

Transcriber: Amanda Couch
Tape of Louis Nunn

Baldwin: We wanted to begin by asking you sort of a broad question, and that is about your views on the Vietnam War, and it's a pretty open-ended question. So however you would like to approach it will be fine with us?

Nunn: Well I don't think we should have gotten into it in the first instance, if we were not going to complete it. I think with our capabilities it went on far too long, and it could have been ended sooner. But it was a declaration of war. Being a veteran of World War II, knowing what great sacrifices were made by soldiers and people to keep this country free. I felt that those who were serving in Vietnam, those who were eligible for the draft, those that had the responsibility of defending this country, as well as enjoy the benefits of this country had an obligation to do so, and once we were in it, I think we had the obligation to finish it with honor. It is the only war that I know of that we didn't finish with honor, and yet to the same token I don't feel like those who served in Vietnam are entitled to any greater benefits than those who fought in World War II. It was a tragedy, it was a hard place to fight, but so was Guadalcanal and the Baatan Death March, and all those things. After World War II the American soldier came back and they went about plowing the fields or working in the plants or doing whatever they were doing, and there was no great uproars or no great disturbances by any of those people. They did write a Veterans benefit and I was the beneficiary of some of that in order to obtain my education. And they could have and should have done the same thing for the Vietnam Veterans. But wars hard and wars is deathly, and war needs to be ended as quickly as possible, and I think that, as I did at the University of Kentucky, you have to submit or commit adequate force with direct orders to put down the uprising or end the war as quickly as possible. So I don't think that we ended it very honorable. I have the utmost sympathy for those people who have served this country and continue to serve this country. It was a tragedy. The greatest tragedy was the failure of the American people to support the Veterans or the soldiers, and the people that were in Vietnam. And to start an uprising that gave aid and comfort to the enemy. For what was going on on campuses, certainly encouraged the enemy to continue to fight. I think to some extent it discouraged the national interest and the national desire on the part of some of the leaders. They began to back away, and they didn't lead they followed, and it was a bad consequence for all people that served.

Baldwin: I know that you have had a lot of different political campaigns. Was it different to campaign for the governership during a time of war?

Nunn: No, it really wasn't that great of a concern in 1967, when I was running for office. There were other issues that were more paramount. For instance in 63' you had, as I recall...(interruption by secretary)

Baldwin: (continuing the interview) We were talking about campaigning during the war.

Nunn: There were other issues. Really the war was not an issue, except I think it was associating with Lyndon Johnson, that was in 67', yes around **UNCLEAR** 63' also, and I'm trying to get my issues. But that was the beginning of the integration movement, a more forceful integration movement. You had prayer in schools, other issues, open housing. Those were more emotional issues because they were more current; they were with the people. The Vietnam War was something you heard about once a day, and I don't think at that particular time in the state of Kentucky, that there was as much emotional concern about the Vietnam War as there was about other social issues.

Baldwin: Initially in your campaign can you recall and would you share your opinion of the President at the time, of Richard Nixon, their positions on the war.

Nunn: Well, I supported the President. The Congress supported the President. I think that everybody that experienced war, unless they had a son, or possibly a daughter involved, supported it. I supported Johnson, and what he was doing. That doesn't necessarily mean that I agree with everything they did or did not do. But as to the success and support of the soldiers, and what was going on in Vietnam, it was either fight or get out. They had a choice and they needed to do one or the other and do it quickly. Perhaps if Barry Goldwater's theory of demilitarized zone, between the two, that it might have been ultimately the better choice, because it would have been a line, where they could have drawn a line. But it was a different type of war, it was a different type of war than our soldiers had ever fought, and I don't know if they were adequately trained to fight that war. Anymore than we would be trained today to go into Iraq. But, they were there, they needed support, they needed the support of the public, and I could not see under any circumstances a riot on University of Kentucky's campus, could do anything but be something that the soldiers who were over there fighting would feel deserted, and from a military point of view, I supported what they were doing and would have encouraged even more force. I think it should have been done, and done quick. That which must be done, let it be done quickly.

Baldwin: Did you know Lyndon Johnson?

Nunn: Yes, I knew, I've known, I am fortunate to have known, or at least have a speaking acquaintance with every President since Harry Truman. I knew Lyndon Johnson. Johnson was a very forceful, sometimes considered somewhat crude person. He was very political. Perhaps his political intuitions and his concern for what the Kennedy's were doing, and the political situation was such that I think he let politics override his better military judgement. Then of course, Nixon walked in to it, and tried to bring an end to it by escalating. He lost his support of the younger people. And it was just something that drug on and on. Hang around anyplace to long and it gets common, people get tired of it. That's what is going on right now with Clinton and the Monica Lewis (Lewinsky) thing. It's gone on for so long that people are tired of it. There interested in it when you mention the words and hear it on television. Then it's out of the mind and it's something else. That's kinda the way it was with the Vietnam War, and I

think that politics probably took us in to it. Politics caused us to linger into it and politics took us out of it. And the failure on the part of the military forces to exert themselves to the fullest extent to give support to the soldiers, I think is the tragedy of it. And letting them linger there without bringing them out or committing full force, that would have been my thought on it, and I think several others share that same view. But it didn't effect campaigning in Kentucky. I don't remember it. The issues really came to a crisis when the riots began to break out. But I could see this coming, I remember when I was a student, they had panty raids. Where the male students ran into the girls' dorm grabbed the panties and ran out. That was a big deal back in those days. That was about the worst that ever happened. The scandals on the campuses, but it spread all across the country. And when the problems started to arise, primarily in California, I called all the presidents of the University into the mansion for lunch. I had given them more money then higher education had ever had. I gave them a better budget. I had cleared all the appointments for members of the board of regents with them. I know exactly what I told them. That it wasn't my responsibility to run the universities it was theirs. I expected them to do it, because I didn't have time and I didn't know how. If they were not going to, and if they were going to join up with a bunch.... This might not be appreciated by all...willyated **UNCLEAR** professors and fuzzy faced kids. **UNCLEAR**. Then I was going to join up with them and run them off. Because you are appointed there to do a job. I said, the reason I asked you here is because I wanted to know what you plan to do if the riots break out on your campuses and what you expect of me if they do. Because I plan on being prepared, and I expect you to be. At that time, I already had the adjective general, training the national guard in riot control and that sort of thing. So I anticipated it. I was prepared for it. I knew what I was going to do if, and when necessary. So that was the general approach. The interesting things were some of the answers I got. I remember Dr. Doran said "I have a fine working relations with the police department in the city of Morehead", That probably consisted of ten people at that time (laugh). "I would call them." Well what are you going to do if they don't come? "Oh well they would, but I'd call the sheriff." I thought well one man and two deputies out there; this is going to be a big deal for a riot. But actually none of them thought in depth about the preparation and what they would do to prevent the students from being hurt, and the colleges, the buildings, the university, the physical part of the university from being destroyed. And so it was in that light that I met with them, and I leaned on them pretty hard.

Baldwin: We're both, our undergraduate degrees are from Eastern. What was your dealing with Bob Martin? Did he have a plan?

Nunn: Bob Martin usually had a plan for most everything. I think that on that occasion Dr. Martin was wise enough to be quiet. He didn't fall under my wrath, so to speak. But Bob Martin, when I ran for governor, since you're from Eastern, Bob Martin came out of the political world, as did Adron Doran, as did all the college presidents at that time. They had been part of the legislature or state government. Purely political, and there was not a one of them that supported me in my race for governor. And so when I decided, what I was going to do, and that was raise enough money to pay the debts and the obligations to the commonwealth. I had them call all the college presidents to be in a basement room, in the capital at 8:00 some morning. I wanted them to know I was

