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Biographical Note

Albert, who represented Oklahoma as a Democrat in the House from 1947 to 1977, talks about a range of political and legislative issues during John F. Kennedy’s time in Congress and as president.

Transcript of Oral History Interview

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Date: March 20, 1971

CARL B. ALBERT

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Oral History Interview

With

CARL ALBERT

May 7, 1965
Washington, D.C.

By Charles T. Morrissey

For the John F. Kennedy Library

MORRISSEY: I understand that you and John Kennedy were freshman members of the Eightieth Congress.

ALBERT: That's right.

MORRISSEY: Did you know him well?

ALBERT: Oh, yes; I knew him. As a matter of fact, I have a picture, I think, of one of the first meetings we had after we came to Congress. I prize that picture.

MORRISSEY: Did you serve on any committees together?

ALBERT: No, I didn't. I didn't serve with him on committees.

MORRISSEY: Any common legislative problems that you would consulted one another on?

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ALBERT: We talked together quite a bit about certain legislation--labor legislation;

we discussed veterans legislation a time or two, and he talked with me about farm legislation.

MORRISSEY: At that time, of course, he was representing a district that I don't think had a single farmer in it.

ALBERT: No, he was representing a metropolitan part of the Boston area, I am sure.

MORRISSEY: What was his viewpoint at that time on the general farm situation?

ALBERT: I think he recognized the importance of agricultural legislation. He did not at that time, I think, have his views completely formulated. I don't think he had made his mind up, as a matter of fact. He gradually turned to more or less the Clint Anderson [Clinton P. Anderson] philosophy, which was the sliding scale price support program. All of those things are more or less outmoded now; but at that time, that was considered to be the position of the conservative supporters

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of farm legislation as against the Farmers' Union point of view, which was for high price supports and high guaranteed farm incomes.

MORRISSEY: Do you have any specific recollections of these conversations in regard to veterans or labor legislation?

ALBERT: I remember talking to him about the labor bill which we had up at the time.

MORRISSEY: Was this the Taft-Hartley?

ALBERT: Yes. He was very much opposed to the House version of that bill. He was opposed to the final bill. But he told me that he did not consider the final version which was adopted to be a slave labor bill. There were things, specifically, to which he objected. He did think the House bill, the Hartley Bill, was far too drastic. I remember that. One of the things he talked to me about in the veterans field was the question of pensions. He seemed to have the view which, I think, many people, shared--that we should not go

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overboard on pensions for those who are not disabled. We should concentrate on G.I. Bill training and that sort of thing; and for direct living subsidies we should consider mainly those who were disabled and those who were old. He had pretty definite views on that subject, and I think he more or less kept them through the years.

MORRISSEY: The prevailing impressions that we have from things that have been written today about John Kennedy as a congressman give the picture that he was a very informal person--dressed casually...

ALBERT: Yes, he was. He was very friendly; and he had an instinct for making people like him because, I think, he liked people. He was not an aggressive sort of person. In some ways, he was slightly shy. But he was very friendly. I met him the first day I was in Congress. Not from that day until he died did he ever fail to know or recognize me, regardless of where he saw me. I could be

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in Iowa--I'd run into him in different places. He always knew me and always spoke to me, long before I was leader of the House.

MORRISSEY: Did he ever speculate on his own political future?

ALBERT: Not in my presence. I knew, of course, that he was ambitious. But he never said much about it. I think I really became convinced that he could be a winner when the Southerners backed him against Kefauver [C. Estes Kefauver] for Vice President at Chicago in the second Stevenson campaign. He really caught on pretty fast there. With a little time, he would probably have had the vice presidential nomination. He almost got it.

MORRISSEY: Were you there...?

ALBERT: Yes, I was there.

MORRISSEY: ...at the time of the Kennedy-Kefauver race?

ALBERT: That's right.

MORRISSEY: Do you have any recollections of the turmoil in that long evening?

