



The FBI Oral History Project

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INTERVIEW OF

Former Special Agent of the FBI

THOMAS E. BISHOP

Years of FBI Service 1941 – 1973

**Interviewed on January 13, 2004, January 27, 2004
And February 3, 2004**

By Clarence H. Campbell & Michael M. O'Brien

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**Interview of Former Special Agent of the FBI
Thomas E. Bishop (1941 – 1973)
Interviewed by Clarence H. Campbell and Michael M. O'Brien
On January 13, 2004**

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Clarence Campbell: Today is Tuesday, January 13th in the year 2004. I am former retired Special Agent Clarence H. Campbell, also known as Larry, and I'm with also retired Special Agent Michael O'Brien, also known as Mike. We're here with former Assistant Director Thomas E. Bishop, who we'll now refer to as Tom.

Mike and I are retired FBI Agents and we're volunteers for the Project sponsored by the Society of Former Agents of the FBI Foundation. The purpose of this Project is to do an oral history of the FBI. We'll accomplish this by interviewing former Agents, such as Tom Bishop, and collecting any photos or other memorabilia that they might have or wish to give to us.

Then the FBI will look over this information to make sure there is nothing that should not be released to the public. The Project then will put together the information and will potentially be made available to former Agents, researchers, scholars, and the public. Any income from this Project will go to the Foundation, the Former Agents of the FBI Foundation.

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay. Now do you want to read this?

Thomas E. Bishop: This is the Release?

Clarence Campbell: This is the Release Form that we're now reading here. "I hereby convey the physical and intellectual property rights to the material listed below to the Society of Former Special Agents of the FBI. This transfer is in exchange for the Society's efforts to preserve the historical legacy of the FBI and its members. I understand that portions of this material may be temporarily restricted from viewing for security purposes and subsequently transferred to an established academic repository." Okay?

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Michael M. O'Brien: Do you agree, Tom?

Thomas E. Bishop: I agree to that.

Michael M. O'Brien: And I'm Michael O'Brien and I agree.

Clarence Campbell: I agree. I'm Larry Campbell, and I agree.

Michael M. O'Brien: So everybody's signed everything. So we have the administration portion out of the way and we can continue.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Michael M. O'Brien: You'll get a copy of that though.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. This interview is taking place at Tom's house in San Diego, California. This is tape number one. Okay Tom, we're going to start by asking you questions on where you were born.

Thomas E. Bishop: Okay.

Clarence Campbell: And your early life, your education, what you did prior to coming in to the FBI, and then what made you join the FBI. So do you just want to kind of ad lib it? Start from there.

Thomas E. Bishop: I was born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio, August 18, 1917, birth date. Went to Purcell High School in Cincinnati, a Brothers of Mary High School, and I went to the University of Cincinnati for my Liberal Arts Degree, which I received in 1939.

I got out of high school in '35, four years in college would be '39, I graduated and got my degree in '39. After that I went to law school for two years at the University of Cincinnati – Law School. At the end of my second year, I left to join the FBI.

Clarence Campbell: All right.

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Thomas E. Bishop: While I was in law school and in college, I worked my way through. I paid for my own tuition and what I could get from scholarship money, which was very little in those days. They weren't accepting guys that were ball players or basketball players like they do now.

Clarence Campbell: You played baseball or basketball, right?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yep.

Clarence Campbell: Yep.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah, I played semi-pro baseball too in the summers.

Thomas E. Bishop: I was in law school from '39 to '41. In the spring of '41, while I was still in my second year of law school, the word got around that the FBI would be interested in taking fellas that haven't yet received their Law Degree, as long as they had a couple years of law school and satisfactorily passed the necessary tests.

I applied, and found later that the whole class had applied, about 25 of us, and yet it turned out that I was the only one that was selected for that New Agents Class.

What made me join the FBI was I was looking for a job. That probably is the best way to explain it, and I thought I might be interested in that type of work. I wanted something that was more than a clerical job.

Michael M. O'Brien: Tom, what background did your father have?

Thomas E. Bishop: He was a fireman. Fire Captain ... the Cincinnati Fire Department, for many, many years. He was retired in about 1941. He retired after the ladder he was on burned and he fell two or three stories. He was almost killed. His foot went down through the ladder step.

I think he was working when I went in to the FBI. He was quite thrilled about that. But he retired shortly thereafter.

Clarence Campbell: So anyway you went for the testing and your interview with the Special Agent in Charge.

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Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: What happened there?

Thomas E. Bishop: At first, well, they give you a written exam, the examination, was not very difficult. It was more or less to find your theories on stuff, and, how you felt about things. Not that you generally had to know a whole lot ... what the heck did you learn about the FBI's work if you'd had never been in it. It was more or less for the benefit of the SAC, Ray Suran. He later became SAC in San Diego and he retired out of the San Diego Office. I think he was the first President of the local chapter down in San Diego.

What else?

Clarence Campbell: You told me earlier that while you were having the interview; the interview with the SAC was interrupted?

Thomas E. Bishop: You want the details of that? Okay.

One of the Agents came into the room where I was being interviewed by the Agent in Charge, and he says, "We've got a little problem, Mr. Suran." And, Suran said, "Well, what is it?" The agent said, "We've got an urgent interview scheduled with a man who is at the Netherland Plaza Hotel," which was a block or two away from the Federal Building, "... and we don't have any Agents. They're all out on assignments." And Suran says, "Well, we'll see what we can do." He turned to me and said, "By the way, could you help us out?"

Thomas E. Bishop: I'm happy to help out; I'm trying to look for a job. And I said, "Sure. What do you want me to do?" He said, "Go over to the Netherland Plaza Hotel and find this guy" and he gave me his name, "and interview him." And I said, "What should I interview him about?" "Interview him about what you would ask about a guy who wants to be an FBI Agent.

Thomas E. Bishop: What his qualifications are and things that you would think would be necessary. And then come back to the office and dictate your report. And then stick around, I want you to read it to see if it's accurate."

Clarence Campbell: That was it.

Thomas E. Bishop:

I said, "Sure, I'd be glad to do that." I walked over to the hotel, went up to the desk and asked what room it was, Mr. So-and-So was assigned to. And they said, "We don't have any man by that name registered here." I later found out that the normal response was to go back to the FBI office and say, "Well, he's gone from over there."

But I had a lucky stroke, I guess, and I went to the Bell Captain and I asked him if he knew a Mr. So-and-So. He said, "Yeah. He's sitting right over there in the lobby right now, reading a newspaper." So I went over to him and told him who I was, and what I was there for, and tried to explain that I was not an FBI Agent but I was there as a favor for them; they asked me to do it. He said, "Go ahead. Ask me what you want to ask." Well, I didn't know what I should ask, but I thought what they'd want to know about a guy who wants to be an FBI Agent, and I asked the questions that I thought would be appropriate.

And, then I went back to the office, after taking copious notes, as they used to say, and I went to Suran and said, "Well, you know, he wasn't registered over there, but I ..." Suran said, "He wasn't! Did you interview him?" I said, "Sure. I found him and I've got the interview." I said, "I don't know how good it is, but I've interviewed him."

He said, "Okay, go ahead in the other room and get one of the stenos in and you dictate a report of what you found out; your interview." So I did that not knowing what should be included but I threw in everything I could think of. I finished that and he said, "Now, she should type it up right away and you sit here. When she comes back, you read it and see if it's pretty accurate and let me know if it's accurate or not."

And I did that. I told him it was accurate and, well that was it. He said, "Okay, well thank you very much. You'll hear from us if we have anything to say to you." And, that was the end of my test ... I guess.

Michael M. O'Brien: That's a good way to do it.

Thomas E. Bishop: Huh? Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: That's a good way to do it, really.

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Clarence Campbell: On-the-job-training.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: You cover a lot of things you didn't know you knew about at the time.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. So now, so eventually you got offered the job and you entered on duty?

Thomas E. Bishop: June of 1941.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. And then you had to go to Washington for training?

Thomas E. Bishop: Washington for about, let's see, I can't remember clearly on that. I think we went to Washington for about a couple days, maybe just one or two days, and they sent us then by Bureau bus down to Quantico. We spent most of our training time at Quantico. And it was class number 13. I remember the name of the class but I can't remember how many we had, but it couldn't have been more than about 35 guys in the class.

But we, I guess, studied the same kind of stuff that you had in your day, as an Agent in training. You don't want me to go over that. It was nothing special that I got. It was the same as everybody else got.

Michael M. O'Brien: Did you personally meet Mr. Hoover in those days?

Thomas E. Bishop: We went in to meet Mr. Hoover one of the first days we were there. And I had heard some of the wildest tales about, there were some people who went in to see Hoover, that he turned down because their hands were sweaty. And other guys because they wouldn't look him in the eye when he was talking to them. Things like that, I don't know whether it's true or just a myth, you know.

Clarence Campbell: Were you given any instructions, before you met Mr. Hoover, by your Class Counselor, or anything?

Thomas E. Bishop: About what?

Clarence Campbell: About, well how to behave when you met Mr. Hoover.

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Thomas E. Bishop: They gave us a day's warning, you know. Be serious, in good shape, wear your best suit. Hell, I only had two suits to my name.

(All laughing)

Clarence Campbell: So you went in, and what was your impression of Hoover when you met him for the first time?

Thomas E. Bishop: He didn't really bother me. A lot of guys, I found out, even the fellas in my class, were nervous as hell and couldn't say anything to him. They didn't know what to say. You know, they sort of shut down when they got in by him. I, it didn't make that much difference to me. I hadn't met many famous people before, if any. But I knew who he was and what he did, and tried to talk to him. I only got about two minutes to talk to him. Hello, I'm Tom Bishop from Cincinnati and ... that kind of stuff, you know.

Clarence Campbell: Do you remember what he said?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. I have no idea.

Clarence Campbell: You don't remember the conversation?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. I don't know what it was. It must have been fairly favorable 'cause they dropped two or three guys, the next day, who were missing from the class.

Clarence Campbell: Really?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Wow.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: So these things were somewhat true.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: If he didn't like you, you might have been gone.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah.

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Clarence Campbell: That's why they were nervous.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Oh. Okay. So then you finished your training and then?

Thomas E. Bishop: I was sent to Baltimore; and I spent about a, two days in Baltimore. The Agent in Charge was Ed Soucy and he sent me to Wilmington, Delaware, a Resident Agency. And it was a real nice town, Wilmington was in those days. I don't know whether it is now. But it was a company town, owned, you know, by DuPont really, and they had a good business there. Everybody was happy that worked there.

Thomas E. Bishop: But I was working General Criminal and Applicant cases there and the war broke out.

Michael M. O'Brien: That would be December 7th of '41?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: And you were in the RA?

Thomas E. Bishop: The Resident Agency at Wilmington, Delaware, and, at that time, most of our jobs were picking up Germans, German aliens, and interviewing them to see what they knew. Part of it was not make work but it was a lot of unnecessary work. I mean, all of these Germans were scared stiff when they talked to us and they were very pro-United States. I don't think they got any good interviews done out of the Wilmington, Delaware, RA. They were just hard-working German citizens.

Michael M. O'Brien: So you would go interview all these German immigrants?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yes.

Michael M. O'Brien: To find out if they had any Nazi connections?

Thomas E. Bishop: That's why they called me back down to Baltimore after about a month. Because there were a hell of a lot more to be interviewed in Baltimore than they had in Wilmington. And some of the ones in Baltimore were, I have to say, somewhat active in pro-Nazi activities.

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Thomas E. Bishop: I didn't stay on any cases that might have been developed out of this because a lot of them were re-assigned to more experienced Agents. But I don't know how useful the interviews were. And several, a number of them, I can't think of the exact number, were deported, because they were not citizens and they were pro-Nazis.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh, okay. Some of these were, you said, German citizens during that time.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: And they felt they were sympathetic?

Thomas E. Bishop: On behalf of the cause. Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: How about Japanese? Did you interview any Japanese?

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't think there was a Japanese within a hundred miles of Wilmington, Delaware, or Baltimore.

Michael M. O'Brien: I didn't know they deported any Germans. That's interesting.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. So you're assigned to Baltimore for six months and then you got transferred to Headquarters?

Thomas E. Bishop: Headquarters. Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. And why did they transfer you to Headquarters?

Thomas E. Bishop: How did they?

Clarence Campbell: I mean, why?

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't know why, to this day, why they did it, but I may have exhibited some signs of common sense, I guess, or else I was in trouble.

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Clarence Campbell: It usually takes seven to ten years to get back to Headquarters and you did it in less than a year.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. It was interesting. I was not there very long in the Bureau, about a month or six weeks when I got assigned to Night Duty in Division 6, which was the Criminal Division.

But anyway, to get back to this story. On Night Duty and Weekend Duty we took phone calls, tried to route them to whom they should go to, if you could do it that way. If you couldn't, you had to try to handle them the best you could. And there were phone calls from other offices, asking for advice.

Thomas E. Bishop: Ed Soucy called shortly after I was there as the Night Supervisor ... what they used to do, the Agent would call the Bureau, tell the operator they wanted to talk to the Night Supervisor and then they'd connect you with who ever was on duty. And they connected me with Ed Soucy. He was calling the Bureau and his response was, "Bishop, for Christ's sake." He'd just gotten rid of me as a New Agent. Here, he's calling me for advice, see. We both got a great kick out of that.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. So then, you mentioned earlier that you were later on Supervisor on the Correspondence Desk?

Thomas E. Bishop: Uh Huh. Supervisor on the Correspondence Desk, which handled all the correspondence to the Director.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: Whether it was somebody he knew or somebody he didn't know. If it was addressed to the Director, they had to screen it through our office, about a four or five man desk, it was. And some distinguished fellas went through there. I don't remember them all. George Carroll was one but I can't remember them all. They were guys that did well in the Bureau in later years. Most of them did.

Clarence Campbell: Then, you said you did that for a while but it got kind of boring.

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Thomas E. Bishop:

I was there for about a year, I guess. Maybe it wasn't that long. It was about early in '43, I think. Maybe late in December of '42. And I had sat there on a desk screening mail and answering crazy questions. I figured out that this was no place for me; that I wanted to do something in connection with the war.

So I went to Assistant Director, Mickey Ladd and I told him I was going to resign. He said, "What's the trouble, Tom? Why are you resigning?" I said, "Well, first, I am doing nothing to the war effort. I'm single; I've got no responsibilities and I wanted to do something and I think I'd be better in the Army or in the service someplace."

He said, "Well, tell me a little about yourself, Tom." And I told him some of my background. He hopped all over the fact that I had a little language ability, and he said, "You speak Spanish?" And I said, "Yes. I used to speak it pretty well and I think it could come back to me pretty quickly." And he said, "Okay. Monday we're starting a new Spanish class and you're going to be in it."

And I went over to the Identification Division, which was in another part of town, another end of town, at that time, and started the class. Joe Santoiana was the instructor. He later became an SAC, and was with me for awhile in Venezuela, when we were both down there at the same time. But, he and another guy put on these Spanish classes.

Clarence Campbell:

But it was pretty intense. You had, what hours?

Thomas E. Bishop:

Oh yeah. It was 9 to 9. Nine in the morning till 9 at night. Six days a week. A half a day on Sunday, to go to church or whatever you had to do. And that was it. And we used to bullshit each other about how hard it was.

Actually it wasn't that hard. It was, if you had like I had, a background in Spanish, it wasn't that hard. But, I remember out in the hall one day, this guy says, "You know," he said, "if these people had their mind made up, they could probably make us all doctors, or surgeons." He said, "It might take a month, two months, but they could do it." Yet, that's the way they felt.

Thomas E. Bishop: They were jammin' this stuff down our throats. But I was pretty good about it because I had that background in Spanish and it came back to me very quickly. I think that thing lasted about three months, you know; do you remember what I said it was?

Clarence Campbell: I think you said six weeks.

Thomas E. Bishop: Six weeks. That was about right.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: That's about right. Yeah, that was six weeks.

Clarence Campbell: And then somebody talked to you about the Special Intelligence Service?

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, no. You were aware before you went into the language class that you were going to be in the SIS, the Special Intelligence Service. They told you that before you went to school. That was an understanding, that you would do that.

Clarence Campbell: Did they tell you what the SIS was?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah. That was part of the training. It wasn't something that they spread around the Bureau very much. It was sort of a mysterious type of thing at the time. Guys were curious about it, but it was not something that they did a lot of talking about. But when you finished the language thing, you went back to the Bureau and your Section was the Foreign Intelligence Section, I guess. That's where they told you what your assignment was going to be, where you were going to be, and what you were going to be, whether you were going to be undercover, a businessman, or a magazine writer, or something like that, or assigned to an Embassy.

And I guess, maybe because I could drink out of a cup or a saucer, they told me I was going to be assigned to the Venezuelan Embassy. I was kind of unhappy about that, when I heard what I was going to be, because I wasn't much for the social life. The FBI people in the Embassy didn't lead a very social life, although we got a hell of a lot of invitations from the girls in the Foreign Service.

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Thomas E. Bishop: In fact, I married one of them. My first wife was in the Foreign Service. She graduated George Washington University and had been in the Embassy in Caracas about one year when I arrived.

Clarence Campbell: So you were assigned to the Embassy where?

Thomas E. Bishop: In Caracas, Venezuela.

Clarence Campbell: That was in 1943?

Thomas E. Bishop: 1943.

Clarence Campbell: Early in '43.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. Did they give you a title? What was your title then?

Thomas E. Bishop: I was Assistant Legal Attaché. I served as Assistant Legal Attaché. The head guy was John Oakes, the Agent in Charge, the Legal Attaché.

Clarence Campbell: So in two years, you started out as an FBI Agent and within two years now you're an Assistant Legal Attaché.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah, and within two years I was the Legal Attaché.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. So you went there and were you covert?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. What I basically was supposed to be was an Embassy employee.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: An employee of the Embassy, under the Ambassador. It was supposedly a secret but everybody in the Embassy knew that the four or five young guys assigned to either the Embassy or to the Consulate were FBI Agents. But it was a secret that they all would tell people about. They'd give you a funny grin, you know, as if "oh, I'm sorry, that's your cover."

Clarence Campbell: So you were basically in counter-intelligence and your job was to find out who the spies were?

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Thomas E. Bishop: That basically was it. We had a little more leeway in what we were doing, those in the Embassy, because we were in U.S. Government. Anybody knew we were U.S. Government; whereas the other fellows were very restricted to what they could get as newspaper people or writers, or working for ABC Company or something like that. They knew they couldn't do too much.

Thomas E. Bishop: Venezuela was sort of in a funny position. They wanted to be partial to the Germans but they knew they couldn't, being in the Continent, and they were selling more oil to the Americans than they were dealing, or selling to the Germans. Because they had to ship it so damn far. So they were pro-United States with an asterisk, if you could put it that way, I guess.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. You mentioned that the Bureau suspected the Germans were trying to infiltrate, or send in saboteurs or spies, to work in the United States.

Thomas E. Bishop: Well we being in Venezuela, in the northern part of Latin America, knew that the German espionage system had to operate by sending their people through either the governments that were partial to the Germans, or were negative. They did not give a damn about them ... they let them do what they wanted to do.

Clarence Campbell: You talk about how the German spies were coming from Spain through Latin America, through Buenos Aires.

Thomas E. Bishop: That's it. That's right. That's the way they came. And they would come from Spain to Buenos Aires, Argentina. Because Argentina was still pro-German. Very much pro-German, because of the background of the people there; there was a lot of them from German backgrounds. And, if they could get them into Latin America and they got into Venezuela or Argentina, they could go and spread out to other countries in Latin America. And work their way north to the United States. Then that's the route that they took.

Clarence Campbell: So they'd come in by using planes, trains and, and even submarines?

Thomas E. Bishop: If they worked their way out of Buenos Aires, they had sufficient documentation to take public transportation or such. Some of these didn't even have to. But, that was one way to get into the United States. And, I want to keep that in mind because that will explain this other case that we had.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. You talked about situations that occurred at the Spanish Embassy.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. That was another thing. Yeah. That helped a great deal, I think, in identifying German spies that came over, by way of Latin America, into the United States. But let me go back to this other thing.

So, I want to emphasize that they didn't have to use subs, or canoes, or anything else to get across the Caribbean to the United States. They had sufficient background built up that they could pass themselves off as citizens of other countries. They had no fear of dealing with immigration officials.

Clarence Campbell: Now you're talking about how you infiltrated the Spanish Embassy?

Thomas E. Bishop: But, I have to figure out ... I don't want to give secrets away. I gave my word that these would be secrets. Is it all right if I disclose this?

Clarence Campbell: Oh yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. You can. Don't, don't worry about secrets.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh. Okay.

Michael M. O'Brien: About anything classified, because this is so many years, 25 years, that we're talking about or more.

Michael M. O'Brien: But everything is going to be filtered through the Bureau. Okay. If they don't like something, they'll take it out.

Thomas E. Bishop: Okay.

Clarence Campbell: So you found this Basque businessman.

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, yeah. We had a Basque citizen. He was very active in Basque activities. The Basques hated the Germans. I mean they basically hated the Germans, still do, I think. And the Spanish.

But, we had this guy as an informant. He was a Basque citizen and a very intelligent man. He had been in Spain for many years. He'd been a college professor. And we used to have long discussions with him, philosophical discussions. I got to know him and another one or two of the fellas got to know him very well. We got so that we could pretty well count on what he said. Anything he'd say, we knew we could count on anything he would tell us.

He was very interested, like we were, in finding out what the Spanish, who had an Embassy in Caracas, were doing.

Clarence Campbell: You mentioned about how you figured out a way to surveil this Spanish diplomat when he was outside the Embassy?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. We were very anxious to get into the Embassy, the Spanish Embassy, because the United States and Venezuela didn't have diplomatic relations with Germany and the Spanish did.

The Germans had to either come up with some sort of a system where they could get information out of Spain ... out of Spain and into Caracas and to the United States. Our break in the whole thing was unrelated to the U.S.

Through the Basque, our real good friend, he introduced us to a guy who was also a Basque but had not been active in Basque activities. But who had a job as night watchman and night janitor in the Spanish Embassy, as a night janitor in the Spanish Embassy in Caracas.

Well, our Basque contact told us that this fellow was a pretty reliable type of person, although he said he wouldn't trust him with his sister, but he was fairly reliable, although he always needed money. And, he told us that he thought we could make a move toward him. And a couple of us, in fact, I wasn't in the original contact group that talked to him. But, we talked to him. It was not me. I didn't do the talking.

Thomas E. Bishop: At that time I was an Assistant Legal Attaché, I wasn't the Legal Attaché. We had a couple good, big men who worked undercover for the Legal Attaché's office.

They talked to this fella and he agreed that he would, if he was invited, go out for a beer now and then, at night as their guest. And he, strangely enough, he got a couple of invitations from Basque people and, one of whom, was the one that was setting the whole thing up for us. And he would leave the Embassy unoccupied when he was out having a beer with his "friends." And they extended his time at longer and longer periods so he wouldn't realize just how much he was leaving the Embassy unguarded.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. I imagine they introduced him to a couple ladies of the night.

Thomas E. Bishop: I'm sure they did.

Michael M. O'Brien: That always ... that'll work.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. I'm sure they did and then drink a lot of beer.

But, through him, we were able to set up this system. He would let us know when he was going to be gone ... like tomorrow night ... and he'd be gone for about two or three hours. That way nobody is going to be guarding the Embassy, 'cause he was the night man there. So we took advantage of that and, using a key he loaned us, when he left, we went in. And I was one of the one's who went in because I operated this big camera thing, as big as this table, it seemed to me. We had to haul that in and take pictures of various documents lying about the Embassy.

After a few visits in there, we saw how easy this was to do, so we got in touch with the Bureau. They had a fellow who worked in the lab. He was a lock and pick man. That was his assignment in the Lab. So we told the Bureau we'd like to borrow him for a couple days, and maybe even a week. The Bureau reluctantly agreed because we didn't know what we were going to find. But we went into the place and one of the first things we found was the Embassy Code Book.

Thomas E. Bishop: It was in the safe. And he opened the safe by doing this stuff you do in the movies, by his fingers ... he listened. He did not blow it up or anything. He had made a key the first thing for the outside of the building. That was the first thing he did when he got down there ... so we'd have easy access to it. In fact, a couple of us had access to it, you know, the Embassy. We got pretty busy around that Embassy. We had to be very careful because it was a residential section. There were other residences that were Embassies around in the general area too.

Clarence Campbell: There were, you said, documents in the code book.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. There were a lot of documents that we got to, a lot of information about who was coming and who was going, that type of thing. Let's see ... I'm trying to put this in some kind of logical order in my mind.

Clarence Campbell: In any event, you told me earlier that they took this guy, he was so successful, that they took him off per diem and transferred him to Venezuela.

Thomas E. Bishop: Right. Right. About a month he was down there.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: Because we had been in and out and he was making a fortune, because it was a very expensive place to live, in Venezuela. And the Bureau decided, or maybe we even suggested that they assign him here, assigned to this office.

Michael M. O'Brien: Tom, that's really an interesting story. If I could just pause here a second and just to ask you about ... what did the structure look like? Was it a two-story residence?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. It was a combination office and residence with living facilities for one person on the second floor and the Embassy offices on the first.

Michael M. O'Brien: Was it a real expensive neighborhood?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yes. Very expensive neighborhood.

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Michael M. O'Brien: And so, you went and you got the guy that normally was there, the caretaker ... you got him out there and he was out drinking and such, ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: And then you guys would come in, you got ...

Thomas E. Bishop: One key made up.

Michael M. O'Brien: One key made up. So you could walk up the front door.

Michael M. O'Brien: Well, we didn't always walk up the front door.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: There were many cases when we used the back door to get in.

Michael M. O'Brien: So you had to go in the back door?

Thomas E. Bishop: I went through the back garden to get into the house.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: And, with one or two of them went through the front door, I mean we, you know. I don't remember why we picked one through the other.

Michael M. O'Brien: You don't.

Thomas E. Bishop: But I know I was saddled with this big black camera box because that's what I was going to be operating.

Michael M. O'Brien: So, so you had a big camera because they didn't have Xerox machines at the time. And so you had to copy these important documents that you saw in there.

Thomas E. Bishop: That's right.

Michael M. O'Brien: How long was the code book? Was it about the size of like 300, 200 pages?

Thomas E. Bishop: It was only ... it was a couple hundred pages only.

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Michael M. O'Brien: So you actually had to physically ...

Thomas E. Bishop: With the camera we had, you could turn the pages separately. So it was a very quick operating type of thing. The only thing that limited us was what how many pages we wanted to get out of there. You know. And not get caught.

Michael M. O'Brien: You couldn't turn on any lights, or anything?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Michael M. O'Brien: So you guys were operating pretty much in the dark.

Thomas E. Bishop: In the dark. Well we had, ...

Michael M. O'Brien: Did you have flashlights?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. As I recall we covered this box and me, so there was no lights escaping.

Michael M. O'Brien: So if anybody's walking by, you didn't want them to see you in there.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Did you have any close calls? Did anybody ever come up to the door while you were there, or anything?

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't remember any, no.

Michael M. O'Brien: Did you find anything that would implicate. Now, seeing as how we just got through the Revolution and the Germans backed them up, and the fascists got into power.

Thomas E. Bishop: This Revolution took place later.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh, it did. Okay. But you were looking for, because Spain and Germany were connected, you were looking for the connection of the Germans and the Spanish. Did you find any? Going through those documents?

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't know.

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Michael M. O'Brien: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: What, what we did, we didn't decode the traffic at all. And we sent bundles of traffic in code to the New York Office. Back to the Bureau, which went to the New York Office; which, in turn, got it to the All-American Cable Company, which handled the cable traffic from New York to Spain, or any country they were connected with.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh. I see that with this book, they were able to ... they did things they never ...

Thomas E. Bishop: This is why I say this was the most important part that I felt was the most important part of the work we did. Because knowing what they were going to do, we would know which country they were going to try to go through, where they were going to land in New York.

Thomas E. Bishop: In fact, I've never been able to prove it, because they never wanted me to talk about it, and I didn't ask about it. But I feel sure that at least the second landing in the United States ... the one they caught the guys down, on the coast of Florida, or where ever it was, it was known, known in advance. We were waitin' for 'em when they got there.

The other one, as far as I know, the one up in, off in New York, off in Long Island was, in a way, we knew they were coming, but we didn't know where. And, anyway, it was a lucky break that we got, where they had been, when they were landing. Where they landed. And we missed by a night, I think.

Michael M. O'Brien: This is the Germans, coming in?

Thomas E. Bishop: The Germans that came in.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: On Long Island. We missed it by a night. In other words, we finally hit upon where they would go, rather than where they actually went. A day later.

Clarence Campbell: So by virtue of translating these cables from Spanish into German, this allowed the Bureau to track ...

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Thomas E. Bishop: We never did, we never translated the cables. It was done by the Bureau.

Clarence Campbell: Right. Right. That allowed the Bureau to track the German saboteurs?

Thomas E. Bishop: They were able to track the movement of the Germans.

Clarence Campbell: Right. Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: In Latin America, even the movement of the Germans to Latin America and how, where they split out in Latin America. Based on the fact we had the code system.

Michael M. O'Brien: The Spaniards were acting as a cover for the Germans ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: To get in the United States. And by getting the code we were able to find out where they were coming in.

Thomas E. Bishop: Right. We helped ... like Uruguay, who wanted to find out if anybody had come there. Because the codes would tell the Europeans, these spies in Uruguay that they could have somebody land over there in another week or something like that. And we had Agents there.

Michael M. O'Brien: How often did they change the code books?

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't know.

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: But I don't think it was ever changed in the time I was there.

Michael M. O'Brien: How often did you go in to the Embassy to copy these things?

Thomas E. Bishop: I think I was in there about three times.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh. Okay. How often did ... was, was it like once or twice a month? Or once every week?

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Thomas E. Bishop: We spread it out at their, at their command because we didn't know when they were going to be gone.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh. Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: That's why we asked to keep him there, assign him there, so he wouldn't eat up all the per diem because he might be ... two months before he could get in.

Michael M. O'Brien: So it might be every couple months or something like that.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. But it never lasted that long. I think probably he was there less than a month.