serious. I knew that they would have to get up real early, or come the night before. And I assigned each of my aids, a particular college president. I walked in and I said, and this A.D. Albright **UNCLEAR** likes to tell this story, I said, Gentlemen I'm getting ready to increase the sales tax from 3% to 5%. A major part of it is going into higher education and your universities will be the recipients of it. If you want any part of it, you better get off your backsides and help get it, or you will end up with nothing. I turned around and walked out. Well you know, they sat there just looking. Then each aid said, "Dr. Martin, will you come with me." Or "Dr. Doran will you come with me." They sat down and took the list of legislators and said "Well who did you graduate with, who could you work with" They were all very beneficial. An of course, after I wrote the budget and after they found out, how I proceeded they all became very devoted friends. Dr. Martin when they built a monument to me down here where I went to high school, Dr. Martin came down for the dedication of that. But, we got along fine. One time I came there, you know you had the finest food at Eastern as any place, and nobody enjoyed it more than Dr. Martin. They had great big platters of butter, and after dinner there was a lot of butter left. I said, Dr. Martin, y'all use a lot of butter over here don't ya? He told somebody later, "That damn governor looks at everything" said, "He was talking about how much butter we ate." I said, no I wasn't talking about how much butter you ate; I was talking about how much butter you wasted. But, and Dr. Doran, he and I had a good relationship with all of them. Dr. Doran wanted a fellow named Cassidy, reappointed to the board. I intended to appoint Cassidy, but Dr. Doran kept after me. So I thought well, I'll let him get anxious. Well he got overly anxious, and he had Mrs. Nunn and me to come up, and he had a big dinner, and seated me beside Lloyd Cassidy. Then he got up to proceed to make his speech. I'm sure y'all can hear him, "Louis Nunn was the greatest governor Kentucky ever had. He's the greatest governor that Morehead ever had. He's given us more money, he's given me a board I can work with and I'm know he is going to reappoint Lloyd Cassidy." Well I thought, you old devil. I'll figure some way to get even with you. So when we were going out of the building, as you know there were sets of double doors. Mrs. Nunn, Dr. Doran and there was Lloyd Cassidy behind him. And when we got in the door and it was quiet, and everybody could hear, I turned to Dr. Doran and said, When did you change your mind about that fellow Cassidy? You said he was the worst board member you ever had. He stated going "Ah, Ah, This is some misunderstanding." We walked on out, then I started laughing. I told Mr. Cassidy I was going to vote for him. It was many interesting things, Martin and Doran, were strong in education. They were dedicated to their universities. There wasn't any question about that. They operated their universities to. Oh remember Chandler, Governor Chandler, was coming back from **UNCLEAR**.the problem been attending at U.K.. I said don't, they understand that if what they wanted to do at U.K. was give all the people passing grades and let them go home and not take the exams. I said, don't they know that I'll have a riot on every college campus the next morning? Every kid that's flunking and everybody that doesn't want to take the exam. He may not care about the war, but he wants to go home. And I'll have a riot on every campus. Governor Chandler said, "Now you won't have any problem with Eastern," said, "Big Bob Martin will put his foot down on um."

Baldwin: That's the truth.

Nunn: But you see there were many elements involved in that, that obviously students didn't think of. I think what I did at U.K. kept the others in line. I don't think there is any question about that. One thing, while I'm thinking about it, that I received much criticism for because of the ignorance of the people, that was involved doing the criticism. When, the problems first started on campus, Dr. Singletary asked if some of the state police could be sent over there. And I don't know if one squad twelve, fourteen people went over, but it wasn't long before the students started attacking them. They started spitting on them, and throwing things on um, agitating them. And Dr. Singletary saw that the situation was about to get out of hand. So he called me and told me what the problem was, and I said well I'll be over in just a few minutes. I called the (unclear) General. I knew what I was going to do. I went to Maxwell place. I remember it very well sitting at the kitchen table, and Dr. Singletary had declared a curfew, and they'd laugh at him. He said he didn't think they were going to abide by his curfews. I said, Dr. Singletary, If they don't abide by your curfew, and you let this thing get away from you, why you might as well plan to leave the University of Kentucky, because you'll never be in control again. Now I hope you stay here a long time, I know how long I'm going to be here, my term is fixed. So if you want me, as chairman of the board to assume the responsibility to send the guard in, I'll be glad to do so. Of course he was quite willing, that was three days after Kent State. I sat down at the table and I wrote out a message that I was sending the National Guard on to the U.K. campus on a mission of protection. With mounted bayonets **UNCLEAR** and live ammunition. Under order to use whatever force was necessary to protect that campus, and the students and the people on it. And that anyone that violated that curfew as of 7:00 by being there on that campus did so at their own peril. Now what wasn't fully revealed was that, the guns, there was live ammunition and they had it in the packet. But there wasn't a loaded gun on the campus. But they could see those sharp bayonets. So they immediately assumed that the guns were loaded, which is exactly what I wanted them to do. Before anybody could've gotten hurt with a gun, why they would have had to give the order to lock and load and then fire. So the situation was well in control. The men had been trained so they knew what do. Immediately, got another instance to show you how Dr. Doran's theory and some of the other s wouldn't have worked. When I was there at Maxwell Place I knew that if they word got out that the Guard was coming that maybe more building would be burned, more people might get hurt. My daughter was in Blazer Hall while the Armory was burned. I was sitting away where I couldn't exactly here what was going on I could hear the windows from the heat popping out of that building and it sounded like big guns going off. But I called Charlie **Willey**, who was the Mayor of Lexington. We were social friends, we were political friends, and I said to him, The Mayor, I'm out to the University of Kentucky on the campus, and as you know we got some problems out here. I'm wondering if you would put all of your police force on alert in case I need them out here for a little while. He said, " Well now Governor you know our relationship and I'd like to help but, I just don't think I want to get my city police mixed up into your problems at U.K. That sort of stuck me a little bit and I said Mr. Mayor that is perfectly all right with me. Let me tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to bring the Guard in here and were going to run these, I think I said these damn people, people off. And if they come downtown and start burning your town, don't you call my National Guard because I wouldn't want them to get mixed

up in your city problems. And there was a pause and he said, " How long do you think you would need them? " So I said, Well I hope I won't need them at all. But this was a time that you have to be there; you have to experience this. You have to hear the window lights pop out, you have to hear children screaming. And you don't know why they are screaming. You have to be there when buildings are burning and put yourself in the position you have to have people who were so belligerent and so planned to carry on that they brought Vaseline to rub on their faces incase they were shot with gas. So it meant that they come seeking trouble, looking for trouble. It wasn't a planned demonstration. There were so many places they'd go. They wanted to demonstrate, they wanted a cross on the College of the Bible, nobody bothered them there, they could demonstrate as long as they wanted but they didn't burn anything down over there either. And nobody went over there to bother them. To use a country expression, " they knew big wood and kindling" They went over to Transylavania and the president of Transylvania called U.K. and said " get your students off our campus!" They were marching through town, everybody was very apprehensive because to see a fire and to question in my mind, what does it accomplish it do this first, and then the second place this destroying the taxpayers money. It didn't make any difference what building it is. It was built by the taxpayers, they are entitled to use it for whatever purpose they want to use it as, long as its legal. Certainly, training ROTC students was a legal, honorable, thing. So, the extents to which they were going and there were reports of fires in other buildings and threats to take over. I heard, heard, knew destruction going on other campus. I couldn't see any reason for it. One of the amazing things about it was the leader, this boy Bright, he wasn't so Bright. But that was his name, but for me he would never have had a place on the Board. I could see, as I said earlier, I could see these problems coming on. I thought if the students have a voice and know what the Board is doing, then they would better understand the reasons and they could communicate it to other students. This boy Bright, so while I, when I went in as Governor. I got the law enacted that the students would have a non-voting position on the Board. I didn't think that they necessarily need to be voting, I thought that might end up being a self -serving interest and a conflict of interest. They might want to vote for no tuition at all, whatever. But anyhow Steve Bright was the first one that was on there. And everything was explained to him, he sat in on the Board meetings, he had an opportunity to know, but he was a militant. He wanted attention. He wanted to be recognized as the , apparently, as the leader and he ended up being one of the greatest agitators we had. And I thought but for me you wouldn't be in a position to ever know what was going on. But the, now to sit down and talk about it. You said well there were three killed at Kent State and they sent them in with guns and ammunition, this sort of thing. Students today don't know what was happening, they don't know, and they never read what I said. Well I know what they did. They could read because we had a handbill distributed to every dormitory. We put it on radio, television, and in the newspaper. So it was distributed all over the campus. Everyplace that a student could have been there was a handbill there for them to read. To know exactly what it said. That they could not avoid compliance based on ignorance. And so when the buildings were burned and when Singletary said that we had to help, why that's when I had the guard. Course the **UNCLEAR** Adjutant General and I had been in constant contact, and he had orders cut. He knew exactly what was coming. And Dr. Singletary, he was **vacillating** a little primarily because of, he recognized the danger to the students there. I don't know that he

