

The John H. Glenn, Jr.
Oral History Project

Interview 5
(Listed Interview 21)

at the John Glenn School of Public Affairs,
The Ohio State University

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Jeffrey W. Thomas
Interviewer

[Interview 5, Tape 1, Side A]

THOMAS: This is the fifth of a series of oral history interviews with Senator John Glenn. Today is January 13, 2009. This interview is taking place at the John Glenn School of Public Affairs of The Ohio State University. My name is Jeff Thomas.

Senator Glenn, today I would like to focus on your business career during the ten year period from 1964 to 1974, and your political activities that culminated in your election to the U.S. Senate in 1974. On January 1, 1964, you officially retired from the U.S. Marine Corps and entered the world of business. Can you talk about a bit about this transition from the military to the corporate world, and the offers you received during that time period?

SEN. GLENN: Well, I had planned, when I was leaving NASA, and leaving the Marine Corps, to go straight into politics and run for the Senate. But I was hurt for the better part of a year, in a bathroom fall at home, an accident. So that left me out of kilter with running for the office that I had planned to

run for. So what was I going to do after I got recovery? I had to decide what I was going to do. We were not financially independent, and all I had at that time was my Marine retirement money. And so there had been some talk about business interests, and would I want to get into the business world. So I looked into it. That's how it came about.

Looking back on it now, that fall may have been a blessing in disguise, because once we got into the business world, I was fortunate, and I was pretty good at some of the business things. I made some good investments there, which gave us the financial security that has lasted the rest of our lives to date. So this entry into the business world was not all bad.

I had had immediately after the orbital flight in 1962—there had been a number of companies that had approached a lawyer that represented the astronauts about whether I would be interested in doing things like advertising, which I did not. I did not want my space experiences to be used on the side of a box of breakfast cereal or something. One of the breakfast cereal companies, as a matter of fact, made an offer. As you can imagine, now this was back in 1962, and their first offer was for a million dollars, if I would do one of the pictures on the side of their cereal. I didn't want that at all. There's nothing wrong with advertising, but I just didn't see that I wanted to use the space experience for personal gain. In my view at least, it would cheapen that experience by just commercializing on it. So I didn't want to do that. But their first

offer was for a million, and that was in 1962. I don't know what would be akin to today but I suppose it would be like five or ten million today. For somebody who grew up with no money in New Concord, Ohio through the Great Depression that was quite an offer. Leo DeOrsey, the attorney at the time, came to me with that. He sort of knew my views on things and he said if I wanted him to bid them up to see what he could get them up to, because this was their first offer, that he would do that. I said, "No, don't even bother with that."

But I did want to go into business and make more money than I had in the past if I could. And do it well. That was one reason that I settled on Royal Crown. When some of the representatives of Royal Crown came and they talked about my going with the company, the first thing I told the man who was sent to talk to me was, "I'm not going to do any advertising, I'm not going to be a shell and be out talking about the product and selling it and putting my name on the line as though it was the greatest thing I'd ever tried." If they were interested in my coming with the company in a business sense, to develop, and be on the board and do things like that and make decisions, then I'd consider it. Royal Crown was the only company that would do it that way. I had offers from a number of different companies. But all of them had in the back of their minds that I'd be into advertising and billboards and radio and things like that eventually. Royal Crown understood right from the start that that was not going to be what I was going to do.

So I went with Royal Crown at considerably less money than I would have made with some other companies because of those restrictions that I put on it. But nevertheless, it was more money than I had ever had come in with a paycheck and so I was quite happy with it. I had some stock options with it that looked good at that time, although those fell flat a little bit later, too. But anyway, that was my entry into the business world. I was on the Board of Directors. I was looking into expansion of the company into other areas, too, diversification. I made a number of trips looking into things; like there was a lamp company and a home decorating company that appeared to have a pretty good fit with some of the things that Royal Crown was doing. So I made a lot of business proposals in that area.

Then wound up being—they wanted me to be head of Royal Crown International. They had an international spread going on, or expansion going on. So I agreed to that and removed the headquarters from Ft. Lauderdale, the international headquarters, from Fort Lauderdale to New York. Annie and I then had an apartment in New York and spent most of two years travelling pretty much all over the world, in places where there were contacts about people who might want to franchise with Royal Crown. I enjoyed that. We enjoyed the travel. We had hired a man who had been in international business with one of the tobacco companies, Morgan Kramer was his name. He was very knowledgeable in

international business. And so I traveled with him. We made several world wide trips. So it was very instructive, also.

THOMAS: One of your other business ventures during the 1960's was you partnered with Henri Landwirth and others, to develop some hotels in the Orlando area. Do you want to talk about that a little bit?

SEN. GLENN: Henri Landwirth, when I first met him, he was the innkeeper at the Holiday Inn in Coco Beach, when we first started going there with the space program. And Henry was a very interesting person. He was a survivor of the Holocaust. He and his twin sister had been in five different camps in the Holocaust. His mother and father had been killed early on in the war. Henri finally came to this country after the war. He was taken out once when the other people were shot and he was left. He had been hit in the head by a gun butt by one of the guards, and he was left unconscious. He came to and he was wandering around and pretty soon there were Americans around instead of Germans. So then he worked with the American forces there after the war and was over in Europe for a while.

