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LAWRENCE F. O'BRIEN ORAL HISTORY, INTERVIEW XXIII

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Signed by Lawrence F. O'Brien on April 5, 1990.

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ACCESSION NUMBER 92-34

INTERVIEW XXIII

DATE: July 21, 1987

INTERVIEWEE: LAWRENCE F. O'BRIEN

INTERVIEWER: Michael L. Gillette

PLACE: Mr. O'Brien's office, New York City

Tape 1 of 3, Side 1

O: The Oregon primary was hotly contested. [Eugene] McCarthy showed a better organization than he had shown in Indiana. We were frankly taken aback by it. We had the same state campaign director we'd had in 1960 with Jack Kennedy, Edith Green, a congresswoman who was highly regarded in the state. We felt that under her direction we had as effective a group as we could put together. The indication that we were in real trouble was at the climax of the campaign, when McCarthy and Kennedy held closing rallies. We had considerable difficulty putting together fifteen hundred-two thousand people. McCarthy had an attendance of over seven thousand. Bobby [Kennedy] had gone to California, because we were moving into California immediately following the Oregon primary.

It was rather a shock to lose on primary night. Bobby had returned from California. We were in the hotel, which was the headquarters for media also. The top network people were there to report the results and there would be interviews through the night. A considerable discussion took place regarding whether or not Bobby should congratulate Gene when the outcome was obvious. There were two schools of thought. The younger group, as I recall it, saw no reason to congratulate McCarthy. They reflected on what they considered an awfully bitter campaign and Gene had said a lot of mean things. We, however, concluded that a telegram should be sent.

In any event, as this evening continued to unfold, another matter came up. Press and network people were anxious to have a spokesman for the Kennedy side in the ballroom. I was a little intrigued to find that there wasn't a volunteer. In defeat it's quite a different atmosphere. I had planned to go down in any event. I simply said, "I'll take care of that," and I went down. I spent a considerable amount of time fending off the reporters, not conceding for a while and trying to focus on our expectations in California.

It was clear California was make or break; if Bobby couldn't prevail in California, he should withdraw his candidacy. If he did, he still had a difficult situation. It wasn't Gene McCarthy over the long haul; it was Hubert Humphrey. But we would face that as we went along.

So I made a trip to New York. I was very concerned about New York. You keep looking ahead. One primary was to follow another rapidly. I submitted a memo to Steve

Smith, who collated information and maintained records. That memo, which is dated May 18, followed three concentrated days in New York where I talked with our citizens committee people, state committee leaders, our upstate campaign people, borough and county leaders in the New York City area and labor leaders. I have a long list of those I met with individually and in small groups. I stated, "As of today, May 18, 1968, we could lose one-half the delegates to be elected by districts on June 18, which would amount to one-third of the delegation strength of the hundred and ninety. This is the candidate's home state. The party regulars are restless. The depth of commitment to Bobby is shallow. The Indiana and Nebraska wins help some, but not enough. All eyes will be turned westward toward Oregon and California. If we win on the West Coast, a lot of spines will be stiffened in New York. But we will still need to mount an intensive effort in New York state between June 5 and June 18. Aside from localized animosities toward Bobby,"--which among other things included a judgeship fight--

G: This was the Morrissey--?

O: No, this was New York and this was the feeling that he didn't support Frank O'Connor enthusiastically.

G: I see.

O: "There's a general feeling," I said, "among the pols that Bob has paid little attention to them, even though he's their senator. This is combined with their reading of Humphrey and McCarthy grass-roots sentiment and antagonisms toward RFK in various areas." Then I pointed out, "McCarthy has been active in New York for the last three months. The Humphrey activity as yet is not vigorous. Gene Foley, a close associate of Hubert's, is the only name mentioned. His contacts have been limited." I continued, "My pitch to the nervous organization leaders who are with us was stand pat, don't rock the boat and don't succumb to any Humphrey blandishments."

Then I had a series of recommendations. The fact of the matter is that I was far from sanguine about what was going to happen in New York. I pointed out finally, "The New York campaign is one of nuts and bolts organization, not one of public relations or mass media concentration because you're in a delegate quest and it's an entirely different situation." The New York situation was that there wasn't any problem identifying Bobby, acquainting the politicians with him. He was the senator from New York.

In any event, while Oregon was an obvious serious setback, even an Oregon victory, in my opinion on the basis of this memo, was not going to contribute greatly to an improved situation in New York if we were unable to mount a grass-roots effort. You tried to be realistic as you moved along.

Going into California we were deeply concerned. You have what borders on an impossible localized campaign and you're going to have to arouse general voter support through media.

G: Impossible because of the size of the state?

O: Size, yes. Impossible, in our terms, what we like to put in the field. You will recall that was one of the reasons why, in 1960, I made what I thought was a deal with [Edmund] Pat Brown, who was governor, on behalf of Jack Kennedy, which was referred to as the Carmel Compact. I've referred to it before, but it's worth noting at this point. Climbing the fire escape in a hotel in Carmel and meeting with Jess Unruh and others as they put together their slate of delegates. We were reaching out wherever we could to get our share.

In any event, we were not going into that California primary. We went into seven primaries that were carefully selected in 1960, large state primaries. We bluffed it out reasonably well with the threat of going in. There was strong Adlai Stevenson support in California at that time. We did the best we could, making the deal. I won't pursue that further because I've talked about it before. But the deal never was consummated. When I met with Jack and went over the deal with him, I suggested he call Pat Brown, thank Pat, and be specific as to his understanding of the deal, which he did in my presence. That still wasn't enough. Pat succumbed to Stevenson efforts and waffled. That experience was in my mind in terms of California.

There were spots around the state that were effective, and there were some local and area political leaders supporting Bobby. There was literature distribution; there were basic activities. But the indications were a very close situation. Now I don't suggest--I don't recall Bobby and I said, "Okay, this is it." Realistically, the campaign was over if we lost.

Finally, we were able to develop a debate between Bobby and McCarthy. It would be on statewide television toward the end of the primary. Bobby did well in the debate.

G: Who had sought the debate, do you--?

O: We did.

G: Why did you do that?

O: What else was there we might undertake? There might have been mutual seeking. But from our point of view, we were anxious to have a debate. So if McCarthy showed an interest, that was good. The fact is the debate was locked up and Bobby acquitted himself well. That closed out the California primary.

G: What did Humphrey do during that primary? Did he support McCarthy?

O: Some of his people did, yes. Humphrey did not officially or formally support McCarthy, but there were clear indications of a considerable amount of effort on the part of

Humphrey people to be helpful to McCarthy.

