the long stories.

DFS - Now the very fact that the press singled you out being the new first Republican to favor impeachment - did that have any particular effect on you?

WSC - Well, sure, it had an impact on me. I found myself during the course of proceedings taking a much more active role than most of the other Members. When I look back through the questions now, I was as always disappointed with the quality of the questions coming from our side. If they are really interested in getting the truth, they they ought to pursue these lines of questioning. From my own experience, again as

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hand

WSC - a prosecutor when a witness didn't ring true then I usually went after a witness. With O'Brien, for example, I thought he was lying. So was Bittman, in my opinion. But you were kind of constrained, you only got your five minutes and there was one point during the questioning of O'Brien where my five minutes ran out and Butler asked that Coehn be allowed to proceed and Hutchinson said "no." The only reason that I got more time is that Trent was outside either making or getting something and he came in and I said "Trent (Lott) would you yield me your time." and he had no notion what was going on, and yielded me his time and I pursued from that point on. And plus it was embarrassing, I suppose, a little bit that the members of the Democratic side were yielding their time to me. It's not always exactly a plus in your favor. But I felt that there were questions that had to be asked that were not being asked and I was going to ask them regardless of what the other people thought about it. And the other thing is, that knowing that you've been singled out creates counter pressures. The counter pressures being that you know that your questions carry less weight. Even though you may think that you are getting at delicate points that ought to be pursued, if they have already dismissed you based upon press reports, saying "well, he's been singled out", then you have the notion that no matter what the validity of your point, no one is paying attention during your side. But I just never felt satisfied with our questions being asked on our side. Or even on the other side for that matter. Waldie, for example, I thought, was always a very good example, but he was so partisan that even I couldn't accept his questioning to really get at the truth, but I knew that his questions would be dismissed just like many times mine would be on my side.

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WSC - Let me try to clarify that I don't leave the impression that my colleagues were less concerned about searching for the truth. That was my perception at the time, I think that I didn't fully appreciate in the past how partisanship had colored perhaps the debates and the performance of the Committee. There was a very strong undercurrent of partisanship in Congress and also in the Committee. I have never had come into contact with it and therefore, it had never troubled me. There were definitely partisans on the Democratic side, just as there were on our side. They were concerned about the truth but they also had this feeling that somehow that if this situation were reversed, and they had a Democratic President and under similar circumstances you wouldn't have the impeachment resolution being heard by the Rodino Committee... That was always underlying.

DFS - I had one final question on the factors outside of the Congress, and that is your wife....

WSC - My wife is a very important factor--

DFS - Would you care to comment on that?

WSC - I think that you should probably talk to her.

DFS - We've been thinking of this. What's your idea, when we get to Hilton Head, of simply asking the seven wives with prior okays to have a group session - group or individual - much shorter of course - What would your reaction be to that?

WSC - I say fine. I don't like speaking for Diane. She is a small petite person with a backbone of steel. She watched all of the Watergate hearings and more of the factual information. I didn't watch any of the Watergate hearings but one night. I caught a portion when Krogh was testifying. Maybe just a flash of Haldeman. I didn't pay any attention to it at all, where she knew every detail backwards and forwards. She takes a very accute interest in natioanl affairs and she reads about everythin and I never tried to intervene but she is very strong. Even when the pressure got really tough, she was always there to say, "You did the right thing."

DFS - Once the Doar evidence began on the 9th of May, did you discuss the thing with her?

WSC - ~~I never discussed it with her.~~ I would discuss some of the pressures that were generated from day to day. She attended most of the hearings that were open to the public. But I don't recall ever discussing any details with her but there is one night, after the vote on sending a letter to the President. I went out to have a couple of drinks with Rails (Railsback) that night. I was pretty angry, frankly, at being placed out by myself and all that. I was angry in the sense that how come privately you say that it isn't compliance and when it came to the public vote, they voted no. I felt that they were putting me in a position of number one of having been labeled that way anyway and then being forced to then confirm it. And I was angry with Rails in particular [laughter]. I just had to get out of that room the reporters kept running up and they wanted interviews and I said, "no, I don't want to talk with anybody." So I ducked out the back door. I tried to go in the back door of the Longworth and the door was locked. Joe Perchit was outside and said, "Bill, I think that they are trying to tell you something." So, then I had to go around, up to the front door. In the meantime I got back to my office, Rails had called up and said come on to the Hawk and Dove and he was there with a couple of staff people and Bell Hermelin.

TM - Yes, I was there too.

WSC - I was pretty down at the time and I think that I had two beers and he was having a good time, kind of needling me. I just finally got up and left and went home. And I remember - I got back about one o'clock, tiptoed up the stairs and I guess I said, "I've just done the hardest thing in my whole career tonight." "I know" she said, "But it was the right thing." I tried not to wake her up that night. That was a tough vote that night, as tough as the ultimate vote, I think. The President was saying, take it or leave it, on Monday night, all the material stacked up and there was always that party pressure and that peer pressure. It was the hardest thing to confront. People coming up during the course of the debate on something and saying, I understand that you're out to get him - you are the one leading the charge against the President. And I said, "why do you say that?", Well, just because" and I said "you mean because I'm trying to ask the right type of questions to get at the truth." But it was always that notion of, well, here he comes and of turning away. Isolation by the other Members. That was the most difficult point, I guess.

SL - Which of all the evidence did you consider the most helpful and the most convincing?

WSC - The evidence assembled? I think the material dealing with the agency abuse, was the most impressive. The IRS-FBI thing was even more impressive. I wasn't at all impressed with our efforts, I guess. The books were helpful in compiling everything, but I took the Water-gate Committee materials and I related that, I read every one of those volumes. Before each time I would go back the evening before and read the testimony over in the Senate and then read what the Committee had done with its interrogation and then related it to the book. I read "All the President's Men" twice, I think just to find out anything that was different than what someone had said in the Senate or something that we had, and had that all integrated I don't know if I can point to any one thing that was that impressive.

SL - Did you talk with any members of the Judiciary Committee at all or the staff people that worked on it?

WSC - I didn't even talk to any members on our side - that was the strange thing about it. None of us really discussed this until the very end.

TM - At one point you did engage with some briefings with Cates?

WSC - Yes, at the very end. He came up to my house on a Sunday. I think that Diane was back in Maine with the boys. Ham Fish wanted to get together and we invited Cates, and we had two or three minority counsel there as well.

TM - Cates rode his bicycle out there!

(Laughter)

WSC - I was impressed by the way, with Cates on his presentation during that long session; I made notes that day. I was impressed with him going back to the initial coverup facet of it, what facts to look for and what was persuasive and what was not. I was very impressed with his organization of that material.

TM - How important were the tapes, in your opinion?

WSC - Oh, very crucial.

DFS - Crucial?

WSC - Crucial.

SL - Could there have been a clear and convincing case built, having no tapes?

WSC - I doubt it. Without the tapes you have no transcripts, right? Without the transcripts you were left with John Dean and the President.