Then he came to this country with no money, and worked in a hotel in New York for a while, then went to hotel school I believe. I think it was Cornell or some place. Then was in Florida and had been night managing a small hotel in Miami. The man that owned it liked Henri and gave him a chance to open the first motel up at Coco Beach, which was the Starlight. And Henri, as a hotel and motel operator, was a natural. He

was very, very good. And in spite of his past he had a wonderful sense of humor and by the time we started going with the space program, Henri had moved over to become the innkeeper at the Holiday Inn. And that's where we got to know him. Then out of that association, Leo DeOrsey, our attorney, had decided he wanted to take some of the money that we had invested in another hotel down there, called the Cape Coloman because it never did much good. But it was one that was owned by the first seven astronauts. We had a small interest in it.

THOMAS: This was in Cape Canaveral?

SEN. GLENN: Yes, this was Cape Canaveral. We didn't have a major majority interest in it, but it was an investment that didn't really pan out. But Henri and I had become very close friends. I was the Godfather to his daughter. If you can imagine, Henri's wife had been Catholic. He was Jewish of course, out of the Holocaust—and me as a Presbyterian Godfather. So I thought this child either has all the disadvantages or advantages, I'm not sure which.

Anyway, Henri then was interested in expanding and doing some other motel development, and asked me if I wanted to be part of that. And of course I didn't have any money to invest big time, but could get a minority interest in some things like that. So we went to see Kemmens Wilson in Memphis, Tennessee, who was the head of Holiday Inn. So we knew him. He said, "What did we want in the way of a franchise?" That he would help us get it. And so that's how I got into the motel business.

We were into several different ventures with Henri and then John Quinn as another partner, who really was a real estate man in Orlando, who really knew the land and the real estate business and investing business. And then later on, we connected up also with Ed Rugman from Boston, who actually had several motels. We developed, I think, four different motels we developed and sold.

The only one that I really lost money on was early on here in Columbus, Ohio. I had thought for some time when Henri suggested investing in Holiday Inn. I thought that here in Columbus, I thought the Ohio State campus here would be a wonderful spot for a good Holiday Inn. All the visitors, over 50,000 student body here and all of this—people back and forth, and all that. And so I had talked to Holiday Inn about getting a franchise here. They teamed me up then with two other people that they knew that were interested in doing the same thing. The three of us then got the franchise and built the Holiday Inn over here on Lane Avenue, which starting off was an absolute disaster. It did not take off the way we had predicted and the way that the business model predicted. I had put all the money that I had into my portion of that, the three of us. And the other people were already Holiday Inn operators with several hotels. So they had more money than I had by far. It came down to where we each were going to have to put in more money to keep the thing going. And I didn't have anymore money to put in. I wasn't going to go out and borrow money when it had already been a poor investment at

that point. So one of the partners then offered to take over from the other two of us, if we just contributed what we had in it. There wasn't any buying and purchase price, and he thought he could develop it through the years and it would be a profitable operation, but it was going to take some time. And so that's what we did.

At that point, I was back to square one again. I was back to basically zero in the bank account again because that one went under and I had put everything I had into that. That was a good lesson in business, also. That no matter how good things look, it sometimes doesn't always pan out the way they are supposed to. But Henri was the one who started me off in this area of Holiday Inns, and we did have I guess a grand total of, through the next 25 or 30 years, we developed, I guess maybe it was five Holiday Inns at different times, and then sold them. It was not a huge amount of money involved with any of them because we had loans that were as much as you could get on property like that. But they were profitable. And I don't want to downplay it. But it was a great experience to be part of developing a business like that and see how you do it, and the banks and the loans and the draws. To have a failure here in Columbus with one of them may have been one of the best things that happened because it taught me a lot of good lessons about business, too.

THOMAS: The Lane Avenue venture, was that before Orlando?

SEN. GLENN: No, that was completely separate. That was a completely separate thing, where I had an interest in being here in Columbus and having observed the

campus and this area here. I had been starting ahead to develop that myself, and teaming up with the other two people. I went to Muncie, Indiana and Louisville, Kentucky, and then the three of us contracted for it and built it over here. So that was no connection with Henri.

THOMAS: These were going on at the same time then?

SEN. GLENN: Yes, correct.

THOMAS: Do you think your corporate career helped prepare you for your career in politics, for when you got into the Senate?

SEN. GLENN: I do. I think it was excellent training. You're dealing so much with business and the corporate world when you're in the Senate. To have a little insight on exactly how some of those things were done, the loans and the dark side of business as well as the success side. It was something I had never been exposed to before. My dad of course had a very small plumbing business in New Concord, and I knew enough about profit and loss and things like that. I had had an introductory course in economics. But there's nothing like being out there in the business world and traveling, particularly the international business where you had a chance to see some of the things that went on with international business and how offers are made and what people are looking for.

One of the countries, just as an example, one of the countries we were in, we were down there almost ready to close the whole deal. It was going to be developing a whole series of franchises for Royal Crown. It was going to be taken on a country wise basis. It was going to be a big

deal. But at the last minute then, he wanted our advertising money, instead of being sent to the company, to come through him personally. And he would see that it got to the company. Well, it was obvious what was going on. I remember it very well. I had a personal discussion with him about what was going on. And we walked off from it. I wouldn't be part of it, because he was trying to skim the whole operation to begin with, to set it up that way to begin with.