G: What were they doing specifically?

O: They didn't have a game plan, but tried to be helpful in whatever way they could. Obviously if McCarthy prevailed, Humphrey in Chicago probably wouldn't have to be concerned about Bobby. So it was clear that the Humphrey people were anxious to see McCarthy win the California primary.

The problem from the outset was how to cope with Gene McCarthy, with the firm conviction that McCarthy was not going to be nominated. Also, [how did you] cope with Hubert Humphrey, whose people were out in the large industrial states effectively lining up delegate support? Our head counts reflected that. I'd have occasions when I'd have to defend our position. I'd make claims of delegate strength. Try to put the best face on it. Walter Cronkite's researcher devoted full time to the progress of the candidates toward the nomination, specifically delegate strength. I can recall one evening trying to convince him that his delegate information was not accurate and mine was. The fact was that Humphrey was headed toward a majority of the delegates by the convention. If we had followed California with a better picture in New York, we still would be short. It would be necessary to peel back Humphrey support. Some of that support was soft.

As a realist, you log the support known to you that Humphrey had. Also, some of that support might be soft. There might be ways to reverse the situation. I have to state that if Bobby had been able to go on to Chicago, he would have had an uphill struggle to be nominated. That's contrary to what is said by some revisionists, some of them friends of mine, who fondly hoped that Bobby [would] be nominated and that hope translated in the intervening years into an assurance that would take place. I didn't feel that way and none of us know what the ultimate result would have been in Chicago. I knew, even in the enthusiasm of victory in California, we were going to be fighting all the way and it would be difficult. Humphrey had the edge despite the California primary result.

G: What would have happened if Kennedy had lived and had gone into the convention with your strength? What would McCarthy have done? Would he have thrown it one way or the other? Would he have thrown it to Humphrey rather than Kennedy?

O: I don't know what McCarthy would have done, but if we reached the point where it was clear that we were not going to achieve the nomination, Bobby Kennedy would have supported Hubert Humphrey. That goes back to conversations we had early on and the understanding between Bobby and Hubert. There hadn't been any meanness up to California involving Hubert. Hubert was playing the game as he should play it: let Gene and Bobby kick each other around. Hubert could not have prevailed in primaries anyway; that was not his strong suit. He knew what he had to do and he was busily engaged in doing it.

I remember vividly that evening Bobby and I in the corridor of the hotel throwing

our arms around each other. Of course, there was a mass rush for Bobby interviews and comments. He couldn't handle them all. I handled some of them, tried to cover as many bases as we could and we went down to meet with this enthusiastic throng in the hotel.

Certainly I'd like to think that all through my political life that I was a realist. There were many in those days who would suggest that I was a pessimist. But I always felt I'd rather be pleasantly surprised than deeply hurt and that was the kind of personal approach I had.

The celebration was over and I don't know why Bobby chose to leave the platform and take another exit route through the kitchen. But we parted on the stage and Ira Kapenstein and I went back to my suite, which was one of the little cottages on the grounds of the Ambassador. The shots were fired and Bobby had been hit and about thirty-six hours later he died.

I remember my reaction was completely different than it had been in Dallas with Jack. Dallas--I refused to believe at each stage; the shots were fired, but he hadn't been hit or he's not seriously wounded. The next stage, he will survive, and the next stage, bring Jackie to view his body, still disbelieving. Ken O'Donnell and I did not allow the public announcement of his death for at least half an hour after we had been told he was dead.

In Los Angeles, I reacted the opposite. I felt immediately it was all over. We all parted Los Angeles a couple days later or a day and a half. The story of the Bobby Kennedy funeral and the funeral train has been told in great detail many times. I had never experienced a funeral train. It slowed down at every hamlet on the way to Washington with throngs of people along the way and hundreds of people on the train; Jackie, Ethel, all of the Kennedys.

The one unusual incident on that train was a brief conversation I had with Eunice Shriver. Eunice reminded me that she and Sarge had done everything possible to be helpful in the campaign. Eunice had spent a great deal of effort in the primary states, through California. She sought my confirmation of that, which was true.

G: She had done everything?

O: That went back to some dissatisfaction in the Kennedy family when Sarge chose to remain ambassador to France and not campaign personally. I didn't think that, as far as I was concerned, was a serious matter. In fact, it made good sense. What he could contribute on the scene compared to leaving the President was something that Sarge had to make his own decision on. He chose not to leave Paris and that was the reason I felt Eunice wanted to review with me what she felt was the record of she and Sarge in support of Bobby. I assured her I had observed what she had done and I let it go at that.

G: Had Bobby thought that Sarge should leave the ambassadorial post and come back?

O: I never had a conversation with Bobby on it. I was aware there were people in the campaign making comments of the negative nature regarding Sarge. What the family's attitude was, I don't know nor did I seek to find out. You'd have to assume that probably there were some who shared the view that he should come back, and there were some who probably shared my view. I didn't see any great overriding reason for him to take that step.

G: How did Robert Kennedy's death affect Lyndon Johnson?

O: At that point I was no longer associated with Lyndon Johnson. I did see him through this period. He was profoundly shaken by it, from my observations. But I did not have any extensive conversation with him.

I don't recall how it came about, but while we were in New York I had coffee, my wife and I, with Hubert and Muriel [Humphrey]. Hubert, I must say, did dwell at some length on this tragedy, made reference to his fondness for Bobby and his feeling that it had been shared. He made reference to our understanding to avoid any conflict and there would be unity at the end. I remember that specifically.

G: Had LBJ exercised any influence or attempted to in the primaries that you entered in terms of either--?

O: Not to my knowledge.

G: You didn't see him as a factor in New York or California or any other?

O: No.

G: Did the Kennedy campaign soften its tone after Oregon? Was it less of a bitter campaign in California than it had been in Oregon?

O: In terms of McCarthy?

G: McCarthy versus Kennedy, yes.

O: I don't recall any softening. It was a short time span. We attempted the basics of organization with heavier emphasis on media because of the nature of the contest in California. But I don't recall any restructuring. I do recall that the debate came off without animosity. While there were debating points made on both sides, they were professional.

G: Did you have some establishment support in California?

O: Yes, spearheaded by Jess Unruh. Jess Unruh early on had adopted the position of strong opposition to LBJ's Vietnam policy and strong support for Bobby. He was among the

first, if not the first, to urge Bobby to seek the presidency. He was in the forefront and I reflected on one evening at Bobby's house in McLean, Virginia, where references were made to a poll in California, which was part of Jess' continuing strong effort to get Bobby to declare his candidacy. Jess was, as he had been in 1960, a potent factor in California politics, with political contacts in just about every county in the state.