Michael M. O'Brien: So then you're talking about extremely sensitive actions going' on here.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Because we talked it over among the Agents that if we get caught, even by a Venezuelan cop, we were going to get our asses chewed because they were doing that in other countries. In Argentina they were throwing American FBI guys in jail.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh.

Thomas E. Bishop: And, we knew it could be, you know, a little sensitive. And we were glad when it was over, to tell you the truth, because it was ... we didn't want to get caught.

Michael M. O'Brien: Once you got in there, how long would they give you to get the information, collect the information? Once you got in the Embassy.

Thomas E. Bishop: Well we didn't take long once, once we got set up.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: We could zoom through that camera at the press of a button.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. So you're looking at a couple of hours, maybe, in there?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh, at the most.

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Michael M. O'Brien: And what, three times?

Thomas E. Bishop: A lot of that depended on how much time we spent in there, depended on how much time they were going to be out of there.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. I see.

Thomas E. Bishop: And, that's what we had to control and that's why our Basque friend was very important to us. Because he could tell us pretty much if the guys were going out to paint the night, we got the girls lined up, and, and they were probably gone one, two or three hours.

Clarence Campbell: You didn't have any radio contact, though, with the guy who was with the diplomat?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. You couldn't do it. The radios were not as sophisticated. Walkie-talkies at the most.

Michael M. O'Brien: Well, what was your game plan if somebody did come and disrupted you?

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, that's another thing we talked about. We all decided that if we got caught, we were not going to tell them anything. We were burglars or something else. See, we'd decided on our own. The Bureau didn't tell us what to do.

Michael M. O'Brien: So then there was no instruction or anything?

Clarence Campbell: No. No instructions.

Thomas E. Bishop: No. And I'll tell you a funny story about that too. This is probably unrelated, but while I was Legal Attaché down there, one of these guys who worked for us, undercover, in Venezuela, he became wanted by the Venezuelan Army for leading the opposition to the revolution that they had down there. They publicly announced that they were not going to take retaliatory measures against anybody working for the revolutionaries, except for our undercover informant.

I had a group of guys who were my surveillance squad. These were Venezuelans.

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Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: And I had trained them how to conduct a surveillance, basically, like a New Agent would get.

Thomas E. Bishop: And their covers were cab drivers, tourist guides, that type of thing. And I had, I think, I had three of them.

And they would follow people and it was amazing, the job they did. Sometimes I would go out and surveil them to see what they were doing, to keep them honest because I didn't want them to submit phony reports.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: And then I'd read their report when they would give me their written report, and there it was ... what they did, this is what they said they had found, you know, who they found and where they went. But, it didn't solve anything, but it was a hell of a nice thing to know they were honest.

Michael M. O'Brien: Then you, you were paying these guys about 10 dollars a day, or something?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh, maximum. Yeah, maximum.

Michael M. O'Brien: And through your surveillance you determined that this bank president of this German Bank was, in fact, a German Agent?

Thomas E. Bishop: That information came from another office.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh. Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: He was one of the guys. Well, I think he came from ... it was one of the countries down south ... I want to say it was Chile but I'm not positive about that. But one of the offices had notified Chile that we had been notified, through somebody ... the Bureau, or somebody ... that these people were coming to Chile. And then we all looked around to see who we had by these names and stuff. One of them was a fella who was the President of the German Bank. It had been a very successful bank until the war broke out.

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Clarence Campbell: You don't remember his name or anything, do you? Do you remember his name at all?

Thomas E. Bishop: I can picture the son-of-a-gun. He was a pretty husky fella, black hair and about 6'2", big husky, typical German, but I can't remember his name.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: I want to say Hugo is his first name, but I wouldn't bet my life on it.

Clarence Campbell: So what actions did you take to neutralize this guy?

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, we went to the head of the Venezuelan National Police. This is different from the Caracas Police Department.

At that time, our relations were pretty good with the Venezuelan Police. In fact, that was another thing I did was try to develop good relations with the Venezuelan Police.

And I did pretty well at that job, including the fact we got the Chief of the Caracas Police invited to the United States for a course in law enforcement. In fact, he was here at the invitation of the United States at Government expense, at the Bureau's invitation, for about two months, I think. And, he had a great time. He really enjoyed it and he came back sold on the United States.

Clark Anderson, now have you guys ever heard of an Agent by the name of Clark Anderson? He worked in Latin America for a long time. But he had the gift. He was fluent in Spanish. He had the gift of making friends very easy, and making everybody think he was his closest buddy.

He worked on that chief while he was up there visiting the United States. And, when he came back, he was a big supporter of the United States. So Clark Anderson escorted him around our country. He took him to other police departments and, whooooo, the guy got a million dollar education, you know, for nothin'. Clark was, he was responsible for most of it.

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Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah, I got off the track again. We went to the Chief of the Venezuelan National Police, and we told him. We got a guy here that we're sure is a German espionage agent, but we can't prove it. But he was the head of the German Bank. And we finally talked him into putting him under, ... what do you call it when you put a guy in custody, special?

Michael M. O'Brien: Protective Custody?

Clarence Campbell: House arrest?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. That's it. Yeah. We had him taken into a camp or a small town in the interior in the jungle, where he couldn't hurt anybody, or do anything. And they went along with it and they kept him there till the war ended and he was there for about a year, I think.

Michael M. O'Brien: So the police actually went in and, and basically, grabbed this guy off the street.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Hell they could have grabbed anybody down there. They don't care ... they could have grabbed me.

Clarence Campbell: And then they interrogated the guy at this camp? And then, basically, did he ever confess to being a spy?

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't know.

Clarence Campbell: Oh. Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: I wasn't there when the war ended. I was over in Curacao the day the war ended. So I don't know what they did with him.

Clarence Campbell: So they basically kept him in this jungle village until the war ended?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Yeah, they had him. There's a word for it, I want to say barricaded, but that's not the word.

Michael M. O'Brien: Detainees.

Clarence Campbell: Detainees, yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

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Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. They scooped him up, the police did, and they took them and interrogated them until the war was over.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: But did they not feed back the information to the FBI about what he was saying, and what he was doing?

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't know remember.

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: I sort of lost track of him.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: When they took him into the jungle, I figured you guys got him, you take care of him. And that's it. He couldn't have had too much information because the bank went out of existence shortly after the war began, you know.

Michael M. O'Brien: And then you mentioned that the American Ambassador at the time. Did you wind up briefing him as to what the FBI was doing?

Thomas E. Bishop: We had this message from the Bureau that we had to brief him. And, especially on anything that was very confidential. He knew what we were doing and our relations with the Embassy.

But he made us swear that we would never tell anybody he did it. Because he was a diplomat and that was his life and he knew that he would be ruined if it came out that he was cooperating with the FBI in any type of an investigation.

Michael M. O'Brien: That's an interesting point. Here's a diplomat and, during war time, and he's concerned about providing information to the FBI?

Thomas E. Bishop: We got the Bureau's okay.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: You mean, was he concerned about giving us information?

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Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, he didn't give us information.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh. Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: We were giving him information.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: But he didn't want anybody to know that we were doing that.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh.

Thomas E. Bishop: And, we didn't tell anybody he was doing that. Nobody in the Embassy knew that at all. That he, in any way, was cooperating with the FBI.

Clarence Campbell: You briefed him on regular occasions in his office?

Thomas E. Bishop: I got to be pretty good friends with him and his wife and we were on a first name basis, and he was a very nice Irishman.

Clarence Campbell: Let's just to kind of lighten up. You mentioned also that during your tour in Caracas, that you were on the Venezuelan National Basketball Team?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah, that's right. I played basketball down there as a means of getting to know young Venezuelans. And I was the only one that even thought of doing that. And, I got very successful at making friends and contacts with the Venezuelans. I played in the National Championships down there with the Venezuelan team and I got voted the Most Valuable Player of the National Championship.

Michael M. O'Brien: Wow.

Clarence Campbell: That was in May of 1945?

Thomas E. Bishop: It was just before I came back to the States. It would have been around then. Yeah, that was after the war. And they were settling up, you know, between us and the CIA.

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Clarence Campbell: Didn't you play a little golf down there too?

Thomas E. Bishop: I played a lot of golf. I had a membership in the Caracas Country Club, which I paid for. You be sure you put that in.

(All laughing)

Thomas E. Bishop: With my own money, in the Caracas Country Club. But I won the Copa de Presidente – The President's Cup. That doesn't mean the president of the club, that meant the President of Venezuela presented that cup.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: The cup. I've still got it at home. It's about that big.

Clarence Campbell: So the actual president actually presented you ...

Thomas E. Bishop: He presented me with the cup.

Clarence Campbell: And you have that trophy today, in your office.

Thomas E. Bishop: No. No, in my den.

Clarence Campbell: You need to shine it up a little bit, I guess it's pretty dingy.

Thomas E. Bishop: It needs shining up.

Clarence Campbell: Fifty years.

Thomas E. Bishop: That's right. I never thought of that, but it's 50 years old.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. That's terrific though.

Thomas E. Bishop: Right.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. Now, you alluded to it before, but you mentioned a Special Agent named Charlie MacAteer and he was?

Thomas E. Bishop: One of the Agents in the office down there was a guy by the name of Charlie MacAteer, an Irishman from up in New York. He's not in the Bureau anymore. This was right down his alley. He saw a ghost behind every pole and he was the kind of guy, we used to have a name for him.

Thomas E. Bishop: He had the for reals, we used to say in the Bureau. When an agent would strap on two guns before leaving the e office, we'd say, "he's got the for reals." But Charlie was a hell of a guy. He made a lot of friends in his own quiet little way.

I don't know how he did it, to tell you the truth, but he came up with a guy named XXXXXXXX. Charlie was one of the Assistant Legal Attachés. XXXXXX was with the Venezuelan Police and he had been high up in the Venezuelan Police when the revolution, which was very brief ... one or two weeks. I don't remember how long it was; it was brief but bloody and a lot of cops got killed ... it was the police against the Army. The Army won.

Michael M. O'Brien: The police were fighting the Army?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. And, the police were backing the old former President, López Contreras, I think his name was. But, they were backing him. And he was backing the police department 'cause, it was his old power base and so he was backing them.

Thomas E. Bishop: During the revolution, while the revolution was in a shooting at each other stage, the police went in to the headquarters of the police headquarters and sort of barricaded themselves. It became kind of a Mexican standoff. This XXXXXXXX, he was pushing the police side because he was a friend and long time supporter of Lopez Contreras.

Clarence Campbell: You mentioned earlier that XXXXXX had a friend.

Thomas E. Bishop: That's right. He was a friend of XXX and he was giving us information through XXX..

Thomas E. Bishop: He'd give XXXX the information. Charlie MacAteer would pick it up, bring it to the office, steam it open, make copies, and take it back to him within an hour or half hour.

Michael M. O'Brien: Who's the material going to?

Thomas E. Bishop: To German companies, individuals with pro-Nazi sympathies, suspected German spies, etc. .

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay. The companies and individuals you suspected?

Thomas E. Bishop: That's right.

Michael M. O'Brien: And he would help you do that. Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: He got the material for us because we couldn't get it.

But let me get back to XXX. He came out on the side of the police. He lost the revolution, in other words.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: And he was stickin' with the police because the former President was in favor of the police, López Contreras, but he was on the losing side too.

Thomas E. Bishop: The Army side were mainly young Army officers. One of 'em was a good friend of mine; used to go horseback riding with him. And, in fact, he came up to the United States for training one time. I had him visit my mother and father and they had him for dinner one night. That's the kind of stuff you used to have to do anyhow.

Clarence Campbell: So then, XXXXXX had to go in to hiding, right, because of the Army? He was on the wrong side of the revolution.

Thomas E. Bishop: After the Army was declared the winner, they announced that they weren't going to take revenge on anybody from the police that stayed loyal to the police authorities. Except for one person. And that was XXXXXXXXXXXX.. Because he had kept the revolution going by pushing the police and actively supporting them.

Clarence Campbell: So he had to go into hiding?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He did like everybody does. It's just part of the revolution. He went into hiding with a girlfriend, at a girlfriend's house. He was into hiding for a couple days and I got a telephone call from him. He was getting tired of his girl, bored I guess, of being hiding and not doing anything. He said, "I need your help." And I said, "XXX, what can I do? You're a fugitive."

Thomas E. Bishop: “You are a fugitive from the Government. Now that the Army won the revolution, you’re on the wrong side.” He said, “Well, I’ll tell ya, Tom, if you don’t help me, I’m going to go surrender myself. And I’m going to tell ‘em who was gettin’ the information and what I was doing with it, who was doing this. Some of the surveillances we had him on, things like that.” I didn’t know if he was going to turn on us, but he told me he was.

I was Legal Attaché. I had the responsibility. I sent a coded radiogram. I told the Bureau what the situation was. What would happen, if he got caught and if he didn’t get caught.

Thomas E. Bishop: And I said, if he gets caught you can just close up this Embassy down here. Not just the Legal Attaché’s office, but you can close down the damn Embassy. Because they’re going to make us ... what do you call it, there’s a status that when you close up, close up your Embassy?

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah, I know what you mean.

Thomas E. Bishop: It’s a diplomatic word.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: I said, “I want some advice. What should I do?”

I can’t remember his name but the advice came from the Section Chief of the Foreign Intelligence Section at the Bureau. He said, “Well, Tom, do what you think best under the circumstances.”

(All laughing)

That’s just typical Bureau language, you know.

Clarence Campbell: Bureau guidance!

Michael M. O'Brien: That’s typical. Believe me, we hear it 50 years later.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. And, I says, "Okay. This guy could cause a hell of a lot of trouble." So he keeps coming back to us. I said, "How about if I get you out of the country?" He said, "If you can get me as far as Curaçao." It's a Dutch island in the Caribbean, north of Venezuela.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Oh. Oh.

Thomas E. Bishop: He said, "If you can get me there or even get me down to the coast, at La Guaira (which was a little coast town 25 miles north of Caracas)," he said, "I could get out all right." And he said, "I'll be fine if I can get that far." He said, "But you know what they're doing down there?"

He said, "They've got this one road, between Caracas and the coast, and they've got this road blockaded and they've got armed soldiers down here." And he said, "Nobody can get out." And I said, "Well, I'll try to get you out."

So what I did, I had a 1937 Ford, my personal property. I paid, I think, 700 dollars for it, in Venezuelan money. But, I just said, "Okay, this day we'll do this." I picked him up at his girlfriend's house, put him in the trunk of the car, and said, "You stay there until I tell you to come out, and it'll be a long time." And I get in, towards the coast. There was one road, winding, twisting road in those days. Now there's probably boulevards and everything else.

But then a winding, twisting road and, in the middle of it, halfway down this mountain, there's a big statue of a car or a wrecked automobile up on a big platform of cement, and underneath it, it said in Spanish, "Slowly, one will go far."

That was the whole point of it, to warn people to drive slowly. Well, we didn't drive very slow because I drove right at the maximum. Every time I'd hit a checkpoint, with these guys in there, I would stick my head out the door and not slow down at all, and yell, "Somos diplomaticos." "We're diplomats." I had diplomatic plates on my car, and I didn't want 'em to stop us because if they get curious and look in that trunk, again the United States would be jeopardized, and the Bureau would be outraged, and I took such a thing on my own, you know, the usual bullshit after giving me all that good advice on what I should do.

Thomas E. Bishop: But, we got down to the coast and I let him off down there. He had a friend who had a little fishing boat that took him to Curaçao. He got to Curaçao and he got a plane on his own. He said, "If I can get to New York, I'll be safe." He said, "I know everybody in New York." And he probably did know a lot of people and he spoke English and everything. But my responsibility ended down on the coast of Venezuela, the northern coast of Venezuela, at La Guaira.

Thomas E. Bishop: About, oh about two weeks later, I got a postcard, unsigned. "Here I am in New York City." That's all. Not signed, no nothin'. That was him, and he made it.

Now, do I have to tell you, want me to tell the postscript to this?

Michael M. O'Brien: Absolutely.

Clarence Campbell: Well.

Michael M. O'Brien: I've got to hear the rest of the story on this one.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. Sure.

Thomas E. Bishop: This was years later. I think it had to be four or five years later, I can't remember. Did I give you any dates at the time, about how I saw him up in Washington. He wanted to see Hoover.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. This was years later when you were an Assistant Director.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. In fact, it was before I was Assistant Director. When I was one of the Supervisors back there.

Clarence Campbell: Are you talking about when he, when he came to this country and wanted to meet Hoover?

Thomas E. Bishop: He wanted to meet Mr. Hoover. Yeah.

In the Bureau when someone wanted to see Hoover, they'd make up a little write-up on the guy; his background, what he did, how his relations with the Bureau were, and that type of thing.

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Thomas E. Bishop: And here comes one through on XXXXXXXX, and I happened to see it. And, it was recommended that he see him because he'd done a lot for the Bureau in those days when he was down there. He was now the head of the Venezuelan police.

Thomas E. Bishop: He was a big shot in the Venezuelan Police Department. The Army had been hunting for him like mad; and here he was with the police again and a big shot.

Michael M. O'Brien: So he made his way back.

Thomas E. Bishop: In the good graces of the Army; you know, he wouldn't be in there without them.

Clarence Campbell: He resurrected himself.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Anyhow, he came to the Bureau and he wanted to see Mr. Hoover. They said, "Well, you'd be perfect for this Tom." I said, "Don't ever bring me near that guy." I said, "He knows a lot of stuff that the Bureau don't know and I don't want the Bureau to know either." And so I got one of the Agents to take him on the tour of the Bureau, and then introduce him to some of the officials. It was a huge relief. But, as far as I know, he never did see Hoover and he sure didn't see me.

Clarence Campbell: So Tom, you never met him? I mean, you know, when he came in to this?

Thomas E. Bishop: I tried to get away from him. Yeah. I didn't want to see him.

Michael M. O'Brien: What I think what Larry was asking, did he know you were back at the Headquarters?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Michael M. O'Brien: He had too much dirt that he could ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He never knew I was in the Bureau at all, maybe. He might have thought I was out of the Bureau by then, you know.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. He's already played that game one time with you ...

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Thomas E. Bishop: Back then, people come back and haunt ya'. You know, that you dealt with in the past.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. So you said, after about three and a half years, you're in Caracas ... and then you?

Thomas E. Bishop: About three years, yeah. Let's see, from early in '43 through the middle of 1946.

Clarence Campbell: And you became the Legat in Montevideo ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah. I skipped that.

Yes. From Venezuela. After World War II wound down, the Bureau was startin' to move people around a little bit. I was transferred, as Legal Attaché, to Montevideo, Uruguay. A great assignment there.

Clarence Campbell: Why don't you tell us how, how you met your first wife, was Carleen?

Thomas E. Bishop: She was working in the American Embassy, and she was with the State Department.

She was in the Embassy assigned to the Commercial Attaché's Office, in Caracas. We met in day to day business contacts, were mutually attracted and fell in love. We go along with each and when I got my transfer to Uruguay, I popped the question. She accepted and decided to quit the Foreign Service and go with me after we married.

Clarence Campbell: How long had you known her before you got married?

Thomas E. Bishop: Ohhh, let's see, about four months.

You know, we were married until 1973, when she died unexpectedly.

Clarence Campbell: But you were married, you were married in Caracas, right?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yes. In Venezuela. You had to have two ceremonies. You had one, if you're Catholic, you had to have a Catholic service, and then a Civil service. The same day. I had one the same day ... went from one to the other.

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- Clarence Campbell: Okay. And then you transferred to Legat, Montevideo?
- Thomas E. Bishop: That was shortly after I got married. We considered it our honeymoon.
- Clarence Campbell: And then you mention SIS kind of closed down after the war.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Shortly after I got transferred to Uruguay, all the Legal Attachés got a notice from the Bureau that Mr. Hoover was closing the SIS operations down and that certain Legal Attaches would be transferred immediately and would stay to finish the reassignment of duties to the CIA. Being the short-timer down there, I got transferred by the Bureau. I was happy as a lark. They sent me to my hometown, Cincinnati, Ohio.
- Clarence Campbell: Okay and just before you get into that. So basically when SIS shut down, the duties of SIS were turned over to CIA?
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. And a few Legal Attachés, that the Bureau wouldn't let go of ... in Paris, in Ottawa, and ... I don't know whether Germany was on the list or not because it was too close to the end of the war. It was, it was where they either were establishing a Legal Attachés Office, or they already had some and we had some in countries friendly to us before the war ended.
- Clarence Campbell: So when the United States dropped the Atomic Bomb on Japan, where were you then?
- Thomas E. Bishop: I was in Curaçao. I never will forget. We'd gotten it over the radio that the war's going to be over. That was the end of the war. And I was in Curaçao on a special assignment --- not assigned there. I was sent there to do straighten out a problem. The guy who was Legal Attaché got into some kind of trouble and they called him back to the Bureau. I don't know what happened to him. And, they sent me over to take his place. So I just popped into the office and there were all these files that I didn't know anything about. The Clerk, we had a Clerk-Stenographer, he helped me out a great deal. And, I was only there a couple of weeks, it seems like.
- Clarence Campbell: When did they drop the bomb?

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Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: It was August '45?

Clarence Campbell: Okay. So then, they closed down the SIS operations and then you got your Office of Preference, your hometown in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Thomas E. Bishop: Correct. That's right.

Clarence Campbell: Did you go there as a Supervisor? Or did you go there as a street Agent?

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, I was workin' as a street Agent for several weeks.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: But I was assigned by the SAC to an Anti-Trust case. Now that gives you an idea of what that SAC thought of people who were coming back from SIS. He thought we were all party boys. I can imagine what he felt was, "We're going to fix this guy up when he gets back.."
(All Laughing)

Thomas E. Bishop: The office had an Anti-Trust case that involved a company that made fire engines. My dad was a fire Captain and so I had some knowledge. I'd been on fire engines and ridden on 'em, and stuff like that. The SAC used that as a little excuse but the real reason was just to straighten me out.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: But the funny part about it ... he had me and another guy, who also had been on SIS, Ed Mason. He also was on it and we got convictions in an Anti-Trust case, which is really unheard of. We got convictions and didn't know a goddamn thing about how to investigate Anti-Trust cases. But we found the value of the camera. We took a lot of pictures of everything we could find ... and they had a lot of files. We spent almost six months on that damn thing. Columbus, Ohio, was where it was located.

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Thomas E. Bishop: And for a while I thought I was going to be the richest man in the United States because I was on per diem. Until the SAC finally caught on and he shipped me out of there. But it was too late then, I had some money saved up to start my marriage with.

Clarence Campbell: So then he realized that maybe you were a little sharper Agent than he had anticipated.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. But anyhow, because of what he could see, I think he saw that we knew a little bit ... at least I knew a little bit about what I was doing. He made me an Assistant Supervisor on the desk. And then Supervisor, and then assigned to the Bureau, for the second time.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. This might be a good time to break 'cause we've been going for 80 minutes, an hour and 20 minutes.

Michael M. O'Brien: But, there's just a couple things I want to ask..

Clarence Campbell: We still got some time on this tape, here.

Michael M. O'Brien: You know you mentioned the CIA came and took over. I have read some history of the SIS and how the military and the FBI were struggling with who was going to do what.

Did you get into that?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. I did not.

Thomas E. Bishop: As a matter of fact, I was lucky. You know, on these dealings between Hoover and who ever else he was dealing with, all I know is we got a radiogram advising we're going to close the office on a certain date.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: And that was it.

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay. So when you had to deal with the military down there, were they always cooperative with you?

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Thomas E. Bishop: Some of 'em were, some of 'em weren't. I hate to say that, but some of 'em were and some of 'em weren't. It depended on the personalities.

Michael M. O'Brien: Well, what was the problem that you had with those that were not?

Thomas E. Bishop: I think they resented us. They were on the ground first as Military Attachés for years and years.

Michael M. O'Brien: So that was their turf, then?

Thomas E. Bishop: And these guys saying we're comin' back and stealing the glory out of that thing. Making them look bad, in a way, too. Because they didn't, they didn't know spies from, from me. I mean, they didn't know anything about espionage, and they had Military Attachés, and stuff like that.

Michael M. O'Brien: Were there ever any incidents with the military?

Thomas E. Bishop: I made it my business to be friends with everybody.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Sure.

Thomas E. Bishop: Military, Coast Guard, anybody. I was friends with them all. And, well, that's what I was supposed to do, I thought. And that paid off for me, I really made a lot of friendships. I mean, I met people I am friends with even today.

Michael M. O'Brien: You said Venezuela cut off the oil from Germany?

Thomas E. Bishop: Maybe because of some of the stuff we were feeding to the Venezuelan Government, because of what we were finding out. And, they could see that some of these spies that were picked up, and publicly picked up, the saboteurs that were picked up back in New York, had come through South America, that way. And they thought maybe we better get along with the right side of this thing, and not be accused of aiding the Germans, but helping the Americans 'cause it was getting pretty obvious they were going to win the war.

Michael M. O'Brien: All right. Now, the game plan ... you got a little side-tracked ... if you got caught in the Embassy ...

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Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah, yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: What were you going to do?

Thomas E. Bishop: Well. Frankly, I was just going to go ahead and tell them I was a burglar.

Michael M. O'Brien: Uh Huh.

Thomas E. Bishop: And that wouldn't last.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: Because just as they did something with me, somebody would come along and tell them, "Hell, he's with the Embassy."

Michael M. O'Brien: And you said you were confident that you would eventually get out.

Thomas E. Bishop: Sure.

Michael M. O'Brien: Did anybody ever get caught doing anything like that?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah. We got guys caught, early on.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh. Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: We had guys serve time down there.

Michael M. O'Brien: FBI Agents?

Thomas E. Bishop: In Buenos Aires. Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. SIS guys?

Thomas E. Bishop: A couple SIS.

Michael M. O'Brien: And how long did they serve in jail?

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't know. I wasn't really too interested in what they were doing. It was in and out ... but not really. They served a little time. I'd say a couple of days or a week, before they could get across that they were FBI Agents. And the Bureau would decide, well they're cover was blown so it pulled strings to get them released and out of the country.

Michael M. O'Brien: Sort of like the Watergate thing. Some policeman walks in on them and catches them, and takes them to jail.

Clarence Campbell: So, so you didn't have instant diplomatic immunity by virtue of working in the Embassy?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. They wouldn't let you have that.

Clarence Campbell: So if an FBI Agent was caught doing something wrong in Caracas, and, do you know anybody personally that actually went to jail and spent like more than a week in jail?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. I can't remember his name, it was an Agent in the Buenos Aires Office, in the Legal Attaché's office . I say Legal Attaché, I don't know if he was the Legal Attaché. He might have been a guy that was undercover, and he wasn't ...

Clarence Campbell: Oh. So they couldn't divulge.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Yeah. I think that's probably what it was. He was probably undercover and they arrested him for, they thought espionage. By the time they could get around and get it straightened out with the government and the Bureau, and the local authorities, he spent a little time in jail.

Now, I think that's one. Now there might have been another couple of them too, but no wholesale ones.

Michael M. O'Brien: Did you carry a weapon?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. We had one in the office.

Michael M. O'Brien: But nobody really could carry?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

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Michael M. O'Brien: Okay. But the impression I get is that the Venezuelans sort of tried to be objective. I mean, gave the appearance of being objective, that they respected the German Embassy and the U.S. Embassy.

Thomas E. Bishop: Sure. They were trying to play all sides.

Michael M. O'Brien: Play all sides.

Thomas E. Bishop: Right. And that's how , and other reasons, you could never really trust them.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: Even this guy I considered a friend of mine, I never could really trust him. He'd give you a lot of yeses and no's and stuff, but you didn't know if he was truthful.

Michael M. O'Brien: So he might take the best deal that's now available to them, whether it's German, Spanish, U.S., or whatever?

Thomas E. Bishop: Sure. That's right.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. Okay.

Michael M. O'Brien: That's good. Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. We could be goin' on for an hour and a half. So probably, this will probably be a good time to break. And then maybe next time when we do some of the follow up here, we can talk about your domestic career.

And you know, some of your key cases and how you eventually went back to law school for your senior year and graduated, and so forth.

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, I was still assigned to the Cincinnati Office. I was a Supervisor. Being a supervisor, my hours were pretty regular although subject to call, you know.

Thomas E. Bishop: I finished my senior year in Law school at night and was inducted into the Order of Curia. For night school that was the equivalent of Order of the Coif. The Order of the Coif is the highest educational honor that a guy in law school could get.

The night schools have a similar thing, called Order of the Curia.

Clarence Campbell: You went back to law school, you went back to law school at night, right?

Thomas E. Bishop: After a hiatus of six years.

Clarence Campbell: Six years later.

Thomas E. Bishop: Almost eight years later, I took the Ohio bar exams.

Clarence Campbell: So you'd work a full day in the Bureau and then go to night school.

Thomas E. Bishop: Right, as a Supervisor. And, we had a retired Judge who gave the exam review course. All he did was ask questions. He had hundreds of books that he had picked out and thousands of decisions that would prepare you for the bar exam. That was the whole thing. And, when you finished with that, you'd feel like a full sponge.

You know, you couldn't get anymore crammed into your head, and I went up there to Columbus, Ohio, with the idea that I'd take the test once and then the hell with it. I had a steady job but it was for my dad really. He'd always wanted me to be a lawyer. He didn't mind I was in the FBI, but he still wanted me to be a lawyer. And, I did pass. In fact, I had one of the better grades, in the 80's, and in the 80's for a bar exam is pretty good.

Clarence Campbell: Just pass it.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh, pass it. You know, you've got to do it in two or three times.

Clarence Campbell: And you passed with distinction, right, Cum Laude. And you passed the bar on August 24th, 1950, I think was the date.

Interview of Former Special Agent of the FBI
Thomas E. Bishop (1941 – 1973)
Interviewed by Clarence H. Campbell and Michael M. O'Brien
On January 27, 2004

Clarence Campbell: All right. My name is Larry Campbell and I'm here with Mike O'Brien, and we're doing a follow-up second interview with former Assistant Director, Tom Bishop. The first interview was done on the 13th of January, and today is the 27th of January.