was that concerned, but he was fearful. Well when the situation grew worse, Dr. Singletary called me and said that the Faculty Senate was going to dismiss school. I said, I don't believe the Faculty Senate had the authority to dismiss school, to let the students go home and give them a passing grade. And he said, " Well I do". I said, I don't think I'd exercise it until I met with the Board if I were you Dr. Singletary. He said " Well I', afraid somebody is going to be hurt or killed before it can be done." That's how apprehensive the president of the university, that how apprehensive he was of the obvious danger that existed there. And, I must say that the police or the guard never attacked anyone until first attacked. They did not approach anyone until it appeared the situation was about to get out of control. I don't know of the National Guard being the aggressive force against innocent people or the state police either. Maybe in one on situations where its been claimed and that may be true but in that situation why there was no reason to be aggressive. So, to get back to where I was, I just think that you have to know the circumstances in the situation to know exactly what happened. And today you can't because you don't feel that atmosphere. Now, let me go back when Dr. Singletary called and was going to dismiss school, we had a Board meeting that night. I sent out state police guards, airplanes and everything I could and we had all of them there except one person. And Jack Hall who was Student Relations, was explaining to us what the situation was and ho critical it was. He said today the state police squirted some tear gas on some of the students, and one of our board members said, " Oh why would they do that to those poor little students?" Well I knew why they did it. Those poor little students had congregated, threatened to burn the building, spitting on them, and being aggressive against them. And that set me off. Maybe more that it should have because this was a tense time and that board meeting was most interesting. I stood up and I said, I want to make my self-clear, I said, I am chairman of the Board of this university. I am director of the Kentucky State Police; I am Commander of the National Guard. Now we are going to make a decision tonight, where we are going to stand by the State Police, National Guard and protect this university or are we going to make a decision if you not going to support them, I'm going to make the decision to get them out of here and I'll have the State Police out within the hour and I'll have the National Guard out within an hour and a half. I'll be on televisions and radios telling everybody that you all won't support the law and let them burn it down if that s going to be you all wish. I'm going to here stand or I'm going OT here fall. And I want to know who is going to stand with me and Chandler. Governor Chandler stood up, bowed from the waist and he said, " Your Excellency I'll help you carry the flag up the hill, but I'll never help you carry it down." And they **UNCLEAR** everybody stood except one person. The one that didn't stand wasn't the one that talked about the poor old students because he was a fine person he just didn't understand what was going on. Naïve, or maybe he was like me and had a child there. But anyhow, everybody stood except one and they said "Well I'm with you. Were going to stand by them." And I said, Well stand up, this is the time for people to get on their feet. And then we finished took a vote and it was unanimous so I told Jack Hall, I said we will continue having school. There will be no dismissing school. Dr. Singletary said, " Well how about dispensing with the graduation exercises. That will be a large congregaton of people. And I said I think that is something we should do but we leave it up to the Board. Do I hear a motion? A motion was made, seconded and that was unanimous. And I said all right we will have no graduation exercised but we'll school

and it will take through examinations. All things will be done as usual. In the interim JAUP and some of the law professors, who didn't know how to ask a legal question, proceeded to go to Bowling Green, probably at the states expense, to file a lawsuit against the president of the university and the chairman of the board. Saying we didn't have any right bringing the guard on there. Of course I'd researched that and I knew that I had the right to bring the guard on there and took full credit for it. So we had to contend with that lawsuit. If you could, and I know you can, you ought to get a copy of that decision by Judge Swinford, it's a very interesting decision, which in essence said that sending the Guard in was the right thing to do and not the wrong thing. But to show you how charged the atmosphere was in those days, Judge Swinford, whom I practiced in front of, was a very strict federal judge. When ladies were on juries, well they wore hats. You didn't read a newspaper in his courtroom, you didn't whisper in his courtroom. He was a very formal, strict judge. But on the trial of that case I was at a loss to understand why he did what he did until it was over. It suddenly dawned on me that I think he already knew what the law was. I think he had already, in spite of any proof, had already concluded that I had the right to do it before he ever had the hearing. But, he let students come in and people standing around the wall. There wasn't seats for everybody and he let them come inside the rail were normally only court officials came, and let them sit on the floor. I remember this one student came in with cut off pants, and he walked up and hung his leg over a back seat. If you had done that normally in Swinfords' court you would have gone to jail or the marshal would have escorted you out. He never said one word. I thought, "well Swinford, whats happened to you?" But he wanted to be sure that he didn't commit any error so that the case would be reversed, was what my opinion was. I never talked to him about it, but it wouldn't have been proper for me to talk to him about it, but I always concluded after that he wanted them to be sure that they had a hearing, that justice was there. But, (Unclear) in favor of the lawyer that brought the suit. They didn't know how to ask a question. And I know one time; they asked a judge to make me quit answering the questions the way I was. And before the judge had a chance to say anything, I said, well now "boy" if you don't want an answer don't ask a question. And they were irritated. Because they really didn't know how to practice and the, that was a lot of bother and expense. They supeoned me and I sat all day, and they didn't do a thing. The next day I asked the judge if they wanted to use me, if they would go ahead and do so. Which he told them that they should and they did? But, the state legislature, which was predominately democratic, you had Julian Carroll who was later governor, presiding over the house. Wendell Ford presiding over the Senate. Both very partisan both fought every move that I made. But when that occurred, word came back from that democratic legislature, if I needed any more authority to call them. For a special session and they would grant it to me. About 98% of the letters and calls that came in to the Governors' office were all favorable. Those who were the disruptive people were in the minority. And they did not; I don't think in any way gained the respect of people out there. Maybe a fear for them, an apprehension for them, but, I think it was a great disappointment. See this went back earlier. The SDS moved on to that campus and they had been putting out all kinds of filthy material. Four letter words, Caricatures, of individuals involved in abnormal sex acts and things like that. They were obviously, by their writings and so on, attacking the Statue of Liberty and things like that, and nobody ever bothering them. Nobody was doing anything to them. That was going on about one year, it was while Dr.

Oswald was there. Dr. Oswald was a great advocate of free speech, do what you want to. He is come out of California, off the Berkley6 campus, I believe, where a lot of that had occurred. And again recognizing the potential danger I had state detectives in plain clothes, on the University of Kentucky campus. And they had been gathering up their materials, they had been listening, and they knew what was going on! And when I said that there were outside forces, which I never bothered to get in to explaining, were creating disturbances. They followed the, some of the people that had been there exciting riots, back across the Ohio River. They were coming out of Indiana, and they weren't students at all. So I gathered up all this material and this relates to the reason Dr. Oswald resigned, and since were doing history, I might as well put it all in there. Because it all interrelated. There was so much filth coming off that campus out of that paper. That I was fearful that two things, on of two things might happen. That if decent parents, got their hands on that paper, on that kind of information, that they might want their children to come home. The second thing was that the democratic legislature, who was fighting every move I made, got their hands on it, and here I am Chairman of the Board, that they might say, "We're not going to appropriate any dollars to a place that's acting like that." So with those two things in mind, I called Dr. Oswald and asked him if he would come over to the Governor's Mansion and over to the Governor's office. And when arrived I'd cleaned everything off my desk, I went over and opened a little safe that was over there, and I brought out all these nasty, filthy things that been put out on campus in efforts to incite riots. I said, "Dr. Oswald I am fearful of two things happening." I explained to him what I thought. I said, "you're the President of the University, I don't want to interfere with what you're doing, but I want to know what you're going to do about it. He said, "Well, my wife is ill and doesn't particularly like it here, so I think I will just resign." I said, "well, I hope its not because of anything I've done or failed to do if you've decided why (unclear) come in here," that's my secretary, so I dictated his resignation and I handed it to him and he signed it. And I said, "I'm not going to announce this, you're the one that's resigning, and you can announce it whenever you get ready.

End of side one.

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Baldwin: We wanted to begin by asking you sort of a broad question, and that is about your views on the Vietnam War, and it's a pretty open-ended question. So however you would like to approach it will be fine with us?

Nunn: Well I don't think we should have gotten into it in the first instance, if we were not going to complete it. I think with our capabilities it went on far too long, and it could have been ended sooner. But it was a declaration of war. Being a veteran of World War II, knowing what great sacrifices were made by soldiers and people to keep this country free. I felt that those who were serving in Vietnam, those who were eligible for the draft, those that had the responsibility of defending this country, as well as enjoy the benefits of this country had an obligation to do so, and once we were in it, I think we had the obligation to finish it with honor. It is the only war that I know of that we didn't finish with honor, and yet to the same token I don't feel like those who served in Vietnam are entitled to any greater benefits than those who fought in World War II. It was a tragedy, it was a hard place to fight, but so was Guadalcanal and the Baatan Death March, and all those things. After World War II the American soldier came back and they went about plowing the fields or working in the plants or doing whatever they were doing, and there was no great uproars or no great disturbances by any of those people. They did write a Veterans benefit and I was the beneficiary of some of that in order to obtain my education. And they could have and should have done the same thing for the Vietnam Veterans. But wars hard and wars is deathly, and war needs to be ended as quickly as possible, and I think that, as I did at the University of Kentucky, you have to submit or commit adequate force with direct orders to put down the uprising or end the war as quickly as possible. So I don't think that we ended it very honorable. I have the utmost sympathy for those people who have served this country and continue to serve this country. It was a tragedy. The greatest tragedy was the failure of the American people to support the Veterans or the soldiers, and the people that were in Vietnam. And to start an uprising that gave aid and comfort to the enemy. For what was going on on campuses, certainly encouraged the enemy to continue to fight. I think to some extent it discouraged the national interest and the national desire on the part of some of the leaders. They began to back away, and they didn't lead they followed, and it was a bad consequence for all people that served.

Baldwin: I know that you have had a lot of different political campaigns. Was it different to campaign for the governorship during a time of war?

Nunn: No, it really wasn't that great of a concern in 1967, when I was running for office. There were other issues that were more paramount. For instance in '63 you had, as I recall...(interruption by secretary)

Baldwin: (continuing the interview) We were talking about campaigning during the war.

Nunn: There were other issues. Really the war was not an issue, except I think it was associating with Lyndon Johnson, that was in 67', yes around **UNCLEAR** 63' also, and I'm trying to get my issues. But that was the beginning of the integration movement, a more forceful integration movement. You had prayer in schools, other issues, open housing. Those were more emotional issues because they were more current; they were with the people. The Vietnam War was something you heard about once a day, and I don't think at that particular time in the state of Kentucky, that there was as much emotional concern about the Vietnam War as there was about other social issues.