G: What was Pat Brown's role in California?

O: I don't recall what Pat Brown's position was in California at that time. We're talking about 1968?

G: Yes. But you don't recall him supporting you or--?

O: No, I don't.

G: You had John Tunney, I guess, a friend of the Kennedys?

O: Yes. He was very active. He was a long-time family friend. In fact John Tunney, I believe, was at Bobby's house this night I just referred to.

G: Anything else on the California organization or--?

O: The best way to sum up the California organization was that it was the best we could do. It underscored the extreme difficulty of primaries. And it further underscored the effort we made to avoid California in 1960. You could not avoid California in 1968. So you had to depend on not only Jess but others, whose names elude me, who had been staunch supporters of Jack. We were greatly dependent upon long-time Jack Kennedy supporters, in turn, to support Bobby.

McCarthy, as was to be the case with George McGovern later, had the great advantage of this widespread youth support, which was really the peace movement. It brought to him an army of grass-roots advocates. It was our good fortune to be able to overcome that in California and our bad luck was not to be able to do it in Oregon.

Tape 1 of 1, Side 2

G: How significant was the Cesar Chavez support?

O: That was important. He had become closely associated with the Kennedys. He had made a major effort in registration and had become a political activist.

G: Now, how did you deal with the accusation that Kennedy was ruthless? There was the time in the Oregon primary, you were saying.

O: When a story broke regarding Bobby as attorney general and surveillance of Martin

Luther King, the connection was J. Edgar Hoover and Bobby must have authorized it. It was harmful. I believe it probably was the [Drew] Pearson columns. We were persuaded this was planted and most unfairly presented to harm to Bobby.

G: Did you see Hoover behind it or Johnson behind it?

O: I saw at least Hoover behind it. But I don't know as I thought about Johnson being behind. Hoover behind it was clear to us or it just wouldn't have occurred. It was not presented in an accurate way. But that was beside the point. It was harmful.

G: What was the accurate version of that as far as you were concerned?

O: I remember Bobby being disturbed when this broke and pointing out to me that those weren't the facts. Yet, what really could you do about it except deny it? You have those who are pleased. The image of Bobby in the political world was considerably different than the image of Jack. Bobby, because of his style more than anything specific, had created in the minds of many the image of being a ruthless fellow. His speaking style, his style in conversations with him. He was very blunt. He had a way of snapping out sentences, giving the impression of belligerency, toughness and some people construed meanness. So he would be vulnerable, in some quarters at least, to that sort of attack.

The interesting thing was the enthusiasm for him, as it was for Jack, among the young people who were new to politics as so many had been new to politics in 1960. Those who had been through the 1960 campaign had a somewhat different attitude toward Bobby than these young people. After Bobby's death, innumerable times over the next decade, I would have who were new to the political arena at that period tell me about the devastation of their lives that resulted from Bobby's death, which was identical with the reaction after Jack's assassination. They had come into the arena with Bobby Kennedy and they were devoted to him. Now, the older activists, including many who supported Bobby, did not have that attachment to Bobby that they had had to Jack. So it was a new generation. They would resent the suggestions that Bobby was ruthless, and understandably. You had a differing approach to Bobby among many people who were involved in that campaign.

G: Did you have a particular strategy, though, for countering that, either developing or displaying his sense of humor more or--?

O: I guess you could term it a strategy. Bobby had had the experience before he entered this presidential contest of being a candidate in a major state in a difficult contest, had acquitted himself well and was elected to the Senate. That wasn't easy because the major accusation was that here's a fellow who became a voter in New York for only one purpose and had no interest in the state of New York. That was difficult to overcome. But he overcame it.

And in his general campaign approach, he was an impressive candidate. Some of

the young, newly arrived were staunch supporters of McCarthy, wedded to the peace movement. And others of the new generation knew Bobby's position on Vietnam was no different than McCarthy's. Bobby was a more attractive candidate to them. But the two were splitting up the youth movement, with McCarthy having the dominant position because of the peace movement.

G: How about the charge of Kennedy being opportunistic because he did not enter before New Hampshire?

O: That was made by the McCarthy people, repeatedly.

G: How did you deal with that?

O: You just simply ignored it. You pointed to Bobby's long-time record, his position regarding Vietnam. We didn't reflect on the belated arrival on the scene. The McCarthy people, of course, resented it greatly. And I suppose if I were a McCarthy supporter, I would have felt that way.

G: Almost felt that he had some sort of lock on the anti-war candidacy?

O: Yes. You can go through the whole period, including today, of the Kennedys in politics. Eddie McCormack was accusing Teddy Kennedy of being opportunistic when he was elected to the Senate. With his famous comment, "If your name was Edward Moore instead of Edward Moore Kennedy, we wouldn't be here on this platform together tonight." The McCarthy people said, "Here's another Kennedy. They're the self-appointed first family." You could play on that pretty well. Our view--I remember talking with Bobby at some length about this--was what are you going to do, have a debate about belated entry? Just ignore it. How many times can McCarthy and his people repeat that and have any impact?

G: What was McCarthy's weakness in terms of the campaign? Not necessarily weaknesses of personality or as a potential president but whether it be a voting record or a--?

O: It was a one-issue candidacy. McCarthy was a free spirit who had been described by some as a loner, by others independent of the establishment through his career. He had the good fortune in 1968 and in 1972 to be able to launch a presidential bid off a cause that had tremendous support. McCarthy was the vehicle for them. Bobby's entry was considered to be motivated to a great extent because of his personal feeling toward Gene McCarthy. I will have to say Bobby didn't hold Gene McCarthy in high regard; neither did a lot of other people. But that certainly wasn't the motivating factor.

G: Was there an inevitable comparison between Bobby Kennedy and Jack Kennedy during this campaign?

O: Yes. As the campaign progressed there was growing evidence that people were relating

Bobby to Jack. He had some of the "charisma" Jack had. I found them decidedly different and I knew both of them intimately, but I'm talking about public perception.

G: Well, was there a problem with contrast? Did people say, "Well, Jack would not have done this," or "Jack would stand for that?"

O: Not that I recall. There's something about a Kennedy candidacy--there's a tendency to focus on the candidate, the image, the personality, and to a lesser extent on the issues.

G: He almost took on a star status in terms of the crowd's wanting to shake hands with him or grasp him or--

O: That was part of this evolvement. Almost daily there seemed to be more of that cropping up, more of what you had observed in Jack Kennedy's campaign.

G: Was this a problem where you had his clothing being torn and I think he had a chipped tooth at one point?

O: No, you welcomed it.