During the first interview, we filled out all the necessary paperwork. We talked about Tom Bishop's experience with the SIS, that's the Special Intelligence Service, overseas, in Caracas, Venezuela. And, today we're going to focus on more of Tom's domestic career with the FBI. At the end of our last interview, you transferred to Montevideo; you met your wife; you got married three months later, and then you were transferred to the FBI Office in Cincinnati and assigned Anti-Trust work. Then you returned to law school at night, and got your Law Degree and, and passed the Ohio Bar. Okay, that was the end of our first tape. This is tape number 2.

Okay. I don't know where you'd like to start. I picked up some of your clippings here that you've got. Tell us what happened when you got back.

Thomas E. Bishop: Me and another guy, named Ed Mason. He came back from Latin America, too. And, he'd only been, you know, in the field, the domestic field, for a relatively short time, maybe two or three years. And my time was spent, a very short time, about a year in the Baltimore Office, in Wilmington, Delaware, and Baltimore.

Clarence Campbell: Why don't you start by telling us about this arrest when you were in Cincinnati?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. This was in Cincinnati, in January, it seems.

Michael M. O'Brien: 1947?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah, '47. I got back the latter part of '46. Anyhow, we had an Unlawful Flight case, for a guy, I think was being charged with an Unlawful Flight to Avoid.

Clarence Campbell: UFAP-Murder, I think, Tom.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. That's what it was, yeah. He was supposed to be a pretty bad, bad guy and he was a big, husky fella.

Clarence Campbell: Did they carry him as Armed and Dangerous?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He was supposed to be Armed and Dangerous. We went to a hotel, which was being built. I think it's still in existence in Cincinnati. They had floors down about six floors, and they had a ladder going from sixth up to the ninth floor, and that was where they were going, where they were working. We went to the foreman in charge and we said we were looking for this guy and we understand he was working here, how do we get to him? And he said, "Well, in the first place," he said, "you'll have a hell of a time getting to him because he's way up there on the seventh or eighth, or ninth floor now." I said, "Well, when do they come down, for lunchtime?" He said, "They don't come down for lunch; they eat it up there."

And he said, "At the end of the day they come down, and you've got to have about a hundred men, one at the bottom of each girder that comes down. Because when that whistle blows, they're gone, just like a bunch of monkeys. They come down the rafters, the girders, and they don't worry about the elevators or the ladders or anything else." So, rather than do that, Bob Garvey, who was the Agent who's with me at the time, he and I decided it would be better for us to go up there and see if we could talk him down.

So, we went up and it was all right to get up to the sixth floor because you could walk up these temporary type steps that they had installed there.

But when you got there, you had to go by, a little steel ladder, hand-over-hand type of thing. And we went up to the top and started walking, climbing up to where he was. He was on the, I think, eighth or ninth floor. And, we got up to the ninth and we spotted him because the description was perfect, from what we had.

Thomas E. Bishop: And he was about 50 feet away from the ladder, out on the girders. I wasn't too eager to walk out on those girders, to tell you the truth.

So I told him who we were and that we were up there to bring him down and to arrest him. I also told him, "You know if you want to go, you can go but you're liable to get shot.

Clarence Campbell: Did you have your gun out?

Thomas E. Bishop: Huh? Oh yeah. We showed him that we were armed. And, he said, "No, no. I'll go." And so we went over to where he was, halfway I guess, we drew a halfway point. He came toward us and we came toward him and I told him he was under arrest. We went back. He had the girders to the ladder, about 30 or 40 feet away, and it was kinda scary looking down and seeing nothing there. He was just walking along, just like it was a highway. But we got him started down the ladder and Bob was down below him, and I was above him. He was in between. The parade sort of slowed down and then stopped when we got to about the fourth or fifth level. I looked down and Bob was getting kind of sick to his stomach from the height; he didn't like heights. And we paused for a little while till he got himself straightened out. Then we went on down the rest of the way and put cuffs on him, when we got down there.

And, I told him if he tries to run, we're going to shoot him. There was never any point in shooting the guy but I told him that. And he walked down peacefully, came down the ladder peacefully. We got down, and the hotel was about two blocks from the FBI Office. So what we decided to do was just go ahead and walk him to the office rather than to the car, and all that stuff. So we just walked him, and he was going along fine, we had put the cuffs on him, and walked him in. That was the end of it.

That night, there was a big piece in the news about it.

Clarence Campbell: You've got the headline, Mike.

Michael M. O'Brien: ***"FBI Agents Scale Steel Girders to Make Arrest."***

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Clarence Campbell: Steel girders, yeah, to make your arrest. You got a big story in the paper.

Thomas E. Bishop: When I got home, my wife says, "Who did that?" I said, "Bob Garvey and I." She said, "You must be out of your mind!"

That was the first real information that she got as what my job was because we were down in the diplomatic circles most of the time, in SIS, and she had no idea what an FBI Agent's job description was.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah, but didn't you tell me about the first time you brought home a shotgun or something?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah. We went out on a sting, or a raid, or an arrest, or something; and we were going out right after dinner. I came home loaded with a machine gun or a shotgun, walked in the house and she looked at it like she didn't know what it was or what we were going to use it for. But it was just to intimidate these three or four fellas we were looking for who had just hijacked a truckload of liquor. And we thought we knew where they were, and we were going to make a raid on this farmhouse that they were stashed in with the booze.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. I want to move up quickly through your career. Where did you go after Cincinnati?

Thomas E. Bishop: Cincinnati? Back to the Bureau.

Clarence Campbell: You went right back to the Bureau.

Thomas E. Bishop: Supervisor at the Bureau ... because I was finished as a street Agent and, in Cincinnati, I was made a Supervisor.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: In Cincinnati, a desk Supervisor.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: I was in Cincinnati about four or five years, I guess. I think it was about '51 or something, I got transferred to the Bureau.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. And, what did you do back at the Bureau, again?

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Thomas E. Bishop: I was assigned to Division 6, which is the Criminal Division. I think it was a misnomer because it was mainly Applicant type cases.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: Investigating people working for or going to work for the government and, it was amazing to try and keep the schedule going and all that. It was a crappy job.

Clarence Campbell: Then, you went back out to the field again as an ASAC?

Thomas E. Bishop: An ASAC ... Yeah. I'm trying to figure out the dates. My offices as an ASAC were, in order, Richmond VA, Cleveland OH and San Francisco CA. The latter is my favorite as both a place to live and to work.

Clarence Campbell: You went to San Antonio first as an SAC.

Thomas E. Bishop: It was San Antonio, San Diego, San Juan, and Richmond, Virginia. Those were my four SAC Offices. They transferred you so much I can't even remember where the hell I was.

Clarence Campbell: Well, it's say's here in April of 1960, you were the Special Agent in Charge, at age 42, of San Antonio. Succeeding Leonard Blaylock. Okay. Who got transferred to Salt Lake. It says, at this time you had 19 years in the Bureau.

And you were ASAC in San Francisco before coming to San Antonio.

Thomas E. Bishop: That's right. San Francisco was my last office as ASAC.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. We don't need to do all that. And then you went to San Antonio?

Thomas E. Bishop: San Antonio, then San Diego, San Juan, Puerto Rico and then Richmond VA, this time as SAC.

Clarence Campbell: Okay, were you in San Diego when Hoover was coming out to the Del Mar track?

Thomas E. Bishop: Right. He'd come out for his annual physical exam.

Clarence Campbell: His annual physical exam?

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Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. And he went there, to the Scripps Clinic.

Clarence Campbell: Half hour for the exam and then two weeks at the track, right.

Thomas E. Bishop: Right.

Clarence Campbell: I used to hear stories, when I was in San Diego, about how they used to repaint the office just in case he would stop by.

Thomas E. Bishop: They used to do what? Well, I'll tell you, the office wasn't very dirty when he was there, but I don't think we repainted the office.

Clarence Campbell: Was it traditional that he would actually go to the office?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. At least once.

Clarence Campbell: Did he speak to the Agents or just speak to the SAC?

Thomas E. Bishop: Just the SAC. He would walk through the office and if anybody happened to be there, they'd tell him who they were. Again, there weren't too many guys hanging around the office because when I was SAC I'd tell 'em I didn't want them there. I want them out workin' on the streets.

Clarence Campbell: Did Clyde Tolson come out with him?

Thomas E. Bishop: Clyde Tolson, oh yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Whenever he came out on those trips?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yep. He came out and they had a good time.

Clarence Campbell: And didn't you say they would always put like a bowl of fruit or something in the refrigerator at the hotel.

Thomas E. Bishop: But every once in a while, the maids would tell me he'd bring a can of soup, some kind of canned soup, and ask them would they ask the chef to cook this up for him. It was his favorite type of soup, I guess. You know.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: And they'd do it.

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Clarence Campbell: So both of them were big racetrack fans? Were they big, both of them liked to play?

Thomas E. Bishop: They were big fans, but they weren't big spenders.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He never made any big bets, though; he was a two-dollar bettor.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. You never had any problems when he came.

Thomas E. Bishop: Bill Fields was an Agent here, and he'd been here a long time and knew everybody in town. He had the job you had.

Clarence Campbell: Applicant Coordinator?

Thomas E. Bishop: HmHm.

Clarence Campbell: Oh. A key post, right.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He tried to see that Mr. Hoover didn't get tied up talking to some gangster out on the balcony ... take pictures of him; kept him away from people who we didn't want him to be in touch with. I'll tell ya, they loved to talk to him and he talked to anybody. He didn't care who you were.

Clarence Campbell: You mean Hoover used to like to talk?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He was a great talker. He'd talk to anybody. And, we worried that he would be caught talking with the wrong guy, you know.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. Look bad in the press?

Thomas E. Bishop: HmHm.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. So there were no problems. So then it says here, you left San Diego in May of '62, en route to your next SAC job in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yep. That's about right.

Clarence Campbell: Any problems in San Juan?

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, it was entirely different. Mike, you've got a question?

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Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah, I did. About the racetrack. You know, I've seen programs on Frontline saying that he went to the track and he was mingling with the big time gangsters and they were placing big bets for him and things like that, that it's part of a pay off or this conspiracy theory. Can you address that type of issue? I mean there were gangsters that, like you said, he was friendly and open and would talk to anybody.

Thomas E. Bishop: This is true. I mean, he didn't even know who he was talking to.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. Can you remember specifically what, like what gangsters did that?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Clarence Campbell: But you had Agents who were kind of like bodyguards for him while he was at the track?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Clarence Campbell: Or he'd be on his own?

Thomas E. Bishop: We had a guy hanging around, but he wasn't really close to him. In other words, Hoover didn't want to be covered with bodyguards when he was alone. And, we didn't. But we had Bill Fields who was always within the area of where he was. And, knowing Hoover, he was seeing who was talking to him and stuff like that. But Fields was the only one. And the ones that he'd be running into would be guys who would be, fellas that we knew from our work, who were gamblers or former hoods, and, you know, not the right element for him.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. But no, like no Mafia guys?

Thomas E. Bishop: I can't think of them right now. There were a couple of the Mafia from Las Vegas came over there, and I can't remember if Hoover really had any contact with them. They didn't have any contact with him, not dealings, because he never had any dealings with anybody.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Michael M. O'Brien: Do you remember any specific incidents that happened where people approached him and tried to get close to him?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yes. I can't remember what it was. I was there at the track one day, and Bill Fields was with me. We were down on the track level and Hoover was up on the upper level. And Bill Fields said, "Oh, my God. He's up there talking to ... so and so," and he knew who it was so we went, did what we did to get him away from him. We had to get up there and separate the two ... you know, ease him away.

Clarence Campbell: This guy was a local bad guy?

Thomas E. Bishop: He was known as a Mafia type. Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: So the Director was like this, when he was at Del Mar, people would come up and talk to him like with any celebrity?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: So it could be, it wasn't any meet?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. No way at all. That man that was talking to him ...

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: ... that was somebody that came up and said, "Hello Mr. Hoover. How are you today?" "Oh, I'm fine. How are you?" "How's the weather?" stuff like that.

Clarence Campbell: Did they ask for his autograph? Stuff like that?

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't remember too many people asking Hoover for his autographs. I don't remember that at all.

Clarence Campbell: How 'bout movie stars that are famous?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh, there's a lot of them. Not just movie stars, but retired movie stars, older, that type ... old, you know.

Michael M. O'Brien: And, you say he was only a two-dollar better?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: I mean, there's controversy about that. Did you know personally that he was?

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Thomas E. Bishop: His chauffeur, he was an FBI Agent. He told me that he didn't remember Hoover ever betting' more than two bucks at a time. He said maybe if we had a great big special, whatever they call those special races ... Hoover would go for five and Clyde would go for five, but they didn't make a whole lot of money out there.

Clarence Campbell: Pretty conservative.

Michael M. O'Brien: Did he win at the racetrack?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah, he won on occasion. I'd say, overall, didn't make much money on it. He enjoyed it. I mean, that was his big recreation.

Michael M. O'Brien: Was that his passion? One of his passions?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. That, that was certainly his big recreation, coming' out here and going to the track.

Michael M. O'Brien: How often did he do it for?

Thomas E. Bishop: He'd go every day the track was open during his visit.

Michael M. O'Brien: Every day.

Thomas E. Bishop: He'd do something in the morning, maybe, and go to lunch. I remember one time they wanted to go out to a place called Hernandez' Hideaway. Do you know where that is?

Clarence Campbell: Right off Lake Hodges?

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah, I've been there.

Clarence Campbell: He went there? Hoover went there?

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: Grubby place.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: That's the home of the Margarita.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

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Clarence Campbell: That's where the Margarita was originally discovered.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: They wanted to go to that place and we had to tell them where it was, how to get there. My wife and I went there after he'd left to see what it was like, and we were very disappointed in it. (laughing)

Michael M. O'Brien: How'd he even find out about this place?

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't know. One of these celebrities, or somebody, told him you had to go.

Clarence Campbell: A lot of celebrities went there. Have you been there?

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. I have.

Clarence Campbell: They have a lot of celebrity photos on the wall.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Yeah, they do.

Clarence Campbell: I never noticed Hoover's.

Michael M. O'Brien: I didn't know. I'll have to check it out.

Clarence Campbell: They had a lot of Hollywood actors like, you know Leo Carillo, the Cisco Kid.

Thomas E. Bishop: That's the kind of people that Hoover was spending time with from the Hollywood crowd. People like that, and they all were respectable people. There was no scandal involved with those people.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: Because he was pretty well screened by somebody ... it must have been us, you know.

Michael M. O'Brien: So he would go to the racetrack everyday?

Thomas E. Bishop: For two weeks.

Michael M. O'Brien: Then he would leave and go back to DC.

Clarence Campbell: It was like his annual vacation.

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- Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.
- Michael M. O'Brien: And would he, at the track, you know, buy the racing form ... would he really study the form?
- Thomas E. Bishop: I don't know whether he did nor not.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Oh. Would he and Clyde be together all the time?
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yup.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Did they ever meet with anybody out here in San Diego, on a regular basis?
- Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah. There was a couple named Tippett. He was an old guy and his wife was an ex-showgirl, but very nice people and they thought the world of Hoover. As soon as they heard that he was coming, they'd be on the phone wanting to give him an invitation to come to their house, which is a beautiful house over in La Jolla, and he'd come to their house and have dinner. I remember she called me one day and she says, "Tell Mr. Hoover we just ...," and this was in the beginning of this thing, and, "...we just had a sauna installed, and we want him to come out and try it out." That was a big deal in those days, whenever that was.
- Clarence Campbell: Did he go alone?
- Thomas E. Bishop: No.
- Clarence Campbell: With Clyde?
- Thomas E. Bishop: Clyde would be along.
- Thomas E. Bishop: After they left, Bill Fields and I were invited out for dinner ... with our wives. They were very nice. She'd been a movie actress in pictures, and Tippett, the old man was a wealthy, wealthy man. I don't remember what he did, or how he made his money, but he was rich.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Okay. That is, I think they're both dead but they were a real nice couple.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Was the Director a gregarious guy? You said he liked to talk to people.

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Thomas E. Bishop: He wouldn't approach anybody, you know, on his own but if anybody came to talk with to him, and started the conversation, he'd go right into it. I mean, he talked ... he about talked your arm off.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh, really.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: So he was a talker, and stuff.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah, he was a talker; that type of guy. Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Did people come and report any crimes to him?

Thomas E. Bishop: Nah. I don't think so.

Clarence Campbell: There were never any attempts on his life or, I mean, he was never worried about ... if he didn't want bodyguards around.

Thomas E. Bishop: No, he wasn't, he wasn't worried about that at all. He would've been irritated if he found out we were keeping a little tail on him.

Clarence Campbell: Did he carry a weapon, when he went out?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Clarence Campbell: Never?

Thomas E. Bishop: To my knowledge, no. While he was at the hotel ... let's see, how did that happen ... somebody stole some money. I don't remember if it was from the lobby, or from a room, or what it was but he got all upset about that. He said, "I don't want this shit happening while I'm here. I want you guys to find out who it was, who did it." Geez, you know, that was a tough, tough thing. We made it a major case.

Clarence Campbell: Did they have Federal jurisdiction over a local robbery in a hotel?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

(All laughing)

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Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. But we found out who did it. Whatever this was, it was a burglary of a room, he became very interested in that case while I was there; but he left to go back, and fortunately we found out about who did it. The police made an arrest of who did it, after he was gone.

Michael M. O'Brien: And how many times, how many times did he come out when you were SAC?

Thomas E. Bishop: Just the one time.

Michael M. O'Brien: He was there one time?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Because I was only Special Agent in Charge in San Diego for six months

Michael M. O'Brien: I see. Okay

Clarence Campbell: They moved you guys around fast, didn't they?

Thomas E. Bishop: I think Cincinnati was probably my longest as an Agent.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: I was probably at the Bureau as much as I was in the Cincinnati Office.

Clarence Campbell: Hey Tom, did you know him from previous dealings with him?

Thomas E. Bishop: I met him, you know, the Agent in Charge always meets the Director when you're in there for retraining, but I didn't know him at all.

Michael M. O'Brien: Well, personally you didn't know him.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: When he came in, did he sit down and talk with you? Did you have any conferences or meetings with him?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. He wanted to know if there was anything new, what you've done out here, and how you'd changed the office, and that kind of stuff. And then he'd go into cases.

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Michael M. O'Brien: You gave him a little debriefing maybe of what was going on?

Clarence Campbell: How long, how long did your discussions last, when he'd come?

Thomas E. Bishop: He'd spend maybe two hours in the office, going around the Chief Clerk's Office, saying hello to the girls, and he'd talk to me maybe a half hour, and the Assistant Agent in Charge too.

Clarence Campbell: Was Tolson with him?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yes, he's with him. He'd just sit in the corner and, Clyde, you know, he didn't have much to say.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: I was going to get into Clyde. Did you have any personal dealings with Clyde?

Thomas E. Bishop: No, not personal dealings but he gave me the best advice, I guess, I ever got when I was just going out in the Field as an ASAC. It was one of the stops I made ... the Director, and the Assistant Directors, and Tolson ... he said, "I've got three things to tell you. Be prompt; be accurate; always check the file." That was, he said, the main thing to do.

Answering questions you got, promptly, no matter what they are; be accurate at what you give out to anybody, and always check the file. If there was anything that he hated, it was a guy making a response without doing the background, or checking ...

Michael M. O'Brien: Or check Indices.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: ... or check with in the FBI files.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: When you say those three things, you saying when you report back to the Bureau ... do these three things, is that what you're saying?

Thomas E. Bishop: No, that's what he told me when I was going out, and he would repeat this. As a matter of fact, I typed up a little card with these three things, on a three by five card, and I just stuck it in the front of my desk on my telephone.

Because it impressed me as what he wanted and it was a good idea. That's how it was, I mean, that's what you should do. But, I mean, he would be more specific ... I guess I can't say more specific than the Director, he was talking about cases that you had. He was, I think, pretty up on most of the cases that you would see him about. Hoover was also, but Hoover probably got a brief of the thing before you came in. That was it.

Michael M. O'Brien: Would he be like Hoover's guy that he wanted someone to go out and correct a situation, would he tell Clyde to do that?

:

We used to call him the hatchet man, a hatchet man in the sense that he would go out and, if there was something, he would get it corrected.

Thomas E. Bishop: But he didn't expect Tolson to do it.

Michael M. O'Brien: He didn't? Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: Tolson never got out of Headquarters that much.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: In fact, I don't remember in my tenure at the Bureau, I don't remember Tolson coming out and taking charge of something, whether it's a special or not a special.

Clarence Campbell: Was Tolson, did he have any prior investigator experience? Or was he just appointed by Hoover way back when?

Thomas E. Bishop: No, I guess that basically that was it. I'm trying to think, this was years and years ago. I'm not too sure about this. I think he was in the Bureau when Hoover came in and he was like an Assistant to Hoover. And then he advanced.

Michael M. O'Brien: But you said when they were off, went to the racetrack, you'd see him, you know, how, he would be pretty quiet and on the outer edge?

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Thomas E. Bishop: Yes. On the edge of the conversation. Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Yeah. Similar to staying in the background.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Sure.

Michael M. O'Brien: Right. Yeah. One more issue and then I'll let you go on. I'm curious when you said the Director came in the office, one of the things he would do is he would walk around and talk to the employees.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Would Clyde be with him?

Thomas E. Bishop: He was walking a couple steps behind him, but he was with him. Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Okay. Would you be with them also?

Thomas E. Bishop: Sometimes I did. But he would tell me if he didn't want me along.

Michael M. O'Brien: And he would sort of just introduce himself to the employees?

Thomas E. Bishop: It was just who he is, here I am, how are things going out here ... You know, you've got a great place to work, and all that kind of stuff.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. So he'd be really friendly.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: To the employees that work there. Would he see only the Agents or only the clerical staff?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. He was friendly to the Agents but, as I told you, I tried to make sure that there weren't too many Agents around. I mean there was when they'd be dictating to a girl or dictating a report, or something. I made sure of that.

Clarence Campbell: Because I heard stories, in the later years, that he never even came in the office. He would just pull in, and go on to the hotel.

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Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah, well maybe he did it that way then.

Clarence Campbell: And everybody was on pins and needles wondering if he was going to come in or not because a lot of times he didn't even come in.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He only came, he only came around the one time when I was SAC.

Clarence Campbell: Why don't we move on? Okay. So then you went to San Juan. Right? As an SAC?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And that was in '62, I believe?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And how long were you in San Juan?

Thomas E. Bishop: A little too long. It was about two and a half years.

Clarence Campbell: Two and half years.

Thomas E. Bishop: They had a thing at this time, that two years was expected to be the tour in office, and, and you could stay, if you wanted to, for longer. If you were an Agent, you just expressed the fact that you'd like to stay here. If you were an SAC, you didn't get a choice, but nobody volunteered after two years and to stay around longer ... no Agent in Charge.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: It was an interesting, very interesting assignment. You had your different culture, different language, getting used to. It was a very interesting thing, but you got quite unhappy after two years.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: It was enough.

Clarence Campbell: You were there at the time when Kennedy was assassinated, right?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

- Clarence Campbell: Okay. Do you remember what you were doing that day? Can you talk about it?
- Thomas E. Bishop: I was sitting in the office working and the radio operator, our radio operator came in. I used to have him try to monitor what was going on in the air and any news. He comes in and he said, "Oh," he said, "Tom, the President was shot and they think he's going to die." I said, "Get me what you can." He kept me up to date for the first half hour, or so, I think. And, one of the first calls I got from anybody that wasn't in the Bureau, was the Chief of Police of the Puerto Rican Police Department ... a good friend of mine ... and he called. He said, "Tom," he says, "Tell me just one thing. Tell me it wasn't a Puerto Rican." He was just scared that a Puerto Rican had done it, and the whole brouhaha would start over again, like they had with the guys with Truman.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Right.
- Thomas E. Bishop: And I said, "As far as your people are concerned," I said, "it wasn't a Puerto Rican."
- Clarence Campbell: And then, where did you go after San Juan?
- Thomas E. Bishop: Richmond, Virginia. That's where ...
- Clarence Campbell: Okay. Then you're in Richmond. Did anything out of the ordinary happen in Richmond?
- Thomas E. Bishop: Richmond. Just normal cases, I don't think there were any noteworthy cases.
- Clarence Campbell: Is that where you got all those, remember some Letters of Censure you were talking.
- Thomas E. Bishop: What?
- Clarence Campbell: Maybe that was when you were ASAC, but you showed me some Letters of Censure that you got from Hoover.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Oh. I got them when I was SAC too, all kinds of letters. Most of them when I was ASAC, though.
- Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

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Thomas E. Bishop: 'Cause that phase of supervising so closely had passed.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: They had a different set of Supervisors at the Bureau, and they didn't worry too much if they printed a 500-page report with two misspellings in it, or something like that.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Michael M. O'Brien: Did you get a Letter of Censure for that?

Clarence Campbell: He was put on probation.

Thomas E. Bishop: For having too many Letters of Censure at the time.

Michael M. O'Brien: Ohh. Geez.

Clarence Campbell: He had five in two weeks.

Thomas E. Bishop: I got two in one day.

Clarence Campbell: Every time an Applicant case went bad, or something, he got a Letter of Censure.

Thomas E. Bishop: It was mainly in the reporting. The guys they said "used poor English" or they'd forget something that should be in the report, or misspelled words in there and I didn't catch it.

Michael M. O'Brien: So they would catch it and they would send it back to you .

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, they would either send it back or they would correct it themselves, but they would always send a Letter of Censure to you.

Michael M. O'Brien: And then the SA, would the Case Agent get one also?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah, he'd get one too.

Michael M. O'Brien: So the SAC and the Case Agent would get a Letter of Censure.

Thomas E. Bishop: But I was ASAC, which was when they had the big drive on making reports accurate. When I was getting those Letters of Censure, I remember Jim Gale was SAC in Richmond. He was fairly new. And, I got two Letters of Censure in the same delivery from the Bureau.

He said, "Jesus Christ, Tom." He said, "What are you doing?" I said, "Misspelled words in reports." He said, "Tom, you better be careful. They're going to put you on probation and bounce you outta here." You know, he was a good friend of mine and he was a little concerned about it. But I was so used to it that I just kinda threw it in a stack.

Michael M. O'Brien: So, in fact, it really didn't bother you that much.

Thomas E. Bishop: Didn't bother me.

Michael M. O'Brien: You'd sort of gotten used to it.

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, I got used to it. Yeah. And I thought it was very petty the way those Supervisors acted.

Michael M. O'Brien: I didn't realize the SAC's were getting ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: ... Letters of Censure. Wow.

Clarence Campbell: You should see 'em. I mean, we have a running joke about, you know, whether he had more ... he got tons of Commendation Letters but he's got ...in fact, I think I've almost counted as many Letters of Censure.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. That's right.

Clarence Campbell: But I think the other ones are way, way more important.

Thomas E. Bishop: We had one guy that was an Agent in a Resident Agency in Bristol, I think, Bristol, Virginia. The guy was a very sloppy character. I mean, everything he did was sort of sloppy. But, he made a report, and I discovered the report because it was about eight months late.

Thomas E. Bishop: He had just never got around to it. He had the arraignment and the guy covered and all this stuff, but never reported it. He had it in his notes, see. And I found it when he, you know, sent the report in.

And, I called him up and raised hell with him. I said, "Jesus Christ, you're gonna get killed when ..." you know, when the SAC gets this, because he signs it. This guy is in jail and nobody knows it. And so, he says, "Well, I'm sorry. I got pretty busy over here helping out another Resident Agent because there's nothing to do here."

But, he got a Letter of Censure and I got a Letter of Censure. I didn't even know the case existed. Because he'd never said anything to the office about it, and that's the only way I'm going to know about it. But, because I didn't see that he reported it properly, I got a Letter of Censure. So you got, you get so you don't pay too much attention to that kind of crap.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. So then after Richmond, you got transferred back to the Bureau as an Assistant Director on December 3, 1965?

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, it basically was Assistant Director, they called me Inspector-in-Charge for a couple months and then they made me an Assistant Director.

Clarence Campbell: In what Division?

Thomas E. Bishop: In Crime Records Division. Basically it was the Public Relations Division. Kept, you know, crime reports and that type of stuff. All press matters had to go through me. And it was a kind of a nerve wracking job because any big case where they made an arrest, Top 10, or a big fugitive, or any other pretty big case, they had to notify me immediately. I had to see that a Press Release went out on it right away ... some national press releases, most of them were national press releases. I had to approve all of those.

They never seemed to arrest anybody in the day time, and, I got a call so many times at night. It's a wonder my wife didn't divorce me.

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Thomas E. Bishop: It got so I could answer the phone, pick it up, tell them what to do, go back to sleep, and the next morning I didn't even know what I had done. I didn't even know ... I forgot about it completely. But, that's the way it was.

Clarence Campbell: Right. Okay. Let me ask you. Did you have many dealings with Cartha "Deke" DeLoach?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He was my boss when I was Assistant Director. He was the Assistant to the Director.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah, I had a lot of dealings with him.

Clarence Campbell: In the Sanford Ungar book, The FBI, he refers to DeLoach and Bill Sullivan as the two "Dukes" of the Bureau. You know, the real power guys there.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: At that particular time.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: In fact, some of them, Ungar said, and he interviewed a lot of people at the Bureau, and he said ...

Thomas E. Bishop: While you're mentioning that, I can picture this guy in my mind. Ungar, I remember him well.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. And he refers to DeLoach as almost like a son to J. Edgar Hoover.

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, he was closer to him than, than Sullivan was.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: He depended on Sullivan for a lot on the Domestic Intelligence side. But DeLoach was a public relations type man. He was, he preceded me as the ... well, I think Bob Wick came in, between us ... but he was the Assistant to the Director for a very long time.

Sullivan was a big disappointment of Hoover's life, I think.

Clarence Campbell: Before you get into Sullivan, let me talk to you a little bit about DeLoach. Some people said he was like a hatchet man for Hoover; that he did all his dirty jobs.

