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RONALD REAGAN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

FINAL EDITED TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT TUTTLE

With Maureen Molloy

December 12, 2003
Los Angeles, California

Interviewer

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Knott: If you don't mind, I would like to ask you some questions about your father, as well. Perhaps that's the best place to start.

Tuttle: That is a good place to start.

Knott: Okay, if you could perhaps recount for us how your father first came to know Ronald Reagan, the early interactions he had with him.

Tuttle: My mother once told me, actually, my father had a business just a few blocks from here at the corner of Beverly and La Brea. He'd been working in the automobile business for a long time, but he went out on his own—he had some partners, and they helped him. He opened the first Ford dealership that was opened after World War II. It was in April of '47. It was a great time to be in the car business, and the dealership was a huge success right off the bat. At that time there were a lot of studios that were near the dealership, and we sold lots of cars to movie stars. My mom said that he sold Ronald Reagan a car. I don't know if that's true. I never heard them talk about it.

My father's first presidential vote was for Al Smith, but after that, he always voted Republican. He got involved in the [Dwight] Eisenhower campaign in 1952, and he and Justin Dart became fast friends. He always told the story that Justin came into his office and said, "You're a young man on the rise—" he's a little bit older than Dad—and said, "I heard a lot about you and I want you to contribute five thousand dollars to General Eisenhower. Dad said, "I have no problem. I can raise five thousand, no problem." He said, "No. I want five thousand from you, and then I want you to go out and raise more money."

So Dad got involved in that campaign and they became great friends. They were a lot alike, both self-made men. Anyway, over the years, Dad got to know Ronald Reagan. I'm hazy on the '60s. I just know that the great event was the speech that Reagan gave for the [Barry] Goldwater campaign in '64. After that campaign, you know, the Party was sort of in disarray, but that was the bright light. Three men—Dad, Henry Salvatori, and a fellow by the name of [A.C.] Cy Rubel, who has been long since gone, who was then head of Union Oil—went to Ronald Reagan and asked him to run for Governor, which is not particularly well-portrayed in the recent TV show. Anyway, he agreed.

In those days, there really was very little regulation, and they said, "We'll take care of money. You don't have to worry." What was interesting was that a lot of people, including Justin Dart, were so discouraged about the results of '64. There was a moderate Republican mayor in San Francisco, George Christopher. Justin, among many, went for Christopher, and it was actually kind of a lonely time for my parents. But they always kept in touch with the Christopher camp, and both sides agreed that whoever won the primary, they'd jump on board the next day. I guess the rest is history. Justin came on board and was an early member of the so-called "kitchen cabinet." But the three first guys were Salvatori and Cy Rubel, and Dad.

The office was down on Wilshire Boulevard—we lived in Hancock Park. I think Dad, of the three, was the most active in the campaign. By the way, if you haven't read it, Lou Cannon's book is quite good and accurate. I haven't read the whole book. I sort of went through the index and saw where it mentioned my father and looked, but it strikes me as being pretty accurate.

Knott: Was Ronald Reagan at all reluctant to make this plunge into electoral politics? Did your father ever talk to you about this?

Tuttle: He always said they had to go back to the Reagans several times to convince them to run. I think that the President and Mrs. Reagan really thought it over, because they knew it was going to be a big thing. Now we know in retrospect it was something people had been trying to get him to do for years. Still, it's a radical change in your life, in anybody's life, and especially as they had young children. It's not easy. I'm very sympathetic to politicians and especially to their families. All of a sudden, I mean, I'd hate to have somebody follow me around with a camera all day long.

Knott: Do you have any recollections of that first campaign, or perhaps your first encounter with President Reagan?

Tuttle: Yes, it's funny. I think it was at the Ambassador Hotel the night of—either it was the primary or the general, and I happened to be watching the television and they came on and said, "The early polls look like Ronald Reagan is going to win." I was so excited I went running back in. How old was I? I was born in '43, so I was 22 and I said, "The polls are out. It looks like you've won." I remember that.

There's an occasion in the book about Dad terminating the President's first Chief of Staff, Phil Battaglia, and my mother and I were actually upstairs. He had told us what was going to happen—that he was going to do it. We were just wondering what happened. Then finally he has this meeting and Battaglia leaves, and Dad comes up and tells us about it. It was interesting.

Knott: Sure.

Tuttle: So yes, there were lots of times. When the President came back in '76 from that heartbreaking loss in Kansas City my dad called me, and said, "Take a car up to his home." I went up to the house, and there he was in his robe.

Knott: If you had to summarize your father's—what were the issues that your father was concerned about that caused him to become active in Republican Party politics and in both the Goldwater and Reagan efforts?

Tuttle: This actually applies to all of these guys. They really, in my opinion, were very exceptional men. They were all self-made. My dad actually hitchhiked to California from Oklahoma. What I admired about them, especially that early group, was they didn't really want anything—in terms of, "I want to be a Cabinet Secretary." The only one actually who ever served was Bill Smith, of the original group. They all just wanted better government. And they wanted smaller government. They were all concerned about the size of government. In those days, in the '50s right after the war, the tax rate was 90 percent.

They were concerned about the size of taxes. They saw how Communism was a real threat, a real menace, and they were concerned about that, and how we were responding to it. They loved their country and they'd all been fantastically successful. [Frank] Earle Jorgenson was another extraordinary man. It was interesting because these guys were all about ten to fifteen years older than Ronald Reagan, but he was a real hero to them. What they loved about Reagan was that he could articulate what they felt and articulate it so well. They were an extraordinary group of guys.

Knott: Was it the speech for Goldwater that really brought Reagan to their attention, or do you know if he was already sort of in their orbit?

Tuttle: By that time he was in their orbit. He was a delegate in '64. I think he was vice-chairman of the delegation. So he was already in their orbit, and he had been giving these speeches for GE. Dad said when he gave that speech the money just started rolling in. I think they put him on television. At the end they came on and said, "If you agree with this, send a check to Goldwater for President." And the money just came rolling in.

Dad saw that Reagan was just a magnetic guy.

Knott: Could you tell us then a little bit—unless there's something else you'd like to add about your father—

Tuttle: I'll tell you what was interesting. They talk about the kitchen cabinet, the way that came about. The Reagans then lived up in the Palisades, and they would go up on Saturday, these guys, and they would talk about what was going on. It was great that he had—by that time there was a fellow in San Francisco, Jaquelin Hume, Dad, Bill Smith, Justin Dart, Henry Salvatori. They would just go up there and review what was going on. It was nice that the Governor had people who were his peers, who could talk to him about what was going on. Maybe if they had had something like that, Iran-Contra would have never happened.

Afterwards, they'd go to the kitchen and have lunch, and that's how the kitchen cabinet—they really truly went up there and just chatted and talked. That was wonderful that they had some outside influences who didn't have an ax to grind.

Knott: I'm jumping the gun here a little bit, but you mentioned Mrs. Reagan. Could you give us some sense of either what you saw directly or what you may have heard through your father about the importance of Mrs. Reagan, especially in these early years—Governor Reagan?

Tuttle: Dad was very close to Mrs. Reagan and would talk to her when the President—or the Governor or candidate—wasn't available. He would talk to her and she was very important, very involved. They were very much a team.

Knott: You know there's this stereotype out there of Nancy Reagan in some quarters being the real power behind the throne. I was wondering if you might comment on that.

Tuttle: I think any good marriage—I have been married twice to two very strong people and I think it's only helped me and made our marriage stronger. Nancy Reagan is a very strong person. She has very strong opinions. I think it's true that where he was tougher on the ideas, he's a little softer on the people. So that was great. It was a great partnership, as any partnership—But I guess what I resent, sometimes, is the suggestion that every decision was made in the bedroom. That's just absolutely ridiculous.

When we get to Personnel I'm sure you'll ask me the same questions. She had a couple of positions that she was interested in, but beyond that, it wasn't like I was on the phone to her every day, talking to her. I was Personnel Director for four years. I think there were three or four positions that she was interested in. She's a very strong-willed woman who has strong opinions, but at the end of the day the President made the decisions and made the call. I'm sure running for Governor was a joint decision, as was running for President. When you see in politicians where obviously one of the spouses doesn't want to do it, it doesn't work as well.

Knott: Sure. Could you tell us about your own early political activities in California, how you first became involved?

Tuttle: I did a little bit in '76. I wrote a check, I raised a little bit of money, but was not terribly active. Interestingly enough, I suppose, without my father I wouldn't have been involved, but there was a young man who was running for Lieutenant Governor, Mike Curb, and I got involved in his campaign in '78 because we were the same age. Then he said to me, "You should be involved in the Reagan Presidential campaign in 1980." He was very involved in the campaign. He talked to Michael Deaver and Jack Courtemanche and they asked me if I would be the vice-chairman. Jack Courtemanche was the chairman in California and there were two vice-chairmen. One was a lady from the north, Trudy McDonald, and I was his vice-chairman from the south.

That was really when I got involved, not full time, but certainly on a half-time basis. My wife, Donna Tuttle, was very interested in politics, and she got very involved. We had appointed county chairmen all over the state, and in L.A. we broke it down into assembly districts, I think. Santa Monica was not a place where we had a lot of support. Donna ran the Santa Monica assembly district and did a very good job. The campaign asked her to come back to Detroit. There was a big youth movement in 1980. The kids came from all over the country to the convention, and they put her in charge of that.

Knott: I didn't realize that.

Tuttle: The campaign had a hall next to the convention hall and it was where the kids gathered all day long. They got speakers to come in and Donna was always saying, "Get this guy." "Get that guy." It was terrific. It was a terrific experience for the kids. Then the last couple of nights they got on the floor with the banners. Probably they're still doing that today, but it was fun and it was exciting.

After the convention, we came back and ran the California campaign, mainly from the volunteer standpoint. Obviously we weren't deciding the national ads and things like that, but we had headquarters all over the state. A really very active—obviously, a very active volunteer campaign.

Knott: Do you enjoy politics?

Tuttle: I like working in government better than politics. I mean, politics just takes over your life. The phone rings all night long. It just envelops you. I've often said I'd never get involved in another campaign unless I ran myself.

Knott: You were in Detroit in 1980—

Tuttle: Actually what happened was, after the convention, we came back and we won. Our business wasn't very good at the time. Mike Curb was going to run for Governor in '82, so both my wife and I went right into the Mike Curb campaign. I was the co-chairman of that campaign and she was, I think, the finance co-chairman or finance chairman. We really worked hard. We all went back to the President's Inaugural, but when we came back in January of '81, Donna wanted to go to Washington, but I said, "Oh, I'm not sure. I don't know." So we jumped right into the Curb campaign.

I had convinced myself that I could maybe get a good job if Mike Curb won, but I wasn't so sure about Washington. So we really worked hard for Mike Curb. Of course in June of '82, much to our surprise, he lost the primary to [George] Deukmejian. Donna had gotten to know Mike Deaver's assistant, a fellow by the name of Mike McManus, and I said, "Well, now if we could get a job in Washington, I'd go back." She really was excited about that. We had lunch one day, my former wife and Mike McManus, and I said, "You know, Mike, I'd be interested in a job if there ever was a spot."

He said, "That would be great. We'd love to have you." I was flattered. You never know. About a month later I got a call, "Would you come back to Washington?" There were three positions we discussed. One was in Presidential Personnel. The second was in the Private Sector Initiatives office. The third was—it's now the fall of '82 so he's been in almost two years since the election, a lot of the people around the country who had helped elect Ronald Reagan had not been contacted. So the White House wanted somebody to put together a program to reach out to those people.

I said, "I'd like to do that." I knew my name had a little cachet, not because of me, but because of my father, and that would help. Helene Von Damm, head of Personnel, seemed to really want me in Personnel, so I said, "What about doing both of these jobs together?" That's how I started, working for Helene and helping her with things that were difficult, and doing—that's how I got to know Maureen [Molloy], because she started working for me in what we called the "key supporter meetings," which were really a lot of fun.

Knott: Tell us about those.

Tuttle: It was paid for by the Republican National Committee. They asked me, "How do you want to do this?" I worked for two or three weeks and put together a memo and the guts of it was to have these key supporter meetings in Washington. They were like—there were all the state chairmen, the finance chairmen, and special group chairmen. There were about five to eight hundred names, as I remember, and we divided it up over five or six sessions.

We would have people come to the White House. My proposal went to the President through Jim Baker and Ed Meese and they all liked it. So I set up a program. I'd have a program in the morning at the White House with Cabinet Secretaries and key White House staff as speakers, and then we'd have lunch in the East Room with the President, and then they'd all get in the bus and they'd go up to the RNC headquarters. Frank Fahrenkopf would talk to them, and we'd get a Congressman or Senator as speakers. People just—they loved it. It was very well organized, no thanks to me, thanks to my friend here on your right—Maureen Molloy, my executive assistant.

I remember the first meeting. I was very nervous. We had had lunch, and after lunch George Shultz was scheduled to speak. We'd gone out of the East Room into the Blue Room that I'm sure you've probably been in. They gave me a note that he was going to be a few minutes late so I just kept talking. I thought, *This is unbelievable. Here are about 150 people listening to every word I say.* People hang on your words in Washington, not because of who you are but more because of where you are. I thought, *I'm in the Blue Room and I can look down the Ellipse to the Washington Monument and see it.* I thought*, This is fantastic! It doesn't get any better than this.*

Knott: Right.

Tuttle: They were fun, and people really liked them. They liked having access and in the meeting I would say to all of these people, "If you need any help, if you have any problem—" I became the designated person for them to call. In fact, I remember one funny experience. We'd always identified beforehand who might be a little difficult or hard to get along. The President would take some questions, and I would always sit at the table, with maybe the people who would be a little difficult. One day the President had left and Ed Meese was taking some questions in the East Room and this guy gets up and says, "Who should I call if I have a problem? Nobody ever takes my call." Ed Meese turned and he said, "Bob Tuttle." With that, I jumped behind the curtain—there are these long curtains there. Everybody laughed.

Then a lady stood up. She was one of the paid people in the California campaign, Lorelei Kinder, and she said, "I know Bob Tuttle, and he's wonderful." I didn't ask her to do it. She said, "He's great, and if you need anybody—" Everyone clapped. So it was nice. They really had someone to

call if they had a problem or if they wanted to talk about something, an appointment, and they knew that I was in Personnel. Most of them, if they were interested in something, it was usually personnel-related. Anyway, we did those meetings for six months. We did one a month for six months—something like that.

Knott: Maureen, you joined Bob at the very time that he—could you tell us the origins of your relationship, your professional relationship?

Molloy: I had worked in Presidential Personnel from day one, well, from February 8, 2001. I was introduced to Bob when he came on our staff. A couple of months after that, the person I was working for was leaving, so I went to Bob and asked him if he happened to know of anyone who was looking for an assistant, where I might fit in. I had a couple of years' experience in the White House already, and he said he would keep me in mind.