Baldwin: Initially in your campaign can you recall and would you share your opinion of the President at the time, of Richard Nixon, their positions on the war.

Nunn: Well, I supported the President. The Congress supported the President. I think that everybody that experienced war, unless they had a son, or possibly a daughter involved, supported it. I supported Johnson, and what he was doing. That doesn't necessarily mean that I agree with everything they did or did not do. But as to the success and support of the soldiers, and what was going on in Vietnam, it was either fight or get out. They had a choice and they needed to do one or the other and do it quickly. Perhaps if Gary Goldwater's theory of demilitarized zone, between the two, that it might have been ultimately the better choice, because it would have been a line, where they could have drawn a line. But it was a different type of war, it was a different type of war than our soldiers had ever fought, and I don't know if they were adequately trained to fight that war. Anymore than we would be trained today to go into Iraq. But, they were there, they needed support, they needed the support of the public, and I could not see under any circumstances a riot on University of Kentucky's campus, could do anything but be something that the soldiers who were over there fighting would feel deserted, and from a military point of view, I supported what they were doing and would have encouraged even more force. I think it should have been done, and done quick. That which must be done, let it be done quickly.

Baldwin: Did you know Lyndon Johnson?

Nunn: Yes, I knew, I've known, I am fortunate to have known, or at least have a speaking acquaintance with every President since Harry Truman. I knew Lyndon Johnson. Johnson was a very forceful, sometimes considered somewhat crude person. He was very political. Perhaps his political intuitions and his concern for what the Kennedy's were doing, and the political situation was such that I think he let politics override his better military judgement. Then of course, Nixon walked in to it, and tried to bring an end to it by escalating. He lost his support of the younger people. And it was just something that drug on and on. Hang around anyplace to long and it gets common, people get tired of it. That's what is going on right now with Clinton and the Monica Lewis (Lewinsky) thing. It's gone on for so long that people are tired of it. There interested in it when you mention the words and hear it on television. Then it's out of the mind and it's something else. That's kind of the way it was with the Vietnam War, and I think that politics probably took us in to it. Politics caused us to linger into it and politics

took us out of it. And the failure on the part of the military forces to exert themselves to the fullest extent to give support to the soldiers, I think is the tragedy of it. And letting them linger there without bringing them out or committing full force, that would have been my thought on it, and I think several others share that same view. But it didn't effect campaigning in Kentucky. I don't remember it. The issues really came to a crisis when the riots began to break out. But I could see this coming, I remember when I was a student, they had panty raids. Where the male students ran into the girls' dorm grabbed the panties and ran out. That was a big deal back in those days. That was about the worst that ever happened. The scandals on the campuses, but it spread all across the country. And when the problems started to arise, primarily in California, I called all the presidents of the University into the mansion for lunch. I had given them more money than higher education had ever had. I gave them a better budget. I had cleared all the appointments for members of the board of regents with them. I know exactly what I told them. That it wasn't my responsibility to run the universities it was theirs. I expected them to do it, because I didn't have time and I didn't know how. If they were not going to, and if they were going to join up with a bunch.... This might not be appreciated by all...will yated **UNCLEAR** professors and fuzzy faced kids.**UNCLEAR**. Then I was going to join up with them and run them off. Because you are appointed there to do a job. I said, the reason I asked you here is because I wanted to know what you plan to do if the riots break out on your campuses and what you expect of me if they do. Because I plan on being prepared, and I expect you to be. At that time, I already had the adjective general, training the national guard in riot control and that sort of thing. So I anticipated it. I was prepared for it. I knew what I was going to do if, and when necessary. So that was the general approach. The interesting things were some of the answers I got. I remember Dr. Doran said " I have a fine working relations with the police department in the city of Morehead", That probably consisted of ten people at that time (laugh). " I would call them." Well what are you going to do if they don't come? " Oh well they would, but I'd call the sheriff." I thought well one man and two deputies out there; this is going to be a big deal for a riot. But actually none of them thought in depth about the preparation and what they would do to prevent the students from being hurt, and the colleges, the buildings, the university, the physical part of the university from being destroyed. And so it was in that light that I met with them, and I leaned on them pretty hard.

Baldwin: We're both, our undergraduate degrees are from Eastern. What was your dealing with Bob Martin? Did he have a plan?

Nunn: Bob Martin usually had a plan for most everything. I think that on that occasion Dr. Martin was wise enough to be quiet. He didn't fall under my wrath, so to speak. But Bob Martin, when I ran for governor, since you're from Eastern, Bob Martin came out of the political world, as did Adrienne Doran, and did all the college presidents at that time. They had been part of the legislature or state government. Purely political, and there was not a one of them that supported me in my race for governor. And so when I decided, what I was going to do, and that was raise enough money to pay the depts. and the obligations to the commonwealth. I had them to call all the college presidents to be in a basement room, in the capital at 8:00 some morning. I wanted them to know I was serious. I knew that they would have to get up real early, or come the night before. And

I assigned each of my aids, a particular college president. I walked in an I said, and this A.D. Albright **UNCLEAR** likes to tell this story, I said, Gentlemen I'm getting ready to increase the sales tax from 3% to 5%. A major part of it is going into higher education and your universities will be the recipients of it. If you want any part of it, you better get off your backsides and help get it, or you will end up with nothing. I turned around and walked out. Well you know, they sat there just looking. Then each aid said, "Dr. Martin, will you come with me." Or "Dr. Doran will you come with me." They sat down and took the list of legislators and said "Well who did you graduate with, who could you work with" They were all very beneficial. And of course, after I wrote the budget and after they found out, how I proceeded they all became very devoted friends. Dr. Martin when they built a monument to me down here where I went to high school, Dr. Martin came down for the dedication of that. But, we got along fine. One time I came there, you know you had the finest food at Eastern as any place, and nobody enjoyed it more than Dr. Martin. They had great big platters of butte, and after dinner there was a lot of butter left. I said, Dr. Martin, y'all use a lot of butter over here don't ya? He told somebody later, "That damn governor looks at everything" said," He was talking about how much butte we ate." I said, no I wasn't talking about how much butter you ate; I was talking about how much butter you wasted. But, and Dr. Doran, he and I had a good relationship with all of them. Dr. Doran wanted a fellow named Cassidy, reappointed to the board. I intended to appoint Cassidy, but Dr. Doran kept after me. So I thought well, I'll let him get anxious. Well he got overly anxious, and he had Mrs. Nunn and me to come up, and he had a big dinner, and seated me beside Lloyd Cassidy. Then he got up to proceed to make his speech. I'm sure y'all can here him, "Louis Nunn was the greatest governor Kentucky ever had. He's the greatest governor that Morehead ever had. He's given us more money, he's given me a board I can work with and I'm know he is going to reappoint Lloyd Cassidy." Well I though, you old devil. I'll figure some way to get even with you. So when we were going out of the building, as you know there were sets of double doors. Mrs. Nunn, Dr. Doran and there was Lloyd Cassidy behind him. And when we got in the door and it was quiet, and everybody could hear, I turned to Dr. Doran and said, "When did you change your mind about that fellow Cassidy? You said he was the worst board member you ever had." He stated going "Ah, Ah, This is some misunderstanding." We walked on out, then I started laughing. I told Mr. Cassidy I was going to vote for him. It was many interesting things, Martin and Doran, were strong in education. They were dedicated to their universities. There wasn't any question about that. They operated their universities to. O remember Candler, Governor Chandler, was coming back from **UNCLEAR**.the problem been attending at U.K. I said don't, they understand that if what they wanted to do at U.K. was give all the people passing grades and let them go home and not take the exams. I said, don't they know that I'll have a riot on every college campus the next morning? Every kid that's flunking and everybody that doesn't want to take the exam. He may not care about the war, but he wants to go home. And I'll have a riot on every campus. Governor Chandler said, "Now you won't have any problem with Eastern," said, "Big Bob Martin will put his foot down on them."

Baldwin: That's the truth.