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, somebody had to do them, I guess that's it. He didn't use the hatchet on me. I fortunately, went up, I guess, under him, at least when I was Assistant Director. He was Assistant to the Director. But he done a lot of guys bad, I mean.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Well, in Ungar's book, he talked about DeLoach as a very personable guy.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And, they came up with, he was involved with Martin Luther King in some of the tapes, you know, the, the authorized wiretaps.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: That Bobby Kennedy authorized on King.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And they said, and they quote an instance here where DeLoach at one time played tapes
to journalists.

Thomas E. Bishop: Right.

Clarence Campbell: I was wondering if King ever saw it in print. And he would

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Thomas E. Bishop:

Clarence Campbell: Did you ever actually listen to or see those tapes?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. I never listened to them.

Clarence Campbell: Then you just heard about it what, through the grapevine?

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, through the grapevine. But I didn't approve of it and I thought it was bad policy. And it would come back to haunt us; and really, it did.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: And, it proved that we shouldn't be doing that kind of stuff.

Clarence Campbell: Well, the reason, the whole basis of it, apparently, the original basis of a wiretap was because they had this lawyer.

Thomas E. Bishop: They found a legal reason for it.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. He was a member of the Communist Party.

Thomas E. Bishop: He was a member of the Communist Party. He was advisor to Martin Luther King.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: And that's what, really this whole thing that Hoover, he reached on the basis of. We have to know what King is doing. And that's what I testified to the House Committee on Assassinations. That we had to know what King was doing 'cause every place he went, the crowds would erupt every time. And Hoover figured that way, if he knew where he was going or what he was going to be doing, we notified the police so the police would be prepared for whatever outbreak occurred at that ... and there were a lot of protesting and things, and stuff. And the police appreciated it. That was why we were doing it. And that's what I testified to.

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- Clarence Campbell: Okay. Back in '64 when they had the Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City, Hoover appointed DeLoach as kind of a leader of a team of 12 Agents.
- Thomas E. Bishop: I know nothing of this. It was before my assignment at Bureau Headquarters as Assistant Director.
- Clarence Campbell: And, and then it says in Ungar's book, on page 294, that Hoover had a press conference with some female reporters, you know, all female reporters from major papers.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Right. Right. I do remember that.
- Clarence Campbell: And then he made the comment on two occasions, you know, DeLoach was in the room. Were you in the room when they had ...
- Thomas E. Bishop: No. I wasn't in the room.
- Clarence Campbell: Okay.
- Thomas E. Bishop: In fact, I don't think I was even at the Bureau at that time.
- Clarence Campbell: Okay. Well, he said, "Martin" this is a quote from Hoover, "Martin Luther King is the most notorious liar in the country." And that was because Hoover had access to the fact that
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.
- Clarence Campbell: And he says, and then DeLoach, according to the book, DeLoach kept saying, "Mr. Hoover, you don't want to say that." And Hoover finally, he said it again and then he, again he tried to counsel, he wrote him little notes and Hoover said, "Hey, he's trying to tell me to keep this off the record, but I don't want it off the record."
- Thomas E. Bishop: He was talking to this woman from Texas, who was a reporter, a real pain in the ass, from my standpoint, and that's pretty much the way it was. I wasn't present, but I know of what happened.
- Clarence Campbell: Wasn't there a meeting and one time, a meeting between Hoover and Martin Luther King, in Hoover's office?

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Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Did Hoover invite him to come in? Tell us a little bit about that. What led up to that?

Thomas E. Bishop: I was there when he came in, but they didn't include me in the meeting or the arrangements for it. I was there when he arrived with four or five of his assistants. Hoover didn't really expect him to have anybody with him. ...

Clarence Campbell: Like Ralph Abernathy, and people like that?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: And his words were "his cohorts."...

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: Called them "his cohorts." And they expected to go in to the meeting and Hoover had told me that he was going to going to see Martin Luther King one on one. And so I told them that that's the way it's going to be, DeLoach helped too. And he told them that that's the way it's going to be, and they were very disappointed. Very disappointed. And Hoover took him in to his back office, he had a big office, reception office where he sees everybody, and then in the back of the office was an office where he talks business. A little, small office. And, he took him back there and nobody was in on that conversation.

Clarence Campbell: It was just Hoover and King in the back office?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And how long did the meeting last, do you know?

Thomas E. Bishop: As I recall, it wasn't too long, maybe a half hour.

Clarence Campbell: Did you read any body language when the two of them came out?

Thomas E. Bishop: They hadn't changed their mind about each other.

Clarence Campbell: But neither one liked the other one very much.

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Thomas E. Bishop: It was a very successful meeting. Yeah. Very cold and standoffish of each other.

Clarence Campbell: Do you think Hoover played any of the tapes for him, or let him know how much he knew about him?

Thomas E. Bishop: I doubt, I don't think he did that.

Clarence Campbell: Maybe told him about them.

Thomas E. Bishop: I think he let him know that he had the tapes.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: He did, he told him that he didn't respect him, also the fact that that we had him on tapes.

Clarence Campbell: Uhmhmm.

Thomas E. Bishop: This, this little thing got very dirty for a while. And, way beyond what I would have liked to see it be. I mean, there was nobody that could outshine Hoover that I know of, and King wanted to be the one 'cause nobody else was going to do it.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: And I think people realized that it was really the Intelligence Division, on Sullivan's side of the house, who's developing all this information and getting it. And it was The Washington Post that was leaking it. And, actually, he was doing what I would be expected to do. They could see, I guess, that I was reluctant to do it, so they had DeLoach handle that, giving that stuff out.

Clarence Campbell: Did you know, there's a Pulitzer Prize book that came out after King's death, written by, I believe it's a black author, Taylor Branch, and it's called Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-1963. He has a whole chapter in there on the hostility between King and Hoover. Let me see if I can find out what he called it ... Hoover's Triangle in King's Machine. He points out in this book that a lot of the black leaders
They just kind of thought "well" ... they kind of blew it off like that's just a guy, you know, don't worry.

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Clarence Campbell: No it wasn't broadcasted, but his inner-circle knew all about it.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And so, was Hoover hostile? I mean, how would you describe Hoover's attitude toward blacks, in general

Thomas E. Bishop: In general, I don't think you can say anything. I've seen him talk to black people and he had black people working for him.

Clarence Campbell: Right. He had a chauffeur that was black, right?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Right. He had this majordomo, I guess he called him, and he'd drive him to the office all the time. And, he chauffeured and something like that. I don't think Hoover was anti-black, as such. He was anti-Martin Luther King because it grated on his sensibilities that King was doing what he was getting away with. And this, I think he felt, that King was doing dissatisfaction to the blacks. He was not promoting their interest. King wasn't careful of his own activities. And, I'm sure, I think that was his attitude and he thought that King had let the black people down.

Clarence Campbell: Right. And that he was a fraud in the sense that

And Hoover was a very straight arrow as far as how he lived his personal life.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Hoover was.

Clarence Campbell: A religious kind of guy, I guess you could say. I mean, did Hoover go to church every week?

Thomas E. Bishop: No, but he went occasionally, but he wasn't a regular at church.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. They talk a lot ... they talk a little bit in here about DeLoach and he had a good relationship with Paul Harvey.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh, yeah. DeLoach was a master at that.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: And he was in my job and handled the desk, in charge of Crime Records Division, before I was out there, and Bob Wick came in between us, and I was a little removed from it. But he was a master at keeping friendships with prominent people.

He was good at that, especially newspaper people, you know. He would do things that a normal Agent would not do just to do a favor for a newspaper guy, and he, of course, he called that favor in when he wanted. That's the way he operated. And I don't think that Hoover even knew what he was up to; what DeLoach was doing as far as dealing with the press was concerned.

Clarence Campbell: It says, also in this book, I'm reading Ungar's book again, that DeLoach had a very close relationship with LBJ, you know, and originally, when LBJ was Vice-President.

Thomas E. Bishop: You know, here's how that happened. DeLoach never had a whole lot of feelings for the Agents. He'd never been an ASAC or anything like that; he was just a Supervisor. But he was in the Liaison Section, what they called the Liaison Section. And he got very, very close to LBJ, who was Vice-President, before he became President and he, apparently he might have even approached him when he was a Senator, because that was his job. If I'd been in my job longer, I'd have done the same kind of thing. Be very close and do favors for the Senate and the House guys, which was what you're supposed to do. But, DeLoach was in the job for a long enough time that a lot of, a lot of guys owed him ... for favors that he had done for them. He had given them information from the files and some stuff like that, on a confidential basis.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Before we get back to the King thing, too far, I just wanted to ... you mentioned you were reluctant to get involved with leaking information or taping them. Tell us about that. You mentioned your reluctance and so, therefore, they gave it to DeLoach. Right?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Michael M. O'Brien: What was your reluctance?

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Thomas E. Bishop: I just, I was reluctant to spread information about the moral character of King.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh. Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: I never felt comfortable in leaking stuff about King's personal life.

Clarence Campbell: Did Hoover know that? Did you ever have any discussions with him?

Thomas E. Bishop: I imagine he probably knew it. I never told him personally about it. And nobody asked me. DeLoach's position was above me, and he was doing it and I figured that, that's his business.

Michael M. O'Brien: But, to say again, to get an idea of what was happening. Martin Luther King was being wiretapped, they were getting transcripts, I imagine, or even the wiretaps, would you all sit around and listen to them.

Thomas E. Bishop: No. No. Nobody did.

Michael M. O'Brien: Nobody did.

Thomas E. Bishop: Most of the people at Bureau Headquarters didn't even know it was going on.

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay. But when this happened and the issue came up, I mean did someone come to you and suggest that you leak this?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Michael M. O'Brien: You said that you were reluctant, that means that somebody would have to be coming to you.

Thomas E. Bishop: DeLoach, it was DeLoach's decision. He was the one who decided to leak the information.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah, but did you have discussions with him about that?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Clarence Campbell: No. And no one ever, never, no one ever came up to Tom Bishop and said, "Hey Tom, maybe you could leak this?"

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Thomas E. Bishop: No, because they knew it would be handled by DeLoach.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: He was my superior.

Michael M. O'Brien: But you mentioned that Sullivan was in charge of the information, originally giving the information.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Would he give you any of the information?

Thomas E. Bishop: If I wanted it, but I never really wanted it.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: He gave me sometimes too much stuff. Bill did. 'Cause I tried to censor it a little bit.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Uhhuh.

Thomas E. Bishop: He'd ask me a week later, "What'd you with that stuff that I gave you?" I couldn't very well tell him I didn't do ... I said, "I've handled it."

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: But I couldn't very well tell him I thought it was bad for us to do it.

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay. But, but, did you ever make that known or did that become an issue that you felt that this was not right, what was going on?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. It wasn't an issue because there was nothing I could do about it. You know, it was being handled between Sullivan and DeLoach and the Director.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. To make it clear, you were in the Criminal Section?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh.

Thomas E. Bishop: This was when I was in the Crime Records Division.

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Michael M. O'Brien: Crime Records. I thought it was Public Relations. Okay. So you were in Public Relations. Sullivan was the Intelligence side.

Thomas E. Bishop: He'd gather the information, and he went to DeLoach, who would, ...

Michael M. O'Brien: ... who would then leak it to the media.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: And since you were in Public Relations, that was your tie in to the whole situation.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay. But when King came in to the office to talk to Hoover, what was the purpose of the discussion?

Thomas E. Bishop: He wanted to talk to the Director, I think. I don't know what the purpose was. I really don't know.

Michael M. O'Brien: It was a lot of, a lot of criticism, as I recall, about the Bureau not protecting Civil Rights workers, so King prompted the meeting, as far as I recall.

Were you there when they initially got together?

Thomas E. Bishop: I was there when he came in to Hoover's office.

Michael M. O'Brien: Were you there before Hoover, were you with the Director before Martin Luther King came in?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Michael M. O'Brien: No. Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: When King came in, Hoover then came in and I introduced them.

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay. So, you went down ... did you get Dr. King and his associates and bring them up to the ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Bring them up to the Director's office.

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Michael M. O'Brien: Did you have any conversation with any of the people surrounding that?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Michael M. O'Brien: Was the mood real tense in there between everybody involved?

Thomas E. Bishop: It wasn't a very social type of meeting.

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay. You could feel the tension?

Thomas E. Bishop: It was, it was polite chit-chat.

Michael M. O'Brien: Did the Director say, at that time, I mean, everybody expected to go in to the meeting.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Was there a conversation that took place where the Director told everybody, "Look, its just going to be heads-up between ..."

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. That was the Director's decision, right there on the spot.

Michael M. O'Brien: Did King argue with him at that time?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Michael M. O'Brien: Or, or was King going along with whatever the Director wanted to do?

Thomas E. Bishop: Mr. King went along with the Director.

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: Now, the people weren't happy because they wanted to be in on it.

Michael M. O'Brien: Was there any type of arguments?

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't know what they said to each other when the two of them met privately.

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Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Right. They go into a separate room, and you are outside with the, the ...

Thomas E. Bishop: The mob that was with King.

Michael M. O'Brien: Did you stay with them at that time?

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't believe I did.

Michael M. O'Brien: So, did they all sit in the office and wait, and you went about your business?

Thomas E. Bishop: They waited in the anteroom for King, yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay. All right, thank you.

Clarence Campbell: Getting back to DeLoach. LBJ would call him all the time. You know, to be updated.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And that LBJ actually had a White House phone.

Thomas E. Bishop: In the White House?

Clarence Campbell: In DeLoach's master bedroom.

Thomas E. Bishop: That's true. Because ...

Clarence Campbell: Because he tried to call one night and DeLoach's teenage daughter was on the phone and he couldn't get through.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Well, this is out of Ungar's book ... and LBJ got so upset about it, he said, "Damn it, put a phone in your room so I can get a hold of you."

Thomas E. Bishop: That's right.

Clarence Campbell: So he had, basically, the red White House phone ...

Thomas E. Bishop: He had the White House phone.

Clarence Campbell: Did Hoover know about that?

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Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. In fact, it was done with Hoover's agreement, you know, he gave his okay. And, it built DeLoach up tremendously.

Clarence Campbell: Because he had ...

Thomas E. Bishop: He knew he had access to the President.

Clarence Campbell: To the President. Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Do you think DeLoach was ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Now he did that before I ever was assigned to Crime Records Division, before I transferred in.

Clarence Campbell: Do you think DeLoach thought, maybe, Hoover's going to retire someday and I'll move in?

Thomas E. Bishop: I would imagine that that was true. His game, you know. He was in a good position.

Clarence Campbell: Sure ... Assistant to the Director.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yes, Assistant to the Director, he knew a lot of politicians, big politicians, you know, pretty well; had done favors for a lot of them, and I think most of the people in the Bureau figured he'd be the successor.

Clarence Campbell: If Hoover had decided to retire, was everybody under the assumption that Tolson would retire with him?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah.

Clarence Campbell: That Tolson had no designs on being the Director.

Thomas E. Bishop: He didn't want to be Director.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: And, everybody thought DeLoach would be the next Director.

Clarence Campbell: Including DeLoach.

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- Thomas E. Bishop: Including DeLoach. I think, yeah.
- Clarence Campbell: Yeah.
- Thomas E. Bishop: And he got a very big disappointment, but he took advantage of a good opportunity. He was, one of his friends, a very close friend, was the guy that was the head of Pepsi-Cola. And, he offered him a job, a good job, and he decided that he wasn't going to wait for Hoover to die ... he took the job.
- Clarence Campbell: Were you there when DeLoach went in and informed Hoover that, it says in the book that he went in and said, "I'm going to retire." And that Hoover was very upset.
- Thomas E. Bishop: I don't know. It was a big surprise to him, I think.
- Clarence Campbell: Yeah. He wouldn't talk to him for a couple of weeks, or something like that, it says in the book.
- Thomas E. Bishop: I couldn't understand. Hoover was mad at him.
- Clarence Campbell: Yeah.
- Thomas E. Bishop: At that point. I think he might have been a little disappointed.
- Clarence Campbell: That then maybe Hoover, in his own mind, thought this is a guy that ...
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.
- Clarence Campbell: ... will take over for me if I ever decided to retire.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Could be, but I'm reading this one and I couldn't figure it out.
- Clarence Campbell: Yeah. They apparently got along. When Hoover got angry or upset with De Loach and let him know it, it just rolled off De Loach's back. De Loach wasn't affected by Hoover's tirades.
- Clarence Campbell: They mention in the book, Courtney Evans.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Evans. Courtney Evans.
- Clarence Campbell: Was the FBI liaison to, what?

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Thomas E. Bishop: He was ...

Clarence Campbell: ... the White House?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He was with the Kennedys.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: That White House. And, he was sort of passé, at that time, I guess. I forget when he left the Bureau, but it was after I was in Crime Records Division, but he didn't wield much influence.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He was in with the White House, very much so. Ever since Hoover told him that he wanted him to associate with them, and develop the White House, you know, be the man who was put in the Bureau for the White House. And Evans did a good job of it. He'd used to do a good job, he'd used to go play football, touch football with them, he'd go to the picnics, and stuff. He did a good job at that. And that was way before I got there, when the Kennedys were still alive.

Clarence Campbell: You were there December of '69, when they had the Chicago raids, by the State's Attorney and local PD, against the Black Panther Party, and they had a shoot out. Do you remember this? They had a shoot out and two Black Panther guys were killed, Fred Hampton and Mark Clark. Do you remember anything about that?

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't remember that at all. Apparently that was not when I was there. When was it?

Clarence Campbell: December of '69. You would've been, you would've still been in Crime Records. This happened in Chicago.

Thomas E. Bishop: Ah-huh.

Clarence Campbell: And, in fact, Mike and I were both stationed in Chicago.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. I remember that.

Clarence Campbell: It's very vivid to us.

Michael M. O'Brien: Hanrahan was the District Attorney.

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Clarence Campbell: Yeah. Pat Hanrahan was his name. He was the DA that led the raid on the Black Panthers.

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't even remember.

Michael M. O'Brien: There was a big shoot out, hundreds of rounds were fired, and two Black Panther Party people killed.

Thomas E. Bishop: Is that right?

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Do you remember any ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Was I at Headquarters at the time? I guess because the FBI was not in the shoot out, it was of no interest to me. I didn't have to worry about the Press Release.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. It was a big thing in Chicago.

Michael M. O'Brien: There was probably a thousand rounds fired into the house, and like two rounds fired out.

(Laughing)

Clarence Campbell: And Fred Hampton was shot while he was in bed.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh my God. I don't know anything about that.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. How 'bout ... I'm jumping' ahead here ... how 'bout the spring of '71, when they had the indictment of the Berrigan brothers.

Thomas E. Bishop: Ahhh.

Clarence Campbell: Do you know anything about that?

Thomas E. Bishop: I remember the Berrigan brothers ... two priests. Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: The two priests, the Berrigan brothers, were indicted and it was alleged they were attempting to kidnap Henry Kissinger and possibly blow up places in Washington, DC.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Yeah.

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Clarence Campbell: And then the New York Times and The Washington Post published the “Pentagon Papers.”

Thomas E. Bishop: I remember the “Pentagon Papers.”

Clarence Campbell: Provided by Dan Ellsberg.

Thomas E. Bishop: The guy who leaked those; what was his name?

Michael M. O'Brien: Ellsberg.

Thomas E. Bishop: Huh?

Clarence Campbell: Daniel Ellsberg.

Thomas E. Bishop: Daniel Ellsberg.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. That's him.

Thomas E. Bishop: I got a call one time. We were waiting for some action to be taken by the Department against him. I was told to be available at all times, any hour, all night, and to let Mr. Hoover know immediately, what was done. Hoover wanted to make an arrest, you know. It was a big deal, and without the indictment, you couldn't give anything out. It was the Department's problem.

But I called him at home, which was, you know, a scary thing, late at night, 2 o'clock in the morning, and I said, “Mr. Hoover, this is Bishop down in the Bureau.” And I said, “You wanted to be advised when we took some action against Ellsberg.” And he said, “Yes, what'd they do?” I said, “Well, he's been indicted.” He said, “Indicted! Is that all they did to him?” He said, “Didn't we arrest him?” Because that's what he wanted, to have a big arrest for the Bureau and we'd get some big publicity out of it. And he was very disappointed.

Thomas E. Bishop: He wanted to know why they didn't do anything. I said, “Mr. Hoover, I don't know.” I wasn't even involved with the case except for the press angles and that's how I know that he got indicted.

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay.

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Clarence Campbell: Were you at the office when you called him?

Thomas E. Bishop: I was in the office. Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: At 2 AM in the morning?

Thomas E. Bishop: I was going to stay there all night if I had to.

Clarence Campbell: Did you have a cot in the office?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. But I had a good sofa.

Clarence Campbell: Nice sofa. (Laughing)

Thomas E. Bishop: I remember one night, one time, he ... what the hell case was that about, it was a kidnapping case where they kidnapped a girl.

Clarence Campbell: Barbara Mackle?

Thomas E. Bishop: He was big builder in Florida. Mackle, yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: And I spent the night, in fact, I spent two nights, until they found the girl, and, you know, got the thing pretty well resolved. Just working on the press aspects.

Clarence Campbell: Let me go to a momentous date in Bureau history ... March 8, 1971 ... the Media, Pennsylvania Resident Agency break-in. And, in the book, again, Ungar talks about this on page 484. He talks about how these anti-war activists, I guess, or anti-Bureau people, broke in, seized FBI files from unlocked cabinets, and then gradually would release the documents that they took with them, detailing COINTELPRO activities. You know for the COINTELPRO, whatever word that means, Counter-Intelligence ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Counter-Intelligence Program.

Clarence Campbell: Program. And then he talks in the book about how the Senior RA, Tom Lewis, got 30 days on the bricks and was transferred to Atlanta. And then Hoover was so upset about the break-in, that he promptly closed 103 of the 538 RA's in the Bureau. And they ...

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Thomas E. Bishop: Hoover was upset.

Clarence Campbell: He was not a big fan of RA's.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He always thought they were living in the lap of luxury and goofing off all the time. He never thought they did much work.

Clarence Campbell: So then the Bureau had this case called MEDBURG. You know, from Media burglary and Hoover calls in SAC Roy K. Moore from Jackson, Mississippi, to run the special. Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Were you involved in any of that?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Clarence Campbell: Other than just getting the results out to the ...

Thomas E. Bishop: I didn't have anything to do with it. Because we never did anything on a national scale about the thing. We decided that the best way to do it is to not recognize it by the Bureau itself, and if anyone handled it, let the Resident Agency handle it. They're tough enough, you know, let them straighten it out. And that was the way it worked. But, they did send Roy Moore up ... and he was a good man ... very cordial, very vigorous and level-headed.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah, he kept trying to tell Hoover, according to the book, that he'd done all he can here, "I want to go back to my family."

Thomas E. Bishop: That's right.

Clarence Campbell: And Hoover said, "No, you stay there, and you solve this case."

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And it was never solved.

Thomas E. Bishop: No. Never was.

Clarence Campbell: He never did figure out who did that break-in.

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Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: But I guess they had some informants and they found out they were planning to break into the Camden, New Jersey, Selective Service Office, in August of 1971. So they set up on the place and arrested those guys.

But they could never trace those guys to the MEDBURG thing. Did you ever meet Guy Goodwin? The Department of Justice Attorney who kinda coordinated a lot of this stuff in the MEDBURG case.

Thomas E. Bishop: I've never met him, but I know of him.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. Then on page 492, of Ungar's book, he talks about how the image of Hoover and the Bureau was starting to decline in the '70's as a result of all these disclosures from the break-in in Media. And, that at one time there was an anonymous letter from ten Special Agents in the FBI complaining about Hoover's management and that the letter was released by Senator McGovern to the press.

Do you remember any of that?

Thomas E. Bishop: When was that?

Clarence Campbell: That was around spring or summer of 1970. You don't remember getting anything about an anonymous letter? Supposedly it wasn't signed, obviously, but it was from ten Agents, you know, and they sent the letter to McGovern, I guess. And then the polls started coming out in August of '70. The Gallup Poll showed that the highly favorable rating of the FBI had now dropped from, it had been 84% in 1965, and now had declined to 71%. Which is still not bad. Three out of four people liked the FBI.

Thomas E. Bishop: I felt some of that heat.

Clarence Campbell: And then, and then they had another poll that Lou Harris took in May of 1971, and the question was should J. Edgar Hoover resign? And in the poll that he took, I don't know how many people he polled, 43% said yes, 43% said no, 14% undecided.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And then later, a Newsweek Gallup Poll came out, and 51% of people thought Hoover should resign, and only 41% thought he should stay on. Did he ever discuss any of these things with you?

Thomas E. Bishop: He wouldn't even recognize them.

Clarence Campbell: Right. I mean, he must have read the papers, right?

Thomas E. Bishop: He rarely read the paper. He never, he never publicly acknowledged any thing.

Clarence Campbell: Apparently in July ... you said you interacted a little bit with Bill Sullivan?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. I had dealings with Bill; mostly because I was trying to keep him under control.

Clarence Campbell: Tell us a little bit about him because he got into a dispute, I guess, with Hoover back in July of '71 and finally left the Bureau in October.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: What were some of the events leading up to that?

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, let's see. He wrote a long letter to Hoover detailing his complaints. Nobody knew about the letter ... about what was in it. And Miss Gandy, one day, called me over to the Director's office, and she said, "Mr. Hoover wants you to read something." She handed me this letter, and I start reading the letter, looked down to see who had written it and it was Bill Sullivan. I thought you're gone, you don't know that but you're gone. You can't do that kind of stuff.

Complaining that Mr. Hoover was losing his grip; the Bureau was suffering because he was not being as sharp on his job as he used to be, or as he should be; and all of that; a lot of personnel type stuff, and a lot of attitude type stuff ... but very unhappy with the Director.

And the Director knew that Sullivan had been dealing with the Department of Justice people. One person was the Acting Attorney General, Kleindienst.

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Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: That's the guy. Yeah. He'd been playing games with him. Sullivan had, and there was an assistant to Kleindienst, another guy that was sort of a hatchet man over there, and apparently Bill Sullivan was trying to angle through these guys. And probably, I think, probably got some kind of a promise that if Hoover goes, you're going to be the next Director. And everything that Bill Sullivan did, from then on, was with that idea. And, Bill would have been a terrible Director, a really terrible Director of the FBI. So it was a good thing.

Clarence Campbell: Why would he have been terrible?

Thomas E. Bishop: Ahhh, he'd been helter-skelter and snap judgments, and stuff like that.

Clarence Campbell: Wasn't a people person?

Thomas E. Bishop: No, he wasn't.

Clarence Campbell: But, he's that kind of guy. Not, not a cool person, you know, he was in fact, was like a wild man sometimes.

Michael M. O'Brien: It sounds intense.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Very intense.

Clarence Campbell: Type A personality?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Go, go, go guy.

Thomas E. Bishop: For some reason or another, Sullivan took a liking to me and I didn't know him from Adam. Well, I knew him during SIS days because he was one of the Supervisors in the SIS Program when I was one of the Agents in Latin America. But, so I, I knew him, but not very well.

Clarence Campbell: Was there like a power struggle going on?

Thomas E. Bishop: I think there was.

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Clarence Campbell: I mean, between DeLoach and Sullivan, as to who was going to succeed Hoover?

Thomas E. Bishop: I think that's the answer.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: And, De Loach just quit too soon. Sullivan cut his own throat, I guess.

Michael M. O'Brien: That letter to Hoover?

Clarence Campbell: It was, that was not the kind of a letter that you would write to your boss. You know, if you had any sense at all, or even good manners, you wouldn't do it. 'Cause see, he had to know that something like that was going to get out. Hoover didn't get it out. He was very careful about who read that letter. I betcha there weren't five people at the Bureau who read that letter.

Clarence Campbell: Beside, besides you and Hoover.

Thomas E. Bishop: And I think he wanted me to read it just in case something popped up as a result of it.

Clarence Campbell: Did DeLoach read it, too?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah. Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And then did they call in Sullivan to have a shouting match, or anything?

Thomas E. Bishop: He and the Director had a meeting and nobody knows what it was about. But, he, in effect, was locked out of his own office.

Clarence Campbell: I heard that.

Michael M. O'Brien: I remember that.

Clarence Campbell: That he went out for lunch and when he came back.

Thomas E. Bishop: He was locked out of his own office.

Clarence Campbell: What do you know about that, huh? What happened?

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Thomas E. Bishop: Well, he got a job with the Department of Justice, as a temporary head, or assistant head, of the Narcotics Division, and they gave him an office down on the fourth floor, one below me, with the Department of Justice offices, but he didn't do anything in his job. He didn't do anything at all ... I don't know if he got paid or anything else, but he was over there for awhile; and several years later, he got killed in a hunting accident.

Clarence Campbell: Then he came back to his FBI office and he couldn't get in?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah. He was out of there ... reduced. The day after he wrote that letter, he was out of there.

Michael M. O'Brien: The next day.

Clarence Campbell: The next day.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Did he eventually retire or what?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah, he retired because he was eligible for retirement and he could retire; they couldn't do anything to take that away from him. But came and did his job for the Department for Narcotics, but it only lasted several months.

Michael M. O'Brien: Narcotics is really not his field, he was into Intelligence. For him to go to Narcotics was totally out of his league.

Thomas E. Bishop: He was a lost soul, really.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Clarence Campbell: Did you want to follow-up on that?

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. I just wanted to do a couple follow-ups. To get back, you said when the polls went down on the Director. You felt the heat.

Thomas E. Bishop: I felt the heat, but not from Hoover.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh. Okay.

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Thomas E. Bishop: I mean everybody in the Bureau was calling me on the phone, saying, "What's the matter, you guys aren't getting very good publicity for the Director." The phone calls were all on me, but the criticism was caused by the guys in the Field who burglarized the wrong office, or got caught burglarizing the office, or something.

Michael M. O'Brien: But part of your job was liaison with the press and things like that?

Thomas E. Bishop: The press.

Michael M. O'Brien: So did you have contact with the press?

Thomas E. Bishop: I had contact with the press.

Michael M. O'Brien: Did you contact Walter Winchell, or Paul Harvey?

Thomas E. Bishop: Harvey, yeah. Yeah. But I never cultivated them like DeLoach did. Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: So, you were more of a business-like approach with the guy? Here's the information, ...

