

This is an interview with Mr.H.Roemer McPhee in Mr. McPhee's offices in Washington, D.C., on February 3, 1975. Present for the interview are Dr. Maclyn Burg of the Eisenhower Library staff and Mr. McPhee.

BURG: We had gotten you then to the White House from FTC [Federal Trade Commission], but your name you said had not gone that route: it had come another way.

MCPHEE: Yes, which we have all explained and gone over. McGeorge Bundy, you remember?

BURG: McGeorge Bundy, of course.

MCPHEE: To Dr. [Gabriel] Hauge and all that.

BURG: So you join and go with Dr. Hauge's operation at what time? I don't recollect the year, Mr.McPhee.

MCPHEE: In July of '54.

BURG: A little better than one full year into the administration.

MCPHEE: Yes.

BURG: Now, when you joined Hauge, what assignment were you given, what position did you have?

MCPHEE: His assistant. Special Assistant in the White House Office was my title.

BURG: And housed where may I ask, physically?

MCPHEE: In the Executive Office Building in an office that was off Hauge's secretary's office. In other words, our two secretaries were in one office. He had an office to the north side of that and I to the south--a small office and his was a large office.

BURG: And were you two the staff then?

MCPHEE: For his part of his responsibility to the President, yes.

BURG: Two secretaries. No one then beneath you as an assistant to you or aides of that kind.

MCPHEE: No.

BURG: Just the two. Now when you joined him, did he talk with you about the duties that you were going to perform? For example, was he able to fill you in on precisely what you'd be doing?

MCPHEE: Yes. I think I may have explained that on the earlier interview. He was the President's staff economic assistant as opposed to the Council of Economic Advisers which was a statutory body which worried about economic questions. He had in that staff capacity with the President responsibility, among other things, for a lot of statutes that were in the economic area that required consideration and action by the President. And it was Hauge's job to do the staff work on those, and he wanted me to work with him particularly on these things that related to statutes, laws, if you will, and that's why he had specified that he wanted a lawyer among the other qualifications that he sought in filling this position. The statutes, two that come to mind right away that we would deal with all the time, were the Agricultural Adjustment Act and also the escape clause provisions of the Trade Agreements Act, and there were others, but those were sort of major, I guess, and took a fair amount of the time. There were many other things, but those were two specific things I recall.

BURG: These are continuing responsibilities—

MCPHEE: Of any President.

BURG: —of any President and must be continually worked on throughout his administration—

MCPHEE: Yes. The Agricultural Adjustment Act--oh, agricultural interests in this country would petition to have imports of certain agricultural products regulated, curtailed, limited in such a way that that industry or that part of the agricultural industry in this country would not be injured. And the same was true of the escape clause. That was more for industry than agriculture, to prevent the influx of goods in such a way that it would do injury to whatever the corresponding U.S. industry was. So you had Agricultural Adjustment Act matters and escape clause matters, and they would well up to the President through the United States Tariff Commission which had to, in each instance, pass on whatever the petitioner's intention was and then pass it forward to the President with a recommendation for his actions.

BURG: So all rice industry protesting the foreign rice competition or all automobile industry protesting, if protest is the word, and then the recommendation is made. It comes up; it passes to your hands or Dr. Hauge's hands. You examine the recommendation yourselves and then pass it on to the President with a recommendation for or against.

MCPHEE: And interested groups from outside would come in and see us and urge for or against whatever the Tariff Commission had considered. They didn't always know the Tariff Commission's recommendation, but they--in other words they just made a presentation to us the way they had to the Tariff Commission for whatever their particular point of view was.

BURG: And so would it be typical then, Mr. McPhee, for the two of you to hear such a group, to hear their presentation?

MCPHEE: Yes. Or I might have seen them singly first. Yes, Hauge and I very often sat together and heard such presentations.

BURG: The odds are that we don't know how it would have happened and the setting in which it would have happened. They would make an appointment with you. They'd tell you what it is that they're going to be presenting to you. You schedule them into your—

MCPHEE: Right.

BURG: —day, and then meet them in your office. Would that be fairly typical?

MCPHEE: Well, with Dr. Hauge in his office, yes.

BURG: Now let me ask you how elaborate might those presentations be.

MCPHEE: Well, they might have been entirely oral, but usually they were accompanied by some kind of documentation which was left with us, maybe a letter stating the position or something like that.

BURG: Now, when you took your recommendation into the President, you had the thing from the Tariff people, you also have the presentation made by this particular group or industry. Was it his routine to accept the recommendation you made or to call for the supporting data that you had and then give it his own personal consideration?