So you run into things like that in the international world that are eye openers, too. But international investment, the business and franchising and things like that were a real education during those years that I was in business, and all the years that I was involved with Holiday Inns or with motels.

THOMAS: So the travel you did helped prepare you a bit for the travel you did as a Senator?

SEN. GLENN: Yes, I think so, because there's nothing like being in some of these countries to help understand a little bit more about them. People sometimes talk about the excessive travel of congressmen and senators, travel abroad, as though every time they travel abroad it's a vacation—quite the opposite. Do you enjoy the trips? Yes, you do. And I went on many trips. I never went on a single trip in the Senate that I didn't think was extremely informative, and in my view you should almost make it a requirement that congressmen and senators get outside this country, so they know a little bit about what's going on outside of our own borders.

People criticize such things and I know that won't sit well. There are people who abuse this, who make trips just for the vacation aspects of it. But most of the travel, international travel, out of Washington, is informative enough that you come back with a real understanding of the people and their needs, and where we fit in, and their thinking. It's just a whole different experience than you get from reading a book.

THOMAS: During the 60's, you traveled a bit for NASA. We talked about trips to Europe that you made for them and to Japan. Other than NASA, were you involved in any other organizations during the 1960's?

SEN. GLENN: No, not really. I had left NASA basically because NASA—I didn't know whether there was going to be any intent to ever use me on another space flight. And in fact, what I had been led to believe, as we covered before I think, it looked as though I was going to be just doing trainee and management duties. As it turned out later, President Kennedy didn't want me to be used again, as I read in one of his biographies later on. So I went into, I felt even in spite of the fact that I had left NASA, that that been such a big experience, it was still at that time unique enough that if I could represent the United States as a private citizen even for NASA, in some of this travel, like to Japan and Europe, why I was quite happy to do that. And so that's how some of that occurred.

THOMAS: In 1967, you did a program for the Great Explorations series, where you traced the route through Africa undertaken in 1871 by Sir Henry Stanley

in his search for Dr. David Livingston. Can you talk a little bit about how that came about?

SEN. GLENN: Yes, that was really fun. David Wolpert was a Hollywood producer who had done a lot of documentaries. He had come up with this concept of Great Explorations. What he was going to do was to take someone that was known and send him to a certain area, and follow the track that that original exploration had followed, and see how things were different, how they were the same. The first one he decided to do was Stanley going to look for Livingston in Africa that of course was so formative later on in all of the European nations going down and carving out pieces of Africa for their spheres of influence, some of the effects of which we live with to this very day. So it was a formative time period. He asked me if I would want to go on that and I said I would love to do that.

The original plan was for me to go and I thought this was going to be a very big thing, a big experience for the family, too, if I could work it so we took the family on this. Basically, we had come to an agreement on doing it, except I insisted on taking the family. Well, that stopped them a little bit. But we worked it out so that the family could go. There were parts of the trip that were—Annie and our daughter Lynn—certain parts of the trip were going to be more arduous than other parts of it. They were out at the Mt. Kinley Safari Club, which was a place in Africa that was well known at the time. They stayed there a few days while Dave and I, our son who was with me all the time, were on the trip. We followed as

closely as we could the exact trail that Stanley followed going and looking for Livingston.

It was fascinating because I wanted to make it and I wasn't playing a role. I was following the same way, and during the filming they would comment on Stanley had done this here and so on, and what we observed with so and so. I had a copy of one of the original copies of his book he did after that trip, so we could pretty well pinpoint the same places where they had camped and spent any time, which we did. It was about six weeks as we worked our way up and across.

We started out—I wanted to start out just like Stanley did, through the bush, on the safari. Well, they don't do that much foot safaris. They don't do that in Africa anymore. But we started out that way and hired some of the people to be porters, and off we went through the bush, just like Stanley had for the first couple of days. It was fascinating to do this and sort of putting your mind's eye a century and a half or so behind you, to experience things pretty much the way Stanley had back in those days.

It started a little bit differently. We went out on an Arab dhow, on the ships with the peculiar type sail, went out a few miles offshore in the Indian Ocean on an Arab dhow, and then came ashore at the little town of Bagamoyo, which is just above Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. We landed right on the beach, just like Stanley had done in an Arab dhow way back in the old days, and camped there a few days while we got organized on the beach. And then took off on our foot safari for the first couple of days.

Well, after that then we went through with Land Rovers and trucks to take us where we went. In fact, at one point, when we were up in the middle of this trip, there was a section where Stanley had spent a lot of time going through a certain area from, I forget the name of the town now. But anyway, on that part of it there's a railroad there now. So we put our Jeeps and our trucks up on a flat car and rode across that part of Africa on a train, a steam train.

So it was a wonderful trip and a wonderful experience. We even, although they had obtained a hunting permit for me, I hadn't planned to use it, but one of the experiences we had that was a little bit unusual was we camped by the Ugalla River, which is where Stanley had a camp for some time. Where we camped there was a little village near there where the people came down to that area to fish during that part of the year. Then they would dry the fish and take them back to their village, which was some miles away. But they planted corn while they were there and things like that.