Thomas E. Bishop: That's right.

Michael M. O'Brien: Here's the Press Release.

Thomas E. Bishop: I got along with those. I never brought 'em back to my house, and stuff like that.

Michael M. O'Brien: With all the people back there, though, the press that you were dealing with, was there anybody that you had a special relationship with?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. They're probably all dead now, but there were a lot of guys who came to see me if they had question.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh.

Thomas E. Bishop: Lots of them, I can't even think of their names.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: But there were a lot of them that I had dealings with, if I wanted to find out something, off the record, I could go to them. Or, if they wanted to find out something from me, off the record, I could trust them enough to go ahead and give it to them. But, I didn't cultivate them on a personal basis. I just wasn't made up for that. They did ... but I think they mostly, you know, respected me.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Yeah. So, was Miss Gandy, it's interesting, you, if I get the scene right ... and you were in the office ... did she call you in, or give you a call and say, "Hey, I've got something I want to show you." Tell us, in detail, what happened.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. I always got along very well with Miss Gandy. Even when I was a half-bare ass Assistant Agent in Charge.

Michael M. O'Brien: She was the Director's secretary, correct?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: And she ruled with a lot of authority ... a lot of authority. And I always got along with her because I was polite to her, and, in fact, when I was back here at the Bureau, from the Field, for something I'd stop in and say hello to her.

When I was just an Agent in the Crime Records Division, if she didn't like a letter that was going out, she wouldn't call the Section Chief, she'd call me and say, "Mr. Bishop, could you polish this thing up a little bit." You know, and give me a tip on how to do it. She was pretty good. I had good relations with her.

I was very sorry when she died, and I kept up a correspondence with her after she left the Bureau. Call her and some things like that. I imagine she thought I was all right too.

When she gave that letter from Sullivan to Mr. Hoover, that convinced me that she thought I was on the Director's side, anyhow.

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Michael M. O'Brien: Did she call you in the office, to say, "can you come down here a second?"

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. She said, "Mr. Bishop could you come over to the office?"

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: "I've got something I want to talk to you about."

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: "I've got something to show you." And I had no idea ...

Michael M. O'Brien: Had the Director seen the letter yet?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: And did the Director instruct her to call you?

Thomas E. Bishop: I kind of thought he asked her to call me.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: Maybe one or two other of the Assistant Directors. I don't know who they were. And we never talked among ourselves on that, that they'd seen the letter or known anything about the letter. I'm the only one that, to my knowledge, saw the letter. I'm sure Hoover saw it, and maybe one or two other people.

Michael M. O'Brien: So when you walked in there, did she say, "Here, take a look at this." And she handed it ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Yes, she did. She said, "Mr. Hoover wants you to read this."

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: And I stood there right in her office. It was about a four or five page letter. It was a long letter.

Michael M. O'Brien: Was it in his handwriting? Or was it typed up?

Thomas E. Bishop: Typed.

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Michael M. O'Brien: It was typed? Okay. And was the tone of the letter, I'm getting from you ?

Thomas E. Bishop: Do you mean the Director's handwriting?

Michael M. O'Brien: No. No. I mean the letter, Sullivan's.

Thomas E. Bishop: I think it was typed, as I recall.

Michael M. O'Brien: It was typed. And, it was like four to five pages.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: I have the feeling, it was a real angry letter.

Thomas E. Bishop: It was.

Michael M. O'Brien: Was it directed to Mr. Hoover?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yep.

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay. I mean the tone of the letter is very angry. Correct?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: And, so when she gave it to you, she said, "Here, take a look at it." Do you remember what you commented, what you told her? Or what you said about it?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. When I read it, I said, "This is really a shocker." And she said, "Yes it is." And she raised her eyebrows, and I didn't get into any discussions with her, but I think she was hoping that I didn't want to talk about it. And I didn't.

I think, in fact, she said, "Needless to say, don't talk about it, Mr. Bishop." And I never told any people, not even Jim Bland, my assistant. I never told him.

Clarence Campbell: Do you know what happened to the letter?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Clarence Campbell: Did it go out?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

- Thomas E. Bishop: It was a personal letter, so I doubt it would be filed anywhere.
- Clarence Campbell: Did Mr. Hoover ever discuss his personal files with you?
- Thomas E. Bishop: No. But I know where they were and I was one of the people who went through them, to get stuff out of them, but I never browsed in them. I saw a lot of them. But, they're not what people thought. There were a lot of personal correspondence with friends of his, ... about are you going to Del Mar this year? Or, you know, stuff like that, or a lot of it was just chit-chat.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Where were they in his office?
- Thomas E. Bishop: In the office ... well, he had about four, four offices in the suite. The first was a great big office, where everybody goes in and then you go down a corridor on the side and the secretaries were there. Miss Gandy was the first secretary, the closest one to him. And then you go in to a small office, which is his business office, where he did most of his business. And then behind that, there's another one - it's a big ceremonial office, where he had pictures taken and stuff like that. But, I never browsed through those things, but I had looked at them, and if I wanted anything, I could go to Miss Gandy and say, "I'm looking for a letter from" so and so "to the Director." ... mailed at this time or that type of thing.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Where would the Director keep his personal files?
- Thomas E. Bishop: In Gandy's office.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Was it in a drawer?
- Thomas E. Bishop: In the file cabinets. I figure there were several, I'd say four of them.
- Michael M. O'Brien: So Miss Gandy had access to all.
- Thomas E. Bishop: All four.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Was it kept locked up?

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- Thomas E. Bishop: I guess during the night. But I don't think it was during the daytime.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Getting back to the letter from Sullivan. Did you see this coming?
- Thomas E. Bishop: No. But that was the last thing I thought, that Sullivan would go public.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Well, it didn't really go public.
- Thomas E. Bishop: It didn't go public, no. But to write a letter like that ...
- Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.
- Thomas E. Bishop: But he apparently had talked to the Director a couple days before this letter ... telling him he was disappointed in what he was doing, or how he was doing his job, and yet he goes back and writes this whole letter, summarizes the whole business, and he was pretty critical of the Director.
- Michael M. O'Brien: But he had a job already lined up. He sort of knew what was going to happen.
- Thomas E. Bishop: He probably had a job lined up.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.
- Thomas E. Bishop: 'Cause he wouldn't be that stupid ... that he wouldn't know a letter like that could have caused him to lose his job. Or to get the door locked on him.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Do you remember any special contacts previous to the letter, or after the letter, with Sullivan?
- Thomas E. Bishop: I had routine contacts with him when he went to the Narcotics office. In addition, I got a letter from Sullivan when I retired, wishing me a happy retirement and saying how much he enjoyed working with me.
- Thomas E. Bishop: People get letters when you retire, you know, from people you worked with, and there was a letter from Sullivan in there, after I had retired. I don't know how it got in there.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Did he get into the letter anything about his anger with the Director, or anything like that?

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Thomas E. Bishop: No. He didn't. He said, in fact, that he's always admired the job I did. That's what he said ... "you were in the perfect position to make friends and make enemies," and, he said, "You walked a very tight line and kept everybody, you know, happy or satisfied."

Michael M. O'Brien: So, it was sort of a complimentary letter toward you. In his letter to Mr. Hoover what were Sullivan's chief complaints?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh he had a lot of complaints.

Michael M. O'Brien: Really.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yes. He thought, first of all, that the Director was making a whipping boy of the Communists. He thought, he told the Director, he thought that the day of a Communist behind every door was not realistic.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh. So he criticized the Director for continuing to attack the Communists ... what year are we talking about this letter came out?

Thomas E. Bishop: Late 1970 or early 1971.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. So that would be one criticism, that he was whipping the Communist dog too much. And he should get away from this and look into other things.

Thomas E. Bishop: That was one of Sullivan's criticisms. He thought the Bureau was going into a decline because Hoover wasn't on the ball anymore, and he was getting too old for the job, and that type of stuff.

Michael M. O'Brien: So, secondly, that he was getting too old for the job and ... did Sullivan suggest what the FBI should be investigating, instead of Communism?

Thomas E. Bishop: Once, I guess, he thought there were other groups.

Michael M. O'Brien: It was probably the Weathermen, who were starting then. So was he suggesting, maybe that they look in that direction?

Thomas E. Bishop: There were other groups that were more influential than the Communist Party.

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Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: He thought the Communist Party was on a decline. And, you've got to agree with him in a way.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. We had over fifteen-hundred informants inside the Communist Party, according to this book by Ungar.

Thomas E. Bishop: That's right.

Clarence Campbell: And, you know, I mean, informants are going to be talking to informants sometimes.

Michael M. O'Brien: Did you agree with that? I mean was Hoover too focused on the Communist Party, at that time?

Thomas E. Bishop: I think he was, anyway. Yeah. I think he was.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh. Okay.

Clarence Campbell: I only have one other question. Let me, let me just say it. DeLoach said that at one time he, he was trying to get legislation passed to pay J. Edgar Hoover full salary, even if he retired as Director. Do you know anything about that?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. I did not.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. I don't think it ever happened.

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't think it ever did.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. That's the only thing I have.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. Maybe we'll meet next Tuesday.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Next Tuesday.

Clarence Campbell: ... at the same time.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Do you think we could do that? Great!

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: All right!

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Thomas E. Bishop: Let me, let me run in and see if I've got anything on my calendar for next Tuesday.

Thomas E. Bishop: Here's the letter from Sullivan to the Director.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh, is that it!

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: I'll be darned.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: The one you were talking about?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. See right here.

Michael M. O'Brien: Uh-huh.

Clarence Campbell: Great.

Michael M. O'Brien: You talked to Sullivan subsequent to when he left the Bureau. Did you ever talk to him about the letter?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't think I really ever discussed these things. Okay, here's the letter.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh.

Thomas E. Bishop: August of '71. This is one of the basic things between them.

“Four. Ever since I spoke before the UPI conference in October 12, 1970, you have made it quite clear that you were very displeased with me because, according to you, I downgraded the Communist Party-USA. My answer to the question raised, the facts were truthful and, as I pointed out later to Mr. Tolson in an Executive Conference, I would give the very same answer again and again and the fact remains that you know as well as I do, that the Communist Party is not the cause and does not direct and control the unrest and violence of the Nation.”

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

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Thomas E. Bishop: Behind the times.

Michael M. O'Brien: Your memory was correct.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: That was his main focus.

Thomas E. Bishop: And it's a strange thing because I can remember when Sullivan was one that was very personally getting into that Communist thing.

Michael M. O'Brien: How, what year is that about?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh, I don't ... I was not even in the Bureau at Headquarters. I was just an Agent in Charge in the field.

Interview of Former Special Agent of the FBI
Thomas E. Bishop (1941 – 1973)
Interviewed by Clarence H. Campbell and Michael M. O'Brien
On February 3, 2004

- Clarence Campbell: Today is Tuesday, February 3rd, 2004. My name is retired Special Agent Clarence H. Campbell, hereinafter referred to as Larry. I'm a retired FBI Agent, and a volunteer for the Oral History Project, sponsored by the Society of Former Agents of the FBI Foundation. The purpose of the project is to do an oral history of the FBI, by interviewing former Agents. The FBI will look over the information to make sure there is nothing that should not be released to the public and then the Project will put together, and the information, eventually be made available to former Agents, researchers, scholars, and the public. Any income goes to the Society of Former Special Agents of the FBI.
- Clarence Campbell: Also, with me is retired Special Agent Michael O'Brien, and the interviewee is former Assistant Director Thomas E. Bishop, hereinafter referred to as Tom.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.
- Clarence Campbell: This is our third interview. In the last interview we, we talked a little bit about Bill Sullivan. And, I want to kind of go back and get into that in a little more detail, if we could. And then, after that, we'd like to maybe discuss your perceptions of L. Patrick Gray, when he took over after Mr. Hoover died.
- Michael M. O'Brien: And Larry, just to clarify one thing. Crime Records is something that most people are not going to understand.
- Clarence Campbell: That's right.
- Michael M. O'Brien: And if you could explain your job, exactly what it was, and what you did. We could start with that.
- Clarence Campbell: Okay.

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Thomas E. Bishop: I was in charge of Crime Records Division. It was then known as Crime Records Division, it has another name now. But we used to handle all the, first of all, the gathering of crime statistics, which was the basis of the Uniform Crime Reports. Now, do I have to explain that?

Michael M. O'Brien: No.

Clarence Campbell: No. That's okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: All right. But it's secondary and, actually, most important function was Public Relation matters for the FBI. We handled all the contacts with the news media, in every form, writers, authors, film writers, movies, television, books, or authors of books. We got the first look at anything people were going to write about the FBI, or any programs about the FBI, anything of that nature. So we'd look at it and be sure it was in accordance with the Bureau's policies and history, that it was accurate.

Michael M. O'Brien: So if you didn't like something, you would be able to go back to the author and turn it down, or whatever?

Thomas E. Bishop: Most of the time.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. And who would read the materials?

Thomas E. Bishop: Agents.

Michael M. O'Brien: Agents, and they'd bring it to you.

Thomas E. Bishop: Me and the Agents, yeah. That's right.

Michael M. O'Brien: And do you remember the most egregious or the most controversial turn down you had?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh boy. No. I know we had a number of them, but I don't remember what they were. Frankly. We had several fellas proposing to do it and we just sort of talked 'em out of it because we knew that we didn't want them representing us in anything ... From their past histories and their past dealings with the Bureau.

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Michael M. O'Brien: I mean, what if somebody got in and you approved what they were going to do ... did they get an inside look at the FBI files?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Not at the files itself, no. We told them what was in the files because these were mostly closed cases. And, there was no problem, in closed and adjudicated cases. But, we did not hand them files. They didn't go through files, that was taking too much of a chance ...

We kept a pretty tight control on what we gave out to them. We had our own local rules, I mean, within ourself, because there were things we could not do. In other words, we couldn't give them information about a case that was pending, pending investigation, or pending prosecution.

Because that would not be prudent to do. Even in day-to-day dealings with the press. Like, I would receive a call from a newsman saying, "We had a big bank robbery out here, and three people were killed. Tell me what's going on." I'd say, I have to, first of all, find out. And then second, I probably wouldn't be able to tell them much anyhow because, until we got some legal action taken in the case, we wouldn't be giving out much information on it.

Michael M. O'Brien: Who were the most favored of the authors at that time?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh, we had a couple of really good ones, most of them were represented by the books they wrote.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: We had a lot of newspaper fellas in charge of various News Bureaus. I can't remember these names of these guys. One of the fellas that we had a lot of contact with was an Irishman who worked for the Evening Star in Washington. He had an Irish name too. He was a well-known newspaperman in Washington, handled the day-to-day duties.

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: He was that type of guy.

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Michael M. O'Brien: What would be your daily contact with the outside? Would you have Agents do that, below you, or would you be the direct contact for a lot of them?

Thomas E. Bishop: A lot of them went directly to me because they knew me, and rather than dealing around with the guys under me, you know, they'd have to get my approval. Most of these would come directly to me. And I knew them from day-to-day dealings.

Michael M. O'Brien: What would you take to the Director, as far as what you were doing? Would you go with him to certain issues? Did you have anything sticky that you felt you had to go up one level?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. I was pretty much on my own. Like what we would give them, or we wouldn't give them. Of course I was responsible for it if I gave them something that Hoover didn't like.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: And I'd get my ass chewed out.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: But, most of all, it was mostly up to me or the fellas who I worked with.

Michael M. O'Brien: Was there any case that you think that sticks out that, you gave it to somebody and the Director came back and said, "Hey, what'd you do that for?"

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He wanted to know several times, I probably don't remember the cases. Several situations with cases where, he said, "What in the hell did you give that out for?"

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, if we did give it out, there were two reasons for it. First of all, it was the kind that we could give out under our guidelines, our Press Release Guidelines; and, secondly, I figured that it better for them to get the information from me than somebody else.

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Michael M. O'Brien: Were there any authors, or writers that were that you did not deal with?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. There were a couple of them we had no dealings with. We wouldn't tell them why most of the time, but there were some that we would not deal with. We would be very careful if we did give them anything.

Michael M. O'Brien: Any of them stick out in your mind? Or, any particular cases that you can think of?

Thomas E. Bishop: I know of situations, but I can't remember them. I can't remember a particular instance. I remember back when the guy at The Washington Post was a little irritable, but he really got me teed off. He and his partner wrote these, "The Inside Story of Watergate," type of stories.

Michael M. O'Brien: Bernstein. Woodward and Bernstein.

Thomas E. Bishop: Woodward and Bernstein. Yes. They, you know they were just two ordinary newspaper people. They got on this thing and they all of a sudden worked out as being stars. And they weren't stars, they lied a lot. That's what it amounted to.

Michael M. O'Brien: They lied a lot?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. I had one instance where Bernstein came to me. It was not in connection with the Watergate situation. It was connected with the appointment of a Mayor for the District of Columbia. At the time, that was an appointed job. The President appointed him, and he was a Negro, named Washington. Bernstein came to me one day and he said, "I want to ask you, are you investigating Washington?"

Michael M. O'Brien: The Mayor, the Mayor-to-be.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. The Mayor-to-be. I said, "You know, if I told you we were, it would be a good indication to you, probably, that he is being considered." I said, "All I can say is we have several being considered, several being investigated, and I'm not going to clarify who they were." "Ohh, come on. It's not going to hurt anything." And he worked on me and worked on me a long time. And it was two or three visits before I would give him something.

Thomas E. Bishop: He said, "Off the record, strictly off the record, are you investigating Washington as a candidate for the Mayor's job?" And I said, "Off the record. Yes." He promptly went out and wrote an article for the next day's paper, saying this was from the FBI and identified one of the ones who was being considered. Hoover raised unmitigated hell with me for giving the information out because there were supposed to be several being considered.

Everybody was interested, who was going to be the next Mayor. So it had a lot of press interest. Well he completely broke his word. If you say "off the record," they'll obey it. But he did not. So I called him up and I told him, I said, "Well, you'll never get another piece of information from me about any of the FBI's stories and you can make do on however you can." "You can't do that!" he says. "You can't cut off the press on your whim." And I said, "It's not on a whim. You broke your oath." And I never, never gave him a thing from then on. Not one thing.

Michael M. O'Brien: Was that before Watergate?

Thomas E. Bishop: It was during Watergate.

Michael M. O'Brien: During Watergate.

Thomas E. Bishop: During Watergate because they were investigating everything that was going on with the White House and the Mayor, and everything. It was all part of this Watergate deal. So I paid him back by cutting him off. It's the only thing you can do. But, that was one of the bad situations. I've had hundreds of newspaper guys who told me that "this is off the record," and I knew I could trust those guys. I would say, "Sure, here's what you need, you can print it all right but not for attribution, you can't say it came from the FBI." That's another code thing we used, and they paid attention to it.

Michael M. O'Brien: So there were certain words you could say?

Thomas E. Bishop: That's right.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. And if they broke that promise they didn't get anything else from me. Or they just got the bare bones or something.

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Michael M. O'Brien: Just one more issue and then I'll let Larry continue. When the Director, when you did something wrong, how did he call you in his office? Did Miss Gandy call you?

Thomas E. Bishop: I had a red telephone at my desk.

Michael M. O'Brien: A hot line?

Thomas E. Bishop: A hot line. That was Mr. Hoover. When that thing rang ...

Michael M. O'Brien: Strictly him?

Thomas E. Bishop: I had to know it was him calling, so you knew it was something of a problem because he didn't call you up much to praise you for anything. (laughing)

I remember we had a girl named Fran Lurz who had been secretary for the Assistant Director of Crime Records Division for about three of my predecessors, all the way back to Lou Nichols, you know. And, she was a nervous wreck all the time, and when that phone would go off, she'd yell "Director's phone! Director's phone!" (Laughing) She was just sitting in the room waiting, and I'd pick it up and then he'd start talking. You didn't even have to say who it was because it was his phone. Nobody had it but me.

Clarence Campbell: There's only one guy.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Only one person. Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: But, so what would he say, "Bishop, get down here. I want to talk to you."

Thomas E. Bishop: No. It had to be something real bad to have him want you to come down and talk to him. He gave me the stuff over the telephone.

Michael M. O'Brien: He wouldn't call you down to his office.

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Michael M. O'Brien: It would just be over the ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Telephone. Yeah. I don't think I got called to his office for, to get chewed out, more than once or twice.

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Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. What, what was his typical demeanor? Was he angry?

Thomas E. Bishop: He was angry. He was angry as hell at certain times when he called. I'm trying to think of which ones that made him real mad, and I had a good answer for him. I forget what it was. But it was within our guidelines. We had certain things in the Department of Justice, how far you could go in giving out information to the press.

First of all, you weren't supposed to give it out unless it was already under indictment, or they had at least filed a complaint against the guy; it became public knowledge, public information, so we could give it out. Or, if I trusted the newspaperman real well, I would tell them in advance that indictments are coming out in this case this afternoon, or tomorrow, or they're filing a complaint against him right now. We'd give them a heads up on it, as they would say. But otherwise I wouldn't give them that heads up on certain things.

Michael M. O'Brien: So when you did something wrong though, he'd be angry and he'd call you up and then would the conversation be a couple of minutes?

Thomas E. Bishop: Ohh. Couple of minutes easy.

Michael M. O'Brien: He would he be yelling at you, basically?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh, well, you know, he spoke pretty loudly when he was upset. And he would say, "Bishop, why in the hell did you do that for?" You know, that kind of stuff.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: But, the one thing about Hoover, he didn't carry it over to the next day.

Michael M. O'Brien: He didn't carry a grudge over.

Thomas E. Bishop: No. In other words, you weren't on his list forever if he got mad at you.

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay.

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Thomas E. Bishop: He would express his anger for just a moment, or whatever it might be, and then he'd go on to the next one.

Michael M. O'Brien: Was he a sharp guy? He was a lawyer, right? Did he know the rules?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Administrative rules?

Thomas E. Bishop: I'm sure he did. He didn't know the fine points of dealing with newspaper people because he didn't like newspaper people, personally. I mean he didn't like them.

Clarence Campbell: All right. I might add that this interview, again, is taking place at Tom Bishop's home, here in San Diego; and that we filled out the appropriate interview forms, and so forth.

I'd like to kinda shift the focus of the discussion to a fellow that you're fairly familiar with, William Cornelius Sullivan, also known as Crazy Billy.

Thomas E. Bishop: (laughing)

Clarence Campbell: Did you ever hear that?

Thomas E. Bishop: I did not call him Crazy Billy.

Clarence Campbell: Did you ever hear that? Was that bandied around as a nickname that he had?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. It wasn't. And, maybe, it might have been by Division 5 people, Domestic Intelligence Division. Which, he headed for so long. But, I never heard it.

Clarence Campbell: Well, I'm taking these references from Sanford Ungar's book, The FBI. I think it is the definitive book on the FBI.

Okay, let's talk about Sullivan's early history here. According to Ungar's book, he entered on duty with the Bureau on August of 1941.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He entered on duty a month or two after me.

Clarence Campbell: Right. Right after you did. And, according to Ungar, he joined the Special Investigative Service, just like you did?

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Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And was assigned on a mission to go to Spain, to try and find out how these German spies were moving in and out.

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't know that.

Clarence Campbell: I don't know if he spoke Spanish or not, but while he was there, that's what he did. And, he had a degree from American University and later got a Master's Degree, and originally applied for a position in Army Intelligence, and somebody referred him to the FBI and he finally chose the FBI.

He was transferred from a number of different assignments to Milwaukee, Albuquerque, Philadelphia, Baltimore, San Antonio. They mention in the book that even as a Resident Agent in Brownsville, Texas, he would regularly make impromptu excursions into Mexico, to look for fugitives. I don't know if that was acceptable at that time.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yes. It was acceptable, depending on your relationship with the local police.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: Right. When I was Agent in Charge in San Antonio, which covered Brownsville and in San Diego, the same policy applied.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: In fact, I thought I'd never get off of those border assignments that they gave me. But, if you had good relations with the local police, and most of the time you did, because that was your bread and butter. You had to, actually, you know, help them. But they didn't get upset with you when you had to do something over the border. They just didn't want you to go over and advertise yourself as FBI Agents and we're doing investigations over here. But we had guys everyday going over the border. But we sort of had an agreement that we would not send them down more than, I think, ten miles. Or something like that.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. Well, anyway, eventually Sullivan joined the SIS and went to Spain on a confidential mission, it says. And he was trying to determine how the Germans were using Spain as a means of transporting espionage Agents. And his job was to calculate how they could intercept these Agents. And the book says, he wasn't there very long, because they said while he was there he became ill and he had to return to Headquarters.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. I think he had some kind of a lung problem.

Clarence Campbell: I don't know. Anyway, on his return, he became a Supervisor in the Security field at FBI Headquarters.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Where he spent the rest of his career.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. The rest of his career in what?

Clarence Campbell: In the Bureau. So, we'll fast forward to 1961, when he was appointed the Assistant Director for the Domestic Intelligence Division, or also known as DID. What was your impression of him when you first met him?

Thomas E. Bishop: Uh-hh?

Clarence Campbell: 'Because he had a reputation of being kind of a ruffled guy. You know, soup on his tie, you know, looked like he slept in his suit, etc.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. He wasn't a sharp dresser like DeLoach was.

Thomas E. Bishop: He wasn't the neatest dresser, let's put it that way. Yeah. It looked like he did sleep in his clothes. That's probably a good way to describe it. He was very assertive, if he thought he knew something, he let everybody know it. And, he was smart. You could tell he was a smart man, and well-read, but ...

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. He was kind of an intellectual guy.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Yeah.

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Clarence Campbell: And, according to Ungar's book, he knew how to play the game like all of you Assistant Directors, you know, and keep Hoover informed and everything's that going on.

Thomas E. Bishop: Right. Right.

Clarence Campbell: And he says, eventually he was referred to *Hoover's special endearing praise of Sullivan*.

Thomas E. Bishop: I think the Director thought quite a bit of Bill Sullivan. Until the letter.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. I want to get into this other chapter. It says, in the book, that he quoted Hoover at least once in every one of his public speeches.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh. I wouldn't doubt that. I probably did that myself.

Clarence Campbell: Because Hoover read all his stuff, you know.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. You were representing Hoover and the FBI in a speech, you might as well mention his name.

Clarence Campbell: Right. And he said he got along pretty well with the Kennedy Administration, with Bobby over at Justice Department and also with Jack Kennedy and the White House.

Okay, then we'll go to 1964. You were definitely at Crime Records then, weren't you?

Thomas E. Bishop: I think so. I'm trying to get these dates straight in my mind, but I really don't have.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. They don't have the exact date on this. Okay, we're pretty straight here. You were there in the '60's.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And then he kinda got into a battle with Deke DeLoach; there were two heirs-apparent to Hoover's job.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. I don't think it was a battle, but it was pretty well recognized that they were rivals.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

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- Thomas E. Bishop: And, heaven forbid, if ever the Director died, it was pretty well thought that one of them would be the next Director, if they picked somebody from the FBI. Which a lot of them weren't inclined to do then, those politicians weren't inclined to do, really. But, yeah, they were rivals.
- Clarence Campbell: Was DeLoach a little higher than he was?
- Thomas E. Bishop: He was for a while. See DeLoach was Assistant Director in charge of the Crime Records Division, a job I later got. Bob Wick was in between for a year. Bob only stayed a year. So then, DeLoach was made, I think his title was Assistant to the Director, or something.
- Clarence Campbell: It says, in Ungar's book, that in 1964, that Sullivan warned Mr. Hoover and Mr. Tolson that he felt that DeLoach was too involved in political dealings with Lyndon Johnson.
- Thomas E. Bishop: I don't know that he told the Director that, but, you know, there's no doubt about he was involved a lot with LBJ.
- Clarence Campbell: When we talked on a previous date, you mentioned about how DeLoach actually had a private telephone line in his house from the White House.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Yeah. That's right.
- Clarence Campbell: Johnson would call and he was pretty tight with LBJ.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yep. And that's true.
- Clarence Campbell: And his idea was probably to discredit, maybe, DeLoach in the event that, you know, Hoover retired or something. And this ploy that he used, was that he felt that DeLoach's association with LBJ might undermine Hoover's position as Director. Anyway, then, Sullivan decided to get a little more aggressive with some of the Domestic sources and decided to use COINTELPRO, Counterintelligence Procedures, against groups like the KKK, Ku Klux Klan. ...
- Thomas E. Bishop: Who would he use the procedures against?
- Clarence Campbell: The Ku Klux Klan.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Oh.

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Clarence Campbell: And also later the Black Panther Party, and go after people like that; SDS, the Weathermen.

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't know what his motives were, but he did put the heat on them, and the Black Panthers were running around taking pot shots at law enforcement officers.

Clarence Campbell: Right. They sent out a memo to everybody in the Field saying, you know, use whatever abilities you can, ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Right.

Clarence Campbell: ... and use the same type of procedures they used against spies and CP, Communist Party people.

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, I had no objections to that, I mean, I don't object to that.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. Well, that was a fact, I mean, that he did. He did have a very aggressive approach toward gaining intelligence that way.

Clarence Campbell: And then, it says in Ungar's book, that in 1966, Hoover decided to suspend the use of, what we commonly referred to as, black bag jobs, legal and illegal mail covers, and then wanted to reduce the use of wiretaps.

Thomas E. Bishop: When was this? What year?

Clarence Campbell: 1966. And this was over the objections of Sullivan, who wanted to continue these things.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Hoover, I think, was afraid that it might embarrass the Bureau then. Did any of this come over your desk, at all?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. I was just sitting on the sidelines, when that was going on, watching it.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: I mean basically, I wasn't involved in it anyway. We didn't do investigations. Our division was dealing with the press and the media.

Thomas E. Bishop: I knew that it could be dangerous. It could be, if you got caught, but we had done, in the Bureau, that type of thing for a long time. I mean, you know, and without any repercussions. I don't know what would cause Sullivan to do those things. Or why Mr. Hoover wanted to do away with them.

Clarence Campbell: Oh, really.

Thomas E. Bishop: Later on. Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. And, at this time, the Domestic Intelligence Division was not located in Headquarters. It was in a separate building, outside.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Well, that was a space problem.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: They were over across the street.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah; in the Federal Triangle building.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. That's where they were.