MCPHEE: Yes, more the former. I mean he would want to know what Hauge's recommendation was. And we would take to him a draft of an action for him to take and if he agreed, having heard the pros and the cons, why then he would either take that action or perhaps modify it slightly or ask that more information be obtained or more study be given or whatever. But most often these were quite routine in one sense. I mean they weren't certainly routine to the people that were involved, but the handling of the bulk of the materials or anything like this was—there was a procedure that we followed and he would very often take the recommendation of his staff once he was satisfied that that was a recommendation that made sense in terms of everything that there was to know about it.

BURG: Now you yourself in your work, did you find it necessary then to do what would amount to research, checking into the backgrounds or these proposals, propositions that had been brought to you? I can't imagine you accepting them on faith, so I would assume that you checked them out.

MCPHEE: You must remember that we had the benefit of the Tariff Commission's detailed consideration. We're talking now about these Tariff Commission things, so he had that. Another thing we did that I suddenly think of is trade negotiations, proposals or a resolution of a trade negotiation, i.e., a trade agreement. We didn't have the benefit of a Tariff Commission recommendation then necessarily although they might have been involved and maybe the State Department, the Economic Division in State would be working on this and I'd be talking to those

people. If I thought we needed something else I'd set about getting it. But almost always it was from the government, from some government source, because the private parties had had ample opportunity to present their cause to various hearing procedures or informal procedures and that was all part of the record we got, so to speak.

BURG: May I ask, was there ever any kind of adversary situation, I chose at random the rice industry. If there was a possibility of some kind of protection being offered to our rice industry, they have made a presentation to you requesting this kind of thing; the Tariff Commission is going to give you some date on it. Would there also be another industry, another grain-cereal industry, which might want to make a presentation to you against

MCPHEE: Very definitely. Hauge never closed the door to any responsible interest--never--always heard them all, but never at the same time.

BURG: They would not be in the room together presenting their respective cases--no cross-argumentation.

MCPHEE: Correct.

BURG: Now, let me ask one further step along this line. Would you seek such presentation, let us say, from wheat growers, or would it have to be that they must be aware of what's going on and they must—

MCPHEE: We never really had to and they were aware of what was going on and they were anxious to make their pitch at the White House level just as they had been at any other level.

BURG: This sounds a lot like a ferociously busy, totally involved kind of thing, and only two of you doing it.

MCPHEE: Correct.

BURG: Did it stay that way for the period of time that you were with Dr. Hauge? Now this was, what, two full years that you were with him?

MCPHEE: Longer than that. From July of '54 to March of '57, so it's going on three years.

BURG: And there was no addition to your staff. There were just the two of you and the secretaries.

MCPHEE: Correct.

BURG: Let me ask you this:during that approximately three year period of time, did the volume of business, if we may use that term, done by your section increase? Or do you remember it as being pretty much of a level—

MCPHEE: Pretty much. There were major matters that came along which you think of. I was thrust right away into what was then the celebrated watch tariff matter. This was a question of whether we would impose a tariff or a quota or a combination of tariff and quota. I don't remember what the Tariff Commission recommended now or what was done, on imports of watches to protect the US horological industry from becoming extinct was the argument. And these were skills that were needed in making fuses that had timing devices in weaponry or what have you.

This is the kind of thing we'd all get into. And the President, eventually, he was very reluctant, as you may know, to impose any restrictions on international trade, but he did from time to time when he felt it was absolutely necessary and he did in the case of the watch tariff. There was—

[Interruption]

BURG: I hadn't thought about the spin-off from a very precise kind of industry of this sort. So this in effect would have had some damaging effect on American defense efforts of the time.

MCPHEE: That was the argument and, of course, there would be, important to add, when something came to the White House like that, it would be circularized among those departments and agencies of the government that were interested in the subject matter, and then they would send forward their views. So in the watch tariff case, we would have had a letter setting forth the position, for example, of the Department of Defense and also, no doubt, Treasury because of the tariff implications, and so we had all of that to help us, too. We really had a great deal of material that came along in the total file or the total records so to speak.

BURG: Now, Mr. McPhee, would any of this, either at that time or perhaps at a later time, would it have been handled, in this case, as part of the Operation Coordinating Board [OCB] activities?

MCPHEE: No.

BURG: It would have been kept with you.

MCPHEE: The Operations Coordinating Board activity was, as I always understood it, a follow up to National Security Council decisions. It was designed to make certain that National Security Council decisions were carried out. The President—

[Interruption]

MCPHEE: I've lost your question here with that interruption from the phone call.