DFS - In your opening statement that Thursday night, you emphasized very, very much the strength of circumstantial evidence.

WSC - Yes, well, I was getting concerned with my colleagues on the floor saying "what the hell are you guys doing over there? All you got is circumstantial evidence." The layman's definition of circumstantial evidence is a bit different from that of a lawyers' and all I tried to point out is that most of your cases are built upon circumstantial evidence, almost every criminal case. You rarely have an eye witness to the crime and you build it upon solid inferences and circumstantial evidence and finally trace it to the accused. You rarely get that eye witness. It just - to answer this - mounting criticism by some of my colleagues, saying "what are you guys doing over there, you're taking so long, why don't you get this thing over with?" And of course, that was because of their concern that the longer that this went on, the closer it came to election time, and which every way they voted, they knew that they were going to damage themselves with a certain part of the electorate and that they would have that less time to repair the damage, that they would have that little time they were pushing for a quick decision. And we would say, well we have got to take our time, we have really got to do a thorough job, we won't be satisfied without that and then the criticism came: from all - you've got only circumstantial evidence. Of course, Chuck Wiggins is the one I think that, who was promoting this. But what I tried to do is to say that, yeah, we've got some circumstantial evidence, but circumstantial evidence can in some cases be far more persuasive and what I tried to do is to

WSC - point out the example of the Dean testimony. As we went out the doors after listening to the tapes on Dean we were just grabbed by every reporter, "Did he say, get the hell out of here, or god damn it"? What was the expletive? The press was focused on the nature of the expletive. Was it "goddamn-it" or was it "Jesus Christ." And I think you had 38 different versions of what was said, and that is just about an example of the traditional fallacies involved in terms of eye-witness testimony. The old example at Chicago University during the course of a lecture the professor brought a scene where someone was shooting someone else and he asked them to recount exactly what happened and he had almost total diversity.

DFS - I do that every spring.

WSC - Of course, those of us who were involved in trying cases, know that reasonable people see different things and so forth, but sometimes, you get a piece of circumstantial evidence which is far more conclusive. The snow was one analogy that I tried to demonstrate that with and I found that the public reaction to that even with the people on the floor, was overwhelming. "Gee, I've never thought about that before, is that what you mean by circumstantial evidence?"

SL - You already mentioned O'Brien and Bittner, what was your reaction to Mitchell?

WSC - Mitchell - I didn't think was entirely forthcoming, I went up and talked to Mitchell during the course of his testimony, I had never met him before (I guess I didn't think that his statements were quite as flagrant as some of the others. O'Brien I thought was lying. Especially after I started asking him questions, he kept turning to counsel to see whether he should answer and Bittman was a very sharp guy. Dean, I didn't think told the truth about that item that he forgot that he had destroyed.

23-30
lying



SL - Henry Peterson, what do you feel his position was?

WSC - I guess I really.... he didn't say all that much. I didn't agree with some of his conclusions, but I guess any of the witnesses - I really wasn't too satisfied with them.

SL - Butterfield?

WSC - Butterfield was a believable witness. Although I thought he jumped too quickly at the notion, that "I'm not Deep Throat". He called Haldemann the Vice President or some thing of that nature, second in command, and said that I'm not Deep Throat, he obviously had read All the President's Men very closely. But Butterfield was credible.

37-40
I think



TM - Kalmbach?

WSC - Kalmbach, he was critical, but I guess I was just disappointed in him. This man looked to me like when I used to go to the movies as a kid, the man who had the white house, and a nice man really, and an insurance job or something, but somebody who is just going around with a black bag and passing out the ambassadorships, simply on good faith. I didn't really sympathize with him much, I guess. But I thought he was really truthful. Who else? La Rue - I didn't think ~~was telling the truth.~~

DFS - Well, passing on to your own relationships to other members of the Committee. For example, say on the 10th of July and the 18th of July, there were two Republican Caucuses, I believe. On both occasions, I think, Hutchinson, for all practical purposes, said he just was unable to understand the Republicans who could vote for impeachment. Was that pretty much directed - the first time - at you?

WSC - I felt so.

DFS - What was your reaction?

WSC - I was about to respond and I know Railsback said something. We were then again defending Jenner, or I was defending Jenner based upon something that he had done. He seemed to have a capacity to get himself into more trouble - almost deliberately at times - I was in the process of defending him. That was not the original understanding under which he was hired, we were looking for someone with qualifications in the academic credentials, and trial experience, we didn't look for someone who was simply going to be a partisan advocate. I think that was the point of the conversation on one of those occasions, and then it came back to what Hutchinson said, "I can't believe that a Republican would vote for impeachment. You better find out who they are." I know that was directed toward me. And Railsback slipped in and said something as to that's how I'm going to vote and I got even more heated. I think Chuck Wiggins broke it off at that point. We then had a lunch, as I recall at the Capitol Hill Club that day. Railsback, myself, Ham and Paul had lunch at the Capitol Hill Club that day to talk about the implications of what Hutchinson had said. I think they were concerned about what he was saying at that point.

DFS - Would you comment on Jenner? So many people had taken obviously different views on him, do you think he did the job for which he was hired?

WSC - Yes, I do. As I understood it when he first came on, there was no talk of simply being a partisan advocate, as I recall. They had some apprehensions about Doar - that he would simply be what they call a Kennedy - Republican, I guess is the phrase they used to describe him. And that he would not really be objective and would be a partisan and

WSC - they were looking for some one to balance him but there was no discussion about his qualifications, academic credentials, or trial experience, and very well known, reputed and so forth, so that it would enhance our own position. Railsback was responsible for getting Jenner. I think Jenner made some mistakes initially. He never should have made a mistake in what he did about what was an impeachable offense. He at least met with us, and at least reviewed the material. But I thought Jenner made a bad error in expressing himself publicly and I think he damaged himself with the other Members of the Committee who wanted to get rid of him immediately from that point on, but felt that they could not. I think that he made a mistake when on one of the crucial nights he took off and went to Texas on a long standing commitment. That was the night that Doar got torn apart when Wiggins destroyed him and rightfully so. And Jenner wasn't there at the time. He was down in Texas making a speech, and making public statements, I think that he did enough things that could have warranted his dismissal in terms of public statements on behalf of the council which put him in a very difficult position in terms of representing us, serving as counsel yet going his own independent way. But I think as far as what he tried to do in the investigation, I think was the right thing.

DFS - Did the White House ever have any contacts with you during the spring or last summer?

WSC - There was one occasion in which they invited me to go on the Sequoia on which Railsback made his famous statement. Two occasions, one I turned down, the other time they invited me. There was one call I received, from the White House about an appointment or some position in New England.

DFS - Weren't you kind of disinvented to the Sequoia the second time?

WSC - Something happened, I have to go back and review that, something happened where I was called and they called back and said that no there isn't any room or something to that effect. And I had no intention of going anyway and then Railsback picked it up and said that if you did go, the first time in shark infested waters But I had tried to stay away from any connection because it might be misconstrued.