A day or two later, his assistant told Bob she was leaving to go back to school. Bob called me up and said, "Hey, come talk to me." When we talked and he told me about this program he was going to put together, it was very exciting to think that all those people who had worked for years to get President Reagan into the White House would now be brought in and treated to the extraordinary experience of having top-level Cabinet people, most of whom had already been working two years in the administration, talk to them and answer their questions, and then have lunch with the President of the United States. It was thrilling for me to be part of that, so I was delighted to accept his offer for the job. And Bob and I worked together until the end of the President's second term.

Tuttle: I tend to be *not* the most detailed person in the world, in fact, that's probably an understatement. Maureen is, so it was a nice partnership. These things required—you had to make sure the Cabinet Secretary was aware when he was to come in. Everything, with one exception—there's sort of an interesting story—went off without a hitch.

As I said, we had these people, and there was a fellow—I forget what he had done, but he'd been important in the campaign—in a little town in New Jersey with an unusual name. Some of these people we really had to work hard to run down. They'd say, "This is the guy who really helped." I don't know if we had had trouble finding him or not, but we sent this guy an invitation.

Molloy: He had a common name, but the town was an uncommon one.

Tuttle: So we send him an invitation and he accepts, right? I didn't pay any more attention to it. It's 150 people at each time. I'm seated at lunch and a member of the Secret Service came over to me and said, "Mr. Tuttle, you invited a Mr. So-and-So." And they said, "Well, there are two of them here."

Knott: Oh boy.

Tuttle: Even when I think about it today—I just froze. They knew where both of them were sitting. So they went over and got each one of them. One was the real guy and one was a guy with the same name in the same little town, and somehow one of our invitations had gone to this

guy who shouldn't have been there. I wanted to take the guy out and punch him, but I suppose—you get an invitation to the White House, you say, "What the hell? I'm going to go. I know it belongs to the other guy."

Knott: You think he knew?

Tuttle: Absolutely.

Molloy: As far as I know, it wasn't followed up on. We think what happened was, the first man was not the person invited, but he received the invitation. He sent the reply card back to the social secretary. Then he sent the invitation, without that card, to the correct gentleman. The second man called to RSVP, not knowing that there was a piece missing. Then they both came to the White House, and they apparently each came in a different entrance. At that time, there was no communication between the computer at the Pennsylvania Avenue entrance and the computer at the West—what was the name of that road?

Tuttle: West Executive Avenue.

Molloy: The West Executive Avenue entrance. And so, the Secret Service didn't know that one had already come in. But I can remember the feeling when Bob called me and told me what had happened; my blood just ran cold. Actually, I think they were allowed to both go on at the lunch, because to determine who was the bogus one at that point would have been extremely disruptive.

Knott: Can I get you to dial back to Detroit in 1980 and ask you a question about any reflections you might have about this whole idea of selecting Gerald Ford as a possible—the term that was thrown around—co-President.

Tuttle: I'll probably tell you more than I should tell you.

Knott: Please do. That's what we're here for.

Tuttle: I can't remember how far, but I think about a month before the convention—Dad and I shared a little office near our dealership. I was going someplace. He said, "Wait a minute. Don't go." He came down to the front lobby. I'd gone back in. I said, "I'm going to be late." He said, "No, I want to talk to you. What do you think about Gerald Ford as Vice President?" I said, "Gee, Dad, I'm just worried about doing the best I can in California. I don't know."

Then Dad and Justin go to Detroit and they were a little miffed about where they were placed in the hotel. One thing I learned as you move away from California—and both of these gentlemen were getting older, and Dad had a lot of health problems—you've got to be in Washington, participating as part of the Presidency, and they hadn't been. They'd been active in the campaign but not there on a day-to-day basis. Anyway, they kept talking about this.

I believe it was Wednesday night that Reagan was nominated. I told you my wife's job was with these kids on the floor and so we're—I'm with the California delegation but I'm spending a lot of time with her and I'd gotten to know a lot of the kids. They would tell her what to do with the

kids. Reagan gets nominated. It's a big thing. Then there was this thing about the Vice President. She kept getting these, "Hold on, hold on, hold on, hold on." Of course, there was all this negotiation going on. We weren't seeing the television about the negotiation which was holding up the floor demonstrations.

Then she gets the word that Reagan is coming down to the floor to announce his Vice President candidate and—I don't think it's ever happened before. He comes down—I'll never forget—and he says it's going to be George Bush. I'd always liked George Bush, and let's face it, at the time a lot of Americans were worried that Ronald Reagan would become President and he would push the button the next day. They thought he was a wild-eyed conservative. I remember grabbing my wife and both of us just embracing because we knew this would bring the Party together.

Then there was a friend of mine—we go back a long way—that I had put on the delegation. It was hard to get people from San Francisco and we'd gotten this guy. He was a Reagan supporter. I said, "Marshall, let's go back to the hotel. Something's happened." We go running back to the hotel. It was so amazing. We go up to Dad's suite, which was on the 65th floor, and Dad was sitting there with Justin. They were in their robes. They said, "We did it tonight. We did it." They were so excited.

Dad and Justin said they had been sitting there watching the television, just like everybody else was, and saying, "This is screwed up. This is screwed up." You've got to understand, these are just two powerful entrepreneurial guys just getting madder and madder. Finally they said, "We're going to go up there." By this time they'd whipped themselves into a frenzy. So they throw on their clothes and go up to the sixty-eighth floor.

The Secret Service stopped them and Dad brushed the guy away. He goes in and there's Mike Deaver who said, "Holmes, we've got a handle—" And he said, "Just get out of my way." So he went in, and I don't know if it had been decided by that time, but it was clear that this Ford thing was screwed up. So he had this confrontation with the President and he said, "You know, I said things I regret to this day." But both Justin and Dad said, "You've got to go down there and speak to the Convention and tell them it's going to be George Bush." I don't know if that was the final deciding thing, but as a result of them and other people, Reagan went down, and what had looked like he was negotiating away the Presidency, and had looked indecisive, was all of a sudden decisive and it was going to be George Bush.

Whatever contribution they'd made to Reagan choosing Bush after this Ford thing had gotten screwed up was very important, and the fact that he went down there and decisively came out and said it's going to be George Bush made a huge difference. What was a very bad story, overnight, everybody forgot about it and concentrated on George Bush. They had to go find George Bush. He was at a bar someplace, I've heard. He thought he was out of it. So that's my story, my little slice. I'm sure there are other slices.

Knott: Do you recall, was your father and the other members of the kitchen cabinet—were they upset just about the process, or about the possibility of Gerald Ford and a so-called co-Presidency?

Tuttle: I think the process—the idea of a co-Presidency, and Henry Kissinger negotiating. Here they worked so hard in '76 to defeat Ford, and to think that Reagan would take foreign policy and he would take domestic policy. I don't know exactly how it got off, but it clearly had gotten off the track. It could have been disastrous. Do you want a President who negotiates part of his Presidency away to begin with?

Knott: We have heard so many different versions of this story and how Ronald Reagan actually came to select George Bush.

Tuttle: It must be interesting for you, it must be like looking at a diamond, everyone has a little—

Knott: That's right—a little facet.

Tuttle: But anyway, for whatever reason, whether it was Holmes Tuttle and Justin Dart, or Ronald Reagan, the fact that the President went down there that night and said it was George Bush was the right thing to do. After that we went out of Detroit united, and it was very exciting.

Knott: Then in the fall of that year, the fall of '80, your efforts are devoted almost exclusively to California?

Tuttle: Exclusively. As I said, we had a big volunteer campaign. There are times when it looked like it was close, but we always thought that they did California a little bit on the shoestring so they could devote their efforts outside of California.

Knott: Sure. Do you have any recollections of election night, 1980? Were you at the actual celebration?

Tuttle: That was interesting. He was supposed to come in to LAX. He'd done this event in San Diego. We all went in a bus out to LAX to meet Reagan. I was sitting near this gentleman from Arizona there to get his picture taken with Reagan. Anyway, we're still not near the airport and he said, "Is this fog?" I said, "No it's not fog." Well, it was. It was "tule" fog, and it came in—we occasionally get it—we haven't had much since you've been here. It is unbelievable.

Knott: Really?

Tuttle: And within ten or fifteen minutes, LAX was closed.

Molloy: What is tule fog?

Tuttle: They call it tule fog. It's just a low fog that sits on the ground. Every year, where it's really bad is in the winter up in the Bakersfield-Fresno area. Sometimes it comes down on Route 5 and they have these horrible accidents. You can be driving along and you just can't see. It's unbelievable. Well, that's what happened in LAX that night. So we all jumped in the bus and we drove. We kept getting the driver to drive faster and faster and we made it to Burbank where the plane landed.

I've still got this guy trying to get his picture taken with the President. The President comes off the plane, and I put my arm around him and I felt—he must have had a flak jacket on, I'd never felt that before—this was sort of interesting. Peter McCoy, who was a good friend of mine, who was then with the campaign, gets off. I get the picture taken, and Peter McCoy comes off and he said, "We won." This is the night before election night, and he said, "We won."

Knott: Polls.

Tuttle: Yes, polls were showing that we'd won. So I felt great because I figured that Peter must know. And sure enough, the next night—

Knott: Did you go in the room when he gave his victory speech? I can't remember if it was the Century Plaza—

Tuttle: I don't have much recollection. I remember being with my parents in their suite. It was just chaos. That's what I remember—that it was chaos.

Knott: Just a real feeling of elation?

Tuttle: Yes, varying feeling of elation and fatigue. It was great.

Knott: Do you recall anything from the transition?

Tuttle: I just recall—I don't think my father had a clue. All of a sudden—he had this little office on La Brea—people were sticking résumés through the door and calling. At the time, too, I felt somewhat bad for my parents. We bought a bank in Arizona and we got into an argument with the regulators about how we were going to buy it. My dad's partner had an interview with somebody and the newspaper had—they shouldn't have had the interview. It didn't come out too well.

We were vindicated in the long run and everything was fine, but the press started following Dad around. I remember we took him one day through the shop and put him in a car so he and Mom could drive to Santa Barbara. The press was all out in front of the door. I don't think Mom and Dad were prepared for the onslaught of all these people who were, frankly, job seekers. Nor was I. We had a wonderful time at the Inaugural.

Knott: I was going to ask about the Inaugural.

Tuttle: We were there with the Darts. Actually, the most fun thing was on Saturday before the Inauguration. Mom and Dad and the Darts gave a party for the Reagan family and for the Bush family. It was small. It was about forty to fifty people. That was the first time I'd ever met Mrs. Bush. I was at her table and it was wonderful. All the kids and their kids. That's the first time I'd met the young George Bush. He was just like me, a young man—I'm a little bit older than he is, I guess. He was just a young guy. It was fun. It was wonderful. It was a family affair.

I remember the toasts were great. Justin Dart gave a wonderful toast. He talked about Dad and the President. At the end President Bush said, "My job is to be a loyal Vice President and I'm going to be one, and it's time for us to go, Mr. President." It was very warm. That was really—for me it was the highlight.

We went to the California Ball at the Kennedy Center. Again, my father just didn't have a clue about the Secret Service. We get there and the President was coming in so everything stopped and the Secret Service guys said, "You gotta stop here." And he says, "I'm Holmes Tuttle. You don't know who I am." They didn't care. So he started up the steps and fortunately—who was the lady? She was a friend of Mary Jane Wick, who was sort of in charge, said, "Let this gentleman in." They had this little tiny table. Everything was just chaos.

Mom and Dad got to go to the Inauguration—you know, for all the friends they had a little bus that went up, and they were on the podium. I was way back in the crowd. I have a wonderful picture of my parents in the President's big box at the parade. Then, that day or the next day, there's a wonderful picture of Dad in the Oval Office with the President, on which the President has inscribed, "We were dreaming to come here"—something wonderful.

Knott: There is a suggestion in Edmund Morris' book, which I realize is a controversial book, that some members of the kitchen cabinet felt at certain points that they were not given their due—the respect that was due them from the President and Mrs. Reagan. I was wondering if you might comment on that.

Tuttle: I remember, right after Reagan was elected, going to a party here in L.A. I can't think of his name. He worked for Eisenhower—a brilliant guy—and he said to me, "Your father is not going to have any influence." I said, "That's not true." And he said, "Oh, he's going to go back to Washington?" I said, "I'm sure he'll go back a lot." He said, "It's going to change." I think my dad understood that. It's interesting. My dad was a very realistic guy, but some of these other guys didn't realize that. I think there was an office for a while—you correct me; I wasn't there. Wasn't there a kitchen cabinet office in the EOB [Executive Office Building]?

Knott: There was. There was some controversy.

Tuttle: Yes. Then it was decided that if kitchen cabinet members were going to have an office, they'd have to fill out all that paperwork. That's sort of when they went away and the staff really took over. These guys had been used to, as I told you earlier, having lunch in the Palisades and talking about the issues of the day in California, and who was doing what. That just didn't happen anymore. It couldn't happen anymore.

I remember my mother and me saying to my dad, "Why don't you take an apartment here?" He had terrible stomach problems all his life and he said, "No, I wouldn't last a week." Part of it was that he knew that his health couldn't stand up to it. I also think he knew instinctively that it was going to change because of the White House and the staff.

Knott: He was accepting of this?

Tuttle: Yes, very accepting. They went back that first July. They went back for a state dinner and there was a wonderful party on July 4th, and they loved all of that. Then when the President would come out, they went up to the ranch. One night Mom and Dad went up, just the two of them, and had dinner with the President up at that little tiny house. They loved all of that. But he knew that it was going to change, and that was okay with him. Having said that, I still think it would be—it's wonderful to have a group of advisors outside with no ax to grind.

Had these fellows not all been in their seventies and eighties, things might have been different. They might have—had they been in their fifties and sixties. I know if I was ever in that position—in fact, when I was Personnel Director I had a little outside group. It's good to meet with people from the outside because you can get so insulated in Washington. Otherwise, the only time they would get together was when there was a crisis, which later on you can ask me about. Maybe I shouldn't tell you about it.

Knott: I hope you do. Morris and others also talk about this alleged wall that existed between the President and perhaps everyone except Mrs. Reagan, and maybe even a little bit there. I realize I'm asking you to sort of—

Tuttle: I'll tell you what my theory is. I'll never forget, it was right after the election, the second election, and Mike Deaver and I were going out to play tennis. The story goes back about five years. My dad got to know President Eisenhower at the end of his Presidency and he'd come to California and he wanted to have time to play golf. I was a history major. I had this book by this well-known historian—I can't think of his name. Anyway, I'd left the book on the table. The Eisenhowers came over after golf and he picks the book up, goes to the index, and finds derogatory comments about his administration.

Things stick in your mind. Basically, I think the academic establishment—no offense, Professor—and I think it's changed in the last twenty years, a lot to do with Ronald Reagan and his background. I think it was much more prejudicial. So I had this early experience with President Eisenhower, with my dad saying, "He didn't like your book, Bob."