BURG: I wondered whether the Operations Coordinating Board would have handled something like this.

MCPHEE: The President, as I always understood it, I never had anything to do directly with the OCB, but I knew the people that were staffing. He had set that up, as I remember it, I don't think it existed before the Eisenhower Administration. And he set it up for the sole reason of making certain the National Security Council decisions were carried through. We had nothing to do with that although this is not to say that the National Security staff people at the White House might not have had some input on something like this. They certainly had a perfect right to, and whether they did or didn't I couldn't remember a specific instance now.

BURG: Well, there were preliminary meetings that would have been held by the OCB before the National Security Council met and that was a place where often the departments, as you know, were informed as to matters that concerned them. And it occurred to me that this connection with National Security, the capability of turning out a precision fuse, that it might have fitted into that pattern too, but obviously in this case it did not.

MCPHEE: Well, it might have. I can't be sure that the National Security staff people didn't have something to say about that case. In fact, I rather think they did. And one outgrowth of all of this really, don't know whether specifically an out-growth of the watch tariff or whether that just contributed to it, was an amendment to the Trade Agreements Act that provided something beyond that which had existed to that time. The usual tariff escape clause action brought under the Trade Agreement was brought solely to answer the question of whether there was injury to the domestic industry. The National Security amendment to the Trade Agreements Act added a criterion for considering such applications--is there possible damage to the National Security even though there might not be injury to the industry, if you follow me.

BURG: Sure. And that followed the watch tariff affair, that amendment?

MCPHEE: No, the National Security Amendment to the Trade Agreements Act came along a couple of years later, I would say--maybe two or three years later.

BURG: So that might have been one of the things that did have an influence on it. Now, if I may, let me ask you a few questions about the kind of routine that you would follow. Typically it's the sort of thing we don't know much about, the kind of day that you might expect to have on almost any given day during this period of your White House Service. That is, when do you arrive at the White House?

MCPHEE: Well, I've forgotten now how often every week we had a staff meeting. Seems to me maybe three times. And those were at 8:30. And you had to be there then, and that was a general staff meeting- -do what was necessary to coordinate things that should be coordinated among the staff. Sherman Adams ran those. After him, General [Wilton B.] Persons. I generally got there around 8:30 or so, and I generally left around 7:30, I would say approximately, in the evening.

BURG: Drove in and out yourself—

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MCPHEE: Yes.

BURG: —in your own car.

MCPHEE: Right. Whenever I got there, if I'd gone to a staff meeting, I then went back to my own office unless I had meetings to go to, which were possible. But you're talking about a routine.

BURG: Yes, kind of a routine day.

MCPHEE: One of the things that Hauge wanted me to do always was to go through the economic journals—Wall Street Journal, Journal of Commerce—and there might have been one or two others, but in any event to look through there for those things that were of particular interest to us and to mark them in such a way that his attention was drawn to them. And I did that always, every day. Whatever the regular work was that we were doing, there was much correspondence to do, so that had to be dictated, and I might be preparing letters for his signature or writing some myself or we might be drafting letters even for the President's signature. Most things didn't require that kind of a response, but when they did, and they were in our area, we did them. And I would probably in the areas that I worked on for Hauge I did not, as I said earlier, work on everything Hauge did. He had a lot of traffic with the Council of Economic Advisers and on other things that I didn't get into, but on the things that I did work on him for, if there was a letter like that I'd probably be asked to take the first crack at it, and then he would work on it, and eventually it would go over to the President.

BURG: With the staff meeting in the morning, there was no way I suppose to predict how long that would take.

MCPHEE: About a half hour, I would say, roughly.

BURG: In that period of time, in that half hour meeting, there was a certain amount of exchange of information about what the various areas were doing and making you aware of things that might come under your scrutiny. Was Adams, in a sense, channeling that to you from his position or was it an interchange?

MCPHEE: Well, it was both and yet, the work wasn't assigned or parceled out there. That tended to be done otherwise, in meetings, you know, with whoever had the responsibility for any given subject. But the staff meetings, as I say, were merely to bring to our attention those things that were thought to be of common interest and importance.

BURG: All to the whole staff.

MCPHEE: Correct.

BURG: And information giving was basically Adams doing it or occasionally, I suppose, someone else rising to report on a—

MCPHEE: Correct.

BURG: —thing of interest to you all.