SL - Just how did you view Mr. St. Clair's performance?

WSC - I think that he did an excellent job up until the final day. And then I think that he made one of the worst mistakes of his career. And that was when, after making a beautiful summation, I thought it was one of the most effective I had seen, he offered a partial transcript of the tape that we were after and it just provoked outrage and I thought just wiped out the effectiveness of the presentation that he had made. I can't imagine why he did it, unless he was instructed to

- WSC - do it. As a trial attorney, I thought, he was superior to Doar or Jenner, in terms of his examination and cross-examination in the manner he went about it, looking at it from a technician's point of view. Jenner I thought laborious as he was, was an old trial attorney who had been through a lot of cases and you got to dot every i and cross every t. And it was painful at times. Our side was shouting at him almost to stop but he kept going and going. So, it's a lot easier in terms of cross-examining especially someone like St. Clair who is very good at it. He is a very skilled cross-examiner. But there were some things that I just couldn't believe, like at one point he's asking O'Brien did anyone ever mention the words to you quid pro quo, did anyone ever call this "hush money" and he said, "no sir, no sir." Then you had people like McClory behind us who was saying that we affirm what St. Clair just said that on one mentioned quid pro quo and no one mentioned hush money. He has a copy of the transcript in front of him which clearly shows that they had been talking about this for a good man many months. And then McClory asking questions knowing that we had been through the testimony. I just kind of had to look over my shoulder and say, "My God the transcripts are sitting in front of him!" That is why I asked O'Brien the question, "I've assumed that you have read those transcripts?" "Yes, I have." And I said based upon your reading of the transcripts do you still maintain that Ehrlichman didn't know anything about it? And he said, which section are you referring to? I just left it because I didn't want him to eat up my five minutes going through which section.
- SL - In view of your, what almost happened early on when you lost some of the papers, what was your reaction to the constant leaks?
- WSC - I thought they would destroy the credibility of the Committee. I was concerned about it. I made public statements about it, I think, to several reporters, and they were asking about it, and I said that the Committee deserves to be criticized, it is an unfair thing that is taking place, and I always had the suspicion frankly, that the news media had access to the reports or the information before we ever did. There was time after time, after I would come out of that room and a reporter would ask me a question about which he had to have prior knowledge. He would then recite a line -- it was directly out of the transcript that we had just been reviewing. He had to have some prior knowledge. I just felt that because of the leaks and what happening that the credibility of the Committee was being seriously eroded. I might say that my staff took quite a brunt too. People from the National Committee used to say to Betty that your boss is the only one; everybody else is together but your boss and this created quite a bit of pressure on her, but she is a very strong Republican and had to take a lot of aggravation.

- TM - Now the mechanics of the coalition? It was difficult to try to put this together, I didn't really take notes as to who was present and who was staying away at any one time. But going back a little before the actual first meeting on Tuesday morning, to the best of your recollection what was the earliest possibly informal conversation that you may have had with any members of the so-called coalition about that type of activity?
- WSC - The first contact that I had was with Railsback. We had a little bit of a confrontation one evening when I got angry with him and walked away.
- TM - At what time was this? In relation to Monday or Tuesday?
- WSC - It was a little earlier than that. This was during the course of the witnesses. We were actually having dinner with Stan (?) and Rails. We had kind of a conversation and Tom at that point made some reference, "Who knows, I might be with you." And I won't repeat what I said to him at that time. But I said that I remember how you were with me back on the letter to the President. I don't put too much stock in where you are and furthermore, I don't care, it was that kind of a conversation. But that was probably the first meeting that I had any contact. We had never really discussed any of this among ourselves. Tom got concerned with an article by Pinckus. In fact while I was interrogating O'Brien, he leaned over to me after the testimony and said, "Gee, that's a great job, come on outside, I want to talk to you." After I had finished examining O'Brien, we went out into the side room, into your office, and he showed me a copy of Pinckus' article pertaining to the turning over of information to the grand jury. Pinckus had written an article that had appeared in the Post of the propriety of turning over grand jury information about Peterson to the President. That was the first time Tom said, "this really troubles me." I don't recall talking about it, this was the first time that we had discussed any evidence. We didn't talk again until one time I was on the floor with Flowers and I said, "Somewhere along the way we ought to sit down and perhaps talk about it. "You know Flowers is the Democratic Railsback; they are very much alike in personality and life style. "Why don't we get together sometime and just talk about this thing." I haven't got the date, I'll have to go back and look for it, but that was a week or ten days prior to our meeting.
- TM - Was to you the coalition a natural event? An inevitable occurrence? That these seven would come together?
- WSC - I never gave it a thought. I did not really think about a Coalition I didn't think about being with anybody else or how anyone else was going to vote. I think that I had so steeled myself to say that whatever I do, I'll probably be left alone or that there wouldn't be anybody else there who cared at that point. I had reconciled myself to the fact that whatever I did that it was going to be difficult for me

WSC - back in my district and to explain to my constituents, and as I said I truly felt that I would not be back. But what I was more concerned with was that I did what I felt was right. I didn't really care what others did. But I had 54 percent, I think the first time.

I really didn't think about a Coalition. Two nights later we're on television - ABC network and McClory, Kastermeier and myself and McClory was kind of bac-ing away from his notebook and saying "Well, I didn't think it was compliance, but I think this is the route to go." The whole thing sort of shifted at that point. I just felt that I didn't know how they were going to vote and I felt Rails was going to have a tough decision because of his district. Fish had problems with his father, didn't know what Caldwell was going to do, didn't even inquire. I know that most of the other ones were going to vote "no."

TM - I think it was a Friday before the Tuesday when John Doar circulated a so-called drafts of different articles in a black notebook and I believe that was the first time we actually were able to see in writing language of potential articles of impeachment. Do you recall your reactions to reading those articles?

WSC - Well, the first articles that I think I saw were Jack Brook's, which I thought were horrendous. As I recall I made a statement to Doar and Jerner one evening, a few days prior to the presentation that I felt that if there were going to be impeachable offenses they could only come under two headings, abuse, and the other was the coverup. Those were the two general categories, if you sat down and put these out in the way of an indictment. I said I just don't think that's appropriate something to that effect. But in my own mind I had to separate the allegations into abuse, and the coverup.

TM - Had you put anything in writing up to that point? Did you have any thoughts of about that time: "Here are drafts of potential articles it's Friday, we're going on TV the following Wednesday, any of these or some of these?"

WSC - I had assumed that was already done. When we got together we just talked in terms of which one we thought we could accept and which one we could not. But in view of the preparations by Doar from day one up until his final summation, it just did not occur to me that they didn't have something spelled out.

TM - Do you recall how you got to Railsback's office? How did you learn of the meeting in Railsback's office.

WSC - I think that you probably told me, saying that were was going to be a meeting over there between some of the people and I was surprised at who it was going to be.

DFS - You were surprised?