ALBERT: Yes, I do. And, of course, my state, my

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governor at that time, was for Kefauver. And I think that helped save Kefauver, actually. Personally, I hoped that Kennedy might make it; but he didn't, although I liked Kefauver, too. Had Kennedy's views been more liberal on farm legislation and water resources development, he would have been nominated for Vice President at that time. Those were the issues that turned the tide to Kefauver.

MORRISSEY: Moving ahead a little bit, Kennedy's Catholicism in 1960, of course, lost him votes in certain areas. And one of the things that intrigues us is that so many of the people who were for him for the vice presidential nomination in '56 came from areas...

ALBERT: That's right.

MORRISSEY: ...where he lost votes in '60 because of his religion. Do you recall the religious, aspect coming up in '56 during his vice presidential campaign?

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ALBERT: No, I think most people that I heard talk about it thought it would be an asset--thought that his being an Irish Catholic from Boston would be a great political asset. And I am sure in my own mind that he would have strengthened the ticket. Even though Kefauver was a good man, he was from the wrong section, his name wasn't as easy to pronounce as Kennedy's name, and he didn't give the ticket the national slant that Kennedy would have given it had he been on the ticket with Stevenson, who was from the Middle West.

MORRISSEY: Going back to this point we talked about earlier, Kennedy's view of farm problems, approaching 1960, would you consider this to be a major obstacle on his course to getting the nomination?

ALBERT: I don't think it was too important. In the first place, by 1960 he was moving the other way; and farm thinking was moving the other way; and they were more or less meeting. I

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don't think it was a major problem. It would have been much more of a problem eight years before or even four years before than when he got the nomination.

MORRISSEY: Did you expect your state to go Democratic in 1960?

ALBERT: No, I didn't. I knew my district would, but I...

MORRISSEY: I understand that your district was the only...

ALBERT: It was the only district in the state which went Democratic. And the religious problem was a bit of a problem even in my district because Kennedy didn't run as well as the average Democratic nominee runs. He didn't run as well as Stevenson, although he was a more popular candidate from the standpoint of the average person. There was some suspicion, though, about the religious

matter, which had more or less been inherited, I think, from the Al Smith [Alfred E. Smith] campaign. I have a strong Democratic district, and Kennedy

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had support from leading members of the so-called Bible Belt churches: the Baptists, the Christians, the Methodists, and all the more or less standard Protestant denominations in that area. But it wasn't a one-way street. I think there was some suspicion among a certain group as to what might happen if we had a Catholic President, although I think that his election quickly allayed those fears. He was very popular in my district at the time of his death.

MORRISSEY: Do you think that this is the primary reason why he lost the state--the religious issue?

ALBERT: It was a contributing factor. I'm not sure it was the primary reason. Eisenhower [Dwight D. Eisenhower] was very popular and had carried Oklahoma twice; and the religious issue wasn't present at that time. I think Oklahoma was becoming a little bit more conservative at the time. It was in one of its conservative trends. I think they misread Kennedy. I think Kennedy was more conservative than Stevenson [Adlai E. Stevenson] or

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Truman [Harry S. Truman], either one. But I don't think it was read that way in my state. I may be wrong, but that was my feeling. I think several factors contributed to his losing the state: the strong support that the Republicans and the conservative Democrats gave the Republican ticket had a lot to do with it; and, of course, Nixon was closer to home, at least in the thinking of people there.

MORRISSEY: Did Kennedy campaign much in Oklahoma?

ALBERT: Well, he made a speech in Oklahoma City just before the election. We had a state rally. It was a tremendous rally. He was a real favorite among the yellow-dog Democrats, as we call them. The real down-the-road Democrats were as enthusiastic for him as any Presidential candidate since, maybe, Truman. I think Truman was the most popular of the recent candidates down there. Of course, Johnson [Lyndon B. Johnson] was popular because he had come from that region. And one of the things

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that I think contributed to Kennedy's problem in Oklahoma was that Johnson was an overwhelming favorite in Oklahoma. Bob Kerr [Robert S. Kerr] was really the manager of Senator Johnson's campaign for the presidency. He was, I'm sure, the one person who

did the most for him because he was a power in the Senate. And he went all over Oklahoma convincing people, or trying to convince people, that Johnson would make a stronger candidate than either Stevenson or Kennedy; and he did a good job of it. I would say that the build-up which led to the defection against Kennedy was partly due to the big build-up that Johnson had had in the state before. There was another factor which was related to this.