MCPHEE: And every week, I think, or every two weeks, I can't remember the frequency, we'd have a briefing perhaps from, oh, the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency] had a person who would come over and talk to us and just give us a rundown on matters that were of general interest and importance. They might not directly affect any of us, but these were things it was thought it would be useful for us to know. This is not to say that that was the only way that the CIA worked with the White House, far from it. They had some- thing of any particular importance in a given area, it would be done with that area and the rest of us would never know about it. I had no involvement with the CIA whatever in Hauge's office, except these briefings and only once in the Counsel's office when I went over there in '57 did I ever have an involvement with the CIA about something, which I can't even now remember what it was. But I remember they dropped whatever it was they wanted us to look at over in two parts--one person bringing one part and one person coming independently and bringing the other part and so on.

BURG: A pound of Cuban sugar and a Cuban cigar carried in. Now is it your recollection that those staff meetings, the meetings at 8:30 in the morning, pretty well acquainted you with the things that were going on in the White House and do you ever remember being shocked and dismayed at something which cropped up and simply hadn't been covered in those sessions?

MCPHEE: No.

BURG: Another way of asking whether they served their function well and—

MCPHEE: Oh, yes, I think so. But they weren't intended to cover the entire water front of the White House responsibilities, activities, and interests. No, they were really just to, as I said, be sure we were coordinated or informed on things where that was important, by no means everything that went on in the White House.

BURG: No, if we go back then to your office, your next move then is to read the journals—

[Interruption]

BURG: —it struck me as you talked about doing that work on the journals, marking things for Dr. Hauge's attention. But one criticism that's been advanced about the Eisenhower White House staff has been that all of you were so hard-pressed. The work- load was quite heavy on you, that it kept down the amount of contact that you might have with people outside the White House, and, so, even outside the executive departments. Did that happen to you or was there any need for you to make contact?



MCPHEE: I had no such impression at all because I spent a great deal of my time with people outside the White House, both from the private sector and outside the White House from the government sector, I mean on the phone or in meetings, so I never had that impression. And also, I think my whole impression of the Eisenhower White House was, certainly the part that I was involved in, was that it was quite open. If somebody wanted to come in they could come in. This is assuming they were responsible, you know, they weren't a crank or a quack.

You saw even some of those from time to time but tried to make it short. But I think the attitude, as I recall, it was one of, you know, somebody has something to say about something that is important why they were granted the time they requested.

BURG: I can see that in your job, particularly your job, almost hinged on the acquisition of knowledge from outside. There'd be no question of inbreeding or a closed circuit arrangement in your part of the operation. But you say that that part of the White House staff that you saw, you felt was quite open.

MCPHEE: Quite.

BURG: Now, would you then have lunch at that White House Mess?

MCPHEE: Almost always.

BURG: And, foolish question though it may seem, would you be eating usually with the same group of people?

MCPHEE: No, because you'd go into the staff mess and just sit down where there was an empty chair. And by far more often than not you did not know who you were going to eat lunch with. Now sometimes you would have a guest at the White House mess, then you'd know. But the bulk of the time you were just going over there to eat and sitting down with whoever was there from the staff secretary to whomever and on and on.

BURG: So that's another way in which information is disseminated and people stay in touch.

MCPHEE: Correct.

BURG: Now, would an afternoon—because your afternoon is a long afternoon, isn't it—stretching on out to about 7:30. Is that pretty much a repetition then of morning activities?

MCPHEE: I once stayed there to 4:00 a.m. I remember that. Something that had to be ready for the President the next day. But that was when I was in the counsel's office. So 7:30, but it could be later and it was almost never earlier. Go ahead, I interrupted you.

BURG: No, that's fine. We would expect to find you continuing the basic work of the morning, that is, it might be drafting correspondence; it might be running facts to ground,

telephones. There was nothing in the afternoon at all comparable in any way to the staff briefings of the morning.

MCPHEE: No.

BURG: That afternoon routine was--

MCPHEE: There were some other things. On Tuesdays, there were legislative leadership meetings, and on Thursdays there were Cabinet meetings. Once in a while, I went to those when I was with Hauge. When I was in the counsel's office I went to all of those. It was just the difference in the nature of my work. When I was with Hauge I'd go to those things when there was something maybe on the agenda of either one that had a relationship to what I was doing or was something I was working on.

But later in the counsel's office, the last nearly four years I was there, maybe not immediately but almost, in a while it got to be that I just was a regular staff person present at those two functions. I never attended a National Security Council meeting. It wasn't in my responsibility. As a matter of fact, almost everything that was done by the White House staff, the bulk of the staff was in the domestic area. The foreign matters, intelligence, foreign policy, those were all done by maybe one or two people on the White House staff, two or three, with the President and with people outside such as the Secretary of State, or what have you. But the meetings that, I went to were ones that bore some relationship to what my responsibilities were. In the counsel's office, you see, it was a lawyer's office. We were the President's lawyers and as such we were expected to have an involvement in many, many things. But in Hauge's office we were not expected to have an involvement, at least I wasn't. So that's why my vistas and my responsibilities were much wider and broadened very considerably when I made the transition from the Hauge office to the counsel's office.