WSC - I didn't know who was going to be over there. I thought may be Flowers, may be Ray Thornton. I had tremendous amount of respect for Thornton - a kind of a mutual admiration society, I guess. He had agreed during the course of the hearings that ~~if I ever wanted, any time, he would yield his time to me.~~ So I thought that Flowers, and Thornton would be there and I thought Rails, of course, would be there and myself and possibly Fish.

TM - What about Henry Smith?

WSC - No, I never thought Henry would be there.

DFS - Or McClory?

WSC - No.

- TM - This is the second interview with Congressman Cohen - present are Congressman Cohen, Steve Lynch, Tom Mooney, June 20, 1975, approximate time 1:45 p.m.
- WSC - The special prosecutor last time, that's the copy of the article that I was referring to. The other thing, is I believe the Los Angeles Times. I'll make a copy of this - this is the article to the Globe, it will be coming out on the Fourth of July or on Nixon's the anniversary of his resignation. But I thought it might be of interest to you.
- TM - It will, indeed.
- WSC - I don't know if you need that material on the Ford confirmation or not - the whole thing about Judge Byrne?
- TM - I think that is - I think that lays a foundation for some of your thinking in that area. It started considerably earlier.
- WSC - Let's see, pages 44, 45, 81 and 82 and 83 - that's some of the stuff on Ford.
- TM - I'll get that out of my book, very good.
- WSC - I think that covers the tone, the type of examination I would conduct.
- TM - Yes, indeed.
- SL - I think I recall running around trying to find that book for you during the Ford proceeding.
- TM - We left off last time with the mechanics of the coalition. Going back to when you first recall being approached and by whom and how you ended up in Railsback's office and I would like to direct your attention, if I may to, section "Chronology" in your book. It was difficult to try to put this all together, as far as the different meetings, whether or not they occurred in some instances and then who was present. I didn't write down the notes that I would have normally taken as a counsel to a subcommittee. Things being as chaotic as they were, I tried to primarily get the substance as far as what people were saying. Looking at Tuesday morning July 23, my recollection is that you were very definitely there and would you want to comment on your impressions of that first meeting in Railsback's office.
- WSC - I guess, I was surprised at how many were there and who were there. Obviously, Railsback would be there, I thought, Flowers were and possibly Thornton. I don't recall if I know whether Mann would be there, I didn't expect to see Butler there. Mr. Froehlich wasn't originally there at the 1st meeting, he arrived later. I just recall

- WSC - the casualness of it, I guess. I walked through the door and I went and sat down behind Tom's chair. Someone flipped me, I guess it was you, flipped me a coffee roll.
- TM - I did, it was a Danish or something.
- WSC - A Danish, and I was sitting behind there. Tom had that long table in front of his desk where everybody was sitting down and I was sitting back
- TM - And everybody gathered around you.
- WSC - I just kind of was impressed with the spirit of the place, it was very casual, "well, let's just sit down and see where we are," it was very informal. If you shake it all down, I think that was Flower's expression, if you take a bag upside down and dump it all out what have you got? Is there anything that we can agree on that constitutes an impeachable offense. I think that we discussed Jack Brook's impeachment articles that we thought were preposterous as drafted and could not be supported by any of us there. We just started a very informal way of saying what our arguments are and what is troubling to all of us and I think that is about all that I can recall of that meeting.
- TM -- Did you expect to see somebody there who wasn't there? Other members of the Committee maybe?
- WSC - Was Ham Fish there, was he at the first meeting?
- TM - Yes, he was.
- WSC - I know that we were. There was some concern on whether we should invite McClory. He was pretty inhumane of us to say no, but Tom felt under some obligation to inform him of what we were doing.
- TM - On Wednesday, I think I made a mistake here. I definitely recall you being there Wednesday morning when the Subcommittee met and they started to hash out the different drafts, Wednesday afternoon it was very chaotic as you recall. 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday the debate was supposed to start. And they gathered in Railsback's office at approximately 2:30 p.m. The meeting started and in my initial reaction I did not include you in that meeting but on second thought, this comes back and I would like to search your recollection on that. It was at this meeting that we received a phone call from Frank Polk, wherein Frank said that he understood there are a number of members gathering and actually drafting articles and that he would like to advise us that he was drafting an article for Mr. Clory and wanted to know whether or not McClory could come over something and I went back to that group with that message and my recollection is that you weren't there at that time.
- WSC - I think that I missed one of the afternoon meetings.

TM - I came back and I gave them the message, that Mr. McClory was working on an article too and whether or not he could join or what not and there was considerable discussion at that point but it was decided by the group that they would send over their work file at the date to McClory to look at, here it gets fuzzy.

WSC - I came in late I think that day.

TM - Okay.

WSC - I did come in cause we were discussing how we were going to carry it out that night and still working on the assumption that all this backup data would be available we got through article one and then we figured that we would still have enough time the next day to get through article two. We wouldn't finish the debate that evening on article one so we thought we would have some time as, I recall, not giving any thought to the strategy of Sandman.

TM - Do you recall when you learned that the Coalition had sent over to McClory a draft of its work? Did you learn that as you came in late?

WSC - I wasn't too concerned, McClory didn't matter to me whether he started or what he did. I just figured that there was a wasted effort to begin with. It was a case of -- well I don't want you to record this so I won't say it I guess.

20-24
McClory
*

TM - I think that it's already been recorded by other members, your reaction is what I'm after, your reaction to the news the draft of an article had been delivered to McClory? Do you recall any statement that you might have made?

WSC - Does someone else recall a statement that I made?

TM - Several sources. (very much jumbled talk and laughter) In particular you were very vocally concerned that it was let out to Mr. McClory who you thought at some point might have a tendency to disclose it to people that might not be interested in what we were doing as you would hope.

30-40
McClory
*

WSC - I'm sure that I said something, but I can't remember what I said though -- what did others say that I said?

TM - Well they say that you actually said that you were very alarmed that when it was sent to McClory it's as good as printed in the Washington Post the next morning, you said it's as good as out, it's public.

WSC - Why when McClory didn't want any part of that particular group, we had communicated to him. That just troubled me, I guess.

TM - Do you recall being at that afternoon meeting?

WSC - Only briefly. I know that I didn't go on time?

TM - I know from my recollection you came in late. You came in late and you nodded and you were there working for awhile and then you had somehow learned, discovered that the McClory had received the draft. And my recollection that at that point you expressed some discomfort at letting that out.

WSC - I'm sure that's true. As to what they say I said, I have to reserve the right to disagree. Tone it down, I don't know how we are going to write this thing up but he was not one of my favorite subjects of the Committee. I was upset with his attitude during the course of the examination that we talked about last time where O'Brien would make a statement that I thought was the first time that he had learned any of this and the transcript is sitting there and McClory is asking him a question, and gave the impression he was just getting into it, right? That sort of question offended me, I guess.