I said, "Mike, there should be a—this is a historic Presidency." Little did we know how historic with the Cold War and all that. I said, "There ought to be a historian." He said, "Bob, great idea, but we've already taken care of it, and we're going to have a historian."

"Who is it?" I said. And he said, "Edmund Morris." I said, "Oh my God." I love history. I said, "I've read his Theodore Roosevelt book. Terrific. I love it." One of the things I regret not doing in my experience in Washington, because I try to spend a lot of time with my family, is not seeking out people as much as I should have. But Edmund I really sought out because he had an office, and I really became friendly with him and I introduced him to my father, and he went out to Santa Barbara—we became very close friends. Very early on he read me stuff from the book that I just thought was terrific. My theory is that he had too much time. I think if he had had a deadline, it would have been a much better book. But I think he was looking for this "mother lode" inside of Ronald Reagan. I've thought about that a lot. I'm not sure if any of us has a "mother lode" inside. I think he was looking for a secret, and he got frustrated when he didn't

find that. I actually had trouble reading the book. He got very involved with the family—really involved.

Knott: With the President's children?

Tuttle: With the President's children. Maybe over-involved. Again, he was, with any public figure, they have to be perfect, but the fact is they aren't perfect. None of us is perfect. I don't know, I'm just purely in speculation, but I read this stuff early on. Edmund had a wonderful house up on the Hill and he took me up. He had one floor for *TR* and one floor for Reagan, and Sylvia, his wife, was writing a book on Clare Boothe Luce, and she had a floor. It was really cool.

He read me parts of his book including the ending, and it was so great. Then all this time went on and I think he lost it.

Knott: Did your father consider himself to be a friend of the President?

Tuttle: Absolutely, he was a friend. The President was a very private—again this dichotomy between the private and the public. He was at once a public man, and yet maybe his most inner thoughts he did discuss with Mrs. Reagan. I think that's true of many, many people. Who knows? It may have been because of his childhood. We all know now what a difficult childhood he had. But I know Dad never had—they didn't always agree, but he never had any trouble talking to the President. What do you think, Maureen?

Molloy: I have strong feelings about this.

Knott: Please.

Molloy: I have three older brothers and a dad who are Irish, and I've always thought that the President's personality and reserve were because of his Irish heritage. My brothers are so similar to him. They're wonderful men. One is gone now. They're wonderful men, but very reserved, and you can only get so close to them. It's a combination of shyness—

Tuttle: Modesty?

Molloy: Modesty—yes, and a male-female thing sometimes. I felt it so strongly with President Reagan. Yet there's a sense of humor like no one else, intelligence, and a compassion and softness of heart—all of that is true, really true, in these men. But there is an arm's length that they wish wasn't there, and it is there.

Irish-American men seem to have an innate reserve. I would frequently see it in President Reagan, and yet he would be so funny, and he would listen so intently to you if you had something to tell him, and be so compassionate, but he would not be able—I'll now speak of my brothers—they would not be able to run over and give you a hug to make you feel better.

Bob brought Edmund Morris to a staff meeting one morning—we usually had meetings three mornings a week for associate directors—and I said to Edmund Morris, whose personality I found to be rather pompous, "I know that I'm 'prejudiced,' but I think the President's inner—what makes him tick—is his Irishness. It's what makes his reserve and what gives him that sense of humor that is so charming and so disarming when he's with people. His sense of humor opens a door to conversation that maybe wouldn't happen with a more—" And so I asked Edmund was he going to go to Ireland, and he said no; he could see no reason to go. I said, "I think you're missing it."

Knott: Interesting.

Tuttle: Yes, that's interesting.

Knott: I also thought it was a generational thing, as well. My father was almost the same age as President Reagan. We were close, and I know he cared very deeply for me, but it was not an affectionate relationship. It was not an overly physical, affectionate relationship.

Tuttle: Interesting. When we get to it, I'll tell you a story. It was the only time I ever hugged my father, and it has to do with getting this Personnel job. And yet, I could tell you a couple of stories about the President. It was my forty-fifth birthday, and I was a little bit, frankly, hung over. We'd had a party the night before. My desk was just like this but I had a couch over there where that painting is and I was sitting on the couch talking to my wife on the phone. I have a little bit of a hearing loss. The door opened—the office was bigger than this one. Somebody started singing "Happy Birthday," and I said, "Come on in." I couldn't hear who it was. Nobody ever came into your office unannounced. Anyway, I'm talking to her and I said, "Come on in!" It was the President.

I said, "Oh my god, Donna, it's the President." I hung up. It was right after Don Regan—I don't know if it's true or not—hung up on Nancy. So the President comes over and he said, "Bob, who'd you hang up on?" I said, "It was Donna." He said, "Oh, Bob, you can't hang up on your wife." I said, "Mr. President, it doesn't happen very often that the President of the United States walks into your office on your forty-fifth birthday. I'll make it up to Donna, don't worry." He sings me "Happy Birthday." I think there was a glass of champagne. Yes, Maureen's got the picture there. There he is. You can see me. I don't even have my coat on.

Molloy: You didn't have your shoes on, either.

Tuttle: I didn't have my shoes on? Yes, I always take my shoes off.

Molloy: You told me your feet were up on the coffee table.

Tuttle: Here's my desk, here's the door, and here's this couch. He came up there and did that, himself, but he was concerned about Donna. He leaves after about five minutes or so, and I said, "I'll take care of it." So I called Donna, and she *was* a little ticked off. I said, "Donna, it was the President of the United States." She finally said, "Oh, okay." It was okay. I went across the street and there was a card store, and I sent her a card saying, "I'm sorry I hung up on you," and I got a

card and sent it to the President and wrote, "Mr. President, I've smoothed it over with Donna, and thank you for coming to my office." This is typical of Ronald Reagan: The next week when I went into his office—and he had this super-clean desk—there's my card, right on the desk. He says, "Thanks, Bob. I got your card."

Knott: The inscription on the picture reads, "Dear Bob—Happy Birthday! And Warmest Friendship. Sincerely, Ron." That's a great story.

Tuttle: Isn't that a great story?

Knott: Do you want to tell us what you mentioned—that when you found out the news that you were going to be appointed White House Personnel Director?

Tuttle: I was thinking whether I should tell this story. What do you think, Maureen? I'll tell the story. We're talking about fathers and generations.

After I was there a short time, Helene Von Damm became Ambassador to Austria and I was frankly disappointed that I wasn't selected to replace her. In retrospect, I hadn't been there too long, I was wet behind the ears, and they might have had some other—I don't know. I was not selected. John Herrington was selected Director of Presidential Personnel. Although John and I subsequently became very close friends, it was not an easy time for me. I sort of went back there with the idea of being head of Personnel. So, in the summer or early fall of 1984, John came to me and said, "Bob, we want to put you in as Deputy Secretary at HUD [Housing and Urban Development]." I really wasn't too thrilled. I said to John, "I'm thrilled." I went home and I talked to my wife about it. She had subsequently become Undersecretary for Travel and Tourism and loved it. Donna was great in Washington.

Knott: In the Commerce Department?

Tuttle: Commerce Department. They've now done away with that job, but anyway, she loved it and was getting kudos and I was sort of frustrated. It was not a very easy time. I said, "You know what? A Deputy Secretary is—there's only one in each job, you get to go to the Cabinet meetings. Why don't I do it, and then in a year we'll go home?" She said, "That's fine. That'll be great." She was ready to go.

I said yes. I was selected by the President and I was in clearance. Of course, then the election occurs and Bill Clark leaves and Don Hodel, who's Secretary of Energy, was selected by the President to go to Interior. John Herrington was selected to be Secretary of Energy. So now Personnel is open, and I'm thinking, *Gee, this is really what I want to do. I don't want to be Deputy Secretary of HUD.*

In the meantime, my father and I had—he said, "Bob, you need to be doing more. You're frustrated." I said, "Yes, I am." He said, "You need to use me, you know." "I don't want to do that, I'm not going to do that." It had gotten to the point where even my mother said, "You know, your dad's really frustrated, and he never asked for anything." It had become sort of a bone of contention between my father and me. Finally I decided I'm going to go for this job.

Bill Clark called me one day—I don't know why Bill did this, but he said, "You know, Carol Hallett has been selected by the President for this job. Bill and Carol are very close, and she was the first woman to be—I think she was Assembly Minority Leader in California. I said, "Bill, I want that job." He said, "It's been decided." I think he was sort of testing me. I thought, *You know what? I want this job*. I wrote the President a note. I'll never forget it. At the same time, I had come up with an initiative on employee training, which we can talk about later. It was my time to go in and make this presentation before the Cabinet. This was so typical of the President. I come into the Cabinet Room. I believe I saw my note on his desk, or at least the same kind of stationery, and he turned around and he said, "I got your note." I'm sitting over there against the wall. And he had that twinkle in his eye. I thought, *I've got a chance for this job.*

Then a lady who worked for me came to my office and—you know how things can somehow change your mind—and she said, "You know, nobody's ever going to help you in Washington, because everybody knows that you've got the most powerful person, the President's best friend, to help you, and you're not using it. You should use it." After that I called my father and said, "Dad, I'd really like this job." He was thrilled. He called the President. Now it's the time of the Inaugural, so I think he went in to see him. I forget whether he went in to see him or called him, but he came home to my house that night in Georgetown and he said, "You've got the job." I remember running out—he was coming over to see my wife and children. I went out in the courtyard and hugged him. So I did use him for that, and I'm glad I did.

Knott: Thank you for sharing that. I know it was difficult.

Tuttle: Talking about the emotion between fathers and sons—

Molloy: I just want to insert here that between the key supporters meetings and when you were selected head of Personnel, we did recruiting for Presidential Personnel and we did a great job.

Knott: If you could talk about that, that would be—

Tuttle: I'll let you talk about that.

Molloy: We had a staff consisting of George Armstrong, Susan Borchard, and me and we reached out all over the country. By that time, the computer system, which had been virtually nonexistent in the early days of the administration, was really cooking. We were able to search by a person's background, as one can easily do now, but in those days it was a brand new resource. We sourced people all over the country and brought them in and through the interview process. Then we were able to recommend them to the associate directors in Presidential Personnel who were staffing the administration.

It was very valuable because Bob's criteria were two—competence for the position and commitment to the President. You couldn't have one without the other, and it made for some extremely capable, experienced, *and* committed people who came through and were appointed to the administration. The other associate directors didn't have the kind of time that we had. They were certainly getting lots of résumés. But we had the time to start from the other end and go out

and source them, as executive recruiters do. I always felt that was a very valuable training ground for us when we went into the top jobs.

Knott: Sure. So during the period from ’82 to ’85 you are—correct me if I’m mistaken—

Tuttle: It’s really ’83. I started December of 1982.

Knott: Right, that’s right.

Tuttle: So it was about two years.

Knott: Is it accurate for me to say that you are initially reporting to Helene Von Damm and then—

Tuttle: That’s right. And then John Herrington.

Knott: Okay.

Tuttle: But the key supporters I just did on my own. I don’t know who I reported to. I guess Mike Deaver or Jim Baker came in on that. But that only lasted about six months.

Knott: Deaver would have been handling that sort of political matter? Is that an accurate—

Tuttle: Yes, yes, he would. But once I did the first one and it was fine, they just left me and let me do it.

Molloy: And you know what I was thinking—we never, to my recollection, had any feedback from people that we had missed anyone.

Tuttle: No, we didn’t.

Molloy: It was a tremendous undertaking to go out and find them all, but no one ever complained that we had left anyone off those lists. We did an excellent job. I don’t know if it ever was done before or since in other administrations. I think that probably had some impact in the states where people stayed supportive of the President.

Knott: I was wondering if I could get you to comment, both of you, on some of the key individuals from that first term. I’m thinking particularly of the so-called “troika” of Deaver, Baker, and Meese. Any observations? Any reflections you have, starting with James Baker, who was the Chief of Staff.

Tuttle: To be completely honest with you, I wasn’t at the level, other than the key supporter meetings. From my perspective, from the beginning, Ed was very nice. He had a weekly meeting of his group that he included me in. I forget what it was called. But by the time I got there and started going to these meetings, which was probably the spring or summer of ’83, there was a fair amount of tension going on.

John Herrington used to talk to me about the appointments and how all three had to agree. Sometimes things would just languish forever. He said, "I just can't get them—" It was a tough job, because John would have to get Baker or Deaver or Meese and it was difficult, although I think the President in many respects was served very well to have—Jim Baker is a brilliant guy, a great organizer, really knew Washington. Mike, obviously, knew the Reagans and he was great with the press and all that, and Ed was sort of the ideological core. In many ways it worked great. It just didn't last. It wasn't something that could last forever, given the different personalities.

Knott: Were the differences, do you think, like California group versus the new guys on the block? Or was it an ideological split?

Tuttle: I think it was all of the above. There's always this competition, which is unfortunate. I think this competition was allowed to exist. Then it becomes ideology. There was always this issue—when did this person come on board for Ronald Reagan? Always. Were they with us in '76? Were they with us in '80? Obviously, Jim Baker wasn't. He wasn't with them in '76. But he was very competent and had done a good job as Chief of Staff.

Knott: Did you feel a certain loyalty towards any one of those three?

Tuttle: I started out, just because of where I'd come from, with a natural loyalty to the Californians, to Ed Meese. But I would like to think that I began to see maybe a little bit bigger picture, a little broader. And I don't think I was quite as ideological as some of the people on his staff and some people remained after Ed left. My criticism—and I'd like to think I'm a conservative. Sometimes some of the people in the White House wanted 100 percent or nothing. I don't come from that school. If you can get 51 percent sometimes, that's great. I felt a lot of times they were willing to go down with the ship on whatever issue it was over trying to get 100 percent, which I thought was counterproductive.

Knott: Did you ever feel that these rivalries, or however you want to characterize it, were so deep that it was counterproductive? The White House was perhaps not working the way it should be?

Tuttle: A lot was accomplished in the first term. I think at the end of the day they overcame that. Sometimes the leaks were bad in the press, but I didn't—and maybe I wasn't on a high enough level, to be honest with you, to see it. I don't know. Maureen, do you have any—?

Molloy: Well, at my level, I was simply answering phones, sixteen lines at a time, and through all of the changes in Presidential Personnel and all of the intensity of the work that we were doing, I just would say that they deserve a great deal of credit for working together, as they must have— Baker, Meese and Deaver—to manage a staff of that size and to start from zero. We had nothing from the [Jimmy] Carter White House. I can only speak for Personnel. We had no records and no assistance in getting Personnel started. You know how large the staff is in the White House. I just think that they deserve a lot of credit for being able to work together and accomplish what we did.