When we camped, they came over and wondered if we had a hunting permit because there was a rogue elephant with only one tusk. The other tusk had been broken off apparently. This elephant had been kicked out of the herd and it kept coming in and eating the little corn crop that they had planted. They had already applied for the ranger to come in and shoot this elephant and take it out. The ranger had not come yet, or

the warden, the game warden. If we had a hunting permit, would we hunt the elephant?

Well, we hadn't planned to do that, but we had all the right equipment anyway. And so that was something. We went out driving and went in the direction in general where they thought the elephant might be. And sure enough we could spot it with binoculars, off in a little stand of trees. So we drove around. Then I got out and went downwind and worked my way up very carefully hiding behind one termite mound to another and behind the bushes and so on, until I got up close. And the elephant, apparently it sensed I was there and charged. It was like something you would see in the movies sometimes. Anyway, I shot the elephant and we got it and it just had one tusk. The other tusk, where it had broken off under the skin, was just big massive pus and so on. The elephant wasn't going to be long for this world anyway.

But the other people were backing me up with their guns behind where I was if the elephant charged. It charged and I hit it, and it didn't go down right then. It ran off a little ways through a clearing and we were running after it. It stopped in the clearing and I could get a good shot, and so I got it on that one. But that was quite an experience, to have a charging elephant out there. It was a new one that I'd never experienced before.

Then the people came out from the village and they thought it was really great because they butchered this elephant and took some of the

meat, stringy long pieces of meat and dried them like beef jerky. The tusk, it wasn't a record tusk or anything, it was good size, it was 67 pounds of ivory, which I still have mounted on the wall on some brass fittings at home. But I have great memories of that. That's a long story but it's was an interesting one.

THOMAS: How big was the production crew or the group that went there?

SEN. GLENN: The whole crew I guess was maybe, they hired a lot of the native Tanzanians to go on the trip. Of those people there were probably, I would guess maybe 15 or 18. But our immediate party that went from this country, cameramen, soundmen, the director, the white hunter that went with us that really knew where we were going and what the dangers were, or how to take care of things, Harold Crouse was his name, from Michigan. But I suppose we had maybe, well including my family then, we had maybe a dozen people. So the whole crew was a traveling crew of probably 25 or 30.

But it was quite an experience. David Wolpert—it was sold as an hour documentary on ABC. It was shown back at that time. He at that time had wanted—the next one was going to be following the route of Genghis Khan, going from Italy clear through and up into China, way back. And I thought that was going to be a great one. But then they lost their sponsorship for this and the whole thing was never really revised. So, my going through the whole trek of where Genghis Khan went sort of fell by the wayside.

But the one with Stanley, the natives called him Bulamatari, stone breaker translated, but he was tough. You read some of the things that happened back then and his crew revolted once. But we wound up then, at the end of this safari, and following the trail as closely as we could, we wound up by Lake Tanganyika, where there is the little town of Kigoma, which is where he found Dr. Livingston. And there's a memorial there to it today, on the spot commemorating it. So we followed the whole thing up to that point. And did a little filming there, and then we flew out. We didn't make the safari coming clear back out. But that trip was one of the greatest trips I've been on.

THOMAS: After 1964, your friendship with Robert Kennedy became closer than it was, I believe, prior to that date. Why do you think the two of you became so close?

SEN. GLENN: I don't really know. I think I had political interests. I was already going to run, and Bobby, of course, was very much involved with politics. And I think some of my concerns about where we were going just as a nation and his were very parallel, even though I had not been in the political arena at that point. Bobby and Ethel had invited us to go with them on a couple of camping trips, and skiing, and things like that. And we enjoyed it, and we enjoyed each other's company. There was always a lot of discussion of what's going on in the world in government, and it was fascinating.

THOMAS: You visited at the house there at Hickory Hill on occasion. Can you describe some of those visits?

SEN. GLENN: Some of them were very common, not much going on. But back in those days, too, when Ethel decided to have a big party, it could be quite a party with a lot of people and a lot of notables and people that I had only read about in the paper. It was a chance to meet some of these people who were very active in government and international affairs, also. They were always very enjoyable, and I guess I'd say at that time, a side of Washington society that Annie and I had never really been exposed to. Some of the dinners and things like that. We did have a real cross-section of some of the most important people in government or most influential people in government or writing or the arts or whatever.

So that was an experience, also. And the things I think we remember more than just the parties are the times when we were off together, like the float trip in Idaho down the Middle Fork or the Salmon River where we camped out on sand bars and floated along the during the day for several days. And a big camp fire at night. Just nothing formal or anything like that, you just sit around talking and sharing views on things.

One thing Annie always recounts off of one of those times was the discussion turned to the superficiality of so many things. About how many people you really get to know well, that you can really count as your honest to goodness close friends. And I remember Bobby talking one time about, who would you want, can you name the people you would want as

your pallbearers at your funeral. And I remember, in other words what he was saying was, we had talked about this: how many people could you really absolutely trust 100%, and what percent of people are those who are just acquaintances or temporary alliances, in politics or in government. And Annie always remembered Bobby having trouble getting to fill up the fingers of one hand with the people he felt he could really trust.

I thought that was very informative, too. In other words, while you may work very closely with people, everyone has their own interests. There's nothing wrong with that, they represent different interests. But the number of people that you really get to where you have a friendship or a trusting, lasting relationship with, that number of people is very small.