Nunn: But you see there were many elements involved in that, that obviously students didn't think of. I think what I did at U.K. kept the others in line. I don't think there is any question about that. One thing, while I'm thinking about it, that I received much criticism for because of the ignorance of the people that was involved doing the criticism. When, the problems first started on campus, Dr. Singletary asked if some of the state police could be sent over there. And I don't know if one squad twelve, fourteen people went over, but it wasn't long before the students started attacking them. They started spitting on them, and throwing things on um, agitating them. And Dr. Singletary saw that the situation was about to get out of hand. So he called me and told me what the problem was, and I said well I'll be over in just a few minutes. I called the (unclear) General. I knew what I was going to do. I went to Maxwell place. I remember it very well sitting at the kitchen table, and Dr. Singletary had declared a curfew, and they'd laugh at him. He said he didn't think they were going to abide by his curfews. I said, Dr. Singletary, If they don't abide by your curfew, and you let this thing get away from you, why you might as well plan to leave the University of Kentucky, because you'll never be in control again. Now I hope you stay here a long time, I know how long I'm going to be here, my term is fixed. So if you want me, as chairman of the board to assume the responsibility to send the guard in, I'll be glad to do so. Of course he was quite willing, that was three days after Kent State. I sat down at the table and I wrote out a message that I was sending the National Guard on to the U.K. campus on a mission of protection. With mounted bayonets **UNCLEAR** and live ammunition. Under order to use whatever force was necessary to protect that campus, and the students and the people on it. And that anyone that violated that curfew as of 7:00 by being there on that campus did so at their own peril. Now what wasn't fully revealed was that, the guns, there was live ammunition and they had it in the packet. But there wasn't a loaded gun on the campus. But they could see those sharp bayonets. So they immediately assumed that the guns were loaded, which is exactly what I wanted them to do. Before anybody could've gotten hurt with a gun, why they would have had to give the order to lock and load and then fire. So the situation was well in control. The men had been trained so they knew what do. Immediately, got another instance to show you how Dr. Doran's theory and some of the others wouldn't have worked. When I was there at Maxwell Place I knew that if they word got out that the Guard was coming that maybe more building would be burned, more people might get hurt. My daughter was in Blazer Hall while the Armory was burned. I was sitting away where I couldn't exactly here what was going on I could hear the windows from the heat popping out of that building and it sounded like big guns going off. But I called Charlie Willey, who was the Mayor of Lexington. We were social friends, we were political friends, and I said to him, The Mayor, I'm out to the University of Kentucky on the campus, and as you know we got some problems out here. I'm wondering if you would put all of your police force on alert in case I need them out here for a little while. He said, "Well now Governor you know our relationship and I'd like to help but, I just don't think I want to get my city police mixed up into your problems at U.K. That sort of stuck me a little bit and I said Mr. Mayor that is perfectly all right with me. Let me tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to bring the Guard in here and were going to run these, I think I said these damn people, people off. And if they come downtown and start burning your town, don't you call my National Guard because I wouldn't want them to get mixed up in your city problems. And there was a pause and he said, "How long do you

think you would need them?" So I said, Well, I hope I won't need them at all. But this was a time that you have to be there; you have to experience this. You have to hear the window lights pop out, you have to hear children screaming. And you don't know why they are screaming. You have to be there when buildings are burning and put yourself in the position you have to have people who were so belligerent and so planned to carry on that they brought Vaseline to rub on their faces in case they were shot with gas. So it meant that they come seeking trouble, looking for trouble. It wasn't a planned demonstration. There were so many places they'd go. They wanted to demonstrate, they wanted a cross on the College of the Bible, nobody bothered them there, they could demonstrate as long as they wanted but they didn't burn anything down over there either. And nobody went over there to bother them. To use a country expression, "they knew big wood and kindling" They went over to Transylvania and the president of Transylvania called U.K. and said "get your students off our campus!" They were marching through town, everybody was very apprehensive because to see it first and to question in my mind, what does it accomplish in doing this first, and then the second place this destroying the taxpayers money. It didn't make any difference what building it is. It was built by the taxpayers, they are entitled to use it for whatever purpose they want to use it as, long as it's legal. Certainly, training ROTC students was a legal, honorable, thing. So, the extents to which they were going and there were reports of fires in other buildings and threats to take over. I heard, heard, knew destruction going on other campus. I couldn't see any reason for it. One of the amazing things about it was the leader, this by Bright, he wasn't so Bright. But that was his name, but for me he would never have had a place on the Board. I could see, as I said earlier, I could see these problems coming on. I thought if the students have a voice and know what the Board is doing, then they would better understand the reasons and they could communicate it to other students. This boy Bright, so while I, when I went in as Governor. I got the law enacted that the students would have a non-voting position on the Board. I didn't think that they necessarily need to be voting, I thought that might end up being a self-serving interest and a conflict of interest. They might want to vote for no tuition at all, whatever. But anyhow Steve Bright was the first one that was on there. And everything was explained to him, he sat in on the Board meetings, he had an opportunity to know, but he was a militant. He wanted attention. He wanted to be recognized as the, apparently, as the leader and he ended up being one of the greatest agitators we had. And I thought but for me you wouldn't be in a position to ever know what was going on. But the, now to sit down and talk about it. You said well there were three killed at Kent State and they sent them in with guns and ammunition, this sort of thing. Students today don't know what was happening, they don't know, and they never read what I said. Well I know what they did. They could read because we had a handbill distributed to every dormitory. We put it on radio, television, and in the newspaper. So it was distributed all over the campus. Everyplace that a student could have been there was a handbill there for them to read. To know exactly what it said. That they could not avoid compliance based on ignorance. And so when the buildings were burned and when Singletary said that we had to help, why that's when I had the guard. Corse the **UNCLEAR** Adjutant General and I had been in constant contact, and he had orders cut. He knew exactly what was coming. And Dr. Singletary, he was vacillating a little primarily because of, he recognized the danger to the students there. I don't know that he was that concerned, but he was fearful. Well

when the situation grew worse, Dr. Singletary called me and said that the Faculty Senate was going to dismiss school. I said, I don't believe the Faculty Senate had the authority to dismiss school, to let the students go home and give them a passing grade. And he said, "Well I do". I said, I don't think I'd exercise it until I met with the Board if I were you Dr. Singletary. He said " Well I', afraid somebody is going to be hurt or killed before it can be done." That's how apprehensive the president of the university, that how apprehensive he was of the obvious danger that existed there. And, I must say that the police or the guard never attacked anyone until first attacked. They did not approach anyone until it appeared the situation was about to get out of control. I don't know of the National Guard being the aggressive force against innocent people or the state police either. Maybe in one on situations where its been claimed and that may be true but in that situation why there was no reason to be aggressive. So, to get back to where I was, I just think that you have to know the circumstances in the situation to know exactly what happened. And today you can't because you don't feel that atmosphere. Now, let me go back when Dr. Singletary called and was going to dismiss school, we had a Board meeting that night. I sent out state police guards, airplanes and everything I could and we had all of them there except one person. And Jack Hall who was Student Relations, was explaining to us what the situation was and how critical it was. He said today the state police squirted some tear gas on some of the students, and one of our board members said, "Oh why would they do that to those poor little students?" Well I knew why they did it. Those poor little students had congregated, threatened to burn the building, spitting on them, and being aggressive against them. And that set me off. Maybe more that it should have because this was a tense time and that board meeting was most interesting. I stood up and I said, I want to make my self-clear, I said, I am chairman of the Board of this university. I am director of the Kentucky State Police; I am Commander of the National Guard. Now we are going to make a decision tonight, where we are going to stand by the State Police, National Guard and protect this university or are we going to make a decision if you not going to support them, I'm going to make the decision to get them out of here and I'll have the State Police out within the hour and I'll have the National Guard out within an hour and a half. I'll be on televisions and radios telling everybody that you all won't support the law and let them burn it down if that's going to be you all wish. I'm going to here stand or I'm going OT here fall. And I want to know who is going to stand with me and Chandler. Governor Chandler stood up, bowed from the waist and he said, "Your Excellency I'll help you carry the flag up the hill, but I'll never help you carry it down." And they **UNCLEAR** everybody stood except one person. The one that didn't stand wasn't the one that talked about the poor old students because he was a fine person he just didn't understand what was going on. Naïve, or maybe he was like me and had a child there. But anyhow, everybody stood except one and they said "Well I'm with you. We're going to stand by them." And I said, Well stand up, this is the time for people to get on their feet. And then we finished took a vote and it was unanimous so I told Jack Hall, I said we will continue having school. There will be no dismissing school. Dr. Singletary said, "Well how about dispensing with the graduation exercises. That will be a large congregation of people. And I said I think that is something we should do but we leave it up to the Board. Do I hear a motion? A motion was made, seconded and that was unanimous. And I said all right we will have no graduation exercised but we'll school and it will take through examinations.