G: You didn't worry about his physical safety, in other words?

O: No.

G: Was there in advance a fear of assassination?

O: No.

G: Really?

O: Other than what has been quite prevalent regarding the Kennedys. The fact is that when he was seeking the nomination, you would hear frequent references to destiny in terms of the end result. The hatred of Kennedys that exists in this country--and I think it did from the beginning and it does today--is so intense while the enthusiasm for Kennedys is so great. There is that element that dislikes the Kennedys intensely. To some extent, it went to religion. Now with Teddy, they can avoid that direct confrontation by pointing to other so-called failings. It's been there and we did not say it's unfortunate that Bobby is seeking this nomination because there's an inevitability or destiny.

G: Did you have a sufficiently free hand in this campaign or--?

O: Yes, it was brief when you think about it.

G: Well, in your case from--what--April to June, I guess.

O: Yes, I was just trying to think it out. I think to put this in proper focus, my involvement was brief. There were those who were involved informally in the discussion stages. But the actual campaign from formalization until Los Angeles was a short period of time.

When you talk about planning and organization, you've got to reflect for a moment. In 1958, Jack Kennedy was re-elected to the Senate. Immediately, we were engaged in planning to seek the nomination for the presidency in 1960. Over that two years, we had ample opportunity to put into effect our concept of organization, our concept of campaigning, our concept of the use of media. We were able to organize in detail, in depth and maximize every potential.

Bobby Kennedy enters the campaign for the presidency and over-night the campaign is on. There had been no planning that I was aware of when I got into the campaign. I didn't see any indication that anybody had prepared an overall campaign program in all of its intricate elements. This was sort of by the seat of your pants. You tried to utilize the procedures that had been proven so successful in prior Kennedy campaigns. How do you implement, I pointed out, the Indiana primary--one day's notice--trying to put together a state-wide campaign that would involve the utilization of thousands of volunteers? That's certainly not the way you would have approached it. You would have had far more organization than existed in Bobby's campaign.

Sure, we did basically the same thing in Indiana in Bobby's campaign that we had done in Jack's campaign. Basically the same, but not nearly as detailed; consequently not nearly as effective. But we did the best we could with what we had in the time span that we were limited to.

The same thing in Oregon. In the Oregon primary campaign in 1960, that would be a campaign comparable to seeking the governorship of Oregon. Months of effort was put into that campaign. Now you're in Indiana; you have a quick touch in Nebraska, you've gone into Oregon and you've just finished California. California didn't lend itself to the kind of campaigns that we waged in the seven primaries in 1960. So you accommodated to what was available. Oregon did; there were some elements of continuity. But there had been a break of eight years. At least you could pick up some pieces. The same in Indiana. But to suggest that we had the same in-depth structure that we had in West Virginia and everywhere else in 1960 would be a misstatement. We had not, in 1960, had to face California in a primary. We did not have to face New York, which was upcoming. It was entirely different, far more difficult. You look back to 1960 in those seven primaries. They were spaced reasonably well. We could fully utilize the candidate campaigning in those states. But you have Bobby running in California even on Oregon primary day to make some hay, and into California on Wednesday after the Oregon primary. That was the way the campaign was waged.

McCarthy had a single-issue organization of devoted young followers. They were grass-roots campaigners with a cause. They were on a youth crusade. And the leader was Gene McCarthy.

G: How did the picture in Pennsylvania look for Kennedy?

O: It didn't look good. Hubert had been very effective. Fred Harris and Fritz Mondale--I believe Harris probably more so--had put a great deal of effort into the delegate hunt in Pennsylvania in developing Humphrey support with labor and the Democratic organization. We were concerned. I watched it very closely. I had all the intelligence you could gather and it was depressing.

G: Really?

O: I came to the conclusion we had an uphill situation, even with a California victory.

G: How about New Jersey?

O: Hubert Humphrey, vice president of the United States, had been in the forefront of progressive action in the Democratic Party for thirty years, and was well thought of. He had one overriding hang-up, vice president of the United States with Vietnam. As a candidate, he was tough for us to cope with in 1960. We knocked him out in the primaries. He was in a far stronger position in 1968, except in terms of Vietnam. It wasn't a surprise to me that Humphrey's people were able to move effectively in the delegate hunt and avoid the primary side. It was the right strategy and it was working.

G: You did have Richard Hughes in New Jersey?

O: Hughes was a staunch Kennedy man in 1960. He was in the forefront of that campaign and remained consistently a Kennedy man. I don't want to unduly reflect on the difficulties that I saw at the time of the assassination in Los Angeles. But had I concluded that there was no way you could peel back some of the support, no way you could work it out? Of course I didn't or I wouldn't have been spending that time and effort in New York and all the other things I was contemplating doing. I'm saying that when you're faced with a difficult struggle, you'd better be sensible enough to evaluate it for what it is and act accordingly whatever way you can. That was the mood I was in at that time. I can't accept some of the Kennedy supporters who proclaimed without question that Bobby would have been nominated in Chicago. That doesn't mean that my support for his candidacy was any less than theirs.

G: How about Illinois?

O: Illinois would have been played out as Illinois was played out in 1960; you would have to prove your case. At some point, Dick Daley would evaluate and come to his conclusion as to what was best for his candidates in Illinois. Dick Daley was a somewhat late arrival, which was no reflection on him in 1960. We were actually in the convention or approaching it within a couple of days with some question about what Daley's ultimate decision would be. We had proven our case to him in the primaries. We would have had

to do the same thing with Dick Daley in 1968. When you're approaching Chicago, that's when you get into serious discussions with Dick Daley. What transpired after Jack Kennedy was elected, where the relationship became closer and closer, would indicate that Dick Daley would certainly lean toward Bobby. But you could not take that to the bank at that time.

G: Did you try to pin Daley down?

O: Making sure he knew what we were doing. We knew he knew we were conducting a vigorous campaign, that we were anxious to have his support, obviously, that we felt deserving of it. You don't go beyond that with Dick Daley and even with that you're using kid gloves.

G: What was the situation in Ohio?

O: I can't relate it directly to Ohio. Humphrey had made inroads in all the industrial states. Beyond that, we felt that organized labor, George Meany, was probably leaning toward Hubert. We knew he thought highly of Hubert and they'd had a long, warm relationship. But there again, he'd be torn--a Kennedy and a Humphrey. It's a tough call. Bobby could be nominated in Chicago provided he had one great batting average through the primaries. You falter in Oregon; that's a setback. You prevail in California, okay. A couple of setbacks would derail the train.

G: Would losing New York have been fatal?