11-20
McClory
*

TM - Going down through these meetings, do you ah, there were two evening meetings, dinners, that you had at the Capitol Hill Club. The first I do not have you listed as being present, Thursday, July 25th, this was after almost at the completion of debate, but I think that debate was still going on and prior to the Friday dinner that was so chaotic. What we were doing at this dinner was putting the final touches on article one, Hogan was there for the first time, Frank Polk was there for the first time.

WSC - This isn't the night that Diane and the boys were with me, was it?

TM - No, I think that was the chaotic night.

WSC - That's ritght, I don't think I was at the meeting before then.

TM - Then the third one Friday morning you recall the Sarbanes Substitute was introduced and all afternoon on national TV, Mr. Wiggins and Sandman were attacking the substitute. At 6 o'clock the full committee recessed for dinner and we moved over to the Capitol Hill Club. Would you just give us your personal recollections of that meeting?

WSC - As you say, it was fairly chaotic and the group was in disarray. It had been routed by Sandman and Wiggins and I thought justifiably so; I agree with what Sandman was saying. I was pretty disgusted with our staff that to think we had gone through this process of drafting these articles and had nothing to substantiate the points. There seemed to be no response that anyone wanted to develop at that meeting, and I think that finally I said well "Damn it I'll draft article one myself if I have to stay up all night to do it or what ever it was going to take, but it better be ready by tomorrow." I did say something to that effect.

TM - Oh, you did indeed. You looked over at me and you rattled off to wit and etcetera.

WSC - I just couldn't understand why they had not done this -- why we had been laboring under the misapprehension it was going to be done and we basically were looking quite foolish. Some members wanted to say they are taking the wrong position but I felt that Sandman and Wiggins were right.

TM - Did you feel that the Coalition or its work product was in danger at that point?

WSC - I thought the whole thing was in danger at that point. And it was a question of being publicly and nationally embarrassed. That you go through a nine-month investigation and then have Sandman who hadn't said a word during the entire nine months suddenly say well where's the evidence, will you give us an example. If you had to indict a man you would set forth a b c, give such and such, why do you say that he's abused his powers? For example? And just fundamental law, I think, that they were raising and we weren't there. One of the things that I had always prided myself on as a practicing attorney, I was always prepared. Always did the work myself, here I got in the situation that somebody else was doing the work and it wasn't there. And we were at bay. I wasn't too happy about it.

SL - You talk about the staff, it is really amazing but I think that they got to that point and didn't provide anybody with any information. When you wanted to go to somebody, who did you have to go to, just Doar and that was it, could you have called someone right away and say listen we need this or who are the experts in the area?

WSC - I never really had much access to the staff at all. I went over I remember, a number of occasions to the headquarters and they would provide me with various books that were there but I never really felt much liberty to call on the individual members for research at a given point or whatever. I pretty much relied on Doar's presentation, what he had there. The interviews I went over and read myself and also relying on past testimony of the witnesses, I didn't really rely on the individual members.

- SL - Some critics have said one of the problems of the inquiry staff, is that Doar was so much in command, that really everything had to go through him, every decision that was made, do you think that was one of the problems then?
- WSC - I think the decisions should be made by him. I don't disagree with that, I question some of his judgment from time to time and I had doubts about what he was doing but I really didn't question his organization methods. I thought he was pretty stubborn; once he got on a point you couldn't really shake him. As you noticed throughout the hearings I tried to get him to attach something to a subpoena and he refused to do it. Ans then he forgot, he said he would do it one time and forgot to send them in another envelope and I said would you please send in another envelope a copy of the items for the justification, and he forgot to do it. He was stubborn in that regard.
- TM - Before we move on any further, just one more point about that Friday dinner, do you recall for the record first of all, your wife and children were present. Do you want to identify them?
- WSC - Kevin and Christopher and Diane.
- TM - Do you recall the resolution of that meeting? It was, you indicated chaotic--
- WSC - It was angry and frustrated. The members had got stung and they didn't really know what to do. Who was going to take what, how do we respond to it, we got to go back on television that night, how to cope with the assault being waged.
- TM - Do you recall the alternatives developed, the plan if any?
- WSC - The plan was that the Doar staff would come back in the morning with justifications for the bases for the article and in the meantime we were to fend as best we could for the rest of the evening on nationalwide television. Yeah, that was the only plan. I had gotten to the point wher I said, "Look I will do it myself, I intend to stay up all night, I can draft article one to substantiate every portion." I was prepared to do that. I was so mad. I just felt that it was a real snafu and that was I was number one, embarassed, so I was one of those who was working on it, was seen and had been perceived as supporting the articles and yet there was nothing there to support it and had I known that they were not prepared, I would have done all the work myself.
- TM - Do you recall the tactics that were developed later?
- WSC - Motion to strike?

TM - The motion to strike by Flowers. Did that come out of the meeting do you recall?

WSC - We had agreed that night that I would be given article one, I guess one facet of it.

TM - Yeah, it was about nine sub parts, I believe.

WSC - We just agreed generally that we were going to divide it up. We didn't see what the justifications were, we got them first thing the following morning, but nothing that night. Saturday, I have to go back to my notes to find out what time in the morning that I came in. But I got those in the morning and then I went over them and changed it somewhat. Then we agreed that morning upon the strategy. We assumed that Saudman was going to insist on his motion, then they would yield to me, then when he backed off, Flowers picked it up. And they just yielded to me.

TM - Do you recall a meeting in Railsback's office, Saturday, July 27th between 10 and 11:30? I believe Hogan was present and Polk.

WSC - Hogan was at the first meeting, wasn't he? He wasn't there.

TM - My notes indicate that Hogan never joined the group but he made his press conference.

WSC - One day earlier, Tuesday.

TM - On Tuesday, the first day we met, and he never joined the group until Thursday evening for dinner, at the Capitol Hill Club, the first dinner.

WSC - I didn't go to that dinner.

TM - You missed that dinner, to my recollection. Do you know why you missed that dinner, do you recall?

WSC - No, I don't recall.

TM - Let's go to that Saturday, I believe that was a meeting on Saturday following the Friday which we had taken the beating on national TV, Railsback's office, I believe, to work and discuss the actual drafting of article two.

WSC - I don't think that I was at that -- I didn't really have that much time. Once they had divided up the work on the part of the Coalition between Ham Fish and Jim Mann and me and Ray Thornton, I don't recall my working. I really don't work a great deal with anybody else on anything, rather alone.

TM - I've noticed that over the years.

WSC - Over the years, I guess I personally out of habit I tend to be a loner most of the time and I just do not get involved in work groups, work group activity. So maybe that was it, once I knew what I had to do then I just assumed that everybody would do what they had to do on their own and I didn't need to be there, unless it was absolutely necessary for me to go, I don't think I did and that's probably been true with everything I've done here. Unless I really have to do it, I don't like to sit around and engage in really philosophical discussions, I knew what I had to say and if they needed it fine, but other than that I've got other things to do.