All things will be done as usual. In the interim JAUP and some of the law professors, who didn't know how to ask a legal question, proceeded to go to Bowling Green, probably at the states expense, to file a lawsuit against the president of the university and the chairman of the board. Saying we didn't have any right bringing the guard on there. Of course I'd researched that and I knew that I had the right to bring the guard on there and took full credit for it. So we had to contend with that lawsuit. If you could, and I know you can, you ought to get a copy of that decision by Judge Swinford, it's a very interesting decision, which in essence said that sending the Guard in was the right thing to do and not the wrong thing. But to show you how charged the atmosphere was in those days, Judge Swinford, whom I practiced in front of, was a very strict federal judge. When ladies were on juries, well they wore hats. You didn't read a newspaper in his courtroom, you didn't whisper in his courtroom. He was a very formal, strict judge. But on the trial of that case I was at a loss to understand why he did what he did until it was over. It suddenly dawned on me that I think he already knew what the law was. I think he had already, in spite of any proof, had already concluded that I had the right to do it before he ever had the hearing. But, he let students come in and people standing around the wall. There wasn't seats for everybody and he let them come inside the rail were normally only court officials came, and let them sit on the floor. I remember this one student came in with cut off pants, and he walked up and hung his leg over a back seat. If you had done that normally in Swinford's court you would have gone to jail or the marshal would have escorted you out. He never said one word. I thought, "well Swinford, what's happened to you?" But he wanted to be sure that he didn't commit any error so that the case would be reversed, was what my opinion was. I never talked to him about it, but it wouldn't have been proper for me to talk to him about it, but I always concluded after that he wanted them to be sure that they had a hearing, that justice was there. But, (Unclear) in favor of the lawyer that brought the suit. They didn't know how to ask a question. And I know one time; they asked a judge to make me quit answering the questions the way I was. And before the judge had a chance to say anything, I said, well now "boy" if you don't want an answer don't ask a question. And they were irritated. Because they really didn't know how to practice and the, that was a lot of bother and expense. They subpoenaed me and I sat all day, and they didn't do a thing. The next day I asked the judge if they wanted to use me, if they would go ahead and do so. Which he told them that they should and they did? But, the state legislature, which was predominately democratic, you had Julian Carroll who was later governor, presiding over the house. Wendell Ford presiding over the Senate. Both very partisan both fought every move that I made. But when that occurred, word came back from that democratic legislature, if I needed any more authority to call them. For a special session and they would grant it to me. About 98% of the letters and calls that came in to the Governors' office were all favorable. Those who were the disruptive people were in the minority. And they did not; I don't think in any way gained the respect of people out there. Maybe a fear for them, an apprehension for them, but, I think it was a great disappointment. See this went back earlier. The SDS moved on to that campus and they had been putting out all kinds of filthy material. Four letter words, Caricatures, of individuals involved in abnormal sex acts and things like that. They were obviously, by their writings and so on, attacking the Statue of Liberty and things like that, and nobody ever bothering them. Nobody was doing anything to them. That was going on about one year, it was while Dr.

Oswald was there. Dr. Oswald was a great advocate of free speech, do what you want to. He is come out of California, off the Berkley6 campus, I believe, where a lot of that had occurred. And again recognizing the potential danger I had state detectives in plain clothes, on the University of Kentucky campus. And they had been gathering up their materials, they had been listening, and they knew what was going on! And when I said that there were outside forces, which I never bothered to get in to explaining, were creating disturbances. They followed the, some of the people that had been there exciting riots, back across the Ohio River. They were coming out of Indiana, and they weren't students at all. So I gathered up all this material and this relates to the reason Dr. Oswald resigned, and since were doing history, I might as well put it all in there. Because it all interrelated. There was so much filth coming off that campus out of that paper. That I was fearful that two things, one of two things might happen. That if decent parents, got their hands on that paper, on that kind of information, that they might want their children to come home. The second thing was that the democratic legislature, who was fighting every move I made, got their hands on it, and here I am Chairman of the Board, that they might say, "We're not going to appropriate any dollars to a place that's acting like that." So with those two things in mind, I called Dr. Oswald and asked him if he would come over to the Governor's Mansion and over to the Governor's office. And when arrived I'd cleaned everything off my desk, I went over and opened a little safe that was over there, and I brought out all these nasty, filthy things that been put out on campus in efforts to incite riots. I said, "Dr. Oswald I am fearful of two things happening." I explained to him what I thought. I said, "you're the President of the University, I don't want to interfere with what you're doing, but I want to know what you're going to do about it. He said, "Well, my wife is ill and doesn't particularly like it here, so I think I will just resign." I said, "well, I hope its not because of anything I've done or failed to do if you've decided why (unclear) come in here," that's my secretary, so I dictated his resignation and I handed it to him and he signed it. And I said, "I'm not going to announce this, you're the one that's resigning, and you can announce it whenever you get ready.

End of side one.

Interviewer: Dr. Baldwin, Dr. Ernst
Subject: Governor Louis Nunn

I. Riots at U.K.

Nunn: I took his resignation and gave him a copy of it and said “You call me and I’ll accept it when you’re ready to go.” It was a few days there after that he announced his resignation. I didn’t know Dr. Oswald very well he came there under Governor Brethedge. I didn’t have any problem with him. The problem may have arisen and he felt there was a problem, because some people perceive things that aren’t there. For some reason unknown to me or never explained to me Henry Ward, who was my opponent, said that I was going to force Dr. Oswald to leave the University of Kentucky. I never thought of it, wasn’t even in my mind. My response was that I had no obligation to keep or no obligation to ask him to leave. I wasn’t committed either way. Well the people of Lexington, a lot of them didn’t like Dr. Oswald. They didn’t like the way he was running the university. The University had kind of been a hometown product in those years. They weren’t very pleased because they knew Henry Ward was going to keep him from what he said. I think it made a lot of votes for me, it didn’t bother me in anyway.

I had no intention of getting rid of Oswald. I had too many other things going on at the time. He probably thought that I had some political animosity toward him or I didn’t want him there, if it was so he had to do his own thinking. Now I want to be the first to admit that I didn’t appreciate the fact that he didn’t exert himself on what was going on at campus. I felt that he had a responsibility not just to walk around and let it all go on.

Because I know that parents and the people of Kentucky, I know what they want. Now I assume that it would be acceptable with all the pornography and pornographic literature that's on television and the attitudes now but again let's go back twenty years and what the attitudes of the people was in those days. I wasn't responding to what the public thought. I was responding to what I recognized that I had to do. The public is not ignorant but they are awfully ill informed or sometimes uninformed. That is one of my problems with the polling process. You call somebody up and ask them their opinion on something and they've had a thirty second impression from over the television. They haven't read it, they haven't studied it, they don't know the consequences of what they're doing. So therefore I don't think that if your in public office and you do what the uninformed and the people who haven't given a lot of thought to if you do what they are your not the leader anymore. You're a follower and to follow a group without a fixed purpose and knowing where they're going and what they're doing is nothing more than a mob. I don't think we ought to have mob rule anywhere whether it's on campus or whether it's the state as a whole. If you're going to lead then you have to know and be informed and get out in front and try to show a sense of direction. Too many people don't do that. I think that I maybe diverting here from what you want but I think the polling process has done more harm to the fiber of our country than anything else. The people in politics find out what somebody else id thinking and what they want and of course that all starts with pocket book voting. That rose out of the Depression of course.

But Oswald left and we started a search. Ebb Curwin had been at the university he was like one of the columns at one of the buildings out there. Everybody loved Ebb Curwin. Ebb Curwin wasn't going to make any quick decisions so we made him as

innerus president. He was such a fine person, so dedicated to the university. I thought it would be a great thing if before we left we vote him as president of the university just before we put Singleterry in there. We'd give him the title. He got along well there and I guess I don't remember any problems he had with the students, with the board or anyone else. It all really come on after Singleterry arrived.

Baldwin: How did you happen to be there, as you told us, when the building was burning?

Nunn: The word come out that it was becoming very unruly. You see that was before the guard and he was about to lose control of it. Well, I knew what people told me but I wanted to know myself and not only that my daughter was in a room on the campus. There were reports that there were fires in buildings and various other things. I was chairman of the board and I thought that I ought to go over and see. But I did not want to go out in the presence of that student body to let them think that I was that concerned or to give them the excuse that would incite them to something worse. They had already been incited and I'd witnessed that once before.

When Oswald left the board meeting, we had a board meeting there of course, when I got ready to leave a state trooper come in and he said there was a crowd gathered out front ad do you want me to bring a car around back so you can slip out. I said " I didn't slip in and I'm not going to slip out. I'm not going to give them the chance thinking they'd run me off. So I don't even want you with me. You go on and get in the car and I'll be out in a few minutes." So I went out and they pitched pennies at me

because of the sales tax. I picked up a few of them and thanked them and said “You know if it wasn’t for my pennies I doubt you all would be here. I think instead of pitching pennies you ought to be back doing your studying so you might pass.” Got in the car and went on.

I anticipated, I knew it would probably provoke [the student body]. At the same time some of the professors were making things difficult for my daughter. One of them told her she had to do a thesis on inter-racial marriage. See they had, because of statements I made in my campaign, thought I was a racist. She said “Well, I don’t know where to do the research.”

He said “It doesn’t make a damn what you do. You’re going to fail anyhow.” So she had come home very upset and talked with her mother and me. I said are you passing everything now and she said yes. I said she should withdrawal passing and come home and forget about it. So they chased my daughter off the campus and that was the so-called faculty. So again you see you have to really know and experience the things that are going on. That was some time after the riots had subsided that she was chased away from school.

Baldwin: That must have been very difficult. My daughter’s in college now. How did you...

Nunn: Did the same thing I told Jenny. If anybody asked her any questions just say “I’d explained it to my mother and daddy and they’re the only two people I have to answer to.” So it was never told until years later but during that period of time it wasn’t a thing about the war. It was just an uprising among people who wanted attention or wanted to

avoid war or wanted to avoid going to war or whatever. I don't know what they were saying or what they were doing. But there's one thing I wasn't planning on burning that university down or any other university.

Ernst: Did you and your daughter ever discuss the war in Vietnam? Was it a topic?