It seemed that they each had tremendous strength in his own area, and they were all intensely loyal to Ronald Reagan—and that's what really mattered. They didn't seem to be there for their own futures but rather to really make this administration—to get it off the ground with a solid start, and they really accomplished it. We never felt like we were floundering, even though maybe we were. We had a solid foundation under us and in large measure it was the senior staff who were responsible for that.

Tuttle: If I have a regret, it's that I didn't get closer to, especially, Jim Baker, because he worked in the White House. I think he's just such a brilliant guy and a great organizer.

Knott: Could you give us a greater sense of your responsibilities from that period, from early '83 to '85 when you're appointed Personnel Director?

Tuttle: Well, the key supporter meetings. And we did the recruiting, as Maureen mentioned. Basically, a lot of that recruiting was political. It was generated out of the key supporter meetings. After that, the key supporters knew they had a friend in the White House. I think a lot of times they had called or sent résumés in, and you do feel like you're just dropping it into a hole. Part of it was that the computer system didn't work very well, and it started to work better. I would take résumés in to the associate director and—I'm a pretty persistent guy. I'd keep going back and saying, "What do we do about this guy?" I think they began to see some results.

Molloy: Additionally, we were able to find people who weren't approaching us, and that was the difference. We were able to find people like my superstar, Richard Soudriette. This is a man I found out in the Midwest working for a mayor, who had expressed no interest, particularly, in working in the administration. We found him because of his background and his language ability, et cetera, all of which came from the computer. Somewhere along the line we had gotten a résumé, but how we got it, I don't know.

Tuttle: See, all these résumés came in—they all came in in early '81 or '80—

Knott: In the transition.

Tuttle: Yes, in the transition. They went in and one of the problems was the associate directors couldn't use the computer. You'd say you want a lawyer and you'd get everyone from someone just out of law school to a guy who is a potential Supreme Court nominee. There's a wonderful lady who's still back there now working for George Bush who began—and the computer got better and better, so people like Maureen could go in and really look and say, "Oh, here's a guy." He probably sent his résumé in early on and then said, "Oh, it's in a black hole."

Knott: How would you balance this desire to find Reagan loyalists with competency? I mean, obviously there are instances where both of those merged beautifully. But in instances where those don't and you've got a loyalist who's really pressing for a position and you—

Tuttle: I really talked a lot about this, probably in every single speech. I'll never forget when I was first Personnel Director. One day a guy comes into my office and says, "I want Dominican Republic." I said, "Sure." He helped a lot on the Statue of Liberty and he said, "Justin Dart

promised me Dominican Republic." I said, "Why are you interested?" "Oh, I've got a home down there." Well, obviously this interview did not go too well. Finally, he said, "You know, young man, it doesn't look like I'm going very well with you, so I'm going to go call Nancy Reagan." I said, "Okay, fine. Go call Nancy Reagan. Thank you, the interview is over."

Obviously, I called her Chief of Staff and he never—he just wasn't qualified. I did check on the guy. I probably gave it to Maureen or someone. He had done a lot of stuff, and there was a delegation to Kenya for the twentieth anniversary for Kenya, so we sent him as one of the members. The head of the delegation was this lady, Nancy Reynolds. He wrote me the most beautiful letter. He was apparently a pain in the ass the whole time. But he wrote me a letter and he was very thankful for that. That's what I mean.

There's this myriad of positions. On the very important positions, I talked about the "two Cs." People would ask the same question. They'd say, "Well, what about this one, who is competent but not committed?" Or "Committed but not competent?" I'd say, "Listen, for these big jobs, if we're not getting both of the people, the President ought to fire the Personnel Director."

By the time I became Director, we really figured out—we controlled everything. Delegations are important, and it's a good way to satisfy people. And a lot of people—all they want is to go on a delegation. Maybe they don't know about a delegation, but Bill Clark took Dad on a delegation to Spain and he loved it, when Bill was National Security Advisor. I don't think for the top jobs that there should be any compromise. But for other jobs, maybe you can—it depends on the job. I really tried to focus on the top jobs, and I had very good people on the boards and commissions. That's another area—all these boards and commissions. Frankly, they could do away with most of them, in my opinion. But it was a good safety valve where you could put people on a board or commission and they would be happy. That's maybe all they wanted, to say to their friends, "I'm on the President's Commission for X, Y, Z, and I'm going to Washington two or three times a year." It was a Presidential appointment. They got a commission, the same as the commission I have.

Knott: Go ahead, Maureen.

Molloy: I was just going to say, you were adamant about the two Cs for the top jobs, but you were also adamant about the two Cs for the SES [Senior Executive Service] and Schedule Cs, which were very important, too.

Tuttle: Yes, we had a very effective clearance process. On the political appointments below the Presidential level, we couldn't appoint the person, but we could hold up the appointments through the Office of Personnel and Management. If, for instance, you were Assistant Secretary and you sent over someone for one of your SES or Schedule C positions, we'd check the person out and if we found out that they were a Democrat, we wouldn't approve them. We also got aggressive—we never were as successful as I had hoped—in gathering people that we thought were good SES and Schedule C people and sending them out.

I always said you couldn't beat something with nothing. Let's say you wanted to get Maureen in and we said, "Uh-uh, we're not going to clear her." We would say, "But here's somebody. Let's

interview this person." That worked pretty well. We had a real Reaganite, and sometimes he would go overboard, who would really check. He'd call this person's home state and talk to a local county chairman and they'd say, "Oh, this guy never supported us," or, "He was a Democrat." It was because we really wanted to get people in all of the full-time jobs who were competent and who were committed to the President.

I always thought that those people—and I do see occasionally, today, somebody who served—we always thought of ourselves that we were credentialing young conservatives and that these people would move up in later administrations or maybe run for office. So that was really an important part of our goal. I don't want to forget mentioning that.

Molloy: And I just want to mention how each of these people knew that their boss was President Reagan.

Tuttle: One of the things that I did, and I don't know if I my predecessors did it, but the President signed off on every single Presidential appointment and I would go back up to the office—and some days I might have thirty or forty. I wouldn't make every call, but on the important calls, I would make the call, and I would say, "Mrs. Molloy, I just left the Oval Office," which was true, "and you have been selected by the President to be the Assistant Secretary." The ones that I didn't call, I gave to my associate directors and said, "You call these people." They would say, "Bob Tuttle was just in the Oval Office and you have been selected to be on this board or commission." It actually was fun, because people would cry, they would yell, they would drop the phone, or whatever.

Knott: Every day?

Tuttle: Yes. Even if it had been someone that I didn't want in that position, I would call, because I wanted them to know that the President made the decision and that they were there for just one reason and that's because Ronald Reagan got more votes than Jimmy Carter and Walter Mondale.

I think that was one of the fundamental flaws, as I read it, just reading history of the Carter administration. He appointed his Cabinet Secretaries, but he let them make all the Presidential appointments below that. That was not the philosophy of the Reagan administration. I didn't start it. That started at the beginning with Pen James and Ed Meese, that the President would be involved. That's what it means that the Office of Personnel—the Office of Personnel is very powerful. It doesn't mean that they made all the appointments, but we were aggressive and involved in every single appointment for that reason. People really do get captured by the bureaucracy and by the Washington—and also we wanted to bring people from outside Washington in, going back to what Maureen said earlier. That was important.

I'll never forget when I first went to Washington and was told by a PPO staff member that, "There are enough Republicans within a mile of the White House to fill the government." I thought, *I wonder what he's talking about*. Well, I discovered in short order he was absolutely telling me the truth. Also, these hangers-on who worked in previous administrations. I wanted to try to bring people from the outside in. It's wonderful about our system that, as I'm sure you

know, we have a high percentage of political appointments, much higher than most democracies, because we have a huge country. It's great that someone like me goes to Washington, works for six years, and comes back. It enriches, it's good for Washington to have people from outside the city, and it's good for the individual who serves.

Knott: Could you give us some sense of how you would recruit, outside of the Beltway, so to speak?

Tuttle: I think the most important thing that I did was—it sounds simple, but I didn't see it at all in the office in the first two years I was there. I sort of divvied up the government into five areas. One was the boards and commissions area. Then I had the national security area, which was State, Defense, CIA [Central Intelligence Agency], and the agencies that related to that. That was one associate director. Then I had another associate director for the independent regulatory agencies—Commerce, and Treasury, and Justice—that seemed to sort of fit. I divided it up.

I had a couple of people whom I really liked who were there, and I was lucky to recruit some people who were just outstanding. I'd met a financial services attorney who was just perfect to handle Treasury and Justice and Commerce. And then a lady whom I'd known, who had actually been in the CIA and worked at the State Department. She was perfect for that particular area. They were smart, bright people. That was number one. I got a staff of four or five associate directors who were really committed to the President and they really understood what I wanted.

For each job, as a job became available, I made them develop a sheet and say, what is our position on this job? What are we looking for? What is our agenda? Not on every job did we have an agenda, so we tried to develop an agenda. Who are the potential candidates? What does the computer show? By this time, they really had gotten comfortable with the lady who ran the computers. They knew they could go into the computer and if they wanted a fifty-year-old attorney, they weren't getting somebody right out of law school; they weren't getting a Supreme Court—they could really go in and ask the computer. The computer was very helpful.

I'd say, what organizations that are supportive of us are interested in this job? Would Heritage, for instance, be interested? We developed a group of organizations that were supportive of the President. Let's reach out to those organizations. I can't remember all the list, but we developed a list of organizations that were really supportive of the President and interested in the President.

Then we had this political office, the job that I had sort of been doing, which was political recruiting, and I had an associate director for that. I would give him—it was George, wasn't it?

Molloy: Yes.

Tuttle: George Armstrong. I would give him these sheets that we developed. I said, "Here. You call and see if we have any people who are interested." We would develop a list of candidates. The guy who wanted the job and knew about it, he was always there calling you, and he had Senator Whoever-it-was calling you from the first day.

I'll never forget—a very competent White House attorney—this is in that period I was talking to you about when my father came back and it looked like I was going to get this job. She came into my office one day and she said, "You know, Bill Bennett's going to Education." I think Bill had already been selected. She said, "And he's going to fire the attorney and I'm going to be his new attorney." It hadn't even been announced.

I thought, *It's going to start right here*. I said, "Look. Let me tell you something. First, it hasn't been announced, but if I get the job and there is a vacancy I'll work with the Secretary, and you'll certainly be considered as a candidate. But there have been no decisions made on that job, I can tell you. When I'm Personnel Director, here's how we're going to do it."

It's amazing. People are so gutsy in Washington. She was just going to walk right over me. I had some other similar experiences like that. But by having these competent people work for me, they did a really good job, and they were really motivated. It was sort of a fresh start in Personnel. John took most of his people with him and there weren't too many people left over. In short order we had a camaraderie and it really worked. I think they knew I wasn't there to get a better job and that I really cared about Personnel.

Knott: How frequently would you get a call from the Hill, saying, "We've got to go with this guy"?

Tuttle: All the time.

Knott: I'm giving you a softball question, here, but I'm interested in hearing how this interaction would work.

Tuttle: Well, what was interesting to me—I'd always say, "How dumb do I look?" They would call me up and say, "I have a great candidate." Like we weren't going to do any checking. We'd find out it was somebody they wanted to fire, or it was their cousin. They're unbelievable.

Some people were very good, and I'll give you an example. Pete Wilson would call me and he would inevitably know more than I did. When he called he was really, really good.

I remember Paul from—what's his name? Trible?

Knott: Paul Trible [Jr.] from Virginia.

Tuttle: One day the Legislative Director said, "Would you go up and meet with Trible?" I said okay. We go up there. He has the candidate in the room with Senator John Warner. They're there. It's like, we want this guy to get this job right now, and you're going to do it. Again, I looked over at them all, sucked it up and I said, "Listen, here's the process. This guy sounds great, we'll be happy to interview him." Of course afterward Warner called my associate director, whom he knew, Mark Sullivan, and he apologized. Trible was just like—they're going to roll right over you, and do it right then and there.

Knott: Was that an aspect of the job that you disliked? Were there aspects of the job that were particularly onerous for you?

Tuttle: The worst experience I had was with Senator [Alfonse] D'Amato. Again our legislative director asked me to meet with D'Amato because of someone D'Amato wanted to be an Ambassador and we hadn't delivered. I never had anyone talk to me like that, including my own drill sergeant in basic training, "You no good—" I won't say it in front of Maureen—but no, of course, I didn't like that.

On a couple of confirmations I did go up and I talked to the Senators. I think, slowly, I garnered some respect. In fact, I'll tell you another funny story.

Knott: Please.

Tuttle: I get the job. It's right at the time that [Bradford] Reynolds had been nominated for a job at Justice. The nomination caused a huge controversy, which I didn't have anything to do with. But I'm Personnel Director. I go in the Cabinet. I thought, *This is great*. I was there. It was really exciting—a Cabinet meeting. Here are all these Senators around the table. The President gets up. Jack Svahn, who was then the head of Policy, said, "You better sit right here because the President might want to call on you." I said, "No, that's never going to happen."

Anyway, the President gives his speech about how they have to have Reynolds, and, "If we don't get Reynolds, blah, blah." Then he opens it up. That's another thing I learned about Washington. They don't even talk about the issues. They start in on how terrible the Office of Personnel is—how they don't return their phone calls—

Knott: I'm sorry, who was saying this?

Tuttle: The Senators. These are the Senators.

Knott: The visiting Senators.

Tuttle: Mark Hatfield, whom I knew personally—his wife had helped me and my wife find a house. They started in, "Blah, blah, blah." You never heard such criticism. I'm telling you, it was just—I finally thought, *My god, I've got to say something*. I finally raised my hand, and the President said, "I'd like to introduce you to our new Personnel Director." I said, "After what I just heard, I don't want to admit that I work for the Office of Personnel."

One thing I learned—I had all my statistics. They had talked about a lot of jobs that were vacant. I said, "You mentioned these jobs—there were fifty vacancies—and for twenty of them we have selected someone, and they're in clearance. Ten, twenty more, you've got up on the Hill. Please confirm them—including Reynolds. These other ten or so we are working on the jobs." They laughed when I said that, so it worked out okay. But, oh my God, I wanted to hide under the chair, from thinking this is the greatest thing that's ever happened to me—being in the Cabinet room—to being lambasted by prominent U.S. Senators. In retrospect, if I did it again I'd have been much more aggressive out of the box in getting up on the Hill—

Knott: Going up to the Hill?

Tuttle: And doing it myself.

Knott: How frequently would you go up to the Hill?

Tuttle: Not a lot. I don't know.

Knott: A couple of times a month?

Tuttle: Yes, maybe a couple of times a month. We had a guy who was an ambassadorial candidate. Actually he'd worked in the Foreign Service and done something he shouldn't have done and he told me about it. That was another thing that I got better at, asking, "Have you ever done anything to embarrass the President?" Everyone said no. Then I'd probe a little deeper.