There were a lot of good things like that. I always remember being invited up to Hyannis Port and water skiing with Jackie Kennedy and things like that, that will always be great memories to us.

THOMAS: So your friendship with Bobby Kennedy sort of expanded your horizons in a social context?

SEN. GLENN: I think so. Well, yes, I'd say that. It wasn't that we were dopes from the wilderness or anything like that. But to be with people like that and discussing the affairs of government and what was going on in the world, it was very informative, very educational.

THOMAS: In 1968, Bobby Kennedy decided to challenge President Johnson for the presidential nomination. Were you aware of this beforehand?

SEN. GLENN: I was very much aware that he was thinking about it. We had talked about it confidentially. But as far as knowing his exact plans, I knew a day or so ahead when he was going to announce, but it wasn't anymore than that, although we had talked about it, what he was thinking about doing before that. Once again, he felt, what was basic to him was what's the future of the country? If he wanted to run against Lyndon, if that was the direction that things were going and he felt that the country needed a change of direction and he could be the means by which that occurred, why he was willing to do it. And that was sort of what was behind it.

THOMAS: He disagreed with what the Johnson administration was doing?

SEN. GLENN: Yes, and that was it. He thought he could do a better job of that. Talking about war and all the things that were going on, he just felt that was wrong.

THOMAS: So you got on board with the campaign fairly early then?

SEN. GLENN: Yes, we did—in fact, very early. He asked me to go with him on the very first campaign swing he made, and as I recall, it was down to Nashville. He was to speak to some of those down there and I went with him. We stayed at the home of John Siegenthaler, who was the publisher of the local paper, the Nashville Tennessean, I believe it was. And stayed at his home.

We were with him off and on. I couldn't go fulltime on the campaign. But I was with him whenever I could during the campaign,

including right up to the last when Bobby was killed. I was in California at that time.

THOMAS: What were your duties during the campaign?

SEN. GLENN: Oh, sometimes, rather particularly, I would make a little speech on my own sometimes prior to his. Sometimes I would introduce him. There were occasions when I was off on a side trip of my own to represent him at some event that he couldn't attend. In fact, on the afternoon of the day he was shot, I had flown up to go to something where—an appearance at a state fair either north or south, I think it was South Dakota. I had flown up there and then flown back into Los Angeles that afternoon. So sometimes I'd be with him and sometimes I'd be at other places. Usually, though, we were with him. I didn't go off on too many of the other swings myself. Anyway, I had an interesting group to travel with. Roosevelt Greer, Rosie Greer, the football player, traveled with us much of the time. Rayford Johnson was along a lot of the time. I was there. And so it was sort of a group that varied from time to time with Bobby.

But all during that time period when he was campaigning, crowds got more intense and more intense, and there became a lot more feeling in the campaign than had been in any political thing I had served with before that time. I think maybe it was even more intense in some respects than some of the excitement of this past year when Barack Obama was campaigning. Because the war, the Vietnam War, was on and he felt very

strongly about that. And the emotions in the country ran pro and con very, very high on the war.

Even the people—the board that I was on with Royal Crown when Royal Crown was headquartered in Columbus, Georgia, there were very, very conservative people on the board, some of whom did not think much of Bobby Kennedy. They saw him as some sort of liberal threat to the country, which I didn't see. So there was some feeling on the board when I was campaigning with Bobby, but we got by that alright because basically I thought it was what I should do at the time.

The day Bobby was shot, I might recount some of that a little bit. He and I—Annie was out in California and I had been up in South Dakota that day and flew back in. We joined them at the hotel up in the suite. There were so many California people wanting to be seen with Bobby, the platform was going to be filled up down below. And so I thought—so we just stayed up in the suite to watch on TV. And that's when he was shot. As quick as that occurred, we knew something had happened on TV. I went down as fast as I could, but by the time I got down and got through all the people, they had taken him to the hospital.

Loudon Wainwright, who was with Life Magazine and a good friend of ours, I ran into Loudon and he and I went out and literally ran out in the street and stopped a car and asked the man if he would take us to the hospital, literally commandeered a car in the middle of the street. And the guy said, "Yea, he would," and so he took us to the hospital.

Bobby still lived that night. Five of the Kennedy children were out there and they were over at the Belaire Hotel. Ethel asked if Annie and I would go over and let the kids know what had happened, that their dad had been hurt. Well, this was late enough in the evening by this time that the kids, most of them, were asleep. But anyway, we went over to the hotel. But then the next day, Ethel decided that they'd be better off—Bobby was still alive that next day, and Ethel decided it would be better off if the kids were back at Hickory Hill in Virginia, rather than out there. And so she asked if Annie and I, if we would take the kids back, and we did.

The president, Lyndon Johnson, had sent—he had called and said if we needed airplanes or anything like that, to let him know. And so we used, we had an Air Force airplane. And so Annie and I took the five kids and flew back from LA to Washington, and took the kids home there at Hickory Hill and stayed with them that night. Well, a small group got together that night there, Bobby's friends and people who knew him well, and literally laid out—we knew that it was very unlikely that Bobby was going to survive.

[Begin Tape 1, side B]

THOMAS: Okay, Senator, you were talking about taking the Kennedy children back to Hickory Hill.