Nunn: My daughter believed and trusted in her daddy. My daughter would have supported her country. She was taught to support her country. Who's to make the decisions about what's good for our country. They haven't had a democracy in years. They had to give it up democracy before they got through colonizing. What we went to was a representative form of government. If we don't like what the representative that we choose do then we can vote them out. We have a process in which to do that. Unless there is immediate harm being done to the citizens and it wasn't to the citizens it might've been to the people over there. Those boys didn't throw down their guns and run. They didn't quite fighting. They stayed on. They wasn't asking for people back here to do what they did. They deserved the support of the people back here. So to set up a riot and create these problems when there's no real justification for doing so. Its all right to protest. I'm not saying I'm opposed to peaceful protest. That's been done from when the country's been first formed. The tea party, that was a little more than a peaceful protest but maybe we've become civilized. They weren't getting any results without it. But the University of Kentucky, the board, the president couldn't stop the war if they wanted to. The chancellor told the little girl and was being so affectionate when he patted her on the cheek and said "Honey, I'd stop the war tomorrow if I could."

II. Politics

Baldwin: Steve Blight charged you with trying to further your political career.

Nunn; I still had two more years of being governor it wasn't political. It was never thought of. He was looking for any excuse. I don't know what may have been said but the position went beyond what he expected. But he was the leader and he needed a position worse than I did so I guess he thought I was doing what he thought He would be doing himself.

Baldwin: When you were getting ready to call up the Guard and making all those decisions about how to deal with the situation at U.K. did you have advisors that you consulted with or were most of these decisions taken [upon yourself]?

Nunn: They were discussed with the people in my office and I was constantly fed information on what was going on the campus. But the decisions were made a long time ago. The decisions were made when I saw it coming. If this reaches this stage I will do this and I will do this and I will do this. I didn't want to wait for the building to be caught on fire before I called the fire department so to speak. I'd been planning for weeks and months and of course all the college presidents could verify that. I'd gone from the end of the legislature when all those things I said had been done so it had been shortly after that the decision had been made that the riots started. I guess it was in May that the riots started, sometime in May or April. The legislature hadn't been long gone.

Baldwin: Were you influenced in your decisions by what was happening at other campuses and other colleges?

Nunn: Certainly, it was obvious to me, I don't know that I was influenced by it. I was aware of it and recognized the stages it had reached there. I felt like if they heard it at U.K. what they was doing somewhere else and it was getting newspaper published and TV published we'll try to cause or do as much or more than they did. So its a matter of keeping abreast of it. You see what I did is what my intentions were, is to not do what they did at Kent State. I sent my people there in adequate force under orders to keep it down and use whatever force necessary to keep it down. So don't let it get started and don't send five people to confront five hundred cause you know they're going to run over them just to show they can. So you send adequate strength with orders to do what's necessary. I think that's where Kent State failed. Those people didn't know what to do, they hadn't been trained. You can't draw a parallel between Kent State and what happened at U.K. because obviously they sent fewer number. They sent untrained people. I don't know if anyone was in control of the situation or not as I was. I see no evidence of anybody being in control and I had back up information. I had sources on what had been going on so I felt I was fully prepared and ready to confront the situation. The most important thing was to not let it get out of hand. That was the important thing and we delayed as long as we could but that was because Dr. Singleterry and the people on the campus. They were running the school I wasn't. I was merely the back up force. When I saw they were beginning to falter and when they began to ask for help then it was my responsibility. I was chairman of the board. I brought along with other members of

the board brought Singleterry there. We had to support him and what he wanted to do and at the same time try not to damage him for future relations with the university. So you had to way all those things.

Baldwin: As the 1968 Presidential campaign began to heat up there was from my recollection of it a lot of talk about the silent majority and something you said earlier reminded me particularly of that.

Nunn: Do you know where the "Silent Majority" originated? You know where Farmers, Kentucky is? Between Farmers and Morehead and I was on my way to Morehead University and Larry Vanhues, my press secretary, was with me and we were talking about the riots and what was going on and I said "Larry, you know, there's a great silent majority out there that's going to rise up some day."

He said "You just coined a great phrase."

I said "What's that?"

He said "The great silent majority." He wrote it into a speech that I gave at the Union League in Philadelphia and another speech or two and at the '68 convention. I gave that line to Richard Nixon. It is in my papers there and I can show you a picture downstairs with Richard Nixon with the top of his fountain pen and his mouth writing it down.

Baldwin: I'm glad I asked that question.

Nunn: That's where it originated. The great silent majority was coined between Farmers and Morehead.

Baldwin: Well, what you were saying earlier about the people of Kentucky and their expectations, what they would expect of the governor to do in that situation reminded me...

Nunn: I felt like or knew what they'd expected and wanted. Why should I sit there and know and anticipate or expect them to burn down a building, takeover administration buildings when the people out there didn't know anything about it? I wasn't going to advertise it because they would have said "Well we don't see it we don't know about it" or they'd taken all their children out of school. Why should I sit here and wait with the knowledge and information that I had about what's going to happen tell me what to do? If you're going to be a leader then you've got to be the leader. You can't wait there and have a consensus when they're burning down buildings and there's a danger of people getting killed. You don't say "Well what do you think we ought to do?" You've got to do it and then take care of the consequences whatever it is.

III. 1968 Convention

Baldwin: What was your experience with the '68 convention? What was it like for you?

Nunn: Well I was very close in to that '68 convention. Richard Nixon came as my guest to the derby the year before he ran for the presidency. I'd been a supporter of his and knew Nixon quite well. I don't know whether to include this or not because it sounds a

little like you're bragging and I don't want to do that. But you asked me about the convention. We'd invited Nixon and Mrs. Nixon to be our guests at the derby in '68. They came and we had the derby breakfast at Spudwart Hall. You know where Spudwart Hall is? We were coming back to the horse track and were between the two exits off of the interstate going to Shelbyville. Nixon said to me "If I'm fortunate enough to be nominated would you consider the vice presidency?" I thought that it was just puffing and ingratiating.

I said "Under no circumstance would I consider it because I had a Democrat Lt. Governor and I'm the first Republican governor in twenty years and the people if I left here would mob me. So I wouldn't be interested. Not only that but I don't feel qualified to be president of something unfortunate should happen to you." He slapped me on the leg.

He said "Well we can qualify you. They did me, I think." I never thought any more about it really until we got down to the '68 convention. I was one of nine people on the republican platform committee. There was Evert Dersk, two senators, three members of Congress and Wally Hickle, who was later Secretary of the Interior, and myself and another governor. There were nine of us that worked on the platform. Of course a lot of that was cleared with Nixon because it was expected that he would be the president. I was I guess what you'd call an insider. I had a button down there and staff for committee. When they started looking for a vice president candidate of course Jim Rhodes of Ohio had been a Rockefeller supporter and was verbal about it. They looked at Agnew. He was what they wanted, a border state governor. Before they finally decided on Agnew they let him speak to the Republican National Convention to see how

he was accepted at that convention, That's when they came down and decided Agnew was the one but I often think about what might've happened if I hadn't been so adamant because I wouldn't have had the problems Agnew did.

Ernst: Do you ever regret...

Nunn: No, I don't think so. Sometimes I do when I see all the things that gone on in this country. I guess I'm conceited enough to think my judgement was better than some of those people.

Baldwin: Would Nixon would have done better?

Nunn: I think so. He wouldn't have had the problems that he had with Agnew. I don't know. When everyone else was taking his signs down I put them up because the position and the relationship I had with Nixon was what any person would have loved to have had with the President of the United States. When a person's in trouble they need help. You don't walk away and leave them then. You don't run and hide and say I know you not. So I stood beside him until the day he was buried. I was with him when he came out of seclusion at San Clemente and went to Hyden. I was there and had dinner with him just the two of us. The day of his funeral the people in Hyden asked me to come and do a funereal seminar for him there and had over a thousand people turn out for that service in Hyden, Kentucky. I was very close in that particular convention more than any other.

IV. Nixon

Baldwin: You talked earlier about how historians have treated you and your governorship. Can you comment on how you perceive how historians perceive Richard Nixon?

Nunn: Perhaps the news media. Nixon had I think a great thought process. I think he was a great president. I think he did a lot of great things and so many things were going on he was in the same type frustration that I was in. Here was leaks coming out. He obviously believed it was a matter of national security. I think that he perhaps became some what paranoid about it. I think he let the power of the office or the attempts to control events. Now they show him in his worst light. I think that that comes because from his conversations in the tapes and I never heard it. I never observed it. When I was with him personally there appears to be some religious bias that might relate to the Jewish people. I don't think that he was biased. I think that he was referring from as a race in the fact that they were in control of most of the media and things like that. I never observed anything in him that was racial or bigoted. He never made any of those kind of expressions. He was a political person and you look back at Lyndon Johnson. The same thing was going on in Johnson but again who have to take yourself back to the period in which these events and these things occurred and what were the people like then.