O: I can't without a crystal ball determine that, but I can tell you I was very concerned about New York. You lose New York and you're a United States senator from New York? I guess it could be fatal, but I wouldn't want to make that call, reflecting back to that time.

G: To what extent was Kennedy running against Lyndon Johnson?

O: He was running against Lyndon Johnson's policy strongly. He wasn't personalizing attacks, but he certainly was underscoring his position in strong opposition to the Johnson position.

G: Well, I think we've covered everything I had on the Kennedy campaign.

Do you want to describe now being asked to join the Humphrey campaign? I think you were asked out to Waverly.

O: Prior to that, two things happened. One, of course, after Bobby's death, I found myself with the dire need to focus on my own future. I had enjoyed the luxury, if you will, of being involved over a number of years--not focusing at all on what I would be doing after that period ended. Obviously, it effectively ended one night in Los Angeles. I started to think this out and talked to my wife to determine just what I would do. I would set up a

consulting company, decidedly not involving Washington. I had a very strong view that once I was through with politics and government that I should physically depart Washington. I received a couple of phone calls during this time, probably within a week or two, that came out of nowhere. There was a call from Jim Hagerty, who had been Eisenhower's press secretary and then held a senior position at ABC Television. He said that there was a need for advice and counsel on how the television networks should handle some problems, particularly the hue and cry about violence on television. Perhaps the time had come when the networks, jointly, could approach these problems and that something could be established by way of public relations.

Tape 2 of 3, Side 1

O: They seemed prepared to do something. They asked me if I would be willing to take on this role on a consulting basis.

So I presented a proposal to them that, without exclusivity, I wouldn't be fully engaged. A meeting they described as historic took place. All three network presidents met together. We met in ABC headquarters. They accepted the proposal.

During that same time frame, Claude Desautels, my long-time assistant, called me to say that he had received a call from a fellow named Bob Maheu, who headed Hughes Enterprises. Maheu didn't know me and wondered if through Claude he could arrange for contact with me. I told Claude he could have this fellow Maheu call me and Maheu did. He said that on the instructions of Howard Hughes, he had a proposal to make to me now that I'm in the private sector. He invited me to spend a weekend in Las Vegas. My wife and son and I went out and I met with Maheu. Maheu proceeded to tell me all about the eccentricities of Howard Hughes, his relationship with him, which was by memo, that he never saw Hughes, yet he ran all of Hughes' activities.

G: Did he seem to think that this was peculiar and how did he explain it?

O: He said that's the nature of his role and I would certainly consider it highly peculiar. Up front he wanted to explain to me how he dealt with him. He said, "I have been asked to explore with you [your] joining the Hughes organization. We've never met before and I'm telling you this crazy story of how I deal with my boss." He took from his desk a sheet of yellow legal pad and said, "I'm going to show you this memo. I'm under instructions never to show any of Hughes' writing to anyone. But I know I'll get nowhere having you listen to a stranger tell you about peculiar activity." I read the memo from Hughes to Maheu carefully and it said, "I have not been sleeping since Bobby Kennedy's death. I am just totally upset. This is a horrible situation. I've been watching everything on television." It went on to say, "I wonder what's going to happen now to these Kennedy people." Then he said in the last paragraph, "I want to particularly focus on Larry O'Brien because I watched him on television the other night and I was extremely impressed. Would you see if you could contact O'Brien and determine if he would have any interest in joining our organization?"

I mention the memo because the memo expressed distress because of Bobby's death and sympathy for the Kennedy family. Years went by and I had a copy of another memo thrust upon me when a fellow was writing a book. It was not the same memo at all. In that memo, Hughes was saying to Maheu that he didn't appreciate the Kennedys or disagreed with their philosophy or something of that nature. When this man thrust this memo at me during the course of an interview, I read it and I told him I had never seen the memo before, which was true. He wasn't ready to accept that because it spoiled his whole theory. In any event, that's why the memo is so firmly in my mind.

I said to Maheu that I would not have any interest in joining the Hughes organization. And I didn't. I wouldn't have any interest in joining any organization full time.

G: But did they indicate what they wanted you to do in [the organization]?

O: We never got to that because I said, "No, I wouldn't have any interest." Then I told Maheu that I was in the process of trying to establish a consulting firm which would be based in New York. Maheu seized on that and said, "Well, perhaps that would be of interest to us." Then he went on to tell me that what disturbed him and Hughes and needed attention was one, the remarkable career of Howard Hughes, basically aviation, that had been lost to the public view because of the eccentricities of Hughes, all the stories about him which were negative over the years, that there had a been bio on Hughes early on. Perhaps some program could be developed to present another side of Howard Hughes, as eccentric as he might be. Two, he felt there should be some focus on the Hughes Medical Foundation. It had all kinds of programs, but there was no sense of publicizing this activity. Maybe a program could be developed to do that. Thirdly, Hughes had a deep, personal view regarding underground testing, that he--I don't know what his motivation was--that he'd be blown up, I guess, in a hotel in Las Vegas; whatever. Anyway, he was most concerned about that. Those are the areas that he thought could justify having a consulting situation where ideas could be developed. He further said that he had no interest in having any kind of lobbying activity in Washington. They had sources and people who did that. He said, "If you want to present a proposal that would speak to what you feel you might be able to do to be helpful to us in these areas, I'll send it to the boss and get a reaction."

The fact of the matter is Ira Kapenstein and I, dollar for dollar, presented the same proposals to Hughes Enterprises and the three networks. The proposal was accepted by Hughes Enterprises and the networks. So I was in the position to open an office and launch a consulting business, which I felt preserved my independence. I always said I have only two bosses in my life and both were presidents, up to that stage, anyway. I liked the idea that my office would be in New York because I didn't want to be based in Washington. I wanted to leave [Washington].

Then another problem occurred. Hubert and Muriel had visited my home in

Washington a week or so after Bobby's assassination. It was a low-key evening. He had called and asked to come over. We spent the evening chatting. At the end Hubert did say, "I don't know whether you would ever become involved with me and I don't want to get into a discussion on this occasion. I'd like to continue the contact and who knows?" something to that effect, a very light touch.

Well, it's not necessary for me to explain to Hubert Humphrey that I'm engaged in trying to put together my personal affairs and get on with it. There was a second meeting. The result was that I said to Hubert, "The best I can do if it would be any help is to participate in your campaign through the convention in Chicago." That meant I was going to have to postpone the launching of my activities. I had not mentioned that to Hubert. He accepted that offer. I joined his campaign and we both understood I'd terminate the campaign activity at the Chicago convention.