TM - Before we move off of this issue, just the adjective has been used to describe the coalition as "fragile."

WSC - That's Railsback's. You recall he used that the first time during the discussion on Article III and on Cambodia. He is a member of that "fragile Coalition" and had some second thoughts, something to that effect. And I recall I spoke shortly thereafter that as far as this member was concerned that coalition wasn't very fragile and that no matter what happens with the article I intended to remain.

TM - You know I don't recall that, really.

WSC - Oh, yes, that's from the debates, I didn't agree with that notion that it was fragile and furthermore it didn't really matter to me whatever it was. When I walked into the room I was full of surprise and a little bit of relief saying that at least you're not alone and there are some other people who share your views as well. That is always comforting. But by that point it really didn't matter to me whether Railsback stayed in or stayed out or what anyone else was going to do, I had already resolved myself as to what I was going to do. And I just didn't want Tom to say the characterization of being "fragile."

TM - Number 11 deals with involving drafts of articles one and two the last week, and we've got primarily the project down at Hilton Head, when the group gets together and try to discuss the drafts, some of the thinking of what was going on --

WSC - Well, doesn't Jim Mann have copies, we each have copies and they were all initialed and we turned them in cause I wanted mine back.

TM - I've got a couple of yours, with your name on them.

WSC - Now that you remind me of it, this was probably my reaction to sending over to McClory that here we went through this whole process of turning the drafts back in, initialed them and make sure that we keep them in one spot, so it's not disclosed and then they turn around, after we go through all

1-3
McClory
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- WSC - this work and send a copy over to McClory who wasn't a part of the group and I thought that was kind of inconsistent to say the least.
- TM - Maybe just one other point in recalling the final week, the intensity of the work, the pressures, the press, the phone calls, we may have covered this a little bit earlier but just a comment on the pressures, time wise and otherwise, that you may have been under that week?
- WSC - I would have to go back and look through my notes and my day-books in terms of what I was doing during the course of that time. The pressure was building up following Jenner's statement on the preceding Thursday or Friday?
- TM - When was that Steve?
- SL - The Saturday, the 20th, after Garrison was through with his presentation.
- TM - The 20th of July.
- WSC - I guess my own position at the time was one, I was disappointed, I was angry, at what happened those final days, Railsback and I came late to a Republican Caucus, we walked in and were advised that they had just taken a vote to replace Jenner with Garrison as counsel and each of us said, please record me as being against that, but we were the only two, Ham Fish may have been the third, but I think that we were the only two that said no.
- TM - There is no record of that.
- WSC - No record of what?
- TM - This caucus, wasn't it a Republican Caucus?
- WSC - I see what you mean, but that's what happened that morning. And when Garrison made his presentation, I can recall making some public statements about it. The press came and said what do you think about this -- I tried to gloss over it without getting into any contest on it. But the whole shift of things during the final days in terms of what was taking place, built considerable pressure I thought. I've really got to go back and look at my notes on what I was doing. It would be more helpful I think. As far as the pressure, I wrote my speech the night before it was given. I was up until about 2:30 or 3 o'clock, as I recall with Diane, and just sat up and just talked to her on what was going to take place. I think she went to bed around three o'clock and then I started writing it and then that's when I started reading, ah, I had a copy of the Federalist and I was reading through that and was going back through it. And I started writing about 4:30 or 5 o'clock in the morning.

- TM - Where did you pick up the idea of the description of circumstantial evidence, of tracing footprints through the snow?
- WSC - Oh, I had a long talk with a former employer of mine, Thomas Lambert, the American Travelers Association, he is the man that I talked to. He is probably my closest friend. I called him in the past about getting advice like about Jaworski for example. Tom is one of the top prosecutors in a number of war trials, and he was an outstanding man at Nueremberg, he was a Rhodes scholar, he was the president of a law school down in Florida when he was 26 years old. Just an outstanding man, the most eloquent man that I've ever heard speak. The most gifted orator, I think, in the country. Anyway, I spent a year and a half working with Tom and from time to time we call each other and I was supposed to get together this weekend going to Boston on a seminar before he cancelled out. And I called him one night and it was late and just sat on the phone and talked to him and told him what it was like down here and we had kept in touch from time to time. And we started talking about circumstantial evidence and going back, I think I recalled to Tom that the classic example he gave of circumstantial evidence was by Thoreau that you find a trout in the milk. We talked for an hour and a half just dealing with philosophy basically and Tom is really a great philosopher. We didn't discuss any facts but only philosophy that night and the whole discussion of circumstantial evidence evolved into a long conversation I think.
- TM - After the vote and prior to the release of the last Nixon tape, as a lawyer, anticipating the Senate trial did you feel that the case was defensible?
- WSC - Yes, I felt comfortable with making that presentation to the House without that tape.
- TM - And now what about the Senate? Going to trial in the Senate, actually?
- WSC - In the Senate, I would have reviewed the request for the tapes and had insisted upon them; failure particularly in view of the Supreme Court's decision, to turn them over, I thought would have warranted negative inferences. I did before anyway but it was even more clear cut after the Supreme Court decision. But I felt that even without that particular tape the case was provable.
- TM - Were you approached during that particular time as a potential manager?
- WSC - Bob Exkhart, as I recall on the floor said he wrote an article for some local magazine and they asked him who he would recommend as prosecutors, the managers, of the bill if it ever went to the Senate and he said I hope that you don't object but I recommended you. You were one of them that had the type of qualities that we were looking for and he went

WSC - into a very complimentary disertation of what they were looking for. Who would make a good manager and what qualities. That's the only suggestion that come, most of it came from reporters. But no one ever asked me and I didn't inquire, I didn't really want to be asked, just avoided the whole issue. I said that I would have to give it long serious thoughts but I'm not inclined to, and then some people picked up that as saying that I would give it serious thought, they just misinterrupted it, saying that I was looking forward to doing it and I wasn't. ~~I didn't want to do it.~~

TM - What was your political situation in Maine at that time?

WSC - I guess that it was unpredictable at that point, prior to his admission, I think I had very high approval rating the first year in Congress and I still had one last year, even after the thing was over, so I knew that I had strong approval with what I was doing and I had very low disapproval, very little negative comment. And I just had another one done confidentially and I have about a one percent disapproval, So that's very low. But within the party, itself, it's pretty bitter.

TM - Did you say bitter?

WSC - Bitter. The letters were running, I stopped counting after awhile, I just reached that point where I said that I'm not goint to get into a tallying contest. If I had to guess at it, I would say that the majority were opposed to impeachment. Of the letters that I received, the sentiment expressed to me, I think, that the majority favored resignation but they were opposed to impeachment. What I had done all through this whole period saying that I would make a judgment based upon the facts and the Constitution and that even if 60%, I remember using that figure, were opposed to impeachment and the facts warranted, I'm going for impeachment. I would vot that way. But if the facts didn't measure up, then I wouldn't. I just said that I hope I can come back and explain to you what I will be doing or what I've done and this way have done the right thing and if I don't, then don't send me back. I had done that quite a few times and I went to a Convention and spoke at the Convention. One woman was down on the front row and said, "Have you ever heard of Willie Pict Thesant(?) and I said yes. You know Thesant is the one who participated in the Johnson impeachment. I guess he was from Maine. And she said, Have you read him? And she was there shouting, and I said yes, I have. And she said well, do what he did. And I said, well, but he voted against his party. And she said, that's not what I meant.