Clarence Campbell: Then we go to May of '69, and we get into the problems.

Thomas E. Bishop: I might add that Sullivan would have nothing to do with picking the space.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: He wouldn't move to another building.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: That had nothing to do with it.

Clarence Campbell: And then in May of '69, they went ahead and instituted wiretaps. Nixon was President and Kissinger was his Security Advisor and they were having leaks involving the Strategic Arms Limitation talks, and the Pentagon Papers, and things like that. So they authorized wiretaps on 13 Government officials and four newspapermen, to try to find out who was leaking this information. Were you aware of anything on that?

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Thomas E. Bishop: I knew that they did it. I knew that it was approved by the Bureau but I don't know who brought it up, I mean, I don't know if it was Sullivan who brought it up.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. And Hoover approved it.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: The specific guys they were focusing on were Morton Halperin and Anthony Lake. I don't know if ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. They were the New Left.

Clarence Campbell: Right. And all the records of these wiretaps were kept, not in FBI files, but in Sullivan's office. Were you aware of that?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. That's according to Ungar, that Hoover just wanted him to have them under lock and key.

Thomas E. Bishop: I can't see why it would be protected more in Sullivan's office than it would be in the Director's office.

Clarence Campbell: Well, I think he wanted Sullivan to kind of honcho the program, you know, run the program. So he kept tabs on it that way. But anyhow, in this book, Ungar talks about how Sullivan developed a relationship with Robert Mardian, who was an Assistant Attorney General in charge of Internal Security.

Thomas E. Bishop: That's the guy. I've been trying to think of that guy's name. He was the one that, I think, more or less, promised Sullivan the Director's job -- if or when Hoover would give it up one way or the other.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah, by then the Nixon White House wasn't too happy with Hoover, and Mardian apparently told Sullivan, according to Ungar's book, this is page 304, that Nixon was planning to dump Hoover.

Thomas E. Bishop: I wouldn't be surprised if Mardian used that approach to sell Sullivan. Mardian was a local politician. I think he'd been an Assistant USA, or something. It's not an easy job. That's why he got that job in the Department.

Thomas E. Bishop: And he had a couple axes to grind of his own. And I think he and the Deputy Attorney General worked together.

Michael M. O'Brien: Kleindienst?

Thomas E. Bishop: Kleindienst. Yes. I think they used hints to Sullivan, that there'd be something in it for him if they'd get a new Director in there. That, basically, I think, was what was going on. Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Representatives of the FBI, CIA, Defense Intelligence Agency, and National Security Agency all get together, since now we've got this New Left problem, there's a lot more domestic violence going on. So this committee, basically chaired by Sullivan, who represented the FBI on it, proposed to reinstate some of these black bag jobs, mail covers, etc., which Hoover had previously suspended back in 1966.

And then when this proposal got to Hoover, according to the book, he vetoed much of the plan. He didn't want to go back into those things again. And, as a result of that, President Nixon went on to establish the Special Investigative Unit in the White House, which we affectionately refer to as "the plumbers." Some, of which, were involved in the Watergate break-ins, and so forth.

Thomas E. Bishop: What was the ex-Agent's name that was in that thing? He had worked in our Division at one time.

Michael M. O'Brien: Gordon Liddy.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yes.

Clarence Campbell: Gordon Liddy.

Thomas E. Bishop: He had been an Agent in my Division, Crime Records Division, and we found him to be a little wild. For our purposes, anyhow; and sort of by mutual agreement, he got out of that Division. I didn't want him in there because he was trouble. He was trouble for the whole lot.

Michael M. O'Brien: Do you remember any specific stories?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. No, except he didn't want to get approval of anything. He wanted to be his own man, and stuff like that.

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Clarence Campbell: Did you actually meet with him personally?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And he'd report to you because you were the Assistant Director?

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, no. He didn't report to me. He was down there; he would report to Milt Jones, who was the Section Chief.

Michael M. O'Brien: But he was in Crime Records. Is that what you're saying?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: He was in Crime Records Division, and also in the Crime Records Section.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. So now we're up to about mid- 1970, and finally Sullivan's chief rival, Cartha DeLoach, finally realizes that Hoover's not going to retire and he gets an offer from PepsiCo, and since he had a bunch of kids; they needed some more income.

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't know that for a fact, but I have a very good idea that that's exactly the way it happened.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: He just gave up on waiting for the Director to die or to retire, and DeLoach was, you know, very close to Mr. Hoover, as close as a guy could be.

Thomas E. Bishop: And, I think DeLoach pretty well was counting that he was going to get it. But when he saw that Hoover had no intention of retiring after his ... what was it 35th anniversary?

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. Well, DeLoach, had set in his own mind, according to Ungar, that when he reached his, DeLoach's, 50th birthday, that's when he would make a decision as whether to stay or not. So it says in the book, on page 294, that six weeks before DeLoach's 50th birthday, he goes in to tell Mr. Hoover that he's going to retire.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

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Clarence Campbell: And they have quoted, and he quotes, “and he was making, at that time, 38,000 dollars a year” as the number three guy in the Bureau.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. That’s right.

Clarence Campbell: And he had a number of children to support ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. That’s right. That was his reason to make some more money.

Clarence Campbell: And he needed some money, and he gets an offer for this very lucrative job from Don Kendall, Chairman of the Board of PepsiCo, ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: ... Incorporated. Kendall was also a close friend of President Nixon.

So he goes in and tells this to Hoover and Hoover, there’s a quote in the book, Hoover just couldn’t believe it and he says, “I thought you were one who would never leave me.”

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. I don’t if those were the exact words but I don’t doubt that that was the feeling Hoover had. But it was a shock to him that DeLoach would leave.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: Because I think he thought DeLoach would get in line to get his job and, he wasn’t fishing for it, but he thought he’d be the man and he didn’t think DeLoach would leave.

Clarence Campbell: Did you have any inkling when DeLoach went in there?

Thomas E. Bishop: It was sort of rumored around.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: Very quietly, that DeLoach might be throwing in the towel.

Clarence Campbell: It said they had a discussion, which lasted, according to DeLoach, two hours and 47 minutes.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. A very long time.

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Clarence Campbell: Almost a three hour discussion.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And that Hoover was very upset.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Kinda cut him out of the loop for a week or so.

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, he, I guess he was mad. He was very disappointed.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: More than anything else.

Clarence Campbell: Ungar refers to several other theories about why DeLoach retired. He mentions in there that there were rumors that DeLoach was hard up for money because he had so many children.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh. Not any more than anybody else.

Clarence Campbell: That he was sometimes caught claiming mileage reimbursements even when he rode to the Pentagon in somebody else's car.

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't know anything about that.

Clarence Campbell: You're not aware of any double billings that he might have made?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Clarence Campbell: Do you remember a guy named Victor Frankel? Who was a contractor. He was supposed to be the guy who was going to build the new FBI Academy at Quantico. DeLoach was pretty tight with him.

Thomas E. Bishop: The name is familiar, but I don't remember anything about him.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: Did he build it?

Clarence Campbell: I guess he did. It doesn't say in Ungar's book, but I think he did. All right, but the problem was that Frankel was under investigation for efforts to bring pressure on some of the people who worked in the Capitol to make extra payments to him for construction of another project ... an underground garage.

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't remember any of that.

Clarence Campbell: So, Ungar said one of the last things DeLoach did, was to get the Attorney General, John Mitchell, at that time, to endorse Hoover's opposition to this new aggressive Domestic Intelligence Program, which was proposed by the White House and Sullivan. And, so that prevented that from going through. So finally, Hoover has no other choice, even though he has some disagreements with Sullivan, when DeLoach retired, he named Sullivan to replace DeLoach as the number three guy in the FBI.

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't know why he did this, but he was one of the two who were being considered if he retired, I guess, if Hoover had any choices. But I don't think Hoover ever expected to leave there till he died.

Clarence Campbell: Ungar says there were two theories why he might have done that. One was to appease Nixon because he knew that Nixon was trying to appease Hoover out. And the other one was to get back at DeLoach for retiring early, he decided to replace him with Sullivan.

Thomas E. Bishop: That was an arch rivalry. Ahh, I don't know. I would think the second one would be more likely.

Clarence Campbell: About the promotion.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yes.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. Hoover never expressed any fear of Nixon.

Thomas E. Bishop: No. Nixon was sort of a protégé of the Director, and they got along very well.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: And I'm sure to this day, that there wouldn't have been a Watergate or any trouble in the Nixon Administration if he had listened to the Director. He didn't do that and, therefore, he got reamed by his own people who would come up with these wild things to do, just to make a name for themselves within the Administration. These young guys who were trying, like that ex-Agent, whatever his name is.

Michael M. O'Brien: Liddy.

Thomas E. Bishop: Liddy, Mardian and the others were trying to make a name for themselves, or impress the President. And they were the ones that did the wild things, which Hoover never would have approved of. And I, to this day, think if the President had called up the Director, or the Director had called up President Nixon, at the time, and said, "Do you know what those guys are doing over there? ... or they're doing this, or they're doing that, you better get rid of those guys 'cause they're gonna hurt you." And he would've done it. Nixon would have done it.

Thomas E. Bishop: But he didn't, he wasn't in a position to do that and he didn't do it, and he went down the tubes. Nixon did.

Clarence Campbell: Hoover, then, had no knowledge of these special "plumbers" unit.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh, he knew what they were doing. Well, yeah, because hell they ...

Clarence Campbell: He could have killed it.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh sure. Most of the people in the FBI knew what they were doing. Not most of the people, but a number of people. And they knew what some of the things that these young ... whatever you call them? I don't know what they ...

Clarence Campbell: Aides?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Aides, I guess. That they were doing things that would hurt the Administration if disclosed.

Michael M. O'Brien: So you're saying it was well known inside the FBI that the plumbers were operating?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Some did.

Michael M. O'Brien: Right. So, how did they know that?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh hell, these guys were bragging on themselves what they're doing, and things like that. They weren't security conscious in any way.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh. So it would get around the Intelligence community.

Thomas E. Bishop: It got around. They would talk to our people and say "we're doing this." Hell that's how I got onto John Dean. When I used to talk to Dean when he was in the Attorney General's office. He was an Assistant Attorney General, and I had dealings with him on the phone. And then when he went to the White House, I occasionally had conversations with him, and he would tell me. That's how I found out about what our then Acting Director, L. Patrick Gray, was doing as far as giving information out. I don't know if this is the time to bring this up, but let me get this straightened out now.

He, John Dean said, "You know Tom, I've had a lot of business with your boss lately." And I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "Well, Gray's been giving me all the details of your investigation and results of your investigation into the Watergate stuff. He would tell me in advance who you were going to interview in connection with that case."

We never did that kind of stuff. In a million years, never would do that. And I said to him, "Why, what's this, what's going on?" He said, "Well just that we wanted to keep informed of what your people are finding out in the Watergate case, and what better way to do it than to get it from somebody in the Bureau."

Michael M. O'Brien: So you're saying Acting Director Gray provided Dean information about who was going to be interviewed and the results of the interviews?

Thomas E. Bishop: Exactly.

Michael M. O'Brien: Larry are you going to get to the Huston Plan? Are you familiar with that?

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Michael M. O'Brien: But you mentioned the Director was strict and like, the President, you know, wasn't comfortable dealing with him because they couldn't get him to do things, like break-ins and things like, they couldn't get the Bureau to play along.

Do I understand that correctly?

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, like I said before, Nixon got along pretty good with the Director. And he relied on stuff the Director would tell him. Because they had been buddy-buddy back when he was a Congressman, and the Director had paved the way for him a little bit when he was a Congressman.

Michael M. O'Brien: Maybe it might refresh your recollection. But, Liddy and these guys came to the Director and said, "Hey we want to do these break-ins. We want the Bureau to help us out in this."

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: And the Director turned them down.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Right.

Michael M. O'Brien: Based upon the Director turning them down, they then started the Plumbers Unit. Does that ring a bell with you?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. That's the way it happened, I think.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. So you're saying ...

Clarence Campbell: Again from Ungar's book here, and he says that this is what we discussed previously about these various defense agencies getting together, you know the CIA and FBI and let's start cranking it up against some of these anti-war groups.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh. Huh-huh.

Clarence Campbell: And so, Sullivan was Hoover's delegate to this panel, and so they came up, all the intelligence representatives, with the proposal re-instituting the surreptitious entries, intercepting mail that Hoover had suspended in the mid-60s, and the recommendation was signed by White House Aide Tom Charles Huston. Huston.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh. I see.

Clarence Campbell: Maybe that's why they called it the Huston Plan.

And then it says many parts of the proposal were typed in the FBI's Domestic Intelligence Division, and then when Hoover saw it, he balked at the final proposal, and all he approved was some trash covers, you know, ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: ... looking in people's trash ...

Michael M. O'Brien: Yes. Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And, also recruiting college-age informants ...

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: ... who would be able to spy on radical groups more effectively than older Agents.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: But he vetoed most of this plan.

Thomas E. Bishop: The wild stuff. Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And that forced Nixon to go to the Plumbers.

Michael M. O'Brien: Exactly. It says a lot about the Director, that he blocked all this stuff the Plumbers wanted to do.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: You know, I mean, is that the impression?

Thomas E. Bishop: I didn't know anything about this Huston Plan. I never heard of that before. But I do know that they shifted their focus on to the other type of liberals, or whatever you call them.

Clarence Campbell: It says in the book here, Nixon later claimed that Hoover's veto of the black bag jobs and mail covers, et cetera, was the reason that Nixon found it necessary to establish this Special Investigative Unit called the Plumbers inside the White House. Because he felt like they had to get this information and Hoover didn't let him do it through FBI channels, so they decided to do it on their own. Which was a mistake.

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Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Well, let me just say one more thing, which is an interesting thing, in hindsight. Now, I'm sure, if anybody came up with those types of ideas now they'd think about investigating it. Did that ever become an issue? Well, these guys are breaking the law and the FBI should look into what they're doing? I mean, because you said it was known by Hoover and a lot of people in the FBI, that they were doing these illegal break-ins.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Was it ever raised as an issue?

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't think so.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh. Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't recall.

Michael M. O'Brien: Considering the times, I wouldn't think that people would, you know, it was "them and us" type of mentality.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. Now we move to October of 1970, October 12th to be specific, and Sullivan gives a speech.

This is on page 306, of Ungar's book, and he gives a speech before the UPI Editor's and Publisher's Conference in Williamsburg, Virginia.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And in his speech, he warns that radical organizations, like the Weathermen and Students for A Democratic Society, were turning to a strategy of "urban guerilla warfare," and might try to even kidnap politicians or foreign heads-of-state. And, in the same speech, Sullivan makes the mistake of saying that he found no link between the Communist Party and the New Left. And, at the time, Sullivan felt, that the CP-USA, Communist Party, was no longer a threat.

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Clarence Campbell: And this, according to Ungar, angered Hoover and Tolson, who had spent so much time and effort on the Communist Party.

Thomas E. Bishop: That, that's true. You know, that speech he gave is one that he did not (and Sullivan had a bad habit of doing this when he was giving these speeches), give it to our Division in advance to look at. And, some of that stuff would never have been approved by my Division.

Clarence Campbell: So he just went ahead and did it.

Thomas E. Bishop: It was considered by Sullivan, you were, how'd they say, "whipping a dead horse." But he didn't think that we had any right to look at or censor anything he was going to say because we didn't know as much about it as he did. That was his argument. But we knew what could get us in trouble, and there were things in that specific speech that should have been left unsaid.

Clarence Campbell: Did you personally have any opinion? Or, I mean, did you feel that Sullivan was correct?

Thomas E. Bishop: Didn't even know about the speech, until after it was over.

Clarence Campbell: So you didn't know? How about your general opinion? Did you think that the Communist Party was still a major threat?

Thomas E. Bishop: I didn't think so.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. Because we had infiltrated it so much, I just wondered.

Thomas E. Bishop: They were all old and weary people by then.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: I mean, they had no young base. If they could ever develop the young students, the way they should and give them some discipline, it would be different.

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- Clarence Campbell: It says here that Sullivan also criticized the Director, Mr. Hoover, from breaking off liaison with the Central Intelligence Agency over some minor disputes. And also disputed Hoover's trying to expand the Legat Program overseas.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Oh.
- Clarence Campbell: And, then apparently later, in Hoover's appearance before the Senate Appropriations Committee in November of 1970, Hoover revealed to the Committee that the FBI had an investigation of the Berrigan brothers, you know, Fathers Daniel and Philip Berrigan, and other militant anti-war Catholics. And this apparently enraged Sullivan because he thought that this should not have been divulged to the Congress.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.
- Clarence Campbell: Then they mention in here they finally figured out that Daniel Ellsberg was the guy who was leaking some of this information.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Right.
- Clarence Campbell: And, so Sullivan and his protégé, C.D. Brennan, who at the time was heading the Domestic Intelligence Division had prepared a recommendation that Hoover permit New York Agents to interview Ellsberg's father-in-law, who was a millionaire toy manufacturer named Louis Marx.
- Thomas E. Bishop: I knew who Marx was. A big, big toy manufacturer.
- Clarence Campbell: Yeah. He was, apparently, a close friend of Hoover's. And it says in Ungar's book, that Hoover and Marx were only casual acquaintances but that often times Marx would send, to the Director, a large shipment of free toys, which Hoover could distribute to the children of friends and to his favorite charities. Were you aware of any of that?
- Thomas E. Bishop: No.

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Clarence Campbell: Anyway, Hoover would never approve this interview because of his association with Marx, but somehow, through, let's say, a communications mishap the interview with Marx was already completed by the time Hoover denied permission for the interview.

And, of course, he was furious, according to Ungar's book here on page 307, and he demotes Brennan, and orders Brennan to be transferred to Cleveland. Do you remember that?

Thomas E. Bishop: I knew that Brennan was in trouble and he might be transferred, but that was cancelled for some reason.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: But I don't remember what it was.

Clarence Campbell: It says in the book here, Sullivan went straight to his friends in the Nixon Justice Department and got Mitchell, Attorney General Mitchell, to rescind Brennan's transfer.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh. Yeah. That would not go well with the Director.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. They said for many months after that, Brennan was virtually in solitary confinement.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And worked only on the Ellsberg case. Okay. So then it says, in July of '71 Hoover finally, ... this is like the straw that broke the camel's back ... Hoover decides that maybe it's time for Sullivan to go, according to Ungar here. So one way he safely telegraphs that is he promotes Mark Felt, who is a rival of Sullivan, into the newly created number three position of Deputy Associate Director.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: So it comes, so the line now is Hoover, Tolson, ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Felt.

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Clarence Campbell: ... Felt and then Sullivan. So Sullivan is bumped down another level here. And this apparently, also, affected the authority of John Mohr, ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: ... who was Sullivan's counterpart on the Administrative side?

Thomas E. Bishop: Right.

Clarence Campbell: And that Hoover was, apparently, disenchanted a little bit with Mohr.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Mohr wouldn't care, Mohr was just a free spirit. He didn't worry about that kind of crap. He was right.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. So, then we come to the fateful day that I think you discussed in the previous tape, August 28, 1971, Sullivan comes into the office and writes this five-page letter, very, very critical of Hoover.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He had a lot of things to say. I don't remember all of it.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: I think you got that in that book.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. It's in the Appendix of this book of Ungar's.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: All five pages of it.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And I'll, let me just quote here.

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't remember all that much except the tone of it.

Clarence Campbell: He writes Hoover this bitter letter, outlining his broad criticisms of the Director's policies. And now I'm quoting from the letter.

Clarence Campbell: “During the past year in particular, you (Mr. Hoover) have made it evident to me (Mr. Sullivan) that you do not want me to disagree with you on anything.”

“You claim you do not want yes men, but you become furious at any employee who says no to you.”

This was in a letter that you said Miss Gandy let you read.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah, asked me to read.

Clarence Campbell: And, then he goes on to say,

“You are incensed because I have disagreed with you on opening new foreign liaison offices around the world and adding more men to those already in existence. I want to say once more, I regarded this as a serious waste of taxpayer money, to increase the number of these ...”

He was against the Legat program.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Yeah. You know why, because it would take a lot of power away from Sullivan.

Clarence Campbell: Right. And then he goes on to say,

“You have refused to give Assistant Director Brennan and myself any more Annual Leave.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh God! I didn't know that. How could he do that?

Clarence Campbell: That's what he says, you know. He says,

“The reason you give is not balanced. You dislike us. You intend to use your absolute power, in this manner, as a form of ‘punishment’.”

And then he goes on, Sullivan goes on to say,

“My wife, in addition to having respiratory trouble, is now ill. Surely I do not need to explain to you why my wife and three children regard you, to put it mildly, as a very strange man.”

Thomas E. Bishop: That's Sullivan. I can tell you.

Clarence Campbell: And then he goes on to say in the letter,

“A number of your decisions this year have not been good ones. I do not want to see your reputation, built up over these many years, destroyed by your own decisions and actions. When you elect to retire, I want to see you go out in a blaze of glory.”

This is kind of like, this is the reason I’m writing you this letter.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Because I don’t want you to hurt yourself and then the Bureau, et cetera.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And then he says,

“You could fire me and do away with my position, or transfer me in some other way to work out your displeasure with me, so be it.”

He knew, you could see that, and he knew that when he was writing this letter he was signing his death warrant as far as staying in the Bureau.

“As you know, I (Mr. Sullivan) have always been willing to accept the consequences of my ideas and actions.”

Okay. That’s the letter.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: So Hoover gets it, what happened? Can you go over again what happened? Miss Gandy brought it in to you and?

Thomas E. Bishop: She called me in my office and asked me to come over to her office; she had something she wanted to show me. And, so, she gave me this letter; I walked in and sat by her desk, and she said that Mr. Hoover wanted me to see this.

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Thomas E. Bishop: I said to her, "What the hell," "what a long letter it was," and "he wants me to read it?" She said, "Yeah. He wants you to read it. "And, my hair stood on end when I was reading that thing. Nobody had ever done that type of thing. I want to see if I can find that letter. I think I've got a ...

Clarence Campbell: No, I've got it right here.

Thomas E. Bishop: What?

Clarence Campbell: I mean it's right here in the Appendix of the book. What letter are you trying to find?

Thomas E. Bishop: This is a letter to me from Sullivan, after I retired, I think. Or he wrote to me right after I retired.

Clarence Campbell: Let's finish off the Sullivan crisis here.

Sullivan writes this critical letter on the 28th of August, and three days later, Hoover calls Sullivan into his office and they argue about the letter. Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: Uh-huh.

Clarence Campbell: This is on pages 308 and 309, of Ungar's book. So then, Hoover writes a letter back ... I don't know if you saw this letter. Did you ever have any discussion with Hoover about this letter?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Clarence Campbell: And, you didn't have any discussion with him after they, the Director and Sullivan, had the meeting on September the 7th?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. I didn't have any discussion with him about the letter. I figured it was between him and Sullivan.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. So August 31st ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Do you have my letter from Sullivan?

Michael M. O'Brien: Uh-Hmm.

Thomas E. Bishop: I think that will bear a little bit about his attitude toward the Bureau. What date was that?

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Michael M. O'Brien: This is June 30th, 1971. On the occasion of your thirtieth anniversary in the Bureau. Signed by Bill Sullivan.

Thomas E. Bishop: But he's out by then.

Clarence Campbell: No. No. This is before this.

Michael M. O'Brien: And he labels it "Dear Honest Tom."

Clarence Campbell: We'll read that a little bit later. Okay, it says, according to Ungar's book, Hoover, on the, September 3rd of '71, writes a letter to Sullivan, now calling him Mr. Sullivan. Which indicates his displeasure.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And in the closing paragraph he says, "I suggest you submit your application for retirement, to take effect at the close of business, after you've used up your Annual Leave." So, Sullivan goes to ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Mardian probably.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. Sullivan leaves Washington to go to his home in New Hampshire to use up some of his Annual Leave but before he does, he leaves on September 13th, but then he contacts Mardian to warn Mardian that "my career with the FBI seems to be at an end here." According to this letter.

Thomas E. Bishop: It's about time he decided to do that.

Clarence Campbell: This is the critical, this is a critical point here ... it says, Sullivan says, "unless something is done with the logs and the materials we've been keeping regarding these Ellsberg tapes and the Pentagon Papers," et cetera, "relating to the 17 special wiretaps," remember I mentioned 13 officials and four correspondents, that "Hoover might use these records in some manner to possibly blackmail ..."

Clarence Campbell: We are interviewing Mr. Thomas E. Bishop, at his home, on February 3rd, and we're wrapping up a discussion concerning Bill Sullivan, who is now retired from the FBI after a very volatile dispute with Mr. Hoover concerning the Director's leadership in the Bureau.

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- Thomas E. Bishop: Tom has pulled out another file folder, and he has a letter here dated June 30th, 1971, on his thirty year anniversary in the Bureau. Signed by Bill Sullivan.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.
- Clarence Campbell: And the letter is addressed to “Dear Tom – “Honest Tom” ... do you want to read from anything else?
- Thomas E. Bishop: (chuckles) Here’s one thing he said in the letter. “Congratulations on being known inside the Bureau and outside, as the very personification and the embodiment of gentility, tact, and character. All these together have contributed to the singular contribution which you have made. Finally, I wish to offer ...
- Clarence Campbell: Is that an accurate description of you?
- Thomas E. Bishop: Huh? No.
- Clarence Campbell: Weren’t you known as being somewhat argumentative and bombastic?
- Thomas E. Bishop: I was pretty blunt and loose. Sullivan says, “One man in the Bureau, who willingly accepts work from other Divisions without any protest. As a matter of fact, you’ve been known to go so far as to ask if you could do the work that fell outside of your particular domain.” This is all said with tongue in cheek. I mean, he even started with Honest Tom. I mean, he used to call me on his phone, knowing that I was lying like a bastard, about whatever.
- Clarence Campbell: Paragraph four.
- Thomas E. Bishop: “And, as I’ve told you before, it is indeed refreshing to work with an honest man in the position you are occupying. Incidentally, you’re the only fairly honest man I have known to hold that position in the Bureau.”

- Thomas E. Bishop: “There never was a time when I asked you a question and I did not get a truthful answer. Further, I have never known one instance in which you were not wholly truthful, wholly trustworthy. To me this puts you apart from the great multitude of human beings. And when I say this, I am very serious in my evaluation.”
- “No matter how much one disagrees with an individual, the daily operations, policies and procedures, there is no problem, just so long as that individual is honest. Therefore, it is no surprise that we’ve had no difficulties with each other.” That’s it.
- Clarence Campbell: This letter was written about two months prior to his very critical letter to the Director.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Right. I thought he was steaming’ in spirit, I guess, about what he was going to say in the letter to the Director.
- Clarence Campbell: It was signed, “Cordially Yours, Bill Sullivan” ... very nice letter. Very nice.
- Obviously, he felt very highly of you. You got along pretty well with Sullivan?
- Thomas E. Bishop: Well, we normally argued a lot. Like he said I was honest with whatever I argued about with him. I mean, you know, I wasn’t going to let anybody try to walk over something.
- Michael M. O'Brien: What were the arguments about, Tom?
- Thomas E. Bishop: About whether we should give something to the press or not, something like that.
- Michael M. O'Brien: And he was trying to get you to give stuff to the press?
- Thomas E. Bishop: No. No. Oh, no. He would have one his people write a thing on it, like say, one of these press releases, and many times I would think he was going too far. And I would tell him why I thought he was going too ... why it would not be good to publish the thing, and that’s the kind of arguments that we had.
- Clarence Campbell: Oh. I see. Yeah.

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Michael M. O'Brien: I mean, are you talking about like the Weathermen and things like that?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Right. Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: And, he would be giving a speech and he would go too far in that speech?

Thomas E. Bishop: Right. Right.

Michael M. O'Brien: Are the comments about the Weathermen?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Do you remember anything specific?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. God no, I don't remember any of it.

Michael M. O'Brien: Larry, I looked through that. There's really not much there..

Clarence Campbell: Okay. So overall you had, it sounds like you had a pretty good relationship with Sullivan.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah. I knew him. We had our differences and things, but basically, he was a gentleman.

Clarence Campbell: Do you think, let's say, do you think that if it came down to, at Hoover's death, instead of appointing L. Patrick Gray, that he appointed Bill Sullivan as the new Director; how do you think that would have impacted the Bureau?

Thomas E. Bishop: Neither of them would help the Bureau, in that job. Neither of them.

Clarence Campbell: So you don't think Sullivan would have been a good Director?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. I don't think he would. He was too emotional. I mean, he couldn't look at anything without letting his emotions get in it. And, you can't do that. You've got to be circumspect, impartial. You don't let your emotions do anything.

Clarence Campbell: Did he ever have one of these shouting tirades with you like we discussed earlier in the other tape?

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Thomas E. Bishop: We had our arguments that were out loud, but nothing bad about 'em.

Clarence Campbell: Did he ever call you on the phone and yell at you, and hang up.

Thomas E. Bishop: No. No. No. Never anything like that.

Clarence Campbell: All right. Anything you want to add?

Michael M. O'Brien: Just getting back to the question, did Hoover know about the Watergate break-in? Like you were saying, the Plumbers were operating and stuff like?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh. And that was just well known among the Assistant Directors, maybe.

Thomas E. Bishop: Some of them. I said some of the Assistant Directors, not all of them. Because some of them could care less or know less.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: But, yes, most of them knew about the Plumbers and their activities.

Michael M. O'Brien: But was it the topic of discussion at meetings or conferences, or anything like that?

Thomas E. Bishop: Not, serious discussions. In fact, every time these guys would do something stupid, there was a discussion about it, "they goofed again." Stuff like that.

Michael M. O'Brien: Were they angry at the group, that they were doing this behind the Bureau's back?

Thomas E. Bishop: They didn't appreciate it, I'll say that.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: They didn't.

Michael M. O'Brien: But they didn't like the Plumbers.

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

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Michael M. O'Brien: And, how would you explain why didn't the people in the Bureau like the Plumbers?

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, they were trying to do something that wasn't their own business, it wasn't their business. I mean, they were not set up for what they were doing. And, they were doing something that the, if anybody would do it, the Bureau would be doing it. And the Bureau wouldn't be doing some of this stuff they were doing.