Anyway, this guy had told me some things that were tough. I said, "Here's what we're going to do." I got on the phone to Jesse Helms and Senator Claiborne Pell and I said, "I'm sending someone up. He's ultimately qualified for this job as an ambassadorial post." It was important, but not huge. "I want you to hear exactly what happened." They listened, and they both called me back, and they said, "Bob, we appreciate this, and if this is all of it, we'll confirm this guy." And they did.

I learned to be more proactive. If I went back today and did it again, I would be much more proactive in working with the Hill.

Knott: How do you develop the skill of getting people to tell you things that they might think would—

Tuttle: Well, I've asked you that question, and you would say, "Bob, I've never done anything"—because you want to be the National Endowment for the Humanities head. And then I'd say, "I want to tell you a story." And this is true. We had a job—it was Assistant Secretary of Energy for Fossil Fuel, or something. We had a hard time recruiting this guy. We finally found a guy who was good. I was so excited. We put the guy into clearance.

I would say, "I want to tell you a story about this guy. We asked him if he'd ever been fired from a job and he said he hadn't. Well, he'd been fired when he was like sixteen or seventeen years old for stealing money out of a cash drawer. We found that out. We're going to find out about you. Now let's go back over it."

"Have you been divorced?" "Have you ever taken drugs?" I said, "We're going to find out whatever it is about you." Then he'd say, "Well, yes, I had a little affair—" I know stuff about people that I really wish I didn't know. I wanted to let them know we were going to find stuff out. That's when people really unburden themselves and that really helped me. I could say, "I think this is something that's do-able," or, "This isn't do-able."

Knott: Were there things that were an automatic death sentence, in your mind, in terms of what they might reveal to you?

Tuttle: I think everything was on a case-by-case basis. I suppose a convicted felon—but they knew that we were going to find that out. This little additional story I would tell them about this guy, which was a true story—then they knew we would—and I'd say, "I've looked at my own FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] report," which I had. And I would tell them a story about that.

Knott: The FBI would do background checks on—

Tuttle: Once we selected you, you'd fill out your papers and we'd give them to the FBI. The next thing that would happen was the FBI would go back to the Counsel's Office—it was all through the Counsel's office.

In some cases, also, I learned—I had a case where a guy abused his wife. I called the guy back. It was another important job with the Navy. I said, "You're not going to get this job, and here's why." He said, "You know what? I was not a good husband. This was a bad divorce, but I never touched my wife." He said it with such passion that I went back to the Counsel's Office and I said, "Re-investigate this guy." Sure enough, the wife, the now-divorced wife, admitted she was angry and she'd said that in a moment of anger—and the candidate got the job.

It was always a two-way street. I had this weird relationship with the Counsel's Office. I got to know the guys, and they'd say, "Here comes another Tuttle-ite. Here we go." My appointees were known as Tuttle-ites. I'll tell you a great Colin Powell story when we get into that.

Knott: I'll make sure I remember to ask about that.

[BREAK]

Knott: … batteries have run out or something.

Tuttle: Lou Cannon spoke out at the Reagan Library, and I went out to hear him. I spoke with him afterwards, and he told me this story. He said, "I've got to tell you a story about your dad. I went down to Palm Springs to interview him early on when these things were probably a big thing. I hit the button. We had a great interview. Your dad was great. I get back to my office, and it's gone. I called him back, and I said, 'Mr. Tuttle, would you mind?'" And he said—typical Dad—my dad was such a great guy—he said, "Sure, come on back." He said, "Actually, he was better the second time." He said he just died making the call and saying, "I lost my tape." Is that why you have two?

Knott: That's why I have two, yes. And they're both very good. That's why I keep glancing—just to make sure we're on track here. You mentioned—as we talk a little bit more about the

personnel process—some of the other offices within the White House that you worked with. You've mentioned Legislative Affairs and the White House Counsel's Office.

Tuttle: Again, one thing I did was I had an outside group, thanks to my friend, Ron Walker, which we can talk about. From the beginning, I was very close to Joe Wright, who was Deputy Director of OMB [Office of Management and Budget] and then became the Director after Jim Miller. I put together a group of top White House aides headed by Jack Svahn and Joe Wright, and a couple of other guys. I wanted to be—it's always better to be inclusive. I'd meet with these guys down in the Mess in the late afternoon, and I'd say, "Here are the big jobs we're looking for candidates for. Here are the jobs we're having trouble with."

They became part of the personnel process from the beginning. In terms of day-to-day interface, the offices were basically Legislative Affairs and the Counsel's Office, for the reasons that I've mentioned. But I wanted the rest of the White House staff to know what was going on. Oh, and another thing that I did—remember when I told you about the position sheet?

Knott: Yes.

Tuttle: Well, OMB was sort of organized the way Personnel was, so I'd say to my associate director, "Go talk to their associate director. What is our agenda in this particular area?"

Knott: Do you want to talk a little more at this time about the outside group? You mentioned Ron Walker.

Tuttle: Ron Walker is a friend of mine whom I met on the '80 campaign who headed Korn/Ferry [International] in Washington. He got together a group of people. There was guy from Heidrick & Struggles, a couple of major search guys, and Fred Malek, who'd been head of Personnel under Richard Nixon. Again—to have some outside influence. I'd meet with them two or three times a year. I didn't meet with them a lot. One thing they did for me was great: at the beginning, after I'd hired new associate directors, this group came in and talked about the personnel process, both from the professional standpoint and from what it was like in previous administrations. I think that really helped my people. They saw I really cared about what was going on in the office and about doing the very best job for the President, these new people, and I think it helped them.

I had wanted to get someone from the search world for our staff, and I wasn't able to do it at first. I eventually did, through Ron—a woman who worked here in Los Angeles for Korn/Ferry. We had an all-day seminar where these guys—Ron, and some of these search people—talked about search, what it was, and what it was all about, and the kind of questions you should ask candidates. I think that really helped the associate directors; as I said, two of them were attorneys, but they didn't have any personnel background. We got into nitty-gritty stuff on how to interview and other personnel procedures.

I'd meet with the in-house group maybe monthly, and as time went on, less with the outside group, maybe three or four times a year. But, again, the effort was to be professional.

Knott: How much influence would you receive—let me rephrase the question. To what extent was President Reagan directly involved in Personnel decisions?

Tuttle: At the very top, he was very much involved—Cabinet Secretaries, Supreme Court Justices. Below that, we really came to him with our recommended candidates. There was one case in my four-year tenure where he got involved in a—well, a couple of cases where he got involved a little bit lower than that. Mostly, I'd go into the Office and tell him why we were recommending someone, and he would agree to it. But not on the top jobs. And I think that's the way it should be.

Knott: Do you care to talk about those exceptions where he was involved in the lower—

Tuttle: There was one. It was an independent regulatory agency. I really wanted somebody, and a very powerful Senator who oversaw that agency wanted somebody else, and it was a fight. I won't say who it was, but I remember going into the Oval Office. Howard Baker was already there. The Chief of Staff was always there with us. So the President is sitting here, and I'm there, and Howard Baker's there. He said, "You know, Howard, we should really tell Bob." I could tell that Howard Baker didn't want me to know. The President said, "Bob, we're not going to go with your guy." It was hard for him to do that. I was very disappointed, because I thought it was such a bad mistake. But it was the only time in four years that he ever overruled me. What I liked especially was that the President wanted to tell me himself—face to face.

Knott: Interesting.

Tuttle: He knew what I wanted, and why I wanted it, and I'd laid it out. He's a great listener, but I think he was convinced by Senator Baker that it was more important that we pay attention to the Senator up on the Hill.

Knott: He had a difficult time telling you?

Tuttle: He had a difficult time. But he did it in such a way that, even though I was upset—you know he had sort of a magical way of handling it, so soft about it, that I couldn't—I mean, Don Regan would just have said, "We're not going to go with your guy."

Knott: What about Mrs. Reagan? I think you mentioned in passing earlier that she—

Tuttle: Yes, she cared about the Kennedy Board. She would call me regarding its appointees, and I would call her. It was clear from the beginning. When I got the job, I went to her and I said, "Here's where we are." I'd known her for a long time. She said, "I'm interested in the Kennedy Board." Of all the Kennedy Board appointees—it's a very prestigious thing—that were made during my tenure, I think only one was somebody that I had generated.

There was also one ambassadorial job that she cared about, and that was Ronald Lauder being sent to Austria. Other than that, once in a while she called me, but not frequently.

Knott: You mentioned Don Regan in passing—I wonder if you could talk a little bit about Don Regan—when he becomes Chief of Staff and the changes that you observed—

Tuttle: I'll follow up with that. This is another great story about Dad. After that encounter we had—he was there for the Inaugural. He was there for about a week or so. He called me the next day and said, "Don Regan's invited me to meet with him." Dad goes to breakfast, and then he comes over to my office. Still, the President hasn't announced anything. Dad said, "Boy, I told him." They go to breakfast, and Don starts in. He said, "You know what? I hear your son, Bob, is a great guy. You know, I've got a son, and being in Washington would be great for him, too. Your boy ought to take this job at HUD. It would be great for him. He could have a great business career." I don't like what's coming.

Dad listens to this for a while, and he said, "Don, let me tell you something. Bob didn't come back here for a career. He's got a career. He's been very successful in business. He came back here because he wanted to help the President and he wanted to be head of Personnel. The President's made this decision. Don, there is nothing you can do that's going to change it."

So my dad told me this with great pride, and I thought, *Geez, this is trouble*. Sure enough—you know, everything in Washington is access, and Personnel was very important. The job had always been Assistant to the President. Don lowered the position to Deputy Assistant to the President. The job had always been in the West Wing. He moved me out of the West Wing. Then, of course, there was the eight o'clock senior staff meeting, which I guess in the Bush administration is 7:30. I was not included in the eight o'clock meeting.

In addition, if you go back, there's all these little snippets in the press. I saw you had the first *National [Journal article]*—You ought to get the second; it's a lot better. [redacted]

But I will say this for Don—he was a very bright, very organized guy, and I knew he was impressed with a lot of the organization I brought to the Personnel process, thanks to Maureen. The book detailing the bios and political credentials of all the candidates was due weekly. The day before my meeting with the President, we'd have a meeting with Don and a group of top White House staffers, including Assistants to the President for Legislative Affairs and Political Affairs, to review my recommended appointments.

They would get the book the day before, and then we would go into Don's office and discuss it. So I said to my people, "Think of this as a brief. You're making this case." In order to be head of the National Endowment for Humanities, for instance, we'd list what our agenda was, why our recommendation was the best candidate, and then the other candidates we'd looked at, and who our recommended candidate and the other candidates were supported by. Gradually, Don saw that I was competent. I don't know how long it was, but pretty soon, I got my office in the West Wing, I got my Assistant to the President title, and I'm included in the eight o'clock meeting.

You know what's funny? I wanted the job. I was so excited about the job. I really understood it, and I had great people. Nobody likes reading negative comments about themselves in the press. Nobody likes being yelled at. But I could see every day it was getting a little bit better. My people were very supportive. Don Regan was not an easy guy to work for, but he changed.

Knott: He had somebody else in mind?

Tuttle: You know what? I've thought about that and I don't have a clue. I think he wanted his person. I don't know who it was, or if he even had a clue, but he wanted someone who would be loyal to him. I also went out of my way to work with his close aides, [Alfred] Al Kingon and Tom Dawson. I formed a real good relationship with them. They were very helpful. They said, "Just hang in there."

Knott: When things got rough during Iran-Contra and Don Regan's last month or two before he—do either of you have any particular recollections of that? When Iran-Contra first breaks—the mood in the White House?

Tuttle: I'll never forget going to the eight o'clock meeting and he tells us what's going to happen. *What? They sold arms?* I just couldn't believe it. The mood, of course, was very dark, and it got darker. I think it was just before Thanksgiving—

Knott: November '86.

Tuttle: It became apparent to me after the first of the year that Don was going to go. That's when I actually went to Maureen and said, "Let's prepare a book, because there's going to be a new Chief of Staff." I just knew it was going to happen. "So when a new Chief of Staff comes in, we can say, 'Here's where we are with Personnel.'"

I'll never forget Jim Cannon, who came in with Howard Baker. There had been lots of criticism of the staff and all that, and we talked a little bit. I said, "By the way, here's a book to tell you exactly where everything is." After that, Howard Baker said, "You know, I'd really like you to stay on." I so admired Howard Baker. I think it's tough—I would have loved to have been Chief of Staff, but for Howard Baker—he wanted to be President, and for him to take that job at a time when it was low for the President—he's one of my real heroes.

If you remember, after he came in, well, there was still Iran-Contra, but it became a much more positive White House. I have great respect for Howard Baker. But he had not nearly the interest in Personnel that Don did.

Knott: Interesting.

Tuttle: But I just admired him so much for taking this job when he thought he probably should be down the hall. He was very loyal to the President. He was a wonderful man. It was a dark time, and Howard Baker got us going again. I think that was a great service to the country.

Don was interesting. Don forgot why he was there. He forgot that he was there because Reagan got more votes than Walter Mondale. The President, by nature, was a delegator. Don took on—we had a Personnel meeting one day in Don's office and there were these—have you been in the West Wing?

Knott: Yes.

Tuttle: There are all these photographs on the wall; they still have them. I was just back there. I didn't travel with the President, so I always looked at them, and it was fun. During the personnel meeting, in comes Tom Dawson holding pictures, and Don goes through and selects the ones he wants. I thought, *Gee, here we are having a Personnel meeting and he's picking pictures*. Then I really started to look at the pictures. More and more—Don's in more of the pictures. Then, of course, the most famous one was when they were in Geneva when [Mikhail] Gorbachev and Reagan were sitting on the couch, and there's Don standing between them. I thought, *No, this is not a good thing*.

I think he admired the President and was very loyal to the President, and in many ways he was a very good Chief of Staff. I mean, I haven't seen other models, because he's really the only one I worked closely with. As I said earlier, I wasn't that close to Baker while I was there.

Knott: Maureen, did you have a sense at that time of the Iran-Contra period?

Molloy: I can just remember what Bob said. The mood was dark, and everyone was very quiet. Everyone was very, very quiet. I happened to be in the West Wing the night that Howard Baker walked in—

Tuttle: Were you?

Molloy: I remember him walking down the hall, and the staff just broke into applause. It was just so extraordinary. You know how reserved everyone is in the West Wing, and there was quite a bit of applause, I recall. We were so relieved that he was coming. The atmosphere, and I didn't have direct relationship with Mr. Regan, but the atmosphere was so different after he left.

When I would go to his suite of offices there, it was—considering the personality of the President—the atmosphere in the suite of offices of the Chief of Staff at that time was not welcoming. You were very nervous when you were—appropriately—there. When Howard Baker came in, it was very different and was the way we felt it should be.

Tuttle: Yes, Don was sort of an intimidating guy.