I then contacted Lenny Goldenson, the president of ABC, and explained the situation to him. I was in the headquarters in Chicago as the convention was about to open, and who walked into my office but Lenny Goldenson. Goldenson was straightforward. He said, "Listen, we're a little concerned and I thought I'd drop by. The agreement is effective the day after this convention ends. Is there any question?" I said, "None whatsoever. While I have not told Hubert Humphrey what my private sector activities are going to be, I do have the understanding with him that we close out with the convention."

Hubert had been nominated. My suite in the hotel was a floor below Humphrey's suite and there was a staircase that connected the two suites. So my wife and Joe Napolitan, a long-time associate of mine, and I were sitting just talking, and a Secret Service fellow came in to give me a message that Humphrey was anxious to have a conversation with me. I said, "Well, tell him I'll pop up shortly." The three of us had to know what the purpose of that conversation was going to be. It bothered me because all that had occurred up to that point had been so devastating and so grossly unfair to Humphrey. We were stricken by the intensity of the opposition. So I went upstairs. Hubert immediately said, "I'm sure you have guessed the reason why I want to talk to you." It went on and on and on. He wanted me to become national chairman and stay with the campaign and I just had to do it. Reflecting on the agreement we had early on to terminate at the end of the convention, in fairness to Hubert I ought to tell him why. So I told him. Just as I told him the Secret Service fellow came in; he had a note he handed to me. He said, "They asked me downstairs to give you this note." So while I'm talking to Hubert, I open the note. The note simply said, "Do it. Joe and Elva."

(Laughter)

I put the note in my pocket and that led me to say, "I've got to tell you why I can't." I told him about the networks and I told him about the Hughes deal. I said, "This is my life and I owe it to my family, certainly. My commitment is in writing with both of them. And it's definite. I've had one postponement. I've postponed in order to be with

you through the convention." Hubert said, "I've got a solution for you, if you will buy it. I will personally call the networks and this fellow Maheu and ask them, as a personal favor to me, to postpone until the first of the year." There was another element in it which I revealed to him. I had a book contract. I had signed the book contract much earlier, probably in April, when I left the White House. It was with Little, Brown. I had a time frame on that and I had taken an advance. So there were three problems: Hughes, the networks and the book publisher. Humphrey said, "I'm going to talk to all three." (Laughter) And he jumped up. I remember him saying, "That's it. Now, let's get a couple of hours of sleep and I'll see you at 7:00 a.m."--now it's three or four o'clock in the morning--"and we'll meet here and place the calls. If they say no, then I'm the loser. But if they say yes, you've got to stay with me." And that's the way the night ended.

I went to his suite at the appointed time and said, "Okay, let's place the calls." It turned out he knew Maheu. I never knew what the background was. That may had been the first call. He got Maheu and elicited from him the commitment that the agreement would hold, but be effective January 1. Then he called Frank Stanton. Of the three network presidents he knew Stanton best. He selected Stanton and not Goldenson. I remember him saying, "Okay. We understand each other. Do I have to call the other two or can you assure me you will work it out with the others?" That was the end of the conversation. That assurance came. Then he called the book publisher who reacted as though somebody was pulling a joke on him. It was really funny because I don't know whether he gave him some lip, or whatever. He said, "Oh, this is Hubert Humphrey. You've got to believe me." (Laughter) And he went through it with him. And he said, "Now I know this delays the time frame, but only for a short period. Will you agree?" So, he had the agreement from the three entities. And he turned to me and he stuck his hand out and said, "It's a deal."

The result of that was I stayed into January. Now we can get back to the activities in the campaign.

G: First, let me ask you to elaborate a little on this proposal with the networks. Were you, in effect, going to present a proposal for reducing violence on television or for simply dealing with the opposition to violence on television?

O: Both. They didn't ask me to spell out what I was going to do. What I was charged with was, "Get us off the role of firemen where we seem to be, constantly." They were re-emphasizing the seriousness, in terms of the letters they had received. I wasn't about to say, "Hey, fellows, that's a drop in the bucket." Immediately Ira and I started to think about how they could change their approach.

It was a broad mandate and I think their view was they didn't have much to lose. They'll see what this fellow might come up with. It was an agreement for one year or two years, the same as Hughes, identical with Hughes. It was a very general proposal, lacking specificity, just go at it and see. I think the attitude probably in both cases was, let's see what might unfold from this venture.

The fee was impressive, and having them both, without any debate or discussion, accept it was pleasing. What was most pleasing was I had a base to start activity and I could pursue my book contract. I was not locked into exclusivity in any instance.

G: Was the book contract something that came to you; did Little, Brown approach you?

O: I was approached by several publishers and Ted White came to me. We were friends and he was with Little, Brown at that time and very high on them as a class organization. He said perhaps I would get higher bids, but that wasn't as important as what they would do with the product. He had obviously been sent to talk to me and I made that judgment on the basis of the quality of the organization as Ted described it. At the same time, ***Life*** magazine made a proposal. Because Ted and I were friends, I mentioned it to him, seeking his advice. He was flabbergasted with the money involved for a three or five-part magazine pre-publication. I met with the ***Time*** people to draft an agreement. I came to New York to finalize it and told them about two or three elements of the agreement that I wasn't satisfied with. It was indicated they wanted to stick to those elements. We would meet in New York and see if we could reach a final decision.

Simultaneously I received a call from ***Look*** magazine and the managing editor of ***Look*** said he had to have lunch with me. So with my meeting with ***Life*** upcoming--it was the same day I believe--I had lunch at the Four Seasons with the ***Look*** fellow and his bureau chief in Washington, who was an old friend of mine. He said, "I obviously don't know what you've been offered so I'm going to have to gamble. I'm going to make a bid right here." He made the bid and it was substantially above the ***Life*** bid.

G: Was it to do essentially the same--?

O: Identical.

G: What did they want you to do?

O: Extract a specific number of words--thirty thousand or so.

G: Oh, I see.

O: The competition at that time between ***Look*** and ***Life*** was intensive. I went back to the hotel with Ira, we were at lunch together--and I said to ***Life***, "I've received an offer that's above yours. I don't think you want to play games and I'm not trying to play games. We could talk about the offer again to see if you'd go above." I said, "I think a decision has to be made and I obviously have to make it. As for the nit-picking aspects of our continuing to refine the contract--we might as well close out." He was quite put out. He started to reflect on moral obligations, but the fact was it was a pretty weak argument. So I signed the ***Look*** contract. This was in existence, this contract, at the time I was having this conversation with Hubert. This wasn't something that had occurred within a couple of

weeks. This went back probably at least several months.