SEN. GLENN: Yes, that second evening back there at Hickory Hill, we knew from talking to California that Bobby was probably not going to survive. So there were several of his friends there at Hickory Hill that evening. We literally laid out and planned the options of what would happen if Bobby died that night, and what the plans would be, to talk to the family about it, New York, and all the things that transpired after that. And so that was sort of—sitting back out on the patio behind their home there at Hickory Hill until quite late at night talking about that.

Well, that night is when Bobby passed away, when he died. And the next morning then, Annie and I were there, and a family friend, Susie Markham, who was a neighbor from down the street, not far away, who knew the kids all very well and had spent time around there. Susie Markham and I had the sad duty of sitting on the edge of the bed that morning and telling each kid their dad had passed away, he wasn't coming home. And that was probably the hardest thing I ever did in my life.

So it was a tough time period. And of course after that then, I wound up and went to New York and we were in the cathedral in New York. Andy Williams came up. I remember they wanted Andy to sing Battle Hymn of the Republic. We were up with the group in Jackie Kennedy's apartment I believe it was, and I got an encyclopedia out to get the words. I wrote out the words for Andy for some of the, not just the first one, but the several verses of the Battle Hymn of the Republic. You

hear that sung in St. Patrick's Cathedral, hearing the echo. That is something I'll never forget.

Different people came in and sort of stood honor guard at the casket there in the cathedral. And Dave, our son, was there. Dave had gotten to know Bobby well. Dave always remembers to this day the time he spent there as one of the honor guards.

After that, they took the casket down to the station. We had to take a window out of the car on the train to get the casket in. It was in the last car of the train as we rode slowly from New York. There must have been a million people along the tracks. The train couldn't continue—it took it way, way over. I don't know how much late we were getting into the station, but I remember coming down on the train with the coffin.

We were talking about how after we got to Washington, those of us who were going to be pall bearers; they had to fold the flag. I remember we practiced that. I was the only one who knew anything about how you fold a military flag at a funeral. So I remember we practiced that a couple of times coming down on the train. And going with Ethel, I still remember Ethel wanted to go down through the cars of the people that were on the train riding down—a lot of friends of Bobby and hers—and walking down the aisle with her when she wanted to thank people for coming and getting on the train.

Then coming to Washington, that was such a memorable night, because the burial was to be over in Arlington. From the Union Station

then the procession went through Washington. It was a beautiful night at Arlington. They had passed out thousands and thousands of candles. Just in the dark of the evening is when we were there and we lit these candles and then we had the service there by the graveside and folded the flag and gave the flag to Ethel. And then went out to their home for a little get-together, out at Hickory Hill again. So Bobby's passing, it was a very emotional time. That's about it.

THOMAS: Getting back a bit to his campaign, can you describe him on the campaign trail? What were some of his strengths on the campaign trail?

SEN. GLENN: Oh, he was a very intense type person. There was not a whole lot of joking. Bobby was a very—oh there were some jokes and some good times, too, but he was extremely serious about campaigning. He took every stop as a chance to get his message across. And the press always wanted to talk to him and usually there weren't too many times when he declined to talk to the press. A very hectic time because they were trying to get in as major a schedule as they possibly could. And almost every place you went into people wanted to see him. People wanted to touch him, just to be in contact. Almost everywhere we went there was some little parade of some kind, where you were in the back of a convertible or something. The crowd would break through police lines half the time just to touch him.

THOMAS: We talked a little bit earlier about how during the campaign the intensity increased and the crowds increased. Did Bobby Kennedy's intensity increase during that time period? Did he feed off the crowds?

SEN. GLENN: He was pretty intense to begin with. And I think it was more, yes I think he was encouraged by the fact that he was making progress and that the crowds were responding well to what he was saying. I don't even remember all the issues that he talked about at that time. But I know education was a big one.

One campaign stop I do remember very well was with the Black Panthers in Oakland, California. We were flying in and he was supposed to meet with them in a church somewhere in downtown Oakland. We were very late getting in, so the crowd had been there. The church was full. And we got there and they were going to let only Bobby in and probably be the only white person there in sight. I was with him and they weren't going to let me in—just going to let him in. Bobby insisted I come in with him, and so they put me in, too.

So we went in and it was a very memorable time. Their people—it was more Bobby listening than it was him talking—and they were just pouring their hearts out about how they were treated and what had happened in Oakland, the unfairnesses, and the education problems, and all the frustrations and difficulties of the Black community there in Oakland. This went on, I don't know, I guess we were there until 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning with this going on. It was more a time period of

Bobby listening than it was of him speaking. He spoke to them of course and talked to them a little bit.

But the intensity and the feelings of the people at that time about some of the perceptions that had resulted in the riots out there in Oakland, and this was back in the time when Cleveland up here, when it was burning, and there were riots in different parts of LA. Those were some very tough times and Bobby was sort of the person that I think many of those people saw as representing their interests and he represented the potential they had for changing the situation they were in and getting more fairness in the way they were treated.

Think how far we've come. I just talked to Annie about that just a day or so ago, how far we've come from those days when I was with him when the Black Panthers were literally giving their threats and leading some of the difficulties out there. How far we've come now, and next week, as we record this anyway, next week will be a time when we will swear in the first Black president of the United States. So do we have a long ways to go? Yes, we have a tremendously long ways to go yet before we can say that everything is fair and equal as we'd like it to be. But people do remember there has been a great deal of progress made, also, although even with what's happened in this last election, not enough, and that will eventually come, too. But when I compare it with what happened back in those days, when I met with them in Oakland, a lot of change.