Molloy: Whenever he was there, the stock market was always on the TV. I just remember that as a point of interest.

Tuttle: It's funny you say that, because when Baker left—at our eight o'clock meeting, the Chief of Staff would always sit at the head of the table and would go through the minutes of his last meeting. Well, one morning we'd had the meeting and then Ken Duberstein was going to replace

him. He makes a really nice speech about Howard. Baker starts to say something and he can't finish. He gets all emotional and everyone starts clapping. We stood up and he got up and walked out. It was very moving, I remember that. He was a great guy.

But, Personnel-wise, it wasn't the same. I mean, Don was—

Knott: Did you prefer that? Would you prefer to have the autonomy you had with Baker?

Tuttle: No, no. It was fun because Maureen would do the book, I mean, I knew who we were going to recommend. We'd write up the books and I'd look at them, and then the day before we'd hand the books in to Don, I would take one home and review it. Then she—did you quiz me, or did I quiz you?

Molloy: I quizzed you.

Tuttle: You quizzed me. She sort of played devil's advocate. "Why are we doing this guy? Why are we doing this?"

Molloy: With Mr. Regan, we had to be very careful that every T was crossed—

Knott: He'd really put you through the ringer?

Tuttle: Oh, in fact—this is typical. It's an unimportant story, but—Maureen is, as I said, very detail-oriented. She's an editor by avocation. Anyway, there was a word describing this guy that I felt was just completely wrong. I wish I could remember the word. I said, "Maureen, this word is wrong." I was so proud that I caught her in a mistake. She said, "It's not wrong." So we got the dictionary and she's right! I said, "Wow, we're going to have fun with this." Sure enough, the next day, Don Regan, who was an English major at Harvard, I think, said, "This word's wrong." I said, "Actually it's not. In this particular case—" I just laid it on, and before I'd finished, Tom Dawson was up the ladder in Don's office getting the dictionary. And sure enough, of course, I was right. It was unbelievable.

Knott: You pointed out he was wrong.

Tuttle: I know. But those kinds of things helped with Don. He remembered and he respected that.

Knott: But that was okay? He didn't mind that?

Tuttle: Yes. And I liked that. I mean, I liked the challenge. So it was not quite as exciting, but that was small potatoes compared to the big issue—that Howard Baker really brought credibility to the President, and on important things. I remember him telling me once—he said, "Tuttle"—he always called me Tuttle. He said, "Tuttle, I care about one thing right now and that's getting [Robert] Bork confirmed." That was a big thing early on. Of course, it wasn't successful. Howard Baker was a wonderful man. He did a great service for President Reagan, and for the country, to come in at that time.

Knott: I'm trying to get the timing on this, because there was a point when Baker—weren't you reporting to James Baker, as well, for a brief period—maybe a couple of months before they made that switch?

Tuttle: No. It was Baker, Deaver, and Meese. My bosses were Helene and John Herrington. For the key supporters, I would really say my boss was Mike Deaver. After the first successful meeting, they just left me alone. Then I reported to John Herrington for the balance of the first term. When John came in, I did a few more of the meetings, and for the balance of '83 and '84, I reported to John.

Knott: We talked a lot today about hiring and recruiting and so forth. What about firing? Were there instances where you had to fire somebody where there may have been some difficulty?

Tuttle: Yes, I didn't shy away.

Knott: We recount in our timeline here this incident of someone named Loretta Cornelius. I don't know whether you want to get into this or not.

Tuttle: Yes, we fired her.

Knott: She refused to—

Tuttle: It's a long story. She became Acting Director of OPM [Office of Personnel Management] and just became very independent and very crosswise with the White House, and I begged Don Regan and the President to fire her. Finally [Constance] Connie Horner was confirmed as Director of OPM. I'd looked through the files and found a letter from Helene Von Damm to somebody in a similar situation, saying, "Dear Mrs. Da-da-da," and that's the letter I used. I said in part, "Dear Mrs. Cornelius, thank you for services. They are no longer required." I remember when Don finally said, "You can do it." I said, "Great." So I wrote the letter, gave it to Connie and Connie jumped in her car and, boom, she was out. That was it.

I don't try to make a big thing about firing, but it was a case of such egregious disloyalty and just ignoring the White House. Sometimes you have to be tough. You don't want to do it very often.

Molloy: Was she a Presidential Appointment? She wasn't confirmed?

Tuttle: We had the right to remove her. I don't know if she was Senate-confirmed or Presidential appointment, but we had the right to remove her. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Knott: What about an appointment where the Reagan administration may not have necessarily had a kind of natural constituency? I'm thinking, for instance, of the Department of Labor, although I shouldn't assume this. There's a reference in our timeline to Raymond Donovan stepping down. You were reported to be asking labor groups for suggestions to replace Donovan. Is that accurate? Would you have actually called various unions and said, "Look, can you give us some names?" Or is this a media misconception?

Tuttle: Sure, unions had supported us and that was the kind of thing, when I talked earlier about when I would talk with my associate director. "Who are the groups that are supporting us in this area? What interest might they have? Let's reach out to them and ask them."

Now, having said that, what I find interesting, especially in—there was really no set procedure for how the Personnel Office dealt with Cabinet Secretary appointments. I thought we ought to have a procedure. I went to my associate directors and I said, "Look, let's make a list of every Cabinet Secretary, and who would be the possible people to replace that Secretary." Of course, along comes Ray Donovan. I submitted a book. Again, Regan liked this.

To be honest with you—and I think it's true of every Personnel Director—I was in on some; I wasn't in on all Cabinet appointments. I had lists, and Bill Brock was on my Labor list and he was selected. I was very active in Ann McLaughlin's selection for Labor the next time around, when Brock resigned.

But I had these lists ready. I would sit down with my associate directors. If you were a sitting Cabinet Secretary, I'd assume you were going to be there forever. But I'd still want to know—what if something happened to you? And I think that served us well. I wanted my people to be thinking in advance. In every case, with one exception, the people who were selected were on my lists. I don't know how many different Cabinet Secretaries we went through in those final four years, but I felt we were on top of our job. I believed it was our responsibility to say to the President, "Here's a list of people you should be looking at."

Knott: Would your job essentially come to a halt at the point at which the confirmation process would begin, or were you involved in the confirmation process?

Tuttle: As I said, if I had to do it over, I would be more involved in the confirmation process. If our nominee got in trouble, then I'd get in. It's always tough to get into something when it's in trouble. I mean you can't just—I remember going up to Senator [Charles] Mathias about John Agresto for—

Knott: National Archives?

Tuttle: It was too late. He'd made up his mind. He was nice and polite, but he'd made up his mind. That was a mistake. I think John would have been great in that job.

Knott: Yes.

Tuttle: I would have been more active right out of the box, and I would have liked to have had a Legislative Affairs person working for me.

Knott: I remember the Agresto nomination. I went to Boston College and I think Agresto got his M.A. or Bachelor's at BC. I never quite understood what the problem was.

Tuttle: The archivists wanted—

Knott: They wanted a historian?

Tuttle: They wanted an archivist. And John wasn't. But I think he would have been great. After his Washington service he was head of—what was it called—a university for awhile.

Knott: Yes, St. John's College.

Tuttle: Very good. You have a much better memory than I do. I think that the Agresto confirmation was unfortunate. Maybe had I been a little more proactive on the Hill—

Knott: What would you have done? You said if you could do your job over you would have been more involved?

Tuttle: As I said, I would have liked a Legislative Affairs person working with me. Daily I would have reviewed the progress of our candidates and said, "Are we going to have any trouble getting this person confirmed? Let's get up there. Let's be aggressive. What can we do? How can we—?" I'm pretty good at negotiating.

Face it. That was what a lot of the job was, anyway. I'd be thinking, *Well, the Cabinet Secretary—you have two vacancies in this department, and I know he wants this person, or she wants this person, and I don't, and here's why*. I spent all my days doing that, and actually I think I was reasonably good at it. I could have done that on the Hill, and we might have saved a few appointments.

Knott: Sure. Were you involved in judicial selection?

Tuttle: I was on the Judicial Selection Committee. Our office would review the recommendations of the Justice Department. Justice would bring the name forth. We'd have a meeting in the Roosevelt Room. It would be the White House Counsel, the Personnel Director, and Legislative Affairs, and personnel from the Justice Department. There were some healthy debates, very healthy debates.

Knott: Any specific recollections from either the [Antonin] Scalia nomination, which sailed through, or the Bork, of course, as you mentioned in passing—

Tuttle: No. Other than I told you about Baker.

Knott: Was it Ed Meese and the Justice Department that would be sort of in the lead?

Tuttle: They would absolutely be in the lead. Absolutely. A big part of the job was Personnel's relationships with the Cabinet Secretaries, and my friend John Herrington was very helpful. He told me, and I think it's important, "Remember, the Cabinet Secretaries are your equal." So it was never, "Mr. Secretary." It was always, "George," From day one, one of the first things I did was go make a call on all the Cabinet Secretaries.

Knott: Oh you did?

[redacted]

Tuttle: I did go out and interface with them. That was a tough part of the job. As I said, it's natural for them to want to hire their own people. In my business, if I hire somebody to run one of our automobile dealerships, I don't tell him who to hire down the road, so it goes against the grain. At the same time, politics is about the election, and it's about loyalty.

Knott: Were there some Cabinet officers who fought this? Who just fought and fought and fought?

Tuttle: Yes, absolutely.

Knott: If you don't want to name names—

Tuttle: I think I'll pass on that one. I think one of the reasons we were successful was that I always said to my staff, "We can't beat somebody with nobody." I would be aggressive and go to the Cabinet Secretaries with candidates. I remember when Otis Bowen came in, of course we had a huge book because it was difficult to get Margaret [Heckler] ever to approve anybody. So we said, "Look, here's a book." We had six or seven vacancies at the Assistant Secretary level. I said, "Everybody in this book is acceptable to us. You pick."

We had five or six people per position. We'd say, "We think this person's the best," and it was successful. We had to get out there and provide them with good people. I think that's why Baker and I developed a very good relationship. In fact, Mark Sullivan—interesting story—who was my associate director I mentioned to you earlier—when we started, both Mark and I,

ideologically and just from a personal standpoint, were much more inclined to be friendly with Ed Meese than Jim Baker. We maybe battled a bit, and, at the end, Jim hired Mark as his general counsel.

Knott: Interesting.

Tuttle: We had a very good relationship because Jim was very professional. [redacted]

Knott: Ed Meese was a little more casual—would that be the way to—

Tuttle: I wouldn't say "casual." [redacted]

[redacted]

Knott: That was it?

Tuttle: The thing was, because of having people like Maureen and other people who worked for me, I really knew my subject and I really cared about it, and that's all I worried about. I mean, I wouldn't try to do other stuff, and I think that that was helpful. I loved the President, and I knew I was going to go home at the end. I didn't have any ambitions to do anything more. Maybe, personally, I should have, but I think that helped me. People knew I didn't have any separate agenda.

Knott: This is an awkward question, and I'm not sure you'll even be able to respond to it, but did you ever get the sense that it helps to be Holmes Tuttle's son in dealing with these kinds of people? You could say something to an Ed Meese that perhaps a John Herrington couldn't? Or did it work the other way?

Tuttle: [redacted] I think people thought of me as the son of Holmes Tuttle, and it took a while for them to say, I hope, "This guy is a halfway decent, competent guy on his own." I think, by the end, I did achieve that.

[redacted]

Knott: What about press coverage? There are two facets to this—press coverage of you—do you recall any that stands out in your mind as being particularly unfair or unflattering? This would be a chance for you to redress, or—I'll just leave it at that for now.

Tuttle: I think that *National Journal* article—was it *National Journal?*

Knott: *National Journal.*

Tuttle: It was pretty accurate. At the time—I know you didn't like it—

Molloy: No.

Tuttle: But you know, it was—I wasn't in a terribly strong position. The whole thing there about my non-involvement in the John C. Whitehead job. John was Shultz's guy.

At the end of the administration, I went on a delegation. It was to France, which is a country in which I have great interest, so I put myself on the delegation. Also on the delegation was a gentleman—I don't know if he still owns it—who owned the *National Journal*. I said, "You guys really hammered me in the article." We had a nice time. We were together three or four days. I get back, and he calls me and says he wants to do another article on me. So, there's an article at the end of the administration that's quite favorable.

Knott: We'll make sure we get that in your briefing book.

Tuttle: That's all right, it doesn't matter. In general, I had very fair treatment from the press. One thing again, I did my homework. They call it, in the White House, "murder boards." Maureen and I would do them. She would ask me the questions. I'd be having an interview with the *New York Times* and she'd do it the day before. Her questions were a lot meaner and tougher than I'd ever get from the press. Again, I knew my subject and I didn't talk about stuff that I didn't know anything about.

My wife was very busy. One of the things—growing up here in California, where a lot of people have money, and Washington, I saw a lot of people who neglected their kids. I loved being a dad, and I didn't want to do that. I just did my job and I went home. I didn't make a big fuss. I was happy with my life. We had a great life. My wife was traveling a lot with this Commerce Undersecretary job, Travel and Tourism, so I thought it was important that I was at home.

Knott: You mentioned earlier—I think you said you were proud of your appointee training. I hope I got this correct. Do you want to talk about—?

Tuttle: Very early on, and I think this was something that Meese had done. He had the Harvard School of Government come down and hold classes, and John Herrington asked me to go. They had people from all over the government go to these—there were two or three days, and they used the Harvard case study method. It was interesting and I enjoyed it. I kept thinking about it, and I went to Ed Meese, and I said, "Ed, we need appointee training." He said, "You're right, and Craig Fuller is working on it with some bureaucrat in the White House." Whatever that guy's name was—we called him "the Rabbit." We put together—we called them Presidential Appointment with Senate confirmation briefings. It was started before I knew I was going to be head of Personnel. The "Rabbit" retired. I just took it over.

Every appointee, after they had been through the clearance process and had been nominated, we would invite them for an all-day session at the White House. We'd always have the Counsel. Fred Fielding was great. We had a lot of people who came from outside Washington and who were trying to do a good job but who stumbled, because they didn't understand Washington, and how important it was that you have a good relationship with your attorney. Fred used to start his talk off with, "This could be the greatest experience of your life, or it could be the worst."

We'd also have a Cabinet Secretary. We'd get a friend of the President's. One time I had Nancy Reynolds speak. We'd have somebody from Legislative Affairs. We'd get the director of OMB. We'd have somebody from the Hill. I'd gotten to know Dick Cheney; then he was the Whip in the House. I think, for the first briefing, we had Dick Cheney speak. After that, I said to him, "Listen, would you just come down here and do this one more time, and let us tape you." From then on, when it came to how to deal with Congress, we'd just shove in the tape and it was Dick Cheney. I was very proud of that. We would invite all the appointees to come—

Knott: This would occur, maybe, once a month?