Howard Edmondson [James Howard Edmondson] was Governor. Howard supported Kennedy. And Howard was about the only person among the leadership of the Democratic party at that time in the state who supported Kennedy. Howard had just gone through the problem of

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trying to put over his platform, which turned out to be, except in a few instances, rather unpopular. And the whole legislative organization of the state was violently opposed to him. The leadership of both houses of the State Legislature was against him. They resented the fact that he went for Kennedy and stood out as the only one and wouldn't go with the overwhelming majority of the delegates. And I think that hurt Kennedy in the general election, not that these fellows, themselves, didn't support Kennedy. They did, but not with the enthusiasm they would have had had they not resented Howard Edmondson.

Edmondson had made an attack on the so-called old guard, the political machine of Oklahoma, which included the leaders of the Legislature and the County Commissioner organization. And between the two, they were the most powerful political group in the state. I think they almost all solidly voted for

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Kennedy. But the reaction, the fight they had about the nomination, about the convention, about the delegates, held over into the general election campaign.

MORRISSEY: Had you been a supporter of Mr. Johnson's candidacy before the convention?

ALBERT: Well, I had, of course, been a supporter of Johnson. I'd been very close to Johnson. I was also friendly with Kennedy. I made no campaign against Kennedy. I did endorse Johnson because we were from the same section of the country, and Johnson was my personal friend even more than Kennedy, although Kennedy, too, was my friend. I had not had the association with him that I had had with Johnson. Johnson was a neighbor from Texas. We had the same problems and more or less similar outlooks on national issues. Along with nearly everybody else in my district, I supported Johnson. I think, except for Edmondson and for Monroney [A.S. Mike Monroney], everybody supported Johnson. Monroney supported

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Stevenson. Monroney has always been sort of a lone wolf in those things, you know. But after Kennedy was nominated, I strongly supported him. After he became President all Democrats and many Republicans were very elated over the quality of his leadership.

MORRISSEY: Were you involved in the arrangements at the convention which led to the Kennedy-Johnson ticket?

ALBERT: No, I wasn't. That was handled, primarily, I think, by Kennedy himself; Mr. Rayburn [Samuel T. Rayburn], who had first objected to it; and Bob Kerr. Those men were, I think, the ringleaders, so far as I could tell, in the operation that got Johnson on the ticket.

MORRISSEY: Let me ask you about the relationship between Mr. Kerr and John Kennedy, both when the two of them were senators and then after John Kennedy became President. Were they particularly close? Did Senator Kerr have an influence on John Kennedy's thinking

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about timber, land, water, and resources?

ALBERT: Well, I'm sure he had some influence. But I wasn't close enough to what they were doing to be able to answer that. I think Senator Kerr felt that he could beat Kennedy in the Senate whenever he wanted to. He took him on, on the Medicare bill. And he told me, "I'm going to beat him. He thinks he can beat me." Even after he was nominated, you know, he took him on. Kerr had tremendous confidence about his ability to maneuver legislation through the Senate. He did break with him on the Medicare legislation. I, personally, was on the other side of that legislation. But Kerr successfully defeated Kennedy's attempt there. And he was successful, again, after Kennedy became President--he wouldn't yield on the issue. I think he came more and more to love and admire Kennedy as he went further into the presidency. President Kennedy was awfully good to Senator Kerr. He came down to his

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ranch. He opened a road near by. He gave him a lot of personal attention. And I think that Senator Kerr appreciated that. I'm sure it was helpful to both of them.

MORRISSEY: In regard to the expansion of the Rules Committee in early 1961, that was a very close vote on a very important issue. Were you involved in that?

ALBERT: Oh, yes, yes.

MORRISSEY: Could you tell me about it?