THOMAS: Did participation in the campaign rekindle your political aspirations? Not that they had really died down.

SEN. GLENN: They hadn't died down. You never know what your own goal is going to be. Did I have a great interest in helping to work on some of these things, things that Bobby was concerned about? Yes, absolutely. Whether that was going to be an elected office or appointed positions or just working as a private citizen, I didn't know for sure.

Later on, when I did run, Bobby had encouraged me to run at one time. I had turned it down earlier because I hadn't been out of NASA long enough and hadn't been—my experiences I had had in the space program, I thought it was my duty to plow those back into other people and help them get going. So I had turned it down at that time. And then later, after President Kennedy was killed, was when I decided that I would run again. Bobby thought at that time that I didn't have enough time to organize a campaign. So anyway, things didn't work out at that time.

THOMAS: Did you stay in touch with the Democratic Party during the 1960's in Ohio? Did you have much to do with them?

SEN. GLENN: Yes, I ran the first time and I didn't make it. I was defeated in the primary against Howard Metzenbaum. And then I had to make a real decision. Was I going to stick with politics or was I going to do other things? There were a number of things. I could go back to school and I could do teaching and lots of things I thought about doing. But I decided that if I really wanted to devote a chunk of my life to being in politics,

well, we were far from being rich. I had made enough money in those intervening years that we were a little more financially independent than we had been before. And so I decided that I'd stick with it. So there was a period there for about four years after I lost to Howard Metzenbaum in the primary ...

THOMAS: This would have been in the 1970 primary election?

SEN. GLENN: Yes. I decided I was going to—and Howard had won that primary, not because he had any better ideas, but just because the people of Ohio and the Democratic Party, which we had to get through first, they knew him better. He had been to all of their meetings for years and years and years, ever since he was a younger person. He had contributed to every Democratic organization in the State of Ohio I think. And so was I going to stick with this or not? I decided I would.

So, while we were following some of the business pursuits in those years, I went to every Democratic event in the State of Ohio, I think. Went to—as we joked about it, went to every rubber chicken and 22 caliber pea dinner in the State of Ohio and got to know all the party leaders and the people at the local level. I think I was in every county in the State of Ohio at some time or other, at whatever Democratic dinner or function they were having. And so that was about a four year effort.

During that time period we remained in business and I was still doing some of the travel. But it was a time period where we were doing a lot of dual things. And so when I ran again I made it, and not only made

it, but made it big and wound up getting every county in Ohio, which is the only time it's ever been done. That was in the general, carried the primary, and then won the general election carrying every county. So it worked out.

THOMAS: In 1970, after John Gilligan was elected governor, he appointed you to chair the Citizens Task Force on Environmental Protection. Can you talk a little bit about this task force?

SEN. GLENN: Yes. There was a lot of talk about the environment and environmental matters and the EPA [Environmental Protection Agency]. But Ohio did not have an EPA. So I think what Jack had in mind, which is exactly the way it worked out, was the first step in establishing that in Ohio would be to put a group together to define exactly what could and should be done, what the status was in Ohio. And so he asked me head that up, and so I did. For the better part of a year we met and we had appointed people from all walks of life in Ohio. Labor and management, environment people and scientists and housewives, and you name it; we had a representative on that group. We had about—the group was I guess, the full committee was maybe 30 some people.

We had to decide early on whether we were going to break them up into subgroups and have them do sub-studies. One group would do rivers, one group would do air pollution, one group would do something else. I decided early on that you'd still have to work out the—even after they made their studies, you'd still have to bring it before the full group to

get the views of everybody on it. So might just as well meet as a committee as a whole all the time and not break up. And that's what we did. It made a very unusual group. But we had some great discussions in that.

Alan Parks, who had been on the governor's staff, Alan was our executive director. That's the first place I met Mary Jane Veno. She had been in the Department of Natural Resources and was sent over to help staff it.

So we made our report to the governor and a little presentation and a press conference and all. Jack Gilligan then used that as the basis for calling for the establishment of EPA in Ohio, which was passed. So we would play a role in that. It might have passed anyway without our efforts on that ETF, Environmental Task Force. It might have. But anyway, we played a role in the establishment of EPA in Ohio.

THOMAS: The Task Force sort of laid the ground work for the Ohio EPA?

SEN. GLENN: Yes. And different members of the task force, when they were having hearings on it then, different members, including myself, appeared before the committees that were looking into this, and gave testimony on what we had found during our deliberations.

THOMAS: In 1973, following the resignation of Eliot Richardson, President Nixon appointed William Saxbe as the U.S. Attorney General. This opened up a seat in the U.S. Senate from Ohio. Governor Gilligan ended up appointing

Howard Metzenbaum to that. This was something that you also were wanting at this point in time, wasn't it?

SEN. GLENN: It was and I was a little bitter at the time about this. I thought that was unfair the way things had gone. But that's the way it went. It was Gilligan's decision and that was that. There wasn't anything I could do about it. Howard had strong labor backing for that, which meant a lot to Gilligan. I think that was one of the main factors that got Howard selected.