LAUGHTER

SL - Did you go on TV, statewide in Maine?

WSC - Yes, I went on a statewide, it was a very interesting experience. I thought I should tell you about a few records. I had been getting increasingly run down, I had averaged only about three hours of sleep a night for almost two months, In fact I didn't go home for dinner one night for almost eight or nine weeks. I was always at the office doing material or going over, going over to the headquarters. I got quite run down during this time, then when Saturday finally came, after the vote, I had promised some people that I would go up and explain to them what I had voted, and so I went up on Sunday and I met with the Bangor Daily News editorial board, I went in and all three networks, I guess, were up there and they were crawling all over each other, bumping into each other, fighting an actual fight would almost break out between cameramen, and we went into the editorial board of the Bangor Daily News and I explained to them my vote in essence and what was wrong and so forth. Then later that day Diane and I took a plane together to Portland where I was going to go on statewide television and I had a very bad headcold at that point. We ran into some bad weather and the pilot came down rather quick and it popped this watch I had on. It popped the crystal in my watch and all of a sudden my ears just filled up and I couldn't hear anything. It completely filled my eustachian tube and my temperature went up to about 103 and I couldn't hear anything. I lost my balance. I had not sense of equilibrium. I was very shaky. Well there is nothing more un-nerving than to be so plugged up you can't hear, I couldn't hear my own voice, I couldn't hear what I was saying, I couldn't even hear a hum, nothing. So they had all the major networks there plus statewide television and there were some people in the audience, and I went on that night to give that speech. I should probably give you a copy of the speech I gave in Maine, it is somewhat different than the one I gave the night before or several days before, and there has been an analysis done, by the way of a student of the University of Maine, studying in English, or speech or whatever, picking that speech apart, I guess not picking it apart but analysing it, what I tried to accomplish. It wasn't too far wrong. But what I did back in Maine, I reduced everthing down to the level of the Governor of Maine. In fact I was going to include that in the first draft I had written. I was going to give that one from the rostrum over here in the Committee, but I decided there wasn't enough time to get that all in. I was very conscious of the 15 minute limitation. So, I deleted it. I think that Hungate used something similar to it. Yeah, I remember grinning to myself saying, son-of-a-gun, I was going to use it and I'm glad that I didn't. Because Hungate came a long time before I did, so I was just as happy that I didn't. That was in my first draft, so I when I went back to Maine I put it back in. What I had before and changed it somewhat. From the approach, the Governor did this, this, this and this ---what would your reaction be? It was very well received.

- WSC - I was nervous because I couldn't hear and I couldn't tell if my voice was loud enough. I was perspiring rather profusely. at the time. It was a very uncomfortable feeling, the knowledge that this was my statement to the people of Maine and I couldn't hear it. It unsettled me and all, but it was well received I guess. It switched everything around as far as public attitude was concerned.
- SL - Do you remember on the day before, the actual vote, do you remember your immediate reaction?
- WSC - Let me come back, Steve. I remember I felt so bad when I got back here, it was on Monday we were bringing article two, and I can recall that there was one point where I found myself getting a bit strident which I rarely do. I hadn't done at least while I'd been down here. But I recall during part of the debate on Monday I got into that bit, "Isn't this amazing, isn't that amazing." I was being overly sarcastic and I was getting so fed up some of the arguments that were being made. But Normally it would not have gotten me. The problem was that I could hear just a little bit that day but I couldn't really; I had to do some lip reading, I couldn't really hear everything and I felt my eyes, I was pretty hoarse at the time, bad voice, felt lousy and I think that contributed to my little bit of stridency. I felt bad about it, and I said something about the American Goulag akaug Pelligo. I think that was on the, that was on Monday. I think there was a little bit of over statement there, but I had been reading that book and it had come across. All the President's Men I read twice, but there was a section in there where Solzenick starts talking about the fear that was being generated by the police tactics about coming to the door and dragging the citizens out and after awhile, he said you just became so apprehensive about when they were coming, you wait and wait, you finally thank them for coming to finally end this kind of terror. of waiting. There was something similar to that in All The President's Men when a secretary went out to that lunch with Bernstein and the fear she went through just being seen with one of them and when she got back, the word had already gotten back to the White House that she had been at lunch with one of them. It was that kind of thing. I think it struck my mind that here are the seeds here, you're being watched constantly and that's what prompted that statement about the faint spector of an American Goulag akaug Pelligo. It was a bit overstated, I think that was just because I was irritated, sick.
- SL - Do you remember your immediate reaction right after the vote, that Saturday night? It's interesting in a couple of interviews so far of the members of the Coalition, they said one of the things that struck them was that some of the members of the Committee were acting, in other words they had been

- SL - preparing for quite a while for the TV cameras for that vote, and that sort of upset them at the time --
- WSC - I felt that was true. Well I didn't, I wasn't one of those who cried. I guess I felt like the deed is done type of thing. Measuring up to this, what you had to do, doing it and not feeling particularly happy about it. Kind of wishing why did I have to be in the middle of all this, but it's over and I'm satisfied that I did the right thing. I had no regrets about the decision itself. I guess it's something you come to the end of a long ordeal and it's finally over. And the hardest thing is to get over the first step I guess. I guess we're all struck by the historical impact of that that was going to have, the historical and contemporary impact. And you are saying okay, the deed is done. It is kind of a sense of relief that you made the decision and it's done. Now it's irreversable and it is over. But I felt that there was an awful lot of acting in terms of the members of, not so much on our side but on the other side, there was no acting on Chuck Wiggins part. He really deeply felt that, and when his head dropped when he heard the vote, that's Chuck Wiggins. But when some of the hired partisans on the other side who were fainting. I thought that their emotions were disgusting. That may be ungracious on my part. You just know that there wasn't too much room for sympathy or empathy or anything else for Richard Nixon.
- SL - We were asking about article one and two, now what about article three?
- WSC - You mean McClory's article three?
- SL - Yeah.
- WSC - I had no intention of supporting that because I just felt that you can't rarify a failure to comply into an article of impeachment. If we had cited him for contempt, if we had been up to that, which we didn't. Then I think it could have been an article of impeachment. But I had preferred and had announced for some time all along that he had failed to comply with our subpoenas and I would simply draw the negative implication that the information was damaging and that would be persuasive with me. But unless we were willing to bring a citation for contempt so that the House could pass upon his failure to comply, then I just think we could not raise it to an impeachable offence.
- SL - In your assessment of the various offenses presented, what role did the offenses of past President's play?
- WSC - Well, none. You mean Andrew Johnson?
- SL - Any of the past Presidents.
- WSC - You mean what action on the part of all past Presidents in the field of abuse and so forth. It really wasn't relevant fact to me. I had lots of mail on this thing saying look at what Kennedy did, look at what Johnson had done. And I said yes that's true, but is that the type of conduct that we want to rectify and say these are

WSC - the standards to which we would hold up for our children or ourselves as the type of conduct that we want to let officials engage in. What was done in the past really didn't have any bearing to me on this.