Michael M. O'Brien: Did any of the plumbers go to the Bureau and try to use them to help them out in the situation?

Thomas E. Bishop: Liddy ... I knew Liddy and he never asked me one time for any help with their problems. He dealt with Sullivan's division, or the Criminal Division.

Michael M. O'Brien: You mentioned Liddy. He was not thought of well by people because he sort of ran off half-cocked.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. That's right. Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: And would Sullivan have the same opinion of Liddy? I mean, did you discuss these matters?

Thomas E. Bishop: I think Sullivan felt the same way about it. But there was nothing you could do about it.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Yeah. And you mentioned about John Dean ...having an inside track with somebody in the FBI who was giving him advanced notice of people to be interviewed.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. That was the Director. I mean, it was the proposed Director ... L. Patrick Gray, III.

Michael M. O'Brien: Gray was giving it, the advance notice?

Thomas E. Bishop: That's right. And, Dean told me about this. 'Cause he was aware, when with what he'd found out, he probably thought I knew about it.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: He was telling me he knew, without realizing it.

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Michael M. O'Brien: And, that was in the conversation you had with Dean; Dean would say, "Look, you know." Yeah. It was something he thought he could talk to me about freely. Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: "I'm really glad they're getting into this inside track."

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He just wanted me to know that he was getting this information and it was helpful to him.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh. So. Okay, if you're going to get into the Gray stuff, I just really think that's important ...

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Michael M. O'Brien: I find it interesting that you were really shocked and I think you mentioned before, the Bureau didn't do those type of things. And if it's an ongoing thing, you don't give anybody advance warning.

Thomas E. Bishop: That's right. That was particularly bad, you know, on the part of Gray, as far as I was ...

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: That was one of the things that I was really upset with Gray about.

Clarence Campbell: All right. In Ungar's book, he has a whole chapter ... chapter 21 ... which he called "The Gray Year."

Thomas E. Bishop: The Gray what?

Clarence Campbell: The one year that Gray ran it the FBI.

Thomas E. Bishop: Okay.

Clarence Campbell: And he starts off, in the chapter, with Hoover's death on May 2nd, 1972.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: What was your reaction to Hoover's death? How did you hear about it?

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Thomas E. Bishop: John Mohr told me. He came down to my office and told me. Mohr was the first one in the Bureau to meet with the Director's chauffeur, who found the Director dead of a heart attack.

Mohr told Miss Gandy, and then he came over and talked to me. 'Cause he knew that I was going to get the press reaction.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: And, so I'd be prepared for it.

Clarence Campbell: Did you get any details?

Thomas E. Bishop: From John Mohr. I didn't give the details to the press.

Clarence Campbell: I mean when Mohr talked to you, did he say that the chauffeur had gone in and found Mr. Hoover dead?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He said he had died in his sleep ... but his body was half in and half out of bed.

Clarence Campbell: He probably had a stroke then.

Thomas E. Bishop: I didn't give any of this in the details about that to the press.

Clarence Campbell: So, according to Ungar's book, what happened next was that Acting Attorney General Kleindienst calls John Mohr, who was the Assistant to the Director, and he tells him to secure Hoover's office.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He did call and said go to the Director's office, change the locks and post a guard on the office. Because they're worried about these so-called secret files.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: They actually weren't. Most of them were Christmas holiday greetings, and he'd write letters back and forth to these old, these old friends of his, and what not.

Clarence Campbell: Did he ever, did you ever, I mean did you ever see any of the so-called secret files that he had on members of the Congress?

Thomas E. Bishop: Not secret files, but there were files on members of the Congress. Mr. Hoover thought these should not be put in the General files, because they were not the Bureau's business, and they were personal and they were, some of them, harmful to the reputation of the person named.

Clarence Campbell: Hoover had some dirt on some of these Congressmen.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: I could see where some of that type of information should not be in official FBI files.

Thomas E. Bishop: Some of the derogatory information on Congressmen was not the result of investigation, but was brought to light during routine contact by SACs with citizens in their districts. And so there it was, so what were they to do with it.

Clarence Campbell: Do you think the Congressmen knew that Hoover had this information?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. The only one I know, who knew we had that kind of information was an out-and-out homosexual, an active homosexual. His father was, I can't remember his name, he was prominent in society in the New York area.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: And, it's all I can remember.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. I think I mentioned this telephone call and actually Kleindienst summoned Mohr to his office.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. That, that would be expected.

Clarence Campbell: And that's when he told Mohr to change the locks, post the guard ... and there was one other person sitting in Kleindienst's office when they had this conversation. And guess who that was?

Thomas E. Bishop: I imagine it was Bill Sullivan.

Clarence Campbell: No. It was L. Patrick Gray.

Thomas E. Bishop: (Laughing)

- Clarence Campbell: Yeah. He was sitting there, so apparently they had already made this decision that Gray was to be named Director and was going to move in. So he was just sitting there taking notes. It says here in Ungar's book, Kleindienst gave the orders too late, so some of the private files were removed to Mr. Hoover's home, which would later be inherited by Associate Director Tolson; others were shredded, and others were transferred to the office of Deputy Associate Director Mark Felt. Were you aware of any of that?
- Thomas E. Bishop: Only the ones that were present in Mr. Felt's office, which wouldn't be harmful to anybody. And there were some probably at Miss Gandy's house, dealing with social engagements, etc.
- Clarence Campbell: Okay. And then Tolson was made Acting Director for one day. He resigned in a one-sentence letter, even before the funeral for the Director.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.
- Clarence Campbell: On Wednesday, May 3rd, the day after Hoover died, and the day before his funeral on the fourth, Nixon announces his choice of Louis Patrick Gray, III, who was at that time the Deputy Attorney General, he was designated to take over the Bureau. Do you remember your first meeting with Gray?
- Thomas E. Bishop: Right outside the Director's office right. Gray was coming and called over and said he was coming over and so I said, "Well, I'll meet you out in front of the Director's office and I'll wait out in the hallway." And, he came, as I recall, he walked in by himself, just walked in all by himself.
- I introduced myself. I had never met the man before. I introduced myself, and told him, "if there's anything we can do to help you, just let me know," And he didn't seem to want to have help so I got out of there.
- Clarence Campbell: Kind of brushed you off?
- Thomas E. Bishop: Kind of gave me the impression he wasn't interested in talking to me.
- Clarence Campbell: Okay.

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Thomas E. Bishop: He knew what my job was.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. They mention in Ungar's book here, on page 506, that way back in June of 1971, now this is almost a year before Hoover died, that Gray asked the staff at DOJ, to prepare a memo re: "The FBI and the Duties of the Director."

Thomas E. Bishop: He was looking' for the job.

Clarence Campbell: And, the question everybody theorizes was, had he already been told that he was being groomed for this job in the event that Hoover retired or died, or whatever.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Because there were no candidates after. One got a better paying job and the other broke off with Hoover. I mean, they both eliminated themselves. And there was no other candidate. Tom Bishop wasn't a candidate. Well he knew that. I mean, I wasn't interested in that. I let everybody know that I was going to retire pretty soon.

Clarence Campbell: So you never wanted to be Director?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. Heavens no.

Clarence Campbell: Did Gray ever mention his favorite book, *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yes. And maybe too, too often. I was so sick and tired of hearing about Jonathan Livingston Seagull. He thought that was a great book and I thought it was a kid's book.

Clarence Campbell: Did you ever read it?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Clarence Campbell: Never read it?

Thomas E. Bishop: Never read it. Well, yes, I read reviews of it, but I never read the book.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. So the first thing that comes up when Gray comes in there, the first big decision he makes, is regarding female Special Agents.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: That, after this time.

Thomas E. Bishop: That was the day I had my first disagreement with him.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: At an Executive Conference, when we had the Assistant Directors first meeting with him, he brought that up. I told him I didn't think it was a good idea.

Clarence Campbell: So you told Gray that you didn't think it was a good idea. And what was your reason.

Thomas E. Bishop: I didn't think they could operate, like the male Agents could operate, in all the things that the male Agents did. They could do certain things well, but, to be quite honest with you, I didn't think that was enough. I thought they had to be able to do everything that the male Agents could. And, I don't know, maybe they've showed that they can do it. It's a tough breed of person coming up now in the Bureau.

Clarence Campbell: In the Ungar's book, he talks about this meeting. That Gray initially met with Dwight Dalbey, who, at that time, was the Legal Counsel of the FBI, and other FBI officials, Tom Bishop, et cetera. The argument ensued and Dalbey prepared a written opinion against hiring female Agents. And Gray said, basically, well I'll think about it or something. Did he ever say anything like that?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He indicated that he was going to play with it, consider it.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: In other words, he was going to put, you know, female Agents in. Because, I think his whole thought was change the Bureau a little bit, do things that are in the news to show he's doing it, and that's what he was interested in doing. And he had a couple other things he wanted to change right away.

- Clarence Campbell: It says here in Ungar's book that at this meeting, with all the Assistant Directors, when Dalbey tells him we don't think this is such a good idea, Gray exploded. And, in what Bureau representatives considered an insulting tone, gave them a lecture on Constitutional Law and Jurisprudence. Do you remember that happening?
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yes, he did that and then he did another thing that made some of the Assistant Directors unhappy. During his explosion, he also told what a legal scholar he was. And that he knew as much about the law as anybody else around here, and he knew what the Constitution provided for and what it didn't. He said he was a member of the Order of the Coif in his law school years. And I looked at Dwight Dalbey, who was in the Order of the Coif from Iowa Law School, and I was in the Order of the Coif from Cincinnati Law School, University of Cincinnati. And we weren't so impressed with that, frankly. Because I'll tell ya, we worked our way through and paid for it ourselves, and he gets the Navy to do it for him ... it didn't cost him a cent. I don't know if he ever found out how I felt about that.
- Clarence Campbell: The Order of the Coif.
- Thomas E. Bishop: But I made it known as much as I could that I was not too impressed with his argument about being a member of the Order of the Coif.
- Clarence Campbell: It mentions in Ungar's book, that he got his Naval Academy Appointment and graduated 172nd out of 476.
- Thomas E. Bishop: What good is 172nd?
- Clarence Campbell: And then he got his submarine commands, and then he went to George Washington Law School courtesy of the Navy and then worked at some various staff jobs at the Pentagon.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.
- Clarence Campbell: And ultimately, in 1960, became Military Advisor to the Staff of Vice-President Richard Nixon.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yep. That's what I figured.
- Clarence Campbell: Apparently there was a lawsuit on female Agents, filed by ...

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Thomas E. Bishop: What were their names?

Clarence Campbell: ... Sandra Nemser and Cynthia Edgar.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Who were they?

Clarence Campbell: They wanted to become Special Agents of the FBI and they had actually filed a lawsuit against Hoover's men-only policy. And actually, I think they did it just in time. And won the case.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: They really weren't interested in being Agents.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Did you ever meet any of these two ladies?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. Neither of them.

Clarence Campbell: It says Nemser was a Legal Aide Attorney, and Cynthia Edgar was a staff worker for Democratic Representative, Bella Abzug.

So after you had this meeting and you and the other Assistant Directors there basically sated their opposition to the policy, the next day an article appears in the New York Times and the Washington Post. Then a teletype goes out to all Field Offices stating, from Gray, "We are now going to hire female Agents."

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Basically telling you guys one thing and then just going ahead and doing it.

Thomas E. Bishop: Sure.

Clarence Campbell: Right. Now, how did that sit with the Assistant Directors?

Thomas E. Bishop: Not too well.

Clarence Campbell: So, he's not off on the right foot. Then he makes an appearance at WFO, the Washington Field Office, then run by Special Agent in Charge Bob Kunkel.

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Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Remember him?

Thomas E. Bishop: Uhm-Hmm.

Clarence Campbell: And he mentions to the Agents, "You can wear colored shirts and mustaches and your hair in sideburns."

Thomas E. Bishop: There's about three things that he changed the grooming of the FBI.

Clarence Campbell: They could wear longer hair, sideburns, mustaches and colored shirts.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And, you know what, and I don't know if you remember, but the Agents burst into applause when they heard this.

Thomas E. Bishop: Hell, he said that they thought it was all changing Hoover's FBI. And it really didn't impress me. You know. You could wear moustaches if you want. That was a crock of baloney. Those guys were wearing moustaches when he announced it! In fact, Earl Connolly, he was the Assistant Director when I came in to the FBI, had a moustache. And he was one of the FBI's best investigators ever, and he was the Assistant Director in 1941.

Clarence Campbell: And he had a moustache?

Thomas E. Bishop: He had a moustache. A couple of guys wore moustaches. But he put it out as if it were all the things he's doing to change the image of the FBI. But he was just trying to build up a false impression, I guess.

Clarence Campbell: Well, then it says during that first week, Gray calls John Mohr, and he asked him the question, "Where are the secret files?"

Thomas E. Bishop: Right

Clarence Campbell: And Mohr tells him, ...

Thomas E. Bishop: What secret files?

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. What secret files? "There aren't any secret files."

Thomas E. Bishop: There's no secret files ... everything's in the files. I mean, everything's in the file. That was the problem, it was in the file. Hell, anybody could get into those files. They'd have some nice reading. But there were no secret files. But I had the hardest time explaining that to those people. That the secret files didn't mean anything because every file in the FBI was secret. Nobody could walk in and ask for a file and look at it. But, the way he put it, there were certain files that only certain people could look at.

Clarence Campbell: Did you ever have a discussion with Mohr after Gray had this conversation with him? Because allegedly in the conversation, Gray says to Mohr, "You know John, I'm a hard-headed Irishman that nobody pushes around." And Mohr reportedly says, "Well, I'm a hard-headed Dutchman and I feel the same way."

Thomas E. Bishop: That's right. That's the way it was.

Clarence Campbell: Does that sound like Mohr to you?

Thomas E. Bishop: That's right. It sounds like Mohr. He was a hard-headed Dutchman.

Clarence Campbell: Six weeks later Mohr retires.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: He had enough of the whole thing.

Thomas E. Bishop: He'd had enough of it. Yeah. He told me he had enough of it.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. Then Alex Rosen also retires.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Another Assistant Director. And then Joe Casper, another Assistant Director.

Thomas E. Bishop: That's right.

Clarence Campbell: He retires.

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- Thomas E. Bishop: They were all good men, too.
- Clarence Campbell: But anyway, before Casper leaves, he gets into a shouting match with Gray. Were you aware of that?
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.
- Clarence Campbell: Casper, for nine years, was head of the Training Division, and he told Gray about his plans to retire, and Gray allegedly asked Casper what Casper thought of Gray's performance so far. And Casper, being very candid, accused the Acting Director of dishonesty and the meeting deteriorated into a shouting match. During which, Gray suggested that Casper was sick and needed a rest. Did Casper ever have any discussions with you about that?
- Thomas E. Bishop: No, he didn't. And it's not the way Casper normally would operate.
- Clarence Campbell: Okay.
- Thomas E. Bishop: I mean, getting into a shouting match with anybody.
- Clarence Campbell: Okay.
- Thomas E. Bishop: He was excitable, but he would've had better sense than to get into a shouting match with the boss. I don't believe that. But I have no way of knowing.
- Clarence Campbell: And I look in here and they have a reference to a fellow named Thomas E. Bishop in here.
- Thomas E. Bishop: I don't know too many people in there.
- Clarence Campbell: In one of them, apparently Gray had a discussion with you, this is on page 355 and 356 of Ungar's book, and he talks about a memorandum that you sent. Oh, we were talking about this background information that we had, that Hoover had been collecting on various members of Congress.
- You remember that?
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Oh, yeah. I remember this.
- Clarence Campbell: This started way back in the early '50s.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh, yeah.

Clarence Campbell: When they asked Field Offices to submit “pertinent background information and data from office files.” No investigation was to be utilized to collect this data.

Thomas E. Bishop: It was for my Division’s use.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: Because I had to deal with Congress. That was one of my jobs. Working with Congress, liaison with Congress, the Senate and the House, and everybody at the top over there. And, I wanted to know if we didn’t already have it in our files, who these guys were. According to our files, some of them were crooks, some of them were drunks, and I would’ve liked to know that for my dealings with them. It was not put into a file, as such. It was memos for me.

Clarence Campbell: And Ungar cites a memorandum that you wrote to Gray, on October 26th, 1972, where you were discussing this procedure, and you said that this allowed the FBI to “gain some knowledge of the background of these individuals and make the Bureau investigation more effective if any sitting or elected member of Congress should become the target of assassination, kidnapping, or assault.”

Thomas E. Bishop: That wasn’t the sole reason.

Clarence Campbell: It says here, in this book, I don’t know if it’s true, “Bishop, who was then head of Crime Records Division, tried to convince Gray of the value of this program.”

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And he quotes from the memo, he said “this was the way, in that this program would help the Bureau find out who, or which Congressman was really friendly to the Bureau and supportive of the Bureau.”

Thomas E. Bishop: No investigation was requested to do this. This information was to be taken solely from the files of the office.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: That was emphasized.

Clarence Campbell: And you said, in the same memorandum, “basic biographical information, any background indicating interest in law enforcement, either pro or con, any prior contacts between the candidate and the FBI, and any information which would indicate a friendly or hostile attitude toward the FBI or other law enforcement.” So that was basically the reason why the Bureau started this program in the 50s.

Thomas E. Bishop: What did Gray say?

Clarence Campbell: Well, but he was asking you why they kept these files. And he felt like these were the so-called secret files that Hoover might use to blackmail these Congressmen when they wouldn’t abide with what Hoover wanted.

Thomas E. Bishop: It never was part of the files, those memos to me. They were just informal memos.

Clarence Campbell: Were you ever aware of any instance where Hoover used any of this negative information against any Congressman?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. I would have been afraid to use it and I think he would have been too. Because, you know, when you’re trying to put pressure on a guy, it’s all right to do what he has done publicly before, but not the part about the guy being a homosexual. I mean, it would be ridiculous.

Clarence Campbell: Did Hoover have a pretty strong negative attitude toward homosexuals?

Thomas E. Bishop: He never gave me any indication whatsoever that he was, in any way, homosexual or sympathetic to homosexuals.

Clarence Campbell: I don’t know if this is the right time to get into it either. It’s a sensitive issue, but invariably people, because of some of these books written about Hoover, claim he was gay. And that he had this relationship with Tolson. Did you see any evidence whatsoever of this?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. None, whatsoever.

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Clarence Campbell: What about the relationship between Hoover and Tolson?

Thomas E. Bishop: They were two old gentlemen who didn't have anybody else to associate with. In other words, their whole life was in the FBI. Nothing else.

Clarence Campbell: They were both married to the Bureau.

Thomas E. Bishop: That's exactly right. Their whole life was the Bureau. And they never got away from the Bureau. Even when they ate together, they talked about everything that's going on. Half of the policies in the Bureau were made in their lunch hour.

Clarence Campbell: Didn't they always go over to, like the Mayflower, for dinner or something?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. I guess they'd go for lunch.

Clarence Campbell: Oh. For lunch?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: How about for dinner?

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, not always, because they ate at Hoover's or Tolson's house quite a bit, too.

Clarence Campbell: Did they?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Just the two of them?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh, well I don't know if it's the two of them. There'd be other people there I didn't know about.

Michael M. O'Brien: At lunch and things, would, would it be other people? At lunch?

Thomas E. Bishop: That was strictly the two of them over at the Mayflower and that was quick lunch and that was it. But at night they would have other people in, for dinner and whatever. But, I don't know the details of who was present or what was discussed.

Clarence Campbell: Did Tolson live near Hoover?

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Thomas E. Bishop: Not real close. I don't think he was within walking distance.

Michael M. O'Brien: Was he a single guy, too. Tolson?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Oh God yeah. I don't think he's ever been married.

Clarence Campbell: Do you know how they met, initially? ...

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Clarence Campbell: Was that before Hoover came into the Bureau?

Thomas E. Bishop: Tolson was an Agent in the Bureau.

Clarence Campbell: He was an Agent?

Thomas E. Bishop: And he'd been an Agent in the Bureau. I don't know how he got in. He was supposed to be very good at what he did, but I don't know what he did.

Clarence Campbell: And Hoover just kind of brought him along.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. Let's move on to Gray. Gray appoints what the Bureau officials affectionately refer to as his "Three Stooges." Did you ever hear that expression?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh Yeah. I know who you mean. I don't remember their names. Two men and a woman.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. David Kinley. Thirty-one years old.

Thomas E. Bishop: Dave. His father is the publisher of that insert thing that's in the Sunday newspapers ... the magazine section. Didn't know his ass from a hole in the ground. I mean, he was stupid. He was supposed to be smart, but he was stupid. He didn't know anything about life or, you know, what goes on.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. Well he apparently controlled access to Gray's office. Did he take over press relations? That normally would have been under your control?

Thomas E. Bishop: He didn't do it, but he set them up for Gray as much as he could, merely by giving people information that he shouldn't have given them. The guy that we called the "whore of the Department of Justice," he wrote many, many articles about what's going on in the Department of Justice. I can't remember his name. What he would do, like, even in my case, when they were trying to blackmail me or whatever they were doing to me ... black ball me, I guess. He talked to Gray and nobody else. This was set up by Kinley.

For Gray to talk, and they were telling about my status in the Bureau, and all this other crap that they put out and it didn't bother me what they said ... well, it bothered me once. There was a story that they attributed to this guy; well, it's not for attribution, it's what this guy wrote and it was in the Washington Post, came out on a Saturday. It was about some kind of a stupid policy matter in the Department of Justice. The Washington Post jumped on me because I was the one who had decided to say it was an unfavorable type of thing. Making a survey of a couple offices got painfully pertinent to the election. Gray gave it to me through Dave, to do it. And I told Dave, I said, "This is not something the Bureau should be doing. This is a political type thing and the Bureau should keep out of politics."

Clarence Campbell: Oh. I know. I think we're going to get into that a little bit later.

It says here in Ungar's book, that Kinley controlled access to the Director's office and anyone that wanted to see Gray, even Assistant Directors who had been in the FBI for decades, had to go through Kinley before they could see Gray.

Thomas E. Bishop: That's true. Because he was like a receptionist. I mean, that is what he was.

Clarence Campbell: And then we get down to page of 511 of Ungar's book, and it says "Gray became increasingly disenchanted with the old Crime Records Division."

Thomas E. Bishop: That's me..

Clarence Campbell: That's you.

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Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: “Renamed the Crime Research Division, to give it a more scholarly image. Kinley also took over dealing with the press on the Acting Director’s behalf.” Which is page 511.

Thomas E. Bishop: After I had retired.

Clarence Campbell: “It was a job he did well, even without following all the old rules about who in the media was a Bureau friend, and who was a Bureau enemy.”

Thomas E. Bishop: Right.

Clarence Campbell: And it says here, “To the great dismay of Assistant Director Thomas E. Bishop.”

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. True. Because that was my job. He didn’t do that until after I had told him I was retiring.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: And then he turned that over to Kinley. So, it was to my dismay that they would put a guy like Kinley in charge of this.

Clarence Campbell: And then the next guy that he appoints, at the same time, is Daniel “Mac” Armstrong who handled investigative policy. Did you ever meet him?

Thomas E. Bishop: Who is he?

Clarence Campbell: Daniel “Mac” Armstrong. Former AUSA. In New York.

Thomas E. Bishop: Only talked to him once or twice.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. And the third person was the female you mentioned, Barbara Herwig.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Age 27.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah, she was the one that knew everything.

Clarence Campbell: She dealt with women’s issues primarily.

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Thomas E. Bishop: She knew, just like a typical woman's issue person would, she knew everything. And didn't mind telling you.

Clarence Campbell: She appointed herself as Mizz, Ms, carrying her on the Bureau sign off sheet. Right?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. I didn't have any dealings with her because she was not dealing with my stuff; considered her a fly in the ointment.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. It says a lot of the Assistant Directors referred to these three people as "bleeding hearts" or the "Kiddy Corps." Is that right?

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh. That's right.

Clarence Campbell: Or the "Mod Squad."

Thomas E. Bishop: That was our nickname for them.

Clarence Campbell: Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: Among ourselves.

Clarence Campbell: Okay. So then we go on to page 523 of Mr. Ungar's book, and, I guess Gray decides to abolish the old Crime Records Division.

Thomas E. Bishop: That's, yeah, that was after I handed in my notice of retirement but I was still in the Bureau.

Clarence Campbell: And he didn't like the speeches that were written and prepared for him and felt that a hostile attitude toward some members of the press would do the FBI harm. This is on page 523 of Ungar's book.

Thomas E. Bishop: What, who, what did he do? Does it say what he did, there? One time he got a speechwriter from the White House. He's a newsman yet today. One of these commentators. I can't remember his name. He wrote a speech for Gray.

Thomas E. Bishop: In the speech he said, "As the chief law enforcement officer in the country, I think" this and that. So I called up Dave Kinley and I said, "David, you better put a muzzle on that guy next time." He said, "What do you mean?" I said, "He's not the chief law enforcement officer in the country. The Attorney General is."

Clarence Campbell: Well, it says here in the book, on page 523, "after a number of bitter clashes with Thomas E. Bishop, the traditional Assistant Director for Crime Research, Gray forced Bishop's retirement."

Thomas E. Bishop: He didn't force me. I was ready to go. I've got to admit that I was ready to go.

Clarence Campbell: Pretty fed up with the way Gray was running things?

Thomas E. Bishop: It wasn't good for me and it wasn't good for him, and it wasn't good for the Bureau, especially. I mean, I didn't think it was a good situation. That the guy in charge of the media relations is not to have a good relationship with the Director. And I didn't admire Gray. I mean, I didn't admire him as a man; I didn't admire him as a Director. I don't think he knew his ass from a hole in the ground about what he was doing. And, he never reached out. He didn't want to depend on the guys he had there who were capable of telling him things, and would tell him when he's right and when he's wrong. He didn't trust us. He didn't, if you'd told him you think he ought to do this, he wouldn't trust you. He'd do something else. And that, that was a bad attitude. I mean, I'm thinking' I wouldn't want to work with a situation like that. I thought about my retirement, you know, what I was going to do with my time, what golf clubs I was gonna buy, I was ready to go.

Clarence Campbell: So you said, it says here, "Another policy of Gray's is he would air the Bureau's dirty linen in public."

Thomas E. Bishop: And that's another thing I objected to. When he did that. He would tell people, or tell the press even, what certain guys got disciplined and what they got disciplined for. We never told that. And the Bureau ... what business is it of the press, to talk about that.

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Clarence Campbell: Your first step. There was a disciplinary procedure against Wesley Grapp in LA.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Kunkel in Washington Field.

Thomas E. Bishop: Wes Grapp was no admirer of mine, and I was no admirer of Wes Grapp. I worked as an Assistant Agent in Charge under him in Richmond, and, I just didn't like the way he treated employees.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: He didn't last long as Agent in Charge after Gray took over.

Clarence Campbell: Dick Rogge in Hawaii.

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, Rogge was my Assistant Agent in Charge in Richmond, and I don't remember what they did with him. That was after I left. He was Agent in Charge in Honolulu when I left.

Michael M. O'Brien: Rogge ended up in Pasadena, I think. California. I knew him.

Thomas E. Bishop: California?

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Rogge made some wives of Agents in Honolulu, where Rogge was, complain about the way he was treating the Agents in the Office, and they wrote a letter to Gray and they hung the nickname on Gray of "Tattletale Gray."

Clarence Campbell: How about a reference to "Two-Day Gray."

Thomas E. Bishop: Two-day Gray. I know what that was.

Clarence Campbell: What was that about?

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, he would be in the office two days a week. The other three days he would be out visiting, he would say "visiting offices."

Thomas E. Bishop: And he'd go in and he'd get all the Agents together and he'd tell them, "You fellas are liberated, you don't have to wear white shirts, you can grow a moustache, and I'm on your side." He was hurting morale as far as I was concerned, and then he was discussing, and shouldn't be discussing items that he would give to the press. Each time he was in a field office, it would be public information, and whether he disciplined somebody or transferred somebody, all that was in the press. "Two-Day Gray" was our nickname because he averaged two days a week working.

Clarence Campbell: So while he was gone, he appointed Mark Felt as Acting Assistant to the Director.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And Felt's job was to keep Gray briefed on what was going on back at headquarters.

Ungar also discussed in his book that Felt sometimes would pass along Gray's orders and say, "I know you're not going to believe this, but this is what he wanted us to do."

Thomas E. Bishop: Right. Yeah. I went to Felt after one particular incident and I said, "I went to Dave Kinley and said that this is wrong." I forget what the thing was, but I objected to Kinley about it. And then I went to Felt. And, Felt's attitude was, "Well, I know it's wrong but we're going to go ahead, or you're going to go ahead, you have to do it."

Clarence Campbell: Ungar says that he thinks that why Felt did this was because he was trying to maneuver himself into the position where if Gray did not get approved, Felt would be appointed Director. So he would be in the logical replacement if Gray failed.

Ungar also talks about Gray using Hoover's Cadillac and he had a Filipino steward prepare his meals.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Now that was done just as I was leaving. I remember there was a big cupboard off of Gray's inner office, the Director's inner office, and he installed this Filipino in there to cook meals for him. He was charging a certain amount of money for the Assistant Director's if they ate there.

- Thomas E. Bishop: And, he didn't issue an open invitation to eat there for Assistant Directors, but they apparently were on rotation ... one guy one day, and one on ... I never got in the rotation because I told him I wasn't interested in it. And, you paid a certain amount and it was apparently cheaper than the restaurant that I used. It was a place across the street there ... some Greek ran it and they were just good. They made good rye bread sandwiches and ham sandwiches, and I went there and ordered every day and I didn't want to go to the inner office and listen to that crap being dispensed over the luncheons there, 'cause that was bad enough during work hours.
- Clarence Campbell: Okay. Were you still there when he was chartering military aircrafts at FBI expense?
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.
- Clarence Campbell: 500 bucks an hour.
- Thomas E. Bishop: It seems to me I knew about that because, and that was another of those things that he was told probably shouldn't be done. And, I think one of my last acts was to represent the Bureau at the ex-Agents Society Annual Convention. It was down south, I can't remember whether it was New Orleans, or where it was.
- But he came down with his wife in a military plane. And they stayed through the convention and went back in a military plane. I, heck, I used commercial air for myself when I fly, and it wasn't first class. I never used first class.
- Clarence Campbell: Ungar said he did it because he feared that his plane might be skyjacked.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Ahhh.
- Clarence Campbell: And that during the first eight months of his tour as Acting Director, he charged over a hundred thousand dollars, at 500 bucks an hour ...
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. It had to be expensive. Yeah. I know it, but man alive. A hundred thousand bucks?