THOMAS: Howard went on to lose against Robert Taft later.

SEN. GLENN: Yes.

THOMAS: What was your relationship with Governor Gilligan at this point?

SEN. GLENN: Well, there was a time period, let's see, I'm getting the years mixed up now here a little bit. When he had been re-elected, he wanted to—there were some people backing him, thinking that Jack Gilligan could run for president. And he wanted me in that second election [1974]. He wanted me to run as his lieutenant governor, with the idea that in mid-term as governor, he could run for the presidency. I would be lieutenant governor and the people of Ohio would not think too ill of him if I became the new governor if he was elected president. So that was his theory.

Well, as I said at that time, I didn't want to be governor, let alone lieutenant governor at that time. I was interested in the [U.S.] Senate. My interests were more nationally oriented and internationally oriented. And Jack and his chief of staff, Jack Hansen at that time, kept insisting and

insisting, and I kept resisting and resisting and resisting. Then finally it came to some threats about how I couldn't make it in the Senate without their support and the labor vote. He even called a meeting with the labor leaders of Ohio, where they had me in to talk to them and tell me about how I couldn't possibly make it without their backing. Push came to shove on this pretty much and they were very insistent about what I was going to do. And I was very insistent about what I was not going to do.

It got to the point where I finally said that if they persisted in this, that I was going to just have to just go public and we would just see what the people of Ohio thought about this. They thought I was joking on this or that I wouldn't do it. And I did. I went before one of these state executive committee meetings, I think it was, central committee or state executive committee, which was open to the press and laid out this whole thing. I said, "This is the time I'm going to run for the Senate. I'll either make it or forget it forever, one or the other." That's what I did. It was major news in the paper. It was headlines in the Columbus Dispatch the next day as I recall.

So we had our difficulties back in those days. Jack didn't make it to the presidency, but he went on to sustain his career as an educator out at Notre Dame. He's back and retired in Cincinnati now. I think he's on the school board in Cincinnati and still active in public affairs, which is good. I went ahead and made it to the Senate that time in spite of all the things I had been told about how impossible it would be for me to make it.

THOMAS: So you went ahead and ran against Howard Metzenbaum again in 1974 in the primary election.

SEN. GLENN: Yes, and made it.

THOMAS: One of the highlights of that campaign as I recall was a debate you had with Howard Metzenbaum at the Cleveland City Club, rather a memorial moment. Can you talk about that a little bit?

SEN. GLENN: Well, this has been recounted and over and over. If I had known I probably should have gotten a copy of that, maybe we could insert that later on in this transcript, because it became known in Ohio as the “Gold Star Mother Speech.” During that campaign—it was a tough campaign. And Howard, in going before some labor groups starting in Toledo—and this is getting in the final stages of the campaign—Howard had started using this little thing about how John Glenn his opponent, John Glenn had never really held a job.

When that was first in the paper and when I first heard about what he had been saying, I thought it was so ridiculous that I wouldn't even dignify it by a reply. But it turned out that over ten days or two weeks, this was being written about more and more. It was being talked about by some of the labor people, and he had gotten to where he was using it at every labor group he went before.

So we were coming up to one of the final debates of the campaign, which is the City Club in Cleveland, which always is sort of the wind up of the campaign. So it was a big event, big hall, big people. It's a

luncheon. So I decided at that one I had prepared a little text ahead of time to give my views on this. Basically, they were along the lines that, and I don't recall now, but maybe we can insert it later on, the exact wording. But it was to the effect that, it's true, I never held a job where I stopped at 3:00 in the afternoon to count the profits and take them to the bank. But that I would ask Howard to come with me to a veterans hospital, which I had been to the previous week, and you look those people in the eye at the veterans hospital with their maimed bodies and you tell them they never held a job. And I said, "You come with me to Arlington National Cemetery, where the flags wave and where I had more friends than I'd like to remember, and you tell them that they didn't have a job. And then come with me to the widows and orphans of Ed White and Roger Chaffee and Gus Griffin, who were killed in the pad fire down at the Cape [Canaveral], and you tell those kids that their dad never held a job." Anyway, I basically ended it by saying, "Howard, you should be down on your knees every day of your life thanking God that some people in this country have sacrificed, and I have held a job."

That whole place erupted. It was big, things quoted all over the papers for the last ten days or so. I think it played a definite role in winning that election. But it was quite emotional, and at that time some of our political advisors at that time—I had said just briefly what I was going to do and they said, "No, you can't do that, you can't do that." I thought I

was going to do it one way or another on that one because I felt very strongly about it and thought this was so ridiculous.

Howard later said it was absolutely the dumbest thing he had ever done in politics. I don't know who recommended it to him, but Howard regretted it very much. I know Howard thought it was one of the main reasons he lost in that campaign. So he did it to himself. And Howard, with all due respect, Howard and I varied politically some, but later on when we were both in the Senate at the same time, we did work together and collaborated on things for the good of Ohio. We got to be friends then. You have some strange turns through politics and political life.

THOMAS: So you defeated Metzenbaum in the primary and went on and won the general election.

SEN. GLENN: Yes.

THOMAS: So why don't we end this session at that point and we'll pick things up in the Senate next time around.

SEN. GLENN: Okay.