Something occurred in December of that year and I didn't go forward with my agreement with the networks or with the Hughes people. Another route came to my attention in mid-December or late December that intrigued me more and I chose it. Unfortunately, I made a bad decision. Clearly I was not going to fulfill that book contract. So I had lunch with the publisher and returned the advance. I have the most beautiful letter because he said in his experience as a publisher rarely had anyone voluntarily come forward and returned an advance. So I didn't have a publisher; I didn't have a relationship with the networks, I didn't have a relationship with Hughes Enterprises, come January 1. With all that went into this, including Hubert's intervention, I reached an agreement to become president of a brokerage firm, McDonnell & Company on Wall Street, about mid-December or later, over Christmas. I notified Bob Maheu of Hughes Enterprises and I don't know whether it was Goldenson or whoever of the networks. At a later date I had an involvement with Maheu and Hughes Enterprises. On the day that Nixon was sworn in, I was on a plane to New York to meet the top staff of McDonnell & Company and take over as president. So back to the campaign.

G: One more question about Hughes before we get to [that]. Did Maheu indicate that Hughes was erratic as well as eccentric? Did he feel that--?

O: Well, I don't know as he had to spell it out, but I was sitting there listening to what defied understanding in a way. That's why he felt compelled to show me something in writing. He said it's awfully difficult to talk about joining an organization when you can't talk to the boss. We were staying that weekend at the Desert Inn, and the boss is on the top floor, I'm told.

G: Did he have an explanation for Hughes'--?

O: No. He had his problems with Hughes at a later date. They were highly publicized. But at that time my recollection is he told me that other than an initial meeting with Hughes when he was hired, through that entire time they had never seen each other. Maheu had been in the FBI; he had graduated from Holy Cross College, he came from Maine. I met his family and they were very nice. He had carried on, apparently extremely well paid. It was a darn good job, but it was probably as unique a job experience as anybody could have.

G: Had Hughes been a factor in any of the campaigns that you'd worked in, had he been a contributor or--?

O: No. I would assume Hughes through his life was a staunch conservative. There was no question about his genius. Taking over the Hughes Tool Company from his father and developing it into a massive organization, getting involved in the movie industry. But more than that, this fellow's genius went to aviation. He set all kinds of world records. One of the largest ticker tape parades in the history of New York was for Hughes when he

broke the world record. That was in his younger days. Then he had built a plane. The fellow was a genius and an eccentric.

He became more eccentric as the years went on. Supposedly, he deteriorated physically and mentally over a period of time. He had this phobia about germs and dust. Along the line he was able to amass a fortune. Then he chose aviation. He was a controversial figure. His aloofness and secrecy lent itself to all kinds of publicity involving Hughes for thirty or forty years.

There's an interesting footnote. The Hughes Medical Center evolved into one of the major research centers in the world. Mac [McGeorge] Bundy, as president of the Ford Foundation, was concerned about tax legislation that would affect the foundation. He got to know the head of the Hughes Medical Foundation. They had a common concern. He said he was most impressive. And then the Hughes Foundation has gone on to tremendous breakthroughs in research. Supposedly, Hughes created the foundation as a tax dodge initially. Maheu's contention was that the foundation was doing a lot of great things but there was a hesitancy to publicize or promote what they were doing and enhance the reputation of the foundation. Maheu felt that was one of his responsibilities; he seemed to be involved in everything Hughes was involved in. He was directly involved with the Hughes Tool Company and obviously directly involved with the hotels in Las Vegas. He was the boss. He called the shots throughout the whole Hughes empire.

G: Did he talk about Hughes and politics other than--?

O: No. I guess state politics. They had to have licenses and what have you for those hotels and gambling entities. On the national scene, interestingly enough, Maheu never discussed politics with me. There was some talk during Watergate of a loan Hughes made to Nixon or maybe it was a contribution he made to Nixon. Maheu never got into politics with me.

I think Maheu had the capacity to compartmentalize. If he was dealing with me, he dealt exclusively on the activities that he and I were engaged in, and then he would go on to the next person. Obviously a fellow wouldn't have survived as long as he did with Hughes if he hadn't maintained total confidentiality with his boss. I found him a thoroughly pleasant fellow to deal with. But he would never get into--

There was one incident I'll never forget. I was talking to him and he said, "I had a great day today." I asked, "What happened?" He said, "I signed an entertainer exclusively for our hotels for X numbers of years," or "the greatest entertainer alive today." I asked, "Who is it?" He said, "Wayne Newton." I had never heard of him. I didn't dare say after that build-up, "Who's Wayne Newton?" It was later on I found that Wayne Newton was indeed the great entertainer in Las Vegas.

G: Is that right?

O: In fact, he became really a Las Vegas entertainer.

Tape 2 of 3, Side 2

O: [Inaudible] there for a while.

G: Okay. Well, shall we start with your visit with Humphrey?

O: Yes. Well, he, as I had said, visited my home one evening, a week or ten days or whatever it was after Bobby's funeral. In a rather kidding vein he said, "Through all the years that we've known each other and the number of times I've invited you out to Waverly, you never came." Shortly after that visit either he called me or Muriel called Elva and invited us out for a weekend. We went out and had a very pleasant stay. I wouldn't say you saw another side of Hubert. What you saw was what people liked about Hubert. We arrived at Waverly and Hubert was flying in; a helicopter was bringing him to their place on the lake. He got out of the helicopter and the first thing he did was start picking up around his swimming pool. He had that reputation of being very neat. His first act was to see if anybody had discarded candy wrappers or what have you.

G: He must have had a compulsion for cleaning?

O: He did, yes.

It was a social visit. Elva and I spent a couple of days there.

G: What was his place like?

O: It was a modern home. Nicely appointed but not excessive. He had a house boat.

G: Oh, a pontoon boat?

O: Pontoon, I guess it was. And he had an antique car. You were kept active during your stay in the antique car visiting neighbors. Then Elva and I were on this boat on the lake and proceeded to stop at various cottages, old friends of his. He went to mass with us on Sunday and then insisted that we, after mass, meet the pastor who turned out to be an old friend of his, too. He loved people and these people around the lake were crazy about him. It was his habit just to pop in. I saw him on his home turf. It was a very pleasant experience, very interesting one.

In any event, when I joined the campaign to secure the nomination at Chicago, which was my commitment, I operated out of, for a brief period, an office in the Executive Office Building. Most activity at that stage had to do with the convention planning, the operation we'd conduct on the convention floor, the housing of the staff, the procedures that would be followed in delegate counting, and trying to assure that we had maximum presence at the convention; for example, gallery seats, floor passes and all that sort of thing. We were very inhibited, even in this area, because of the financial problems that he

was experiencing. Clearly, sources of funding the campaign were quite limited. There was a constant effort being made to have enough funding in order to support the convention proceedings and the staffing of the convention. And that became a problem. Other than that, there was the normal procedure to the point of who would place his name in nomination, who would second the nomination. Everything you are normally engaged in, preparing for the convention itself.