TM - Do you think it possibly has been say from FDR's time a gradual buildup of Executive power, there has been somewhat lessened because of this exercise of impeachment. Do you feel that there was a concentration of power?

WSC - I think that there has been a growing concentration of power ever since FDR. That is one of the reasons why I would not have voted for impeachment on the impoundment issue. It wasn't so much the President usurpation of powers, it was Congress yielding it up, turning it over. I just felt that there were some abuses in past administrations and if I had been there and there had been an impeachment article, it might have warranted their impeachment as well. But I didn't think that what ever they had done in the past was dispositive of what standard we hold this President to. We are not talking about a retroactive application of unfair standards. Simply Kennedy because may have bumped somebody or whatever that simply didn't decide the question of whether or not the President has abused his power. We have lost control of our appropriations process because we don't have a system; only last year when they couldn't overturn the vetos, they decided to pass the budget reform act. I didn't think we could turn around and impeach him for what we had a complicity in. So the role of Congress in all this was very important to me, and involved him too. They also had the 45 day resolution which allowed him to continue to bomb Cambodia, which I voted against. I voted to have an immediate cut-off of the bombing and that failed and they went with the compromise, but I felt that even if there had been some secret bombing, if we had knowledge of it afterwards and still gave it support, we couldn't very well say that you should be removed. And that's in the year of spending money on his personal residences and we compare that with Johnson and how much money that man made while in office. But for Jack Brooks to lead the way in that, I thought was another example of his partisanship which was unwarranted and did not belong in the hearings, if you compare that with what Johnson did, in terms of going out a millionaire. It didn't really compare, to the key issues of abuse of power and coverup.

SL - Do you think as a result of the inquiry future generations will have a clear definition of an impeachable offense?

WSC - I'm not sure that there will be any clearer definition. I don't think we came to a clear definition of an impeachable offense, other than the general statement that's when you have abuse of power granted or usurpation of power not granted. There are some broad guidelines. I think it will serve as a sobering thought to any future President. Remind them that power is there and that it can be used if your are engaged in similar type of conduct.

- SL - Has your opinion about the news media in the country changed as a result of your experience? 3-13 slanted
- WSC - I don't think it's changed much, I think it's reaffirmed my original opinions, I think it's slanted. I think it was slanted during this.
- TM - In what way?
- WSC - I think there was a bias toward impeachment. Or against Nixon or whatever, it was there. I think it still is a left, that there are more liberal than there are conservatives in the media located here in Washington. I won't say it reached the point of being unfair as somewhat biased, not unfair. I find it in my own State too at times but I think there is a definite bias toward the left and not to the right.
- TM - Could impeachment have occurred without the press?
- WSC - ~~No it could not have occurred without the press~~, as a matter of fact, impeachment would not have occurred at all and a good many other factors involved, and the press being one of them. It would not have occurred without the Senate Watergate Committee. If you stop and think of what we did in terms of our investigation, we did very little, all it was was a compilation of material that had already been gathered by the Senate Watergate Committee. If you take away the Senate Watergate Committee, if you take away Judge Sirica, who I think even went beyond the bounds of propriety in some instances in getting at the truth of Watergate, I think if you had any other judge you probably would have had a different result, not too many would have handed out a 35-year provisional sentence to make sure that someone talked and told the truth. If you didn't have the Supreme Court Ruling on the necessity of turning over the tapes, that's another factor I think that lent a lot of weight to it. I would say that without all these other factors you wouldn't have had impeachment on the merits of what the Committee did on its own. It would not have voted for impeachment. The media was necessary I think in terms of the coverage. It was an educational process to come from the thought of impeachment at one time being the equivalent of capital punishment of a President. The initial reaction of people talking about impeachment over that long period constantly writing about it, hearing about it, build up a certain credibility cause the more you talk about it the less dangerous it seems in terms of upsetting the stability of the country. The more people heard about it and learned about it, and read about it, the more acceptable, of at least the discussion of it was. And no longer was just something for cocktail party talk by the elite. It became more familiar to the people and less threatening.
- SL - What benefits do you think came out of this for our system?

WSC - We not enter upon a history of a period rich in disaster, gloomy with wars, rent by sedition, and savaged at its very hours of peace, ceremonies of religion are violated, the sea is crowded with exiles, informers are rewarded with detestable wages and he who has no enemies, destroyed by his friends, -- then I go on, I say that the sea is crowded with exiles with the author referring to the Vietnam refugees, informers are rewarded with detestable wages is the author referring to John Dean or Jeb Mcgruder who draw some \$3,000 per appearance in reaping royalties and so forth. I point out some of the inconsistencies in our society. They have the responsibility for that, if they want to pay \$3,000 it is sort of like an x-rated movie -- it appeals to the purient interest without informing very much. As far as whether it is good for the country, I don't know, it's too early to tell, but I think it has had a good effect upon the country as far as what the meaning of the Constitution is and redefining our allegences and what that article is all about I gave you. As to whether or not, this is not what we are writing about, whether ultimately we will cleanse our system or stain it, it's too early to tell.

TM - Why did you wait until May of '75 to make a decision to tape your recollections and your role in the Coalition?

WSC - Well, I think it's going to be important looking back, 50 or 100 years from now. As we look back over the Johnson impeachment for som illumination and help and guidelines, and so forth. I think that's important -- an important part of our history that the public understand how this all came about. I told you I'm writing something of my own cause I want one day to disclose how in my mind it all really happened, nto what everyone else saw and all the public posturing, but how I think it all came together. So I think it's important, it's important someday someone have this, I'm not sure that now is the time as far as I'm concerned. Because I think it would be lost in much of the junk that has been written about Watergate and about impeachment and that is not what I want. I would like to see someday that everone, each of us, write our own stories as how we came to our separate versions of what was right. Did you take a look at the copy of the article that I gave you?

SL - I was just glancing at it.

WSC - Right, well take a look at that. Just the opening line is that I talk about this very thing that people tend to preserve the best recollections of ourselves and now I started to put some other comments in there about how amused I am that they now point almost the Byzantine strategies concocted by O'Neil and Rodino and Doar to somehow crack the conscioues of the individual members and its laughable, you know in terms of how they designed to do it, to crack our conscioues. That had nothing. Their strategies were going asunder all the time, so many times that their strategies could have exploded in their faces. And I don't think it had any bearing whatsoever how each member ultimately came up to his conclusion.

TM - Very good, thank you.

WSC - Okay.