ALBERT: Well, we knew that in order to put over the program, we had to have a voting majority on the Rules Committee. The alternate methods of getting legislation to the floor were so cumbersome that you couldn't put through a program without getting control of the Rules Committee. Mr. Rayburn, of course, was the leader in that. I'd like to say this. I heard him say to President Kennedy, "Mr. President, I'm not going to say anything to you about the Rules Committee fight. It's a legislative fight. The

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Administration has nothing to do with it, and we're going to handle it ourselves in our way." He was very blunt about that to the President, you know--about Hill problems. So, he said to the President, "We're not ever going to discuss this." And he volunteered this so as to save the President the embarrassment of maybe asking about it, which he never did. Mr. Rayburn, then, had this matter in his mind for several days because I talked to him about it at the "Board of Education" three or four times, heard him discuss it. I talked to him privately about it. He conferred with me. He never said what he was going to do at first. There was a strong desire on the part of a group of more liberal members of the House to purge Southern defectors and try to get at the problem that way. Mr. Rayburn thought it over, and he decided that that was not the best way to do it. So he, instead, decided to add three members to the

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Rules Committee so that we could control it by a one-vote margin. Mr. Rayburn did oppose purging, and I don't know whether or not Williams [John Bell Williams] and Watson [Albert William Watson] would have been purged this year had he been here. He had a different attitude toward that than Speaker McCormack [John W. McCormack].

MORRISSEY: Is it your impression that not just the President but his legislative liaison people took the Speaker's advice and kept their hands off this proposal?

ALBERT: Well, as far as I know, they did. They never did call me about it. They never said a word to me about it. If they did, it would have been only with members that they had personal connections with. They would have only muddied up the waters had they gotten involved in it openly.

MORRISSEY: I have heard that John Kennedy felt encumbered in his legislative program by two facts. One was the narrow margin of his victory in 1960. The other was that he had been a junior member

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of both houses, never part of the leadership. Did you sense that he was sensitive about both of these in his dealings with the leadership?

ALBERT: Well, I don't think so. I didn't feel it. I think he was doing much better than the margin of his victory would give him the right to expect. I think he was doing quite well, as a matter of fact. Things were moving a little slow, but I think he was doing well. I know that he looked up to Sam Rayburn, as nearly everybody else did. And Sam Rayburn had no desire to do anything but to make the Kennedy Administration a success. That was certainly a strong asset. Of course, Vice President Johnson was very modest about the matter. He never did try to inject himself into White House problems or to embarrass the President. I never once heard him embarrass the President. He dropped the Johnson technique of pushing and having his way, you know. He was very cooperative,

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and he recognized that the President was the leader. I don't think that Johnson ever did anything that would have embarrassed President Kennedy at all. Whether President Kennedy had some inner feelings about that, I don't know. He had so much popular support after a few weeks in office that I think that that would have allayed any problems that he ever had either about his seniority or his being a part of the so-called establishment of the Senate--or not being a part of it.

MORRISSEY: Comparing Kennedy's relationship with the legislative leadership at the outset of his term against what it was towards the last few months before the assassination, were there differences? Did he seem to have more assurance about himself and his program?

ALBERT: I think that the truth of the matter is that Kennedy had enthusiastic support from legislative leaders almost from the time he was nominated--certainly from the time he started making an active campaign and began

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showing Nixon up in his campaigning, in his television programs, and the fine appearance and reaction he was getting--and he was doing this with a lot of handicaps; he was Catholic; he was from an isolated part of the country, the extreme northeast; he was younger than many people think a President should be; he had not been a national leader, he'd been an important public figure. Considering all these things, I think he did extremely well. I think that his winning the election was almost a miracle--following Eisenhower. And when you're in charge of the administration, you have access to many more ways of getting financed and that sort of thing, you know. The average person who is interested in politics is interested in victory. And following Eisenhower, I think that most of the professional politicians thought that Kennedy would lose. But his marvelous campaign, the fact that he came up from being an underdog, against a man who