Tuttle: We had one about four or five times a year. We'd wait until we'd get thirty, forty, fifty nominees and appointees.

Knott: En masse.

Tuttle: Yes, and if you didn't come the first time, we'd invite you the second time. People seemed to really enjoy them and get a lot out of it. The response was very good. I don't know if it's still being done. There should be a little money set aside. I think we bought them lunch. We'd clear out the room where we had the boards and commissions staff. We'd clear that out once every couple of months and hold the briefings. So that, really, you would get a feeling about what Washington was like. Sorry, you wanted to say—

Molloy: I couldn't help myself. I was just thinking, if I came to Washington from anywhere other than Washington, I would find that type of day invaluable. Who wouldn't have? You wouldn't understand unless you went through that kind of training. I do hope it's still going on.

Tuttle: Yes, so do I.

Molloy: The pitfalls you would avoid just because you heard examples of others who fell would make it worthwhile.

Molloy: Lots of things that are perfectly acceptable outside, you wouldn't even realize it until—

Knott: Even a lunch? If somebody buys you a lunch, is that off limits?

Tuttle: I think it was $35.

Molloy: It was a specific dollar amount.

Tuttle: The other thing we would talk about was the *Washington Post* test. Could you put it up on a billboard, or run an ad saying this is what you were doing?

Molloy: I think it was one of your best contributions.

Knott: Bob, you mentioned in passing—you referred to George Shultz and John Whitehead and you mentioned the Deputy Secretaries and the importance of that.

Tuttle: I don't know about Pen James, but Helene and John struck me as being pretty confrontational in the choices of Deputy Secretary—

Knott: I'm sorry, I missed that.

Tuttle: Very confrontational with the Secretary, depending on who the Secretary was. I think my appointment to HUD was probably an example of that. I don't know how much time they spent with Sam Pierce. I really don't know the answer, but what I discovered and why I feel strongly to this day, is that the Deputy Secretary is so important. The number two—whatever—under the Deputy is so important to the Secretary that I made it clear to the Secretaries that they could choose their own Deputy.

I certainly would tell them what I thought. When Bill Verity came into Commerce and he wanted—I forget the guy's name—I said, "Bill, you're making a mistake." But if this is who he wants, that's okay. Because there are cases—I don't know if it's still true—where the Secretary would get somebody foisted on him and he'd deliberately lock the door to his office.

In many cases, the Deputy Secretary and the Secretary's office are—that was one area where I would let the Secretary—I would make it clear that it's their choice, within reason. I think that was the right thing to do. You occasionally see where they'll choose somebody who comes to Washington from the outside, and they'll say, "We'd really like you to take this person." It's important that they bond with that person before, because it's bad to have them foisted on them.

Knott: I jotted down the term "big crisis" earlier. It was in reference to your tenure at the Office of Presidential Personnel as Director.

Tuttle: What did I say?

Knott: I wrote down "big crisis." Were there particular events, were there particular moments during your time that perhaps were low points? The toughest time? Was there a tough time for you?

Tuttle: Even though I was excited to get the job, the beginning was tough. As I said, there was negative press, but—

Knott: Once you got into the groove, so to speak—

Tuttle: Yes. I'm trying to think. I served longer than anybody ever served in that job. What had happened was—it's funny. I told you about Bill Verity.

He comes over to see me one day and he said, "That Deputy Secretary position—you were right and I was wrong." "Bill, I appreciate that," I said. He said, "I'd like to get it taken care of." I said, "Will you just sit here a minute?" I go downstairs to see Howard Baker and I said, "Senator, this is great. This guy he wanted was not Deputy Secretary material. Can I just go back and tell him it's okay?" He said, "Sure." I went back upstairs and I said, "Bill, if you don't want this person as your Deputy Secretary, it's okay with the White House."

In the meantime, as I'm gone—that takes about ten minutes—I've got to wait to see Howard Baker. I'm thinking, *Now who for Deputy Secretary?* By the time I get back up I have a couple of people in mind. I say to him, "Now Bill, I've got a couple of people in mind." He said, "Wait a minute, I've got a couple of people in mind, too, and the number one person on my list is your wife." I said, "Oh damn." Wait a minute again. I go down the hall to the Counsel's Office and I said, "Here's what happened. I'm out of this." He said, "You're out. Go back in there and tell him you recuse yourself, and that Mark Sullivan (my Associate Director) will have to work with him on this matter."

I said, "Bill, here's a letter of recusal. I'm out of this; you have to deal with Mark Sullivan." Donna had been Undersecretary of Commerce for Travel and Tourism. As I said, he inherited her, but he really liked her, and he selected her as Deputy Secretary. They were very close. They worked well together. It happened to be my wife, but it was the fact that it was someone he had worked with and really liked. His big emphasis was Russia and trade with Russia at the time, so he basically let her run the rest of the Department.

Knott: Was there any media controversy surrounding that?

Tuttle: No, because I handled it—somebody probably wrote something, but, no, I was careful.

Knott: You mentioned Colin Powell a few minutes ago, and you said you had a Colin Powell story.

Tuttle: Yes, well, Ambassadors were something that I really wasn't involved with in the beginning. [redacted]

I go over to Shultz for my first meeting and he said, "We need to rotate the non-career Ambassadors." Previously, there had been no set policy, so we rotated a lot of the non-career Ambassadors. I'm sure they thought that they would get a lot of Foreign Service Officers appointed. As time went on, and I got the respect of Don Regan, I really did a lot of studying about Ambassadors. The Constitution is quite clear that the President has the absolute right to appoint the Ambassadors, but in the last 50 years Foreign Service Officers have garnered almost 70 percent of the ambassadorial appointments.

Knott: Professional Foreign Service—

Tuttle: Yes, professional Foreign Service.

Knott: That's an interesting point.

Tuttle: What's happened, also, is the world has really changed. It's much more economic. Maybe they had a point after World War II at the height of the Cold War—and there are some places where there should be a Foreign Service Officer—but, if you think about it, almost everybody today has a lot of foreign experience. They've worked in other countries.

The Associate Director I had working for me on foreign appointments was really good. State would send us—she would get a list of Ambassadors that were coming up. I said, "Let's get aggressive." Typically, what State wanted us to do—they would say, "Just have the President decide who he wants as non-career Ambassadors, and send us over a few names. They most likely will be golfing buddies of the President, or contributors, and we'll take care of them." I said, "You know what? We're going to put up a candidate for every post." But we've got to be serious about it. We would look at every country. We'd know three or four months in advance, and we'd start to go out and find people. Here again, the computer served us well.

I can give you a couple of examples. Jim Rawlings, who was our Ambassador to Zimbabwe—he'd been the first white businessman to ever meet with Robert Mugabe. Now, I'm gaining the respect of Don Regan, so we have these ambassadorial meetings, which were attended by Don, John Whitehead, the National Security Advisor, and me. We present a candidate for every post, and as a result of that, and with the support of Don and the President, we got the percentage up to the highest it's been in a long time. It was over 40 percent. Of course, Shultz didn't like that at all.

Knott: Right.

Tuttle: As time went by—now I'm getting to my Colin Powell story. [John] Poindexter leaves; in comes [Frank] Carlucci. Now Carlucci leaves, and in comes Powell, but Powell had been Carlucci's Deputy, so I'd gotten to know him. I would go down to the National Security Advisor before the meeting and go through my candidates and the people that I really cared about, because we'd get in these meetings and we'd really have big arguments and a lot of debates.

So I'd go to Powell. He's such a great guy. I guess everybody called the appointees Tuttle-ites. I thought, *I know what he's going to say, and I'm going to have a comeback for him*. So I went in. He said, "Here you come with your Tuttle-ites." I said, "You know, Colin, Ronald Reagan was a Tuttle-ite." As if he knew what I was going to say, he said, "But different Tuttle." Just like that. I was just crestfallen. But he's so great. He's so sharp, so much fun to work with.

Remember when Shultz wanted to send Jack Matlock to Moscow? I didn't protest. But on the other countries, I think it's important to propose a non-career candidate for each post. A lot of countries, not all of them, but Morocco, for example, has always wanted a non-career Ambassador. They perceive that that person has access to the President. I believe very strongly in non-career Ambassadors. I don't believe that because you've given money or your best friend is the President—ultimately, it's the President's decision, but I think it's the job of the Personnel Office to do the same thing in Ambassadors that we try to do in the other appointments—to find people who were both committed to the President's agenda and competent to serve in that country.

I would probably not be good for a lot of countries, but you might be. We didn't do it willy-nilly. We were very aggressive in that area, *very* aggressive, to the point where Shultz got real upset. I remember we had a meeting over at State. We had breakfast. My Associate Director who handled State had prepared a memo on Ambassadors, and it was really good. She was a lawyer. It was great. I gave it to Don; I remember sitting there, and he starts in. He said, "George, I've been doing a lot of studies about Ambassadors," and out comes this memo. He was really good.

Molloy: George couldn't knock it.

Knott: You touched on this earlier, but I'm interested in terms of staffing places like the National Security Council. Is that just completely different than dealing with the rest?

Tuttle: In the Reagan White House, all the departments staffed themselves. There were cases where they would come to me, or I would go to them with a candidate, but basically, I didn't tell Jim Miller or Colin Powell who to hire. That had been set up from the beginning, and I didn't try to change it. Occasionally, we'd get somebody placed, or they would come to me, but otherwise we just left it.

Knott: Okay. There was some mention in the briefing book about the record of the administration in terms of minority hiring, and there was a quote in here from you. I probably won't be able to find it at the moment, but do you have any comment on the record of the administration in that regard?

Tuttle: A couple of things we were very proud of—the length of time that people served had been getting shorter and shorter, and we really turned that around. I forget the numbers, but we did a very good job on women—we appointed between seventy-five and a hundred women to historical first appointments. Obviously, the most famous one is Sandra Day O'Connor. On minorities, you know, I don't remember the statistics. We were not unmindful of this issue, but again, every candidate had to meet the criteria—commitment to the President and competency for the position.

I cannot remember to this day who the woman was, or what the job was, but I remember going into the Oval Office and saying, "Mr. President, I'm so excited; this will be the first woman to ever hold this job. This is going to be great." And he said, "Bob, is she competent for this job?" I said, "Yes, Mr. President, she is." But that just took me back to the basics. They've got to be competent. I always remember that. "Bob, is she competent?" I was so enthusiastic that we had a woman. So, we were not unmindful if there was a woman or a minority, but we also were careful to make sure that that person also shared the "two Cs" as well.

Knott: There were press reports in 1987 that you were being considered to be Secretary of Transportation.

Tuttle: Wrong.

Knott: Totally wrong?

Tuttle: Yes, and I went down to see Senator Baker and said, "Senator, it didn't come from me." He said, "I appreciate that."

Knott: You never had any desire for any Cabinet post?

Tuttle: Well, it's interesting. Ron Lauder was Ambassador to Austria. He called me one day, and he said, "My brother and his wife are coming to Washington. Would you take them to lunch in the White House?" I said, "Sure." We go to lunch, and we're talking, and he asked me about myself, and he said, "You know what? You're making a mistake. What are you going to do?" I said, "I'm going to do this job 'til the end." He said, "You should do another job. You've got a key job that's absolutely vitally important, but" —Leonard Lauder—he's Chairman of the Whitney Museum Board— "nobody's ever going to remember this, and you should have another job."

It was funny. In terms of my own career, if I wanted to stay in Washington, he was absolutely right. But I never thought about anything else. Bill Clark told me one time, "The U.S. Ambassador to NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] might come up. You ought to go over to Brussels." But Donna had a great job, and the kids were happy.

Knott: Okay. Was there a sense, as the administration drew to a close, that you were losing some steam? I realize that's an incredibly open-ended question, but—

Tuttle: I think a little bit, especially in the domestic area, but not in the foreign policy area. I'm sorry we weren't more aggressive, even in the domestic area, at the end. I didn't have a say in that, but looking back, I think you should be aggressive right to the end. In Personnel, we tried to really keep it going. We did a lot of recess appointments of appointees in "acting" positions at the end of the administration, because again, we wanted to credential these people who served the President. It was too late for them to get confirmed, but all their life they would be Assistant Secretary, or Undersecretary, and remember this. That's where my relationship with the rest of the White House staff helped, because the Congress, especially Senator [Robert] Byrd, was just dead set against recess appointments. I don't know why. In general, we recessed a lot of people at the end, and almost everybody I wanted to recess, they agreed to do, which was tough. It was tough to get a recess appointment, even to get the White House staff to agree to it.

Knott: I see.

Tuttle: We tried to not lose any steam in the Personnel area.

Knott: You thought you were still getting good people right toward—

Tuttle: You know, we were getting good people. Another of the things that I did that I'm also very proud of—I read a lot of history, and I read that when Richard Nixon got reelected in '72, he goes into a Cabinet meeting and says, "Great job, everybody." He gets up and walks out and says, "Bob has something to tell you." Bob said, "We want your resignations." It was terrible. But I also knew, I could just see—I was going back to California, but people thought they were going to move up in the Bush administration.

I didn't think, number one, that was going to happen, and I didn't think it was right for Bush to inherit all of that. I went to Duberstein. He was now Chief of Staff—the last Chief of Staff. I said, "Why don't we do something about this?" We decided I would send a letter out to all the employees, maybe it was all SESs, Schedule Cs—I can't remember. I said, "I don't mind doing this, because I'm going back to California." Basically, then Ken brought it up at a Cabinet meeting. He'd already gotten Shultz to agree to speak on behalf of that recommendation, saying, "What we need to do for the incoming President is to have everybody submit their letter of resignation." President Reagan agreed, and we did it. So, when Bush came in, he had all these letters of resignation. Everybody had resigned.

In fact, Ken mentioned it at a staff meeting—that we're all going to have to send a letter of resignation—I raised my hand and said, "I'm not resigning, I've already been fired." Because Bush, early on, had picked Chase Untermeyer to be his Personnel Director. I'd been talking to Chase for six months.

Knott: I wanted to ask you about that.

Tuttle: Yes, I knew he was coming in. But I was very proud that everybody submitted their letters of resignation. So Bush now has your letter of resignation. You may hold over, but if he doesn't want you, he can come and say, "I've picked someone for this job and thank you very much for your service." And he already has your letter of resignation. I think we did it very

humanely, but we gave President Bush a chance to create his own administration, which I thought was important.

Knott: Did you ever hear of any reports of any bitterness on behalf of people who worked for President Reagan—that they felt, *Gee, we brought this guy in. Why is he—*

Tuttle: There's always going to be some—I don't know. I can't answer—

Molloy: Not very much—a little bit. But when people stepped back and thought about it, you knew that, as a Reaganite, you had a different loyalty, and that Bush people were deserving of their own people who had worked on President Bush's campaign and had been supportive of him for years. Just like we deserved our shot, now it was their turn. I think most people understood that.