BURG: And Hauge has been called by one or two scholars who've looked into the White House staff in the Eisenhower years part generalist and part specialist.

MCPHEE: Correct.

BURG: But as generalist, that was what he pretty well did himself. It was not delegated to you. Your task was the more specialized task that you've described to me.

MCPHEE: Well, if he was asked to work on, oh, the State of the Union Address or some speech or special message or something like that, I could get drawn into that, you see, by him. Maybe that's more in his generalist area than in his specialist area. The things I did not do with him, as I can see it and remember it now, were the things that related to what I might call the pure economics as opposed to statutory matters, let's say, that related to economics. But I'm sure that he spent time talking to Arthur Burns and to his members of the Council and to Steve [Raymond J.] Saulnier and his members of the council when Saulnier succeeded Burns about the business cycle and whatever else. Though I'd been an economics major in college, this was not my forte that's not why I was with Hauge and I did not participate with Hauge in that—

[Interruption]

MCPHEE: —policy was chaired by Clarence Randall. Here again, I had some involvement and I saw a lot of Clarence Randall. He saw a lot of Hauge. We saw a lot of each other--maybe together or whatever. I attended some CFEP [Council on Foreign Economic Policy] meetings, not many, but some. But here again, that's another category of responsibility that I was into somewhat but not in a big way.

BURG: Before I go back and follow another line that I'd like to follow, let me then ask you quickly about your routine getting back home. You're leaving the White House at about 7:30 and coming back home; can you just roughly indicate to me the kind of social life that you and your wife would have at that time.

MCPHEE: Well, when I first came to the White House I wasn't married. I was married while I was there. I was married on May 19, 1956, so I'd been at the White House two years approximately.

BURG: And there was some kind of reception at Dr. Hauge's for you.

MCPHEE: Correct, at his house.

BURG: Yes, at his house.

MCPHEE: I remember Clarence Randall came to that as did many people--just having mentioned Clarence Randall. I remember it because he was so punctual. He later told me and my wife that he had had himself driven around the block a couple of times so that he would arrive on the dot of whatever the time was rather than a few minutes early. He made a great thing of this. He was very time conscious and arrived on the very dot rather than early or late. But, yes, I got married then and so my social life the first two years— I met the girl I married the first few weeks I was here in Washington. It was about the first few weeks, and I was just a bachelor and I saw her some of the time and some other people, and I lived with two other bachelors in Georgetown, one of whom worked in the White House with me, also unmarried.

BURG: Who was this?

MCPHEE: J. William Barba.

BURG: Oh, yes.

MCPHEE: Bud Barba, a very dear friend, a longtime friend of mine. We'd gone to college at Princeton, he a class ahead of me, but we'd known each other. We'd been in the Navy B-12 program together which is when I really got to know him. And we just by coincidence wound up on the White House staff at the same time. After we were married, the social life was different in the sense that it always is from being unmarried and then going to a married status. There were a number of things that you were invited to because you are on the White House staff, social

functions just in the town and some embassy functions or whatever. And I went to some of those. I didn't go to all of them, but went to some of them.

I remember Governor [Sherman] Adams, my wife always admired the way he went to such things when he did. He would go and he always left, very punctually, after he'd been there a short while. He never stayed very long. He didn't have the time to. And he would excuse himself and go.

There were White House dinners which I went to. I think my wife and I went to one, one of the state dinners. There were a lot of White House functions, social functions that we would go to, you know, maybe not. Very often the staff was invited to join the group after a state dinner. And it was very nice. For example, I remember once Arthur Rubenstein was to play the piano in the East Room and my wife and I, and this was typical, there was some staff at the dinner. But I was a junior staff member, so I was typically not invited to a dinner. But very nicely the President always had, I think almost really most of his staff, invited. There weren't that many of us on the staff, you know, maybe twenty-five or something like that in those days of what I would call sort of a maybe the kernels of staff. But there'd be others too, and we went in. And it was a white tie affair and we went in in the East Room, joined the dinner guests, and heard Arthur Rubenstein play the piano. And there were occasions like that. Maybe Fred Waring and the Pennsylvanians, the President liked them. I think I heard them once or twice, that sort of thing.