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had been elected vice president twice, the whole party thought he was terrific. I talked to Speaker Rayburn during the campaign. I went down by his house. His district bordered my district. He said, "Boy, this young man, Kennedy, is showing real quality." I put that in as background in order to try to answer your question. From the day the leadership first met with President Kennedy he had the complete support, unswerving support, of the entire Democratic leadership, in both branches of Congress. No question about it. Senator Mansfield had supported Johnson; Humphrey, I think, had probably supported somebody else, maybe himself; certainly, Rayburn had supported Johnson. I think McCormack was for Kennedy. Later on, however, the President had the devoted cooperation of the entire leadership. And as far as I'm concerned, he had my complete devotion. I did everything I knew how to do to help make his program a success. I

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looked upon him as a friend and one of the most charming and attractive people I ever knew in my life, which he was, of course. And that was his greatest political asset--his personality.

MORRISSEY: I was wondering if in the first few of the leadership practices, for example, he seemed a little unsure of himself, a little awkward about how one goes about this matter of...

ALBERT: No, I think he was...

MORRISSEY: ...talking to his former superiors on the Hill?

ALBERT: No, I didn't sense that if he did. He had an efficient and very devoted staff. No President ever had a more devoted staff than he. Most Presidents, of course, have a devoted staff; but he had a very devoted staff, a hard-working staff. I think he felt equal to the job. I felt that way about him. I think he recognized that he was something entirely different--he was now President. While he hadn't been a leader

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in Congress, he had the leadership of the nation and the free world on his back. And I think he had the confidence that he could fulfill his responsibilities as leader.

MORRISSEY: Do you have any other recollections of any contacts Mr. Rayburn had with John Kennedy? Were there any comments the Speaker made about Kennedy, before or after Kennedy became President?

ALBERT: Well, he often referred to the President as being a very strong and dynamic leader; he thought he'd have a great administration. I can't remember many specific instances just out of the air. I'm sure if I could associate myself with certain specific events, I could remember them. But I just don't happen to, offhand.

MORRISSEY: After Mr. Rayburn died, there was speculation on whether his successor would be yourself or Mr. Bolling [Richard Walker Bolling]. Did you have any feeling that the White House was pushing Mr. Bolling?

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ALBERT: No, no. I had no such feeling. Well, I don't think that there was any real speculation as to whether Rayburn's successor would be Mr. Bolling or myself. I think everybody knew that McCormack would be. There'd been some talk about younger people, but that was all a product of the minds of newspapermen, in my opinion. I never contributed to any of the articles that came out saying that I was a candidate for the Speakership. Even before Mr. Rayburn died they were speculating, you know. And Mr. Bolling's race and mine for the leadership, which, of course, is the secondary office, was a friendly competition. There was nothing that anyone could say that could justify any conclusion that in the race for Majority Leader, the White House was on his side. I talked to the President about it, myself, within a week or less after Mr. Rayburn died. I told the President that I thought I would win; and he said he thought I would, too. He wasn't taking any part in it.

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I will say this. This is an entirely different matter. I think that there were people in the White House and in the Administration who were for Mr. Bolling. And there were people who were for me, and I'd say there were probably more for me than there were for him. The working group, the group that worked the Hill, I'd say, were almost one hundred per cent for me. At least, most of them were for me. Maybe some of the fellows who knew Bolling better and were more interested in academic aspects were for him. I think we both had support, but I don't think you could say that the President was involving himself in that thing at all. He was very practical, and I think he figured I'd win.

MORRISSEY: I garbled my question. I meant to refer to the race for the Majority Leadership and not the Speakership. Moving on, it's difficult for me to anticipate how we might talk about all the various legislative issues that

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came up during the Kennedy presidency. Of course, you have an appointment with the Speaker, I understand, at 11 o'clock. I've got a list here of the various issues, and maybe if you ran your eyes over them, any recollections you could offer about the genesis of any

of those, their history in the House, the strategy of those for and against, perhaps this would be the best way of handling the matter in the time available to us.