Thomas E. Bishop: Hoover would, he would use first class. Hoover was entitled to use first class by his grade. And I was entitled to use first class, but I told them no, it might be reported in the press and have some newsman or FBI Agent criticize me.

Clarence Campbell: Did you actually go in and inform Gray face-to-face that you were going to turn in your retirement papers?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yes. We had a, we had a meeting.

Clarence Campbell: What was that about?

Thomas E. Bishop: That's the one that I got upset about. On a Saturday morning I was catching up on my sleep, and my wife came in and she come in and woke me up. She said, "Tom, what in the world have you done?" And I said, "What do you mean?" She said, "You're on the first page of the Washington Post and you're gonna lose your job." And I said, "Well, let me see it." And I read the thing.

It was a story about me being opposed to something that Gray had done, or something like that. And I was against his wishes and as a result the paper prints the story. It was written by this guy, he used to write all these non-attributable stories out of Gray's office, where he would spread the information but it was not to be shown where it was from or who gave it to him. And, I forgot what the hell it was about, but he tried to put the blame on me for something that I didn't accept the blame on it because I didn't do it. But, I went in and told him "you're wrong, this is not me." I said, "I didn't do this." I said I don't appreciate that one bit and I really don't appreciate the fact that you made my wife get up on a Saturday morning and cry over a story that you leaked.

Clarence Campbell: What was his reaction to it?

Thomas E. Bishop: Ah, he said, well he was kinda of defensive about what he'd done first. And when he saw he wasn't going to anywhere, as far as I was concerned for what he'd done. He said, "Well, it's up to you. Whatever you want to do." I said, "Well, I want to get outta here as soon as possible." And he said, "Well, you can't get out as soon as possible because you have to be concerned with your job and the Bureau" and all this and that.

Thomas E. Bishop: And he gave me a new assignment. He sent me down to Quantico, over the weekend. I got it on a Monday, I guess, right after I went to talk with him. I was supposed to write a history of the FBI National Academy. I think that's what it was. But we'd never had a history of the FBI National Academy, written by anybody before because it wasn't for us to write it. It's not up to the FBI to write it. This is the FBI National Academy, and these guys who had attended it, if they want to have somebody write it for them, we'd help them but we wouldn't write the thing.

And so I went down to Quantico, and all I did was shoot baskets in the gym. I rode and ran my laps every day. I was in the best shape that I ever been, after two weeks down there. And I spent two weeks ... never turned a wheel as far as the FBI was concerned. I did put my scrapbook, one of my scrapbooks, together. And that, you know, that was it.

Clarence Campbell: Do you think he was just trying to get you out of Headquarters?

Thomas E. Bishop: Hell yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Out of sight, out of mind.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Yeah. That was what he wanted to do. He was afraid I'd bloody well tell somebody about what was going on, or something. I didn't have any intentions of doing that. My attitude always was, you know, I don't hurt anybody in the Bureau because I don't want to hurt the Bureau. And that was the way I had always acted in my job.

He wants to get even with me, or worse, he can't hurt me, I was going to retire anyhow, because I'd had it with him. But I didn't want to cause any trouble with the Bureau, and on the Bureau records, fighting' with each other and all that kind of stuff. I didn't do that. I didn't believe in that.

Clarence Campbell: Do you think he might have leaked that article on purpose to irritate you? To force you into retirement.

Thomas E. Bishop: I wouldn't be a bit surprised.

- Thomas E. Bishop: That was the final thing for me, that made me submit my request for retirement. He, apparently, didn't want me because he knew I was going to fight everything he did that I disagreed with, if I didn't think something was the right thing to do. I wasn't going to, you know, accept it.
- Clarence Campbell: It says in the book that Gray was considered by the Field Agents as somewhat of a "hero" because he made all these changes, you know.
- Thomas E. Bishop: But that was the way he started.
- Clarence Campbell: No more daily reports for RAs, etc.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Well, that kind of stuff, funny thing is, that all came back. The Inspectors went out and they said all these changes should be reinstated.
- Clarence Campbell: And, so on and so forth. And in his book, Ungar says that Gray, in essence, became a "devil" to the Assistant Directors. And that he had formed this Director's Advisory Committee.
- Thomas E. Bishop: What? I think that was after me. I don't remember, but I heard about it.
- Clarence Campbell: And then Ungar said he abolished the Crime Records Division and set up the Office of Planning and Evaluation, OPE.
- Thomas E. Bishop: He just gave it another name is what it amounted to. I understood it, he just renamed it.
- Clarence Campbell: Then, on page 527 of the book, Ungar refers to this teletype that went out, I think we referred to it earlier, alluded to it earlier, sent out to all the Bureau offices, basically getting the Bureau involved in political wars.
- Thomas E. Bishop: That was when I was still there. That's the story that was written in The Washington Post that caused my wife to cry.
- Clarence Campbell: Oh. Okay.

Thomas E. Bishop: Somebody was going to go out there to the West Coast, either the President, the Attorney General or the Assistant Attorney General, and they had asked us, the Bureau, to find out something about the state of the relations between the ... I don't remember the details. What's Ungar say it was? What was it about?

Clarence Campbell: "Bureau processed the request for the Nixon White House for identification of the substantive issue problem areas in the criminal justice field and ordered John Ehrlichman to give Nixon maximum support during campaign trips."

And several of the SAC's, Special Agents in Charge, declined to even respond to something that was so blatantly political.

Thomas E. Bishop: What I did, I went to Dave Kinley, Gray was out of town when this request was received. I went in to Dave Kinley and I said, "Dave, this is politics. We don't want to get in politics. We've never, the Bureau, been in politics." He said, "Well, Gray told me that's what he wants done."

I went to Mark Felt and told him the very same thing. I said, "We should not be in this." And Felt agreed with me. He agreed a hundred percent. But he said, that's what Kinley told him you have to do. So I called one of my Agents in, from the Crime Records Division, and told him to send a teletype to the West Coast Offices, there were three or four of them involved, and find out what the attitude is of the people out there, or the law enforcement people, about whatever this was they were talking about. I can't remember what the issue was, to tell you the truth.

Clarence Campbell: Well, the President was going to make a campaign trip out there and he wanted to know how law enforcement felt about certain issues.

Thomas E. Bishop: So that was it. Yeah. And, I felt it was a political type of thing and something that the Bureau shouldn't be involved in. And Felt agreed with me; anybody else in the Bureau I talked to, agreed with me; but that's what they did because that's the way the boss wanted it.

Thomas E. Bishop: That's when the stories came out, just as I had predicted. The FBI had gotten itself involved in political matters, which they never did before, and they shouldn't be.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah, he mentions, well, you know, he supposedly says several of the SACs declined to respond to the request and eventually White House Aide John Ehrlichman, for reasons of his own, suggested publicly later that transmission of this memorandum or teletype through FBI channels had been, in fact, an improper political use of the Bureau, as you said.

Thomas E. Bishop: There again, Gray wasn't there. When he came back, he didn't tell me, but Kinley told me that Gray said it was okay. When he got back. I never talked to him, but Kinley said Gray wanted it and that's the way it was handled.

Clarence Campbell: Then they discuss the Watergate scandal, this is on page 528, and Gray turns over to John Dean copies of FBI 302's concerning interviews that Agents were doing. This is after you left, I guess.

Thomas E. Bishop: No. This is while I was there. This is another thing that caused me to get into a fight with Gray. And one of my conversations with John Dean, he wasn't in the Department then, he was in the White House. He told me, in one of these telephone conversations that, "Hey, I've been doing a lot of business with your boss lately." I said, "What's that?" And he said, "Well, you know, he sent me over those 302s and, he said they're getting the reports of the interviews of people that were supposed to be interviewed in the investigation. Also sending a schedule of who the FBI was going to interview next. I said, "What are you using that for?" He said, "I get together and brief them."

Again I went to Gray. And it was then I told him that we were going to get in trouble, this is not something we should do. And he said, "Well, we're gonna do it and I'm the Director." And, in fact, those were his words, "I'm the Director and you're the Assistant Director."

Clarence Campbell: And then, the book goes on to say that on June 28th, 1972, Gray meets with John Dean and Ehrlichman, and they give Gray two envelopes from the safe of Howard Hunt and they tell Gray, "You gotta get rid of this. This is political dynamite."

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Clarence Campbell: Gray takes them home and burns them in his fireplace. I don't know if he read them or what.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah. He read them.

Michael M. O'Brien: Whoa, whoa, wait. Tom, do you know what they said? You said Gray read them, but I mean ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He let me know that he had read them and burned them and he didn't think anything wrong with his doing so.

Michael M. O'Brien: Gray told you that?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: The fact that Gray burned the packet of envelopes, it ultimately was his downfall.

Clarence Campbell: I want to get into that.

Michael M. O'Brien: Oh. Are you going to get into that?

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. Right.

This is page 532 of Ungar's book, it says, "On June 28th, '72, Gray met secretly with Dean and Ehrlichman, in Ehrlichman's White House office. Although the complete contents of Howard Hunt's safe at the White House had supposedly already been turned over to the Bureau, after substantial delay to which Gray had consented, the Aides now produced two manila envelopes containing documents from Hunt's safe that they said had nothing to do with Watergate, but should not be incorporated into FBI files and, in fact, were 'political dynamite that should not see the light of day.' "

"They later learned that the envelopes contained copies of State Department cables that had been doctored and fabricated by Howard Hunt in order to demonstrate that President John Kennedy had ordered the assassination of Ngo Dinh Diem, President of South Vietnam, during the early stages of the involvement with Vietnam. Gray accepted the envelopes, never mentioned them to anyone at the FBI for ten months."

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- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. That's right.
- Clarence Campbell: Had Hoover been alive, he would have at least probably written a memorandum saying that they had given him this stuff.
- Thomas E. Bishop: He would've rushed over to the Attorney General and told them what was going on.
- Clarence Campbell: Yeah. "The combined effect of these gestures" ...
Ungar's book continues... "The combined effect of these gestures was a substantial obstruction of the FBI's aggressive Watergate investigation." Let's jump ahead and then we'll come back to this at the end here. Nixon gets reelected in November of '72. The last job to be filled was FBI Director. By this time, according to page 543 in Ungar's book, Ehrlichman now opposed Gray as "an unfit blunderer."
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Are you finished with the envelope stuff?
- Clarence Campbell: No. I'm going to go back to it.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Okay.
- Clarence Campbell: Kleindienst steps in on Gray's behalf and he says, "You should retain him." And Dean is very happy with the arrangement that Dean had with Gray because Gray had given him everything that he needed.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Making Dean look good.
- Clarence Campbell: So finally on February 16th, Gray meets first with Ehrlichman and then with Nixon. They tell him to be tough, needing tough leadership for the Bureau. And the next day Gray is announced as Nixon's choice as Director, permanent Director. And the confirmation hearings are set to open on February 28th, 1973. Are you gone from the Bureau by this time?
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. I had retired from the Bureau.
- Clarence Campbell: I think you went out on February 1st. Didn't you?

Thomas E. Bishop: Yes, but I was in touch with a lot of the people on the committee.

Clarence Campbell: But you never testified?

Thomas E. Bishop: No, but Gray knew that I was going to testify too, and not favorably to him.

Clarence Campbell: The hearings were a disaster for Gray. Gray became more weak and more vulnerable. They discussed about how the Watergate case had been investigated and the Senators exploded when they learned from Gray that he had literally shared these FBI files with John Dean.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: So by this time the administration abandons Gray and lets him, use that word, twist slowly in the wind.

Right. The President invokes exclusive privilege, or exclusive privilege to prevent Dean from being required to testify. Ehrlichman advocates leaving Gray to “twist slowly in the wind.” Gray’s dreams are shattered. He writes to the President in early April, asking that his name be withdrawn from the nomination.

Now we get, to the night of April 15th, 1973, this is on page 537 of Ungar’s book. Ehrlichman calls Gray at home to warn Gray that Dean is now talking to the prosecutors. And among other items of interest, he was telling him about the Hunt files that they gave to Gray. And Gray confirms, during this conversation with Ehrlichman, that he destroyed the files, burned them in his fireplace.

Early in the morning of April 25th, 1973, Gray calls Senator Lowell Weicker, his Senator from his home state of Connecticut. And he says, “I gotta talk to you about something.” And then he tells Weicker that he took the Hunt file to his home in Connecticut over the weekend, and on his return, he took the envelopes back to the office and, without looking inside, tore them up and threw them into the burn bag.” I guess this is like an FBI Agent’s burn bag?

Clarence Campbell: “Asked by Weicker what was in the envelopes, Gray said, ‘You’ll have to ask Senator Peterson.’ Weicker asked Peterson at a subsequent meeting and Gray tells Senator Peterson that the documents were these fabricated cables dealing with the Diem assassination. So then, Weicker releases this to the press and the tale of Gray’s burning of Hunt’s documents is front page headlines on Friday, April 27th.”

“Gray realizes he’s potentially vulnerable to prosecution on the charges of Obstructing Justice and Perjury before the Senate Judiciary Committee connected with the destruction of these files.”

So finally, on April 27, Gray formally resigns and Ruckelshaus is named the Director of the FBI.

Thomas E. Bishop: That’s right.

Clarence Campbell: So he was in the FBI for 51 weeks and then finally had to resign.

Thomas E. Bishop: That’s right. He wasn’t allowed to join the ex-Agents Society, either.

Clarence Campbell: Did he ever apply to join the Society?

Thomas E. Bishop: I don’t know. Somebody told him he was not eligible because you have to have a year, I think, of good service in the FBI. And he didn’t have good service, and he wasn’t in the FBI for a year.

Clarence Campbell: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: Boy. That’s what made me happy.

Michael M. O'Brien: Well, just getting back to how, how’d you find out about the envelopes? I find that interesting. Did it become general knowledge at Headquarters before the testimony? I mean, how did it come out that he destroyed these envelopes?

Thomas E. Bishop: I can’t remember. It wasn’t me. You know, ‘cause I never had my hands on the envelopes.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

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Thomas E. Bishop: Really.

Michael M. O'Brien: But you knew it happened. You knew he destroyed it.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: I think you said he did because at some confrontation you had with Gray, you brought this up to him.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. I think I did but I remember my main conflict with Gray was not destroying stuff but giving it to Dean and the Department when he shouldn't have.

Clarence Campbell: I think he's talking about the leaks, like Gray giving the 302's and the reports to John Dean.

Michael M. O'Brien: Right. No. But I also thought that, and correct me if I'm wrong, Tom, I thought you said that you mentioned that you confronted Gray, at one point, about him destroying the envelopes.

Thomas E. Bishop: I can't remember.

Michael M. O'Brien: Okay. Well maybe I misunderstood you.

Clarence Campbell: I think you're referring to the 302s, that Gray leaked to Dean.

Thomas E. Bishop: Right.

Clarence Campbell: When did you retire, 1973?

Thomas E. Bishop: '73. Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Yeah. Okay. So in June of '72, Gray never mentioned to you about Ehrlichman giving him these envelopes from Hunt's safe?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Now what about, you testified at Gray's hearing.

Thomas E. Bishop: I never did testify. I was scheduled to testify either the next day or the day after that. And I talked to the investigators. They knew pretty well what I was going to testify to. And, I'm sure that Gray knew what I was going to testify to.

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Michael M. O'Brien: Gray?

Thomas E. Bishop: Gray. Because they tell the guys that are going to testify, what they got against him ... that's before they testify, anyhow. So he probably knew what I was going to testify to. And, I didn't care. I was, at that point, fed up with it.

Michael M. O'Brien: Well the interesting thing is that, from what I read in the book, that Ehrlichman, I mean, here they have this guy inside the FBI (Gray) that they could use for political purposes.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: Ehrlichman says he's, you know, basically he's incompetent. Is that right?

Thomas E. Bishop: Well that's after they found out what he had done. Ehrlichman was one of his big supporters when he got nominated. But they found out, between that and later on, that what he wasn't very competent. And, that's when he started talking about Dean.

Michael M. O'Brien: But Ehrlichman seemed to say, wait a second, this guy's not competent and the other guys couldn't handle that because they had an insider in the FBI, who was giving them information and helping them out. I thought Ehrlichman was more of a political animal that would be really helpful over at the White House, if they had him in there.

Thomas E. Bishop: Well. I don't think he'd take a chance on somebody like that, to tell you the truth.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Uh-huh. Was there anybody in the Bureau that testified against Gray?

Thomas E. Bishop: No. Nobody got to.

Thomas E. Bishop: No. Nobody in the Bureau ever was called because of the fact that he resigned.

Michael M. O'Brien: What was the damaging testimony that hurt Gray?

Thomas E. Bishop: It wasn't so much damaging testimony as a lack of confidence in Gray.

- Thomas E. Bishop: Let's see, how's it go? Bucky Walters, one of the Agents and a good friend of mine, (he died recently), he got like a ground swell started in the Bureau, for Agents who are on duty, that said they lost all faith in Gray in light of what they were learning coming out in the hearings. And, that was about the final blow as far as Gray was concerned. He could see that he had no support in the Bureau and his White House support was disappearing and he knew he was not going to beat the groundswell. He didn't want that label put on him.
- Michael M. O'Brien: You know, going back to the Gray incident connected to Watergate, he was indicted and charges were eventually dropped.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah, they were dropped. Yeah.
- Michael M. O'Brien: And people, because of that, connect him to maybe being Deep Throat. Do you think it was him?
- Thomas E. Bishop: I don't think he knew enough about anything.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Oh. You don't think he knew enough about the case and what was going on?
- Thomas E. Bishop: I don't know who it was.
- Michael M. O'Brien: So as you look back on the Watergate and all this stuff that goes on, what are your reflections on Gray and the whole Watergate issue?
- Thomas E. Bishop: Well, I think ... let's start at the very beginning. The young guys there, Liddy and his cohorts, they were trying to get themselves recognized by Nixon, so they'd get better jobs under Nixon than what they had. Simply self-praising themselves. They were trying to do something that would catch the President's eye and he'd appoint someone to be in charge of this or that.
- Thomas E. Bishop: That's the first phase of it. Then, after that, they had the ... ah geez, what order to put this in.
- Thomas E. Bishop: The guys who were involved in the break-in saw that their chances were slim to none and didn't admit to anything because the White House was not going to stand behind them. And, so they figured hell, we're in trouble now.

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- Thomas E. Bishop: We're going to get prosecuted and we're not going to be protected. So everything was happening, coming at, pointing at Gray, from all different directions. I don't think he was even aware of the break-in at the Watergate Hotel. I don't think he was aware of it until after it had happened. But, it was all stuff that would reflect on him and make the case against him stronger than it was.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Do you think his actions, like sending out the teletype about the survey and all that ...
- Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Do you think that was political naiveté? Or was it trying to ingratiate himself?
- Thomas E. Bishop: He'd do anything that the White House asked him to do. He did a lot of things like that and got the FBI involved in doing it because he said to do it. And, I told Dave Kinley and Mark Felt what I was thinking about the political thing and of every Field Office, what their attitude would be.
- Clarence Campbell: You're right though because in the book, Ungar's book, he said, "One thing Gray had was this incredible sense of loyalty to whoever his boss was.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.
- Clarence Campbell: You know from the time he was Advisor to Nixon and all the way through, and that just carried over, you know, basically if his boss told him to do something, he would move, heaven and earth to get that done because he was loyal to his superior.
- Michael M. O'Brien: So he really wanted to be the Director of the FBI.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah. From the time he got in the Department, this is how it was.
- Michael M. O'Brien: So you never, in all your years in the Bureau, you never really saw it so politicized, I mean, following Gray.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Oh. Never.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

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Thomas E. Bishop: There had never been any questions that were automatically disapproved. I mean, they never had any. But they changed the whole business of the Bureau's attitude of what they did. Did it while they were in power.

Clarence Campbell: It's interesting because you look at some of these, the congratulatory letters that you got from Gray, I guess he was in the hospital and you sent him a card and he thanked you for that.

Thomas E. Bishop: Right.

Clarence Campbell: And then he said, on March 8th of '73, like two months or so after Tom retired, he says, "Dear Tom, It occurred to me that you may wish to have the copies of my prepared testimony that's before the Judiciary Committee of the United States Senate."

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: "I send these to you because you devoted so many years of your life to making the FBI the institution that it is in our country."

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Signed, L. Patrick Gray

He's getting ready for testimony and he wanted Tom on his side.

Thomas E. Bishop: Everybody he could get on his side.

Clarence Campbell: Kind of mollify them, you know, so they wouldn't get out and start talking about some of these ...

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Yeah.

Clarence Campbell: And then a week later, he sends Tom, "Dear Tom, Enclosed is the copy of the March issue of The Investigator, which reflects a tribute to you on page 10. I thought you'd be interested in seeing it." As if you don't get The Investigator.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. That was put out by my Division.

Clarence Campbell: But this one is signed, "Pat Gray."

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- Michael M. O'Brien: A friendly reminder.
- Clarence Campbell: Not L. Patrick, but Pat Gray.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Oh boy.
- Clarence Campbell: And then the last letter that we have here, July 12th, '73, six months after I retired, from Clarence Kelley, who, by this time, had been appointed Director.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Clarence Kelley, a friend of mine.
- Clarence Campbell: "Dear Tom, Yours is one of the first letters I received in my appointment as Director and I want you to know how much it meant to me to know that you were behind me and that I could count on you. Now I'm in Washington and it's comforting to know you're close by living in Annandale, Virginia and wanting to help." And then he signed "Clarence."
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah.
- Clarence Campbell: Then he says, underneath, in his own handwriting, Kelley says, "Do you remember the stew at Carl's house? I still get a laugh out of it."
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. He was, he was out of the Bureau and Carl was Agent in Charge in Kansas City. I was giving a speech in Kansas City, Clarence was not in the Bureau any longer; he was Chief of Police in Kansas City.
- Carl invited Clarence and I to his house for dinner and his poor wife didn't have any notice, he didn't tell her, so we had stew. She was saying sorry we don't have anything fancy for you, but in France they call this ... it's a long name for what stew is. Clarence and I looked at each other and we both said it at the same time, "We always called it stew." And, anyway, we probably embarrassed the hell out of her but she took it in a good way. But, that's what he was talking about. Stew. I'm sorry but I just can't remember Carl's last name.
- Clarence Campbell: I don't know if we'll have any additional interviews, but I really thank you for your insights into an exciting time in Bureau history. And I'm sure that people who will listen to this.

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Thomas E. Bishop: I don't think anybody will want to even listen to it.

Michael M. O'Brien: They will.

Thomas E. Bishop: I'm not really organized well. I didn't really get organized right because I didn't know which way you were coming at me from.

Clarence Campbell: Well, that's why I used Ungar's book as an outline and it refreshes your memory.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yes.

Clarence Campbell: But it was fascinating for Mike and I to do the interview.

Michael M. O'Brien: Did we miss anything, Tom?

Thomas E. Bishop: I think you pretty well found out ... it is disjointed but it seems like we got it all in there.

Clarence Campbell: It's all there. We'll let the Bureau sort it out.

Thomas E. Bishop: Good for them. Somebody, whoever in the Bureau has to sort it out, he's got a hell of a job. He really has a tough job.

Clarence Campbell: Great. Okay.

Michael M. O'Brien: Were you upset when you left the Bureau?

Thomas E. Bishop: No.

Michael M. O'Brien: No?

Thomas E. Bishop: I was looking forward to it. I was looking forward to it sometime before I retired, even.

Michael M. O'Brien: You sounded like you were upset with Gray.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah I was upset with Gray but I got along fine with everyone else I worked with in the Bureau.

Michael M. O'Brien: But you left that and that was it?

Thomas E. Bishop: That was it. Like I told those people, that was another part of my life, a separate part of my life.

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Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah. Yeah. I feel the same way.

Thomas E. Bishop: After I retired and moved out here, I didn't do anything and didn't want to do anything. I had several offers of good jobs and even offers to write books about my Bureau career. I turned down all of them. By good management of my money and of my investments, I could retire and live comfortably. My days in the FBI are over and that is over and is just another life.

Clarence Campbell: Good interview.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. I don't know, it's not a very good interview.

Clarence Campbell: Sure it was. You're trying to recall what happened 30, 40 years ago.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. That's right. You're right. I didn't realize it, I guess.

Clarence Campbell: Well, I'll tell ya, you did a hell of a job.

Thomas E. Bishop: Ahh yeah.

Clarence Campbell: Proud to be part of it.

Michael M. O'Brien: Who'd you think Deep Throat was anyway?

Thomas E. Bishop: I don't have any idea.

Michael M. O'Brien: You know about the red dress comment that was made about Hoover.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah. Well, you know the guy who started that whole thing was some British guy named Edwards, or Edward.

Michael M. O'Brien: Right.

Thomas E. Bishop: I was sitting home having breakfast one morning several years after I retired and the telephone rings. And he introduced himself as whatever his name was, Edwards or Edwin, or something, and he said, "I'm calling you from Europe." He says, "I'm writing a book on the FBI and Mr. Hoover and I would like to come over there and interview you in-depth, about your relations with him."

Thomas E. Bishop: So I said, "As far as I'm concerned I don't have an objections to talking to you, but I want you to know before we even deal with each other, that if it's anything derogatory about Mr. Hoover I will not contribute to it, because I have no derogatory stuff about Hoover." He said, "Well, I'll call you back and make an appointment."

He never did call back, which made me think the only thing he wanted was to do a hatchet job on Hoover. He never asked me any questions, but that's where he was, that's what he did want to find, but I thought it was not good, I could tell this was going to be a hatchet job. And, that's the one, he's the one that got things started off with the wife of one of Hoover's friends. That guy, I forgot his name, but he was a friend of Hoover. His wife was a lush and she was, apparently, in her cups one time and was talking to this author about Hoover. And told him that Hoover was at a dinner party in a woman's dress.

Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: That couldn't possibly happen. But he put it in his book, unsubstantiated. And it was picked up from there by everybody and it was amazing that so many people picked up and repeated that story.

Michael M. O'Brien: From one woman who made up a story that was never proven.

Thomas E. Bishop: I guarantee it. Gossip is really an amazing type of thing. She chose the power of the press to get attention to a completely false story.

Michael M. O'Brien: They showed an interview of her on some TV station. She said she went to the door of a house where there was a party in progress. She knocked on the door and she saw somebody that looked like Hoover, dressed in a woman's red dress. Nobody else has ever confirmed that story. She's the only one that ever came up with that story. And that has become like, you know, a legend.

Thomas E. Bishop: Oh yeah.

Clarence Campbell: That is the first thing people ask you.

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Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.

Thomas E. Bishop: Everybody does that.

Clarence Campbell: And I always tell them, I say, "If Hoover was gay, one of his Agents in the Bureau would have found out about it and used it to get his Office of Preference or something."

Michael M. O'Brien: Sure.

Thomas E. Bishop: I tell them I saw him every day, and his office was right across the hall from mine. I would certainly have found out about it.

Michael M. O'Brien: Well what was his main strength and his main weakness?

Thomas E. Bishop: Well, let's see. Strength, he believed in himself, and he also was a patriot. He felt he was really doing things for the government and he thought his job was a valuable job. And it was his job. And he did as good a job as anybody could do in the job. When you think of all the things that he initiated through the Bureau and in overall law enforcement itself, it's just amazing what he did.

He, personally, was a strange man. In fact, he said he had a temper. But he also did things that you wouldn't expect him to do. He did things for me, I mean, that I wouldn't expect him to do.

Thomas E. Bishop: I never will forget, one day I was on the phone all day with some newspaper people who were out to get the Bureau about some story. I forget what the story was, and I was fighting with them all day long. About 9 o'clock, I was still in there working. I got a call on Hoover's private line. He says, "Bishop." I said, "Yes." He said, "You're still here?" I said "Yes." He said, "Why don't you go home, you've had a hard day." And, that was true but he, you know, he let me know that I was working my ass off and he knew it.

Michael M. O'Brien: That he appreciated it.

Thomas E. Bishop: Yeah. Yeah.

Michael M. O'Brien: What would you say his biggest weakness was?

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- Thomas E. Bishop: He jumped off the, he jumped off ... how can I say this ... he, he was too, when you'd do something, without thinking.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Impulsive? Impulsive?
- Thomas E. Bishop: Impulsive.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Yeah.
- Thomas E. Bishop: And that controlled a lot of the things he did. He made enemies through his compulsive, impulsiveness, and he made friends through it. I mean, he would do things really make you sick to your stomach. You know, I would be so mad at him. But then the next day he'd do something that you, that you didn't want to leave.
- Michael M. O'Brien: It's interesting you said that he didn't hold a grudge. He sort of forgot the next day and just went on.
- Thomas E. Bishop: That one of the reasons I liked working for him because he'd chew me out regularly, and the next day I'd say, "Oh, boy, I hate to even go in today." And then he'd be like it never happened. And that's why I liked him. Yeah.
- Michael M. O'Brien: He was a strange man and as you say.
- Thomas E. Bishop: After Mr. Hoover's death and shortly before I retired, we had lined up a well-known author named Don Whitehead who wanted to write a book about the Bureau, Hoover and Tolson. Whitehead had previously written a very favorable book about the Bureau entitled The FBI and he knew a lot about the inside workings of the FBI. When he wrote that book, we took him in for about three months studying the inside workings of the FBI and personal data on Hoover and Tolson. We asked Tolson if it would be alright. His answer was that he didn't want any books written about him. I don't think Mr. Hoover would have told us that. But that's what he said, so we just dropped the subject. Since then nobody has written an authorized book on Hoover.
- Michael M. O'Brien: Well. Fascinating history.
- Thomas E. Bishop: Yes, it is.

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