Then you had what you might call your regular social life just with friends, you know. We'd go out to dinner or have some people in to dinner, that type thing. It was always late. We weren't ever able to do this on a sort of usual scheduling. You might get there maybe in time for dinner but not for the hour or hour and a half that preceded dinner. Or maybe you'd get there in time to join everybody a few minutes before they went in to dinner. But, you know, you were working late and you just didn't have the leeway to leave as early as you might have otherwise when you had a dinner engagement.

BURG: Now the social functions of that nature, the ones that you just now described, were those in part with colleagues from the White House staff?

MCPHEE: Could be or with people outside I knew that had no relation to the White House. I had some classmates from the Harvard Law School, still have them, here in town. And my wife had friends, you know, that kind of thing that have nothing to do with the White House.

BURG: When you yourself entertained, may I ask, was it generally your style to keep the gathering small, intimate—

MCPHEE: Yes. We never have, I think, in our married life. Now what, nineteen years this May, I think we've only given one party that'd you'd call a cocktail party. We had thirty people there once. That was for one of my wife's good friends who was in town and being remarried. She'd been divorced and she was being married again, we had a party for them. This was when we lived in Alexandria. I lived in Alexandria all the time I was married in the White House. But mostly, it was just a dinner party that we would have. Our house was small so we

couldn't accommodate too many. My wife never liked a large dinner party anyway; she thought it was sort of self-defeating; we never got a chance to really see many of the people that were coming at that time.

BURG: Could I ask you if in any of these social functions, embassy parties, this kind of thing—did anyone ever attempt to play upon your position in the White House staff?

MCPHEE: How do you mean play upon?

BURG: Well, I'm thinking of attempts that would have been obvious to you that one of the chief reasons you were there is they wanted something from you. Through you they would have access to the White House. Anything like that ever come up that you recollect?

MCPHEE: No. If they knew me well enough, they wouldn't have had to have a party to do it. They could have just called me on the phone and said they would like to see me and talk to me about whatever it was on their mind. So—

[Interruption]

BURG: Now you were saying that where they knew you, they had a more direct way of access.

MCPHEE: I think really the answer to your question is no. I don't remember anything blatantly forward. It's not inconceivable that we were invited to something, oh, for example, I had various responsibilities that affected various people and they might have asked me to some function, but I don't ever remember being pumped or pressed or anything like that. Somebody might have mentioned something. I'd have said, "Well call me and we'll see what we can find out", or, "You can come in and talk", you know, like that.

BURG: So nothing untoward comes to your mind?

MCPHEE: No.

BURG: It just seemed to me that it would be a little difficult. Suddenly as you had gone to this exalted position and perhaps be bombarded by pressures that you had not had to cope with before.

MCPHEE: I think, you know, one reason that probably doesn't happen—and I can say that now as a lawyer out in private practice and dealing with the government, the clients— that's a way to probably hurt yourself rather than help yourself or your client. In other words, if you make too greatly forward an effort like that, why people are put off by that. I know I would have been.

BURG: I would think so.

MCPHEE: I think most people are that smart and they don't do something like that. They knew, you know, there's a proper time and a place for something and that's the way to do it rather than to try and mix it in with something else which would be so obvious. There is no question but what we were invited to a lot of places and things because we were in the White House, that we would not have been invited to otherwise. Have not been invited since!

BURG: Let me ask you, before moving you on to the next stage of your work in the White House, in the counsel's office, I believe that you admired Dr. Hauge—

MCPHEE: Enormously.

BURG: —that you thought very highly of him--

MCPHEE: —enormously, yes.

BURG: Could I ask you, as you think back on them now, what were the qualities in that man that especially attracted your admiration?

MCPHEE: Well, I can say that easily because I thought about it a lot of the time and remember it well. He was a man of a truly superior intelligence and of remarkable steadiness and equanimity. I never saw him ruffled once, really. And he never lost his temper. I think he always handled himself in situations very, very well. I learned a great deal from that man just by watching him and noting the way that he managed himself. He was very disciplined and managed situations with people and what have you. So I really couldn't say enough good about him. I think he was just an outstanding human being and a great, great public servant.

BURG: Poised and knowledgeable kind of man.

MCPHEE: Absolutely, yes, completely. I regret that I don't really see him at all anymore. I did once or twice, four or five times maybe in the years immediately after leaving the White House, but I haven't seen him or talked to him in several years now, a number of years. But, you know, this is the way it goes. He's in New York and I'm down here, but I hear about him, and you know.