ALBERT: The very first one, the Minimum Wage.... The President, of course, had made a campaign commitment to try to increase the minimum wage and broaden the coverage. There was an Administration bill. It was obvious that it was going to be difficult to pass the Administration bill; and there was a Republican substitute, which had a lot of support, particularly among Southern members. And Mr. Carl Vinson was urging that we take--I think it was the Ayres [William H. Ayres] substitute. I forget exactly whose substitute

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it was. Arthur Goldberg [Arthur J. Goldberg], who was then Secretary of Labor, now Justice Goldberg, came up and discussed this matter with us. We went over both the Administration bill and the substitute. Mr. Goldberg said that he thought that we could salvage much more than the substitute would contain, and things that were very, very important. So he sat down and immediately outlined what he thought we could do. Then they picked me out as the person to offer it. I was Whip then. We had to get it out of the atmosphere of the Committee on Education and Labor, where they were really battling one another over it. So I offered the substitute. It lost by a tie vote, which showed how close Goldberg was calling the shot. But it passed in the Senate. When it came back, the House took it. So I would say that Goldberg was probably one of the brightest men that any President ever brought into the Cabinet. I was tremendously impressed by the ability of the

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man. I hated to see him leave the Cabinet because, in my judgment, he was one of the really, really top thinkers in the Administration. He's an illustration of the quality of men Kennedy brought into his Cabinet. Had it not been for Goldberg, we would have gotten much less out of the minimum wage legislation. The President was very elated over what he got because he got substantially what he went out for. You always have to compromise a little, and the compromises were heavily directed in the President's favor on that bill.

Depressed areas was, of course, one of the big things that the President had talked about. I think the President figured--and I might talk about depressed areas, manpower retraining, tax cut, and tax reform all together--because President Kennedy had the feeling that one of his most important missions was to keep the economy moving and to tone it up, to move it faster, to expand it--that this was the only way that we

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could do all the things we had to do. Give people jobs; secure our national defense. And I think that his greatest effort was in that direction, as far as domestic legislation was

concerned. So, out of his Administration came ARA [Area Redevelopment Authority], APW [Accelerated Public Works], which were rifle shot efforts at specific areas. Of course, it was his administration that inaugurated Appalachia. All these things were in that direction; and, of course, Johnson agrees with him. Johnson hits harder, I think, at the poverty aspect. I think Kennedy was thinking more in terms of the total economy. Then, the tax cut. We have had almost a continuous rise in income, in national economic growth ever since Kennedy took office. I doubt that we would have been so politically strong, as we were when we went into the last campaign, had it not been for the background which Kennedy laid and for the legislation which he sponsored, which we did enact up here, including legislation

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which did involve manpower retraining, depressed areas, tax cuts, tax reforms. I think those were absolutely essential to the growth that we've had.

Housing. Of course, we passed a very broadened housing bill. Then there was the effort to establish the Department of Urban Affairs. The President, I think, was the first to understand that our country was becoming urbanized and that problems of the nation's cities should be coordinated. We couldn't meet the growing needs of cities by scattering functions all over the various departments of government. I think we'll pass that bill this year.

The balance of payments deficit, of course, was one of the things that concerned him all the time. We're still wrestling with that, but we've made steady progress ever since his time.

Water resources: in this area we've made more progress under Kennedy and Johnson than we ever had before.

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Medicare: the House has passed a Medicare bill, which is more comprehensive, which will do far more than either Kennedy or Johnson ever dreamed that we could do. The House, here, I think, has been--particularly the Committee on Ways and Means and its chairman, Mr. Mills [Wilbur D. Mills]--have been, really, the spark-plug of a great Medicare program.

Communications Satellite Corporation: I don't know whether there's anything much to be said about that. The President pushed it hard. He had some opposition from the liberals.

Aid to Education: we passed a great higher education bill, a vocational education bill.

Foreign Aid: always was a battle; is a battle now. I'm just running down these because I don't have time to...

MORRISSEY: Yes. I'd be most interested in your views

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on farm legislation during the Kennedy years.