When Boone settled this country he didn't come over and check to see if everyone was wearing buckskins. So to put Daniel Boone in a tuxedo coming through Kentucky he'd be just as out of place as putting me in buckskins going through the governor's office unless it was something going on. That's just a way of showing by comparison the thought process, the religious process that at the time and the circumstance and the

condition usually make the person or it breaks the person. You are a product of your environment. I taught my grand children how you become a part of whatever surrounds you. If you around dirt you get dirty, if you're around liars you start lying. If your around drug users your going to start using drugs.

The way I demonstrated it **unintelligible** there was a skunk that created a terrible odor. Well [I] got them all in my station wagon and drove them out to where it was and told them to jump out and I locked all the doors so they couldn't get back in. After they got through whiffing and holding their noses for about seven to eight minutes why I said "Get back in lets go." So we came down to the house. I said "Now get out and see if all you smell like the skunk did." Well of course it'd absorbed in there clothes and their nostrils. So I gave my grandchildren the skunk test to prove that you absorbed whatever surrounds your environmental experience. That goes to life. It goes to politics, it goes to everything. Whatever you are and wherever you are human nature was made that way. You just adjust to it. You have to adjust to it just as a matter of survival and acceptance. If you're among a bunch of thieves then you're going to be a thief yourself.

One of the great things about my administration is that there was not a single scandal. As further pride as further disappointment I should say not pride there hasn't been a single administration since mine that hasn't been subject to grand jury investigation. Again I attribute it to the people I surrounded myself with. A group of young people who had no inclination to steal, didn't know how to steal and had hope for a great future and worked toward it. As a matter of fact they were so young they got dubbed "Nunn's Kiddy Corps." They were a great, great group of people and the evidence of that is the achievements they made since they left office.

Baldwin: What as Agnew like?

Nunn: Agnew was a brilliant fellow. Too bad he had larceny in his heart. He always seemed a little bit contemptuous to me and in other words we would have a governors conference he would usually vary from the norm. Now whether he was trying to speak and reflect other opinions of the people, in a quite liberal state, I don't know. But he always as I said he always seemed to deviate from the norm in some way. So that was one thing I noticed about him but I loved his family.

His wife Judy came here. I had a great accomplishment a big program going on in Irving, Kentucky. I was going to take her over there. She as going to be the star performer at this rural area over in Irving. The Commonwealth Attorney didn't like the school superintendent. So he got the superintendent charged with something, two or three days and we never did get to see his act. Purely political, purely political. The Commonwealth Attorney was a great friend of mine and still is. I often told him I didn't appreciate what he did but he sure didn't want Judy coming over there, Judy Agnew coming over there to be with that school superintendent. Local politics.

Baldwin: During the Nixon campaign and then early into the campaign were you aware at that time of what his strategy might be in terms of turning the war over to the Vietnamese?

Nunn: No, no, no, no I don't know. Most of our conversations would have been along more family, political things. I didn't feel that I wanted to get in. Now at one time while

I was governor but all governors were included in a briefing on what the situation was. We weren't allowed to even take in aids. I didn't particularly feel that I should be trying to deal with international affairs for two reasons. Number one I didn't know that much about it. I didn't have the information. I related myself to the citizen that didn't know when I was having the riots. Then there were other things. We didn't have a lot of time together. The President of course is very busy and everybody demanding of his time.

I was going through these things for U.K. and I gathered some things. Some of them are that Mrs. Nunn put together and I ran across five invitations to the White House in one year. I think that they respected me. He respected me and my judgment. I remember when we had the head of the Australian government there. I was seated at the head of the table with the President. I was honored because of all the governors to be put in that position but I didn't impose on his time.

I knew how busy he had to be. He had told all of his aids that anything I wanted to see that I got it because I wouldn't do anything to embarrass him. I wouldn't ask for anything I wasn't entitled to. I didn't have to see the President. I had the political people in every department. I had their names, address, and telephone number. I had the person that represented the White House who was there to communicate. So if there was something I wanted to do for the state of Kentucky or for some private citizen I called the person in that department then I called the head of the department or the Secretary who ever it might be. Like transportation Boatly was Secretary of Transportation. He'd been a fellow governor. I knew him. So I talked to him and the political person so that when the two met they'd recognize each other. I told him it was coming up and the political

person who obviously cleared it with the White House so it was on its way up.

Everybody fell in line and you got faster action and you got better results.

There were a few things there was a senator by the name of Metcalf from one of the western states that had introduced a hobby farm bill. The essence of it was that if you didn't live on a farm, work on a farm you weren't a farmer so you didn't get any of the exemptions. I don't know if they explained it to the President but various people tried to get appointments concerning it. Finally, it came back to me and what was going on and some of the horse people got very concerned. I called and got an appointment. I invited so many of these people from racing, well the big rollers, the top of the line so to speak of the horse industry. We had a meeting in the Oval Office and out of that came the American Horse Council. What I did had a drastic effect on the state of Kentucky.

I took fifty thousand dollars spent it on research and had them to determine how many horses we had in the United States, how many people worked for them, how much was spent on feed, how much was spent on tact, how much revenue came from race tracks. I had all the facts and information and statistics to show the significance of the horse industry all over. So when I went I had the information that would justify him taking the action he did. That's one of the problems that you have whether its governor or anything that your doing. Most people don't have the funds or the time or the talent to sit down and research things and come up with significant points. Consequently it kind of gets brushed aside. Anytime I think that you're going down to see someone who was in a position to make a decision or carry forward a decision that you need to go prepared. If your not prepared, my mother used to tell me plain language was easily understood.

One of my favorite scripture quotations is, I'll paraphrase this a little bit "if the sound of the trumpet giveth an uncertain sound who shall prepare for battle?" My experience was that I'd tell the commissioner something and the commissioner would tell the deputy commissioner and he tells the foremen. By the time it's gone through four mouths two of them think that they'd improve on what I said and the other one's forgotten what they said and you started out with is not really what you wanted at all. For that reason I guess I came off kind of harsh, hard and said this is it do you understand it. Some may have considered I was talking down to them but I wanted to put everything in writing that I could. But then you don't necessarily want to do that either. If I was in Washington a United States Senator or the President of the United States everybody that worked for me would throw away all their pencils and their notebooks and recorders because if its so that you have to write it down its not that important enough to be working on anyway. All those people do just like Clinton and Nixon and all those people everybody writes down what happened, who said what and then when it comes up everybody tries to cover their own back. Then they give their own variety of it and there's six people in a room and each one writes it down different way. So you've got conflict of testimony and it looks like someone's lying.

V. Foreign Relations & The Cold War

Baldwin: As governor you've indicated that you're not necessarily involved with the President and foreign relations.

Nunn: No, I mean it was discussed. I remember one night being at the White House.

John Mitchelli, myself and the President and one other person, I'm sorry if I can't recall

right at the time. There were four couples there for dinner. There was some discussion of it then but O just listened. I didn't want to demonstrate my ignorance by getting into it. I might've asked a few questions. I figured out as a boy a long time ago the Lord gave me two ears and one tongue and if I ever thought that anything I achieved was recognizable I'd wait until I knew. Don't get into too much trouble if you recognize you don't know everything.

Baldwin: It is hard for me, it's probably less hard for you because you've probably kept up more with your feelings, at the time when Nixon decided to go into Cambodia with U.S. forces. Do you recall if you thought widening the war to end the war was a good strategy to end it?

Nunn: I thought it was good. Even if I'd been doubtful because of the information that I had I still thought that it was a good thing because I was under the opinion that I'd told earlier. Either fight or go home. I thought that if that's what they're going to do I saw it as a thing to end the war. I saw it as aggression if you want to call it that that would end the Vietnam situation. That's what everybody wanted. I wasn't concerned about the communists in Cambodia because they made their choice and had already decided which side they wanted to be on. They were as much at war as the Vietnamese were. As long as they were supplying things to the communists and they were communists that's what it was all about containing communism.

Baldwin: On that topic one of the difficult things that we have as college professors now is getting students to really understand the threat of the Cold War. They often think of Russia now as sort of a paper tiger.

Nunn: It was then. I having been in WW II was not very fond of the Japanese. In 1970 there were a group of governors five or six of us maybe seven that went to Japan. We were gone nineteen days and visited all over Japan. When I left to go my attitude was that I want to go I want to see what's going on. But I don't like Japan. I don't care if we have nothing to do with them. When I left I changed my whole concept because I saw the ability of the Japanese people to produce technical things, how to copy, what they were doing to the automobile. We went through the Honda plant. Mr. Honda gave us a motor bike. Went through and looked at the industry and concluded that if those people with their technology and their ability to build and produce should with Russia who no one knows is a paper tiger at the time. Everybody thought they were great. If the two of them tied together then our national security was very much at risk. So I changed my whole attitude in nineteen days about whether we should do business with Japan. It wasn't that they endeared me to them as a nationality. It was the fact that of survival and national interest. So you wonder why people switch positions and why they would do that. As you become wiser it's only a fool that never changes his mind when you get more information and find out things you need to know. You better change that's bigotry, prejudice, and bias and all those things when you don't have the capacity to change