BURG: You've mentioned strengths and you were a younger man than he at that time. Did that younger Roemer McPhee see any flaw or fault in Dr.Hauge? Anything that did not measure up to that generally high standard that you have—

MCPHEE: No, I really didn't. I think some people felt he was somewhat distant. When somebody might say something like that to me I would really dispute it and say, "Well you really don't know the man."

BURG: Some found him reserved?

McPhee, Interview #2, February 3, 1975

MCPHEE: Yes, right. I think that's right. We always had—it wasn't what you'd call a close relationship—but I think there was a good relationship there. And it was appropriately one of a superior to a junior--when I was a junior.

BURG: I can understand. At that time while you were still with him, might I ask who were your closest—

MCPHEE: I'll tell you something else of interest about Hauge. He was asked to be—I can't remember the sequence in which these came—but he was asked to be the Dean of the Harvard Business School. He was also asked to be the chief of the editorial page of the New York Herald-Tribune. And he took neither job, as is a matter of record. One he turned down himself, the other I think he wanted to do, and that probably was the deanship of the Harvard Business School, but I can't remember which. I think that's what it was.

BURG: I think that's what it was.

MCPHEE: And he went to the President and asked him, and the President said he really didn't see how he could spare him and Hauge said, "Fine, I'll stay." And he did. He didn't leave until—it was somewhere in those last two years he left. I don't remember. But he did have those two opportunities and stayed on once at the President's request and once having decided the matter for himself.

BURG: He was there through '58.

MCPHEE: Through '58.

BURG: Yes, into '58. It might have been early in '58.

MCPHEE:- Yes. I'm just trying to think whether he was there when Adams left or not. I just don't remember. That was in the fall of '58.

BURG: Yes.

MCPHEE: In early fall.

BURG: I don't know either. I don't have anything in here to refresh my memory with regard to that.

MCPHEE: The two things that I was aware of I believe came up before I left him to go to the counsel's office, so that would have been before March of '57 when I think those two opportunities came up. So when he left in '58 to go with the Manufacturers-Hanover Trust in New York as the president of the bank, he had declined these other two opportunities I'd say at least a year before.

BURG: Was it your impression that others also shared your feelings about Dr.Hauge, all except those who felt that he was reserved—

McPhee, Interview #2, February 3, 1975

MCPHEE: Yes, I think so.

BURG: He was held in high esteem by most of the staff, to your knowledge.

MCPHEE: Certainly by all of the senior staff. The only person who made the kind of comment I'm talking about was somebody else on the junior staff, you see, what I call the junior staff, the second tier of the staff.

BURG: Down around the level of Emmett Hughes, Robert Gray—

MCPHEE: Well, perhaps. But my level, you know, particularly where you would probably—say you had a principal—you might very well be working for a principal as I was.

BURG: Gerald Morgan, I take it at that time, would be one of the principal—

MCPHEE: Definitely.

BURG: —staff. I think there were seven all told. Sherman Adams and then about seven in a line across—[Howard] Pyle, I believe could have been called that at that time.

MCPHEE: Yes.

BURG: Morgan, Hauge.

MCPHEE: Persons.

BURG: Persons.

MCPHEE: You know, [Bryce] Harlow.

BURG: Right, yes.

MCPHEE: Jack Anderson, Jack Martin.

BURG: I. Jack Martin. And your line then is the next line.

MCPHEE: Yes. Definitely. They never wrote about us you see. This is how you can find the demarcation fairly easily.

BURG: That's why I'm here with the little black box, yes. Could I ask, who did you regard as perhaps your best friends, closest associates, at that time while you were with Dr. Hauge? Now, of course, Dr. Hauge, would be one of them, but at that stage in your White House career—

MCPHEE: Well, I got along well with everybody, at least I thought so. Bud Barba was a very special friend for the reasons that I've mentioned. Bernard Shanley because he also came from New Jersey, and I had known him before I came down, you see. Bud Barba was—they were in



law practice together in the firm of Shanley and Fisher. And I knew Bern Shanley moderately well before I came down, and he was a senior on the staff, and he was the counsel at one time and then later he was the appointments secretary for the President. And Gerry Morgan was always somebody I knew very well. Gerry and I had gone to the same college. Our parents had gone to the same college, Oberlin. He and I had gone to Princeton. But Gerry was always somebody I think I knew quite well on the staff after I was there and got to know people on the staff. Ed McCabe—it's hard for me now to distinguish between the Hauge period and the other period because I worked with these people—Ed came in in '56, so I didn't know him until 1956. Bryce—got to know Bryce. Probably I got to know all these people except maybe Bud Barba better once I got into the counsel's office because I saw more of them. My responsibilities brought me in touch with them more. I was also then in the West Wing as opposed to being in the Executive Office Building. But if I'd be going back to the lunchroom, you know, there you were: you'd be sitting with any of these people. Andy Goodpaster I admired greatly and valued as a friend, but as a young man to a senior, again.