ALBERT: Yes. Well, the President turned over to Freeman [Orville L. Freeman], Secretary of Agriculture, the matter of trying to get out farm programs that would keep farm income up, cut down the costs, and take a little of the chaos out of it. Freeman went to work. He did a good job. He overreached himself. He went further than it was possible to go and get legislation through Congress. We wound up with very practical bills in the feed grain program. I think they did a lot of good. We got a cotton program afterwards, which was about ready to be taken up when Kennedy was killed. That was the first major bill that Johnson put over after he became President, and it certainly has been beneficial. But we're no closer to a consensus on agricultural programs now than we were ten years ago. The technology of agriculture changes so fast, thinking changes so fast, the ends of farming and agriculture, generally, have

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changed so fast that it's going to be difficult for the government to solve these problems. Indeed the government is never going to solve them. All it can do is just to try to make adjustments that will keep farm depressions from taking place, will keep agriculture virile because one doesn't solve these problems. One just simply solves a temporary problem until the next major change in the agricultural economy takes place. There's no such thing as a perfect solution to the farm problem because the farm problem today won't be the farm problem tomorrow--with or without legislation. I think what we want to do is to try to maintain American farm production, which is a very simple and easy thing to do. What is our greatest farm problem politically--and probably our greatest asset nationally--is that we can out-produce the whole world. There's no danger in the foreseeable future of there being any shortage of food and fiber

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in this country. We do hope, however, that we can cut down the costs of agriculture. President Kennedy hoped for this; President Johnson does too. With civil rights, of course, the President had run on the basis of hoping that he could institute certain civil rights reforms. I don't think he ever expected to get the legislation which finally grew out of his and the Johnson Administration--the big bill we passed last year. Had that bill not come along, we'd probably have passed the voting rights bill, which we will pass this year, because that was the direction in which Kennedy was moving when he decided that it was necessary to go further in certain areas, particularly accommodations and employment and that sort of thing.

MORRISEY: Before we run out of time, I want to ask you about the President's visit to Big Cedar.

ALBERT: Yes. Well, he came down to Big Cedar to open a road, which somebody said had started

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nowhere and went nowhere; but that, of course, was wrong. In the most scenic part of Oklahoma, very beautiful country...

MORRISSEY: Am I correct in saying that that was in your district?

ALBERT: It was in my district, although I must confess that Senator Kerr had more to do with his coming than I did, because he was Senator Kerr's guest. Senator Kerr's ranch was in that county. But he did me more good, probably, in my race for majority leader there than anybody ever did because he took about two-thirds of his time telling how hard, as Whip, I had worked for the administration's program; and how much good I'd done, and how I'd cooperated in fight after fight. That, of course, helped me in Oklahoma. It raised my stature not only in my district but across the state and was used over and over by my friends in showing, while President Kennedy wasn't actively participating in House business, what he

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thought of me. I think he made a big impression on a tremendous crowd. After he had made his speech, he and Senator Kerr were both apparently excited. They moved off, and I had to get them back to cut the ribbon. They didn't remember what they'd come there to do. They were about to leave. [Laughter] Is there anything else before we wind up?

MORRISSEY: I don't think so. I see it's 10:55 up there by the clock.

ALBERT: I wish I could think of more.... You've done a good job of asking the questions.

MORRISSEY: Thank you very much.

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[END OF INTERVIEW]

Carl B. Albert Oral History Transcript
Name List

Anderson	Anderson, Clinton P.
Kefauver	Kefauver, C. Estes
Smith	Smith, Alfred E.
Eisenhower	Eisenhower, Dwight D.
Stevenson	Stevenson, Adlai E.
Truman	Truman, Harry S.
Kerr	Kerr, Robert S.
Edmondson	Edmondson, James Howard
Monroney	Monroney, A.S. Mike
Rayburn	Rayburn, Samuel T.
Johnson	Johnson, Lyndon B.
McCormack	McCormack, John W.
Williams	Williams, John Bell
Watson	Watson, Albert William
Bolling	Bolling, Richard Walker
Vinson	Vinson, Carl
Ayres	Ayres, William H.
Goldberg	Goldberg, Arthur J.
Mills	Mills, Wilbur D.
Freeman	Freeman, Orville L.