Tuttle: But even if there was some bitterness, you'd already submitted your resignation. I was proud that we did that, and it made it easier for President Bush. I think if I had just ignored that, then there would have been a lot more pushing and shoving. I can see people saying, "I'm not going to resign; you're going to have to fire me." Well, that would have been horrible.

Molloy: And it had been many, many years since there was a transition from one President to another of the same party—I think it was Calvin Coolidge—so there was no recent precedent for how to handle it.

Knott: And you dealt a lot with Chase Untermeyer during this period?

Tuttle: I'm telling you—six months before the election. I'd known Chase, not real well, but all this stuff that we're talking about today, I went through and showed him my books and told him how we operated the office.

Knott: For both of you, what was the feeling like as the end approached? I think I know what the answer is, but was there an enormous relief that you were returning to the private sector?

Tuttle: I was tired. About six months before the end, I went to a party. When I entered the building I saw a Senator who was mad at me; I hadn't returned his call. There was a Cabinet Secretary who was mad at me, and a White House staffer who was looking for me. I didn't want to talk to anybody. It was still cocktail hour so I went in the employee entrance and sat back at the bar and had a drink. Then when they all sat down, I went and sat down, and I thought, *You know what? I've been here too long.* I can't speak for Maureen. I was ready to go. There was a lot of nostalgia at the end, of course. We had a lunch of all of our staff over at the Hotel Washington. We really had fun, but I was ready to go.

I'll tell you a funny story. This is what is so great about our country. I had a full pass, access to everything. My checking account is the White House credit union. The day after the Inaugural of President Bush, I had to get some money. I come in the entrance, and I know these guys; I mean, I'd been in the building about six years. I knew the guards. I went out of my way to be friendly. They said, "Mr. Tuttle, we're sorry but you're going to have to get cleared. You have to go call

on the phone." I had to go call the credit union—and they apologized, "It's all right." I called the credit union, I said, "I've got to come in." They took my social security number and cleared me in. So, one day you're the king of the hill and the next day you are—

Knott: Sure.

Tuttle: I'll tell you one other cute story—you saw a picture of my office. About three or four days before the end of the administration, the door opens and—nobody, I mean, *nobody* came in that door except the President of the United States if it was closed. Maybe Maureen. This guy comes in. He's got overalls on. I said, "What are you doing in here?" He said, "I'm here to take your television." I said, "What? My television?"

He said, "Yeah." It made me mad; then I thought, *Oh what the hell*. So he takes the television and all that's sticking out is this little cord. The next day I took some good friends of mine, who were back for the Inaugural, to lunch in the White House, and I tell them this story.

They said, "Come on, we want to go up and see your office." I'm holding onto this cord, and they take my picture and we've called it "waning power."

For me it wasn't a problem, because I knew what I was going to do. After the Inauguration parade, I said to my wife, "I'm going to go play tennis." I went and played tennis with a Cabinet Secretary, and he was furious that they had taken his car. They'd asked for his car. I think the swearing in is on Tuesday. Monday or Tuesday. But they'd asked for his car about Saturday or Sunday, and he was furious.

Knott: Really?

Tuttle: And he was a big-time, I mean, this was a big Cabinet post. But for me, I knew I was coming back to California, so it was different. Maureen, I don't know, what about you?

Molloy: Well, it was tremendously sad because it was over, and they were truly the best years of many of our lives, but I think the sense of satisfaction was very deep. Because we knew it was coming for a very long time, almost everybody knew where she was going, or he was going.

I didn't want to interrupt you, but I think for many of our staff who stayed until the end— we saw people coming in towards the end—I think always knowing that you'd be able to say that you were part of that administration was a tremendous draw for people. We were so proud of what we had done and what the President had done in the world. It was a very moving time. I wouldn't have missed it for the world.

I personally always intended to say to the President, if I had the opportunity, that I wouldn't have worked that hard for anybody else. But I always thought it might be a little bit disrespectful, so I didn't say it, but that's the truth. We had worked harder, probably, all of us, than we'd ever worked in our lives, but we wouldn't have missed it.

Tuttle: It wasn't like work.

Molloy: It wasn't.

Tuttle: You get tired. People say how hard they worked. You know what? They're dying to get these jobs.

Knott: Of course.

Molloy: I've heard you say many times and it's true for me, too—we never walked into that complex once that we didn't say, "Wow." You never got over the sense of awe that you felt at having the opportunity to serve. So many never had it, and it was wonderful.

Tuttle: You know who described that beautifully, the best I've ever—is Peggy Noonan in one of her books about the White House. If you haven't read it, it's beautiful the way she described it.

Molloy: In the particular administration we worked in, the White House was the way that it should be. It was held in highest regard. The way that the social events were handled, the respect that the staff received—all of that was the way that it should be. It was the way the American people expect it to be, and I'm just proud to have served.

Tuttle: You don't think about these things and you're sort of bringing it all back.

Knott: I'm glad. We've been focusing a lot on the Office and I'm wondering if—I don't want to upset either one of you, but if you can tell us some stories, some personal stories? Maureen, you told me a story earlier today about this photograph that you have and President Reagan, the man.

Molloy: Obviously, we received tens of thousands of résumés, in every shape and form. People would be very creative in how they designed their résumé so it would stand out from the others. Do you remember the funniest way that a résumé ever came to us? It was at a time when we had a woman on the staff who was from New Hampshire.

Tuttle: Bonnie Newman?

Molloy: Bonnie. She was talking one day about the great lobsters they had in New Hampshire, and we took up a collection—whoever wanted in—and she sent for a crate of lobsters. When they came and they cracked the crate open, there was a résumé, in plastic, on the top of the lobsters!

Knott: You're kidding. That's good.

Molloy: No. And another time, when Pen James was head of Personnel. We were at the Palm restaurant. We had a staff party there. We had a private room, and one of the waiters came in and gave us a résumé. I wish that I had kept copies or made notes, for my own personal recollection, of the many funny things that people put on résumés, designs and stuff, because it was great fun.

Tuttle: You know, they redid the Blair House during the Reagan administration. Mrs.[Selwa] Lucky Roosevelt, who was head of Protocol, somehow didn't get along too well with the East Wing, so she called me and she said, "I've got a perfect candidate"—that's the way she talked—real fast—"for the Blair House." I said, "I don't know if I can help you but I'll interview her." I really liked this lady; she was Danish. So, sure enough she got the job. She was very grateful, and she did a great job. My staff and—I don't know if you know were a part of that—it was my birthday and they gave me a surprise party at the Blair House. Not too many people—it was a breakfast, wasn't it? It was wonderful and they had all sorts of silly presents.

Then one day—what birthday was that, Maureen?

Molloy: When we took you to the movie theater?

Tuttle: Ron Walker called me and said, "I've really got to meet you. It's something important." I think he picked me up. He drops me off at this movie theater and Maureen and my immediate staff took to me to the movies because they knew I loved movies.

Molloy: It was *La Bamba*.

Tuttle: Was it *La Bamba*? Then we went and had a picnic.

Molloy: We had balloons in the theater, and popcorn, and champagne under the seats. There was nobody there; it was the middle of the week in the afternoon. We tried to be creative. When Bob took over Presidential Personnel, of course, I had worked for him a couple of years already, and he made me his Executive Assistant. I was the first woman to hold that job. He said to me, "I want Presidential Personnel to be the department in the White House that everyone wants to work in. I want it to be the best department." And it was.

Bob was a great administrator. We had about forty to forty-five on the staff most of the time. He did enough social things with them that they felt appreciated, and it was a great department to work in. You worked very hard, but you were proud of what you were doing. You knew the importance, and that wasn't always the case—just speaking for myself, because I'd worked under Bob's predecessors. And if you worked at a lower level in the department you wouldn't necessarily understand the importance of what you were doing, but under Bob, you did. Everybody did.

Knott: Do either of you have a special favorite anecdote about President Reagan?

Tuttle: I think my favorite was the birthday—I'll tell you another great one.

Molloy: It was just typical of President Reagan.

Tuttle: I'm in the Oval Office for my weekly personnel meeting with the President and Howard Baker. The President said, "You're out in the sun a lot, aren't you, Bob?" And Baker just said, "Yes, Mr. President. We can never find Tuttle. He's always on the court." Nobody used the court very much except for Joe Wright and me, and because the family didn't use the court, we could

get on any time. The President said, "You know Bob, I was out in the sun a lot." I knew he'd been a lifeguard. He said, "I had a lot of problems." I looked. He had a fairly big nose, but it was all chewed up and I had never noticed it. He said, "Do you use sunscreen?" This is like '86 or whatever. I didn't even know what sunscreen was. I said, "No, I've never used it." He said, "Oh Bob, you've got to use sunscreen." So I said, "Okay."

Now we go into the personnel issues. At the end, I get to the door and he said, "Don't forget to get some sunscreen." I went right across the street and I got the sunscreen and I sent him a card telling him that when my Commander-In-Chief gave me an order, I obeyed it—the sunscreen was purchased, and I've used it ever since.

The last September we were there, I go in on September 7th, and he said, "Bob, I talked to your parents today." I said, "Great, Mr. President. Why did you talk to my parents?" He said, "Bob, it's their anniversary." Oh. So I said, "Oh, my god." He could see I felt bad. So he said, "Oh, don't worry about it. I know you're a great son. I know they love you." But when I got to the door, he said, "Don't forget to call your parents." So this is the way he was—you just loved working for him. I got up to my office, I called them. They said, "Well, we got a call from the President, but we didn't get a call from you yet." So I told them the story. It was fun working for him. He just had a way of just engendering loyalty without demanding it.

The administration was over in January and I came back to California. My father passed away in June. We let the kids stay in school. It was a tough time and my business was bad. I think I'm a better executive just for having worked for Reagan. It was just great to work for him. I liked working for him. It was fun.

Knott: If you had to sum that up as to why you're a better executive, having worked for Reagan, how would you—

Tuttle: I think maybe before I'd say, "Do it this way," although I guess I still do occasionally. I think that his personality, the way he was able to engender loyalty, and also, I think I didn't delegate as well until I watched him do it. He made things fun and interesting, and maybe I hadn't done that as much. It was a very tough time when I came home because my business was in difficulty. And my father had passed away. Sorry, Maureen, did you have something to say?

Molloy: I just wanted to say, I told you my favorite story.

Knott: But we didn't get it on tape. Would you mind?

Molloy: Oh, yes. On President Reagan's last St. Patrick's Day in the White House, he went to an Irish pub in northern Virginia for lunch. It created great excitement in the White House that he was doing that. My brother is an Irish historian, and he had sent me a ten-verse song, which he had written out, about Ballyporeen, which is where President Reagan's grandparents are from. I had had it done up artistically and so, as President Reagan was celebrating St. Patrick's Day festively, I called Kathy Osborne and said to her, "I know you get a lot of gifts, Kathy. I'll tell you what I have, and if you think the President might at all be interested in seeing it, I'll send it

down." I told her what I had, and she was very excited and told me she'd call me back. She did, and she said, "He will love it." So I sent it down.

About an hour to an hour and a half later, Bob Tuttle's assistant screamed my name. In the West Wing nobody screams. You talk in low tones. It really was very frightening, and by the time I was even getting out of my chair, she was at my door to say that the President was on the phone. I took the call, and it was truly a very moving experience. He talked to me as if I were the only person in the world. He chatted away about his visit to Ireland, and the pub that they had there named after him, which I had been to also, and it was really a wonderful experience. He was very grateful for the song.

Then, a year later, when I was out here in California, I asked if I could go over to his office in Century City and see him on St. Patrick's Day. He was traveling, so I went the next day. I didn't tell anyone why I was coming. I walked into his office and he said, "Oh, it's you." He turned around and he took an Irish derby that he had worn on the day in the White House when he went to the pub, and put it on his head. It was just so—it was amazing to me, and then also he didn't know, no one knew, that I was bringing over one of the White House pictures that had been given to me of the President on that day, wearing that green derby. He signed it for me.

Knott: That's great.

Molloy: Those are two memories I have of him that are very special. He was very caring, a very loving man.

Tuttle: I agree.

Molloy: I wanted to just remind you, Bob, of what you told me—and I heard you say it a couple of times, and it was very meaningful to me. I knew, even though Personnel doesn't get the kind of headlines that some of the other departments in the White House get—it's not sexy like some of the other departments are—You told me why you had an interest in Personnel, and it was because of a speech that you heard the President give.

Tuttle: Yes. He'd often said when he was campaigning that he wanted people to step down from the best position they'd ever had to serve in his administration. I thought that was wonderful. When they mentioned the job at Personnel, I thought, *I can do that*. That, I can get excited about.

Molloy: The importance of political appointments can't be overstated. If they're not strong, then the administration isn't strong, or isn't as strong as it could be. One of the things I want to tell you and I know I've told you this, but you may not remember it. Towards the very end of the administration, I would guess it might have been October or somewhere toward the very end, the White House Clerk, who is a career appointee and had been there, I believe, since the Kennedy administration, came up to see me. He sat in my office and he said, "I just want to tell you that Presidential Personnel is run better today than it has ever been."

Tuttle: That's great.

Molloy: He didn't have to say it. He wouldn't have said it if he didn't mean it. Having worked on all the procedures and everything that we did, I'm sure it was true. But it was great to hear it from him.

Tuttle: Maureen always emphasizes the positive, but there's always the—I'll never forget going to a party with Fred Malek, you know, he was Personnel. We'd had a few drinks. For some reason, I don't remember, we were sitting next to each other in the theater and he said, "You know, you are the best Personnel Director in the administration." I was the fourth one. He said, "But you know what? Come to think of it, that's not saying very much." I don't know if you know Fred Malek, but that's typical of Fred.

Molloy: We had someone while I was there who worked for John Herrington and left when John did. But she used to call Presidential Personnel the heartbeat of the White House. The potential for damage to an administration, to a Presidency, of the wrong people being in there is so great. I know that was before Bob's tenure there, but his energy and his innovative ideas for how to approach—as he's told you—made such a difference. People who had been there, as I had, through other Directors, not necessarily in the Personnel office, who didn't care how they ran it—it was different under Bob.

I think that's what created the loyalty on our staff. And we had a staff, too, where people stayed. The burnout rate in the White House is very high, but our staff did not have great turnover, and that made a big difference, because we understood how it works. There wasn't a lot of "learning" going on. We knew how to do it, we did it well, and we did it on time. When Bob was meeting with the President every single Thursday, we had hard work to do, getting him ready to go, especially with the number of appointments that we had.

Knott: Well, I thank both of you very much for giving this project your time. It's very worthwhile and I want to thank you both.

Tuttle: Thank you for asking us to participate. At first I was a little reluctant, but it's fun because it's brought back so many memories.

Knott: I'm glad.

Tuttle: Do lot of people say that?

Knott: They say the very same thing.

Tuttle: Yes, as I say, my life changed dramatically. It had to. So it was interesting to go back and relive those years. Thank you.