BURG: You had not known Paul Carroll?

MCPHEE: Well, I knew him when I first came there. He did not die until after I had been there a few months.

BURG: I see. Late in '54, I think he died.

MCPHEE: Yes, you see, and actually the reason I went to Hauge was because the person who had been working with Hauge was going to go over and work with Paul Carroll and that's what created the vacancy. I've often felt, you know, that if Paul Carroll had died before I'd come there, I'd probably never have gone to the White House because this fellow probably would have stayed with Hauge and there never would have been an opening, you see.

BURG: I see.

MCPHEE: Stephen Benedict was his name. He had been in the campaign and come down and had worked with Hauge and then went over to Paul Carroll's operation and wasn't there all that long before Paul Carroll died very suddenly of a heart attack.

BURG: One of the notes I had to myself was to ask you about Steve Benedict. But in the meantime I was running down other data and found out more about him. Before I run out of tape, which I will in just a moment or two I think, let me just ask you what circumstance then drew you out of Hauge's office and into the counsel's office.

MCPHEE: This may be on our earlier tape—

BURG: You think so?

MCPHEE: —and maybe not. What happened was that Bud Barba was going back to New Jersey to practice law again.

BURG: Back to the same firm?

MCPHEE: Right, where he is today. That created a vacancy. I will see him here Thursday night incidentally; he's still a very good friend. That created a vacancy there. Gerry Morgan had become the counsel to the President when Shanley had left, I believe to go run for governor of New Jersey.

BURG: I think so.

MCPHEE: And Gerry went to Hauge and asked Dr. Hauge if I could be his associate in the counsel's office as the assistant special counsel to the President. And Hauge and he talked about it and Hauge agreed. Gerry Morgan came to me and I remember him asking me, he said, "How would you like to be a lawyer again, full time?" We talked about it, and he told me he had talked to Hauge about it and it would be all right with Hauge, and I thought that would be a good thing to do, so that's what we did.

Then, to fill my shoes working with Hauge, we had on the staff a young man, five or six years younger than I, named Philip Areeda who had come over there on loan from the Air Force and had been working in something the staff secretary's office was doing. He was interested in perhaps doing something else. He had finished his term with military service, so he had, I think by then become a civilian again. He was asked if he would like to become Hauge's assistant in my place and he was very interested in that. So that's how the things went around. Phil is an extraordinarily able person. He has a degree in economics from Harvard. I don't know if it's a graduate degree, but he majored in economics and then went to law school. He graduated in his Harvard college class, as I understand it, summa cum laude, number one in the class and then did the same thing at the Harvard Law School, summa cum laude, number one in his class. I don't know who has done that in the history of that institution, not many.

BURG: A remarkable achievement.

MCPHEE: Right. And Phil is one of my dearest friends today. He is here in town now. He is in the counsel's office at the White House now.

BURG: Yes, I was hoping to get in touch with him this week and I may not be able to do that. Was it your opinion at that time that moving with Morgan would broaden the kind of background that you had, or was there some other reason why you wanted to take this job.

MCPHEE: Well, I think the idea of getting into the counsel's office was because I was a lawyer, I think. Whether I thought consciously that it would broaden me, I may have suspected that, but I was maybe more exactly as Gerry said, you know, I'm getting back into something that was fairly legal again.

BURG: You had been happy enough with—

MCPHEE: Oh, yes.

BURG: —the things you had been doing. You found that work satisfying to you?

MCPHEE: Yes. But the other work proved to be broader and, in that sense, more interesting because it was so much more to the range of view from the counsel's office.

BURG: Had you really known that ahead of time, Mr. McPhee, or did you simply find that out—

MCPHEE: It's hard for me to remember. I probably had—

BURG: Morgan might have pointed out to you that the vistas were a little broader.

MCPHEE: I don't remember that, specifically, could be.

BURG: Did you talk to anyone outside of Morgan about the work done in the counsel's office. That is, did you feel out the ground a little bit before you rendered your decision?

MCPHEE: I don't think so because I think I had a good enough understanding of it. And also, there may have been the understanding that it was going to be structured a little bit differently. It was, as it went along, and that wasn't all foreseeable or known in advance.

BURG: O.K. That's a good place to stop because I know—yes, I'm running low on this tape—so I thank you very much for your time in a very busy day.