G: Well, when you joined the campaign you had two co-chairmen, Fritz Mondale and Fred Harris. And then you had a lot of other executives like Bill Connell and--

O: At the time that I joined the campaign, Fritz Mondale and Fred Harris came to visit me at my home in Washington. I indicated to Hubert I didn't think it was appropriate for me to chair the campaign, with Fritz and Fred in place. I assume that's what motivated the meeting. The thrust of that meeting was their assurance to me that they were totally supportive of Hubert's desire. They thought it was the right thing to do and they would be continuing their general activity in his behalf but would step aside in terms of the table of organization. They made that very clear to me, because that wasn't something I was seeking; clear to me in consideration of Hubert's proposal that I should know they were in total accord. They had discussed it and they'd be pleased if I'd join. So that occurred.

G: There was reportedly a group of young volunteer lawyers who made up a lot of the core of the active campaigners and they had a session with Humphrey and told him he really needed to have you involved at the top running the thing.

O: I don't recall that.

G: Have you ever heard of that?

O: I may not even have been aware of that meeting.

G: But was the coordination in the campaign decentralized with people like Connell and Jim Rowe and Kampelman, each exercising a certain amount of authority on the one hand and Mondale and Harris on the other?

O: No. I may be talking about a period beyond the nomination; I'm having trouble separating the two segments. We had regular formalized staff meetings; all the top participants were obliged to attend these meetings. There were discussions of all aspects of the campaign. It was determined at Chicago that Orville Freeman would take on the responsibility of maintaining a dialogue regarding issues.

The first step I think that I took after I became chairman of the campaign and party chairman was to meet with the agency that had been hired early on to brief me. This would be the media side of the campaign. I remember I had Joe Napolitan sit in with me and we fired the agency at the end of the meeting. The agency, I think, later on sued or threatened to sue. But the fact is that the presentation was not what we thought of [as]

top quality. We didn't feel we could fault the agency because they were never given any coherent direction. They hadn't really latched onto the thrust of the campaign, the emphasis of the campaign. These story boards and projected television spots just didn't have a focus. We were going to be racing against time in any event. So we let the agency go and started the campaign from scratch right then and there.

G: What did you do in terms of publicity? Did you hire another agency or did you--?

O: No, we hired the elements of what we conceived to be an agency's role in the campaign; in other words, we hired the best fellow in America to do spots, Tony Schwartz. We hired other people to do the bio, the half-hour show, another to do the [Edmund] Muskie segment, others to develop the ad program. We were aware of these people. Between Joe and I, we knew these people intimately and we'd seen them under fire and tested. Joe had all kinds of qualifications in this area. He had conducted any number of campaigns across the country and the world. He had the capacity to put together the best people. A fellow that does spots is not necessarily the fellow who can do the bio. We didn't feel that we were selling beer or cigarettes. This required a particular expertise and experience. The elements of the campaign could be focused on or pinpointed. And under Joe Napolitan's total direction and guidance--he was given complete authority--we would bring the appropriate people in for the appropriate tasks and it would be all coordinated by Joe.

G: What did Kennedy's death do to the Humphrey finances? Did it dry up the contributions? I mean, were people contributing to Humphrey in order to head off Robert Kennedy, do you think?

O: I don't know. I wasn't familiar with their activities prior to my arrival on the scene. I wasn't familiar with their financing while I was with Bobby. The fact is, which is not unusual in a campaign, there's never a period when you're flush, unless you're a Republican. In those days, you're not talking about federal financing.

The fact is that material that had been prepared was discarded. The bio would be the intimate family presentation to the American people. The Humphrey family and Humphrey the man had no bite to it. It didn't present Humphrey the man. We knew Humphrey the man and it was unfortunate it wasn't there.

So you had to start over. We did bring the best people available in and with enthusiasm. But those people had to be paid. They're not volunteers and you'll have to be up front to defray the cost of production. You had time allocations and an expert in that area. The production costs have to be taken care of and the time buys have to be in advance or you're not going to be on the air. What happened is we developed an excellent package of promotion, PR and media, with a price tag of around six million dollars for the last three weeks of the campaign.

We started later than Nixon in this kind of expenditure. He was on the air very

early. In fact, I think he was on the air Labor Day weekend. We weren't and we tried to conserve whatever resources we would have for a final drive. We found ourselves shockingly without any financial resources three weeks before the election. By dint of heavy borrowing from some very wealthy Democrats who were supportive of Hubert, we were able to put together approximately half the budget or less than that. We had to drop agreements on time buys and reduce the whole package by about 60 per cent. It was a devastating situation. We tried to overcome that [by] pursuing the possibility of debate. That was our only hope to even approach Nixon in terms of impact. We tried to circumvent the equal time provision. I remember the tremendous job John McCormack did in the House. In the Senate Dirksen threatened to filibuster. My recollection is that Senator Pastore was chairman of the committee in the Senate and Mike Mansfield, of course, was playing a key role. I believe I contacted the President, suggesting that if we succeeded that he have a public ceremony and have the candidates there.

It was one of the most distressing days of the campaign. I was with Hubert in the Waldorf. We were both in New York and we got on the phone. I had made a number of efforts to move the legislation to the Senate side. There was some adamancy on the part of Mansfield and less than great enthusiasm on the part of Pastore. The specter of Dirksen blocking it in any event and having a big brawl. Our view was let's have the brawl because at least the brawl itself would create some publicity and some free time if you will. We got Mansfield on the phone, and I believe Pastore, and talked to them. Both of them determined that they would not bring it up.

G: Really?

O: Yes.

G: Why wouldn't they?

O: They said it was not going to pass and it would create animosity and interrupt the flow of legislation. If we couldn't assure them of passage, and we couldn't, then their decision was not to engage in it. And they weren't buying our contention, "Let's give it a whirl and let's get to a filibuster." It certainly was not going to be harmful. It might have been helpful. It was a real kick not to be able to get our own people to go along with it, but they wouldn't.

Back to the convention. What you had, as we moved toward it, was an assumption that Humphrey would prevail, but [with] some mountains to climb. One would be the resolution on Vietnam and what form it would take and whether or not the McCarthy people and the liberals would prevail. How could we get an accommodation with them to bring some kind of unity to the convention in terms of the platform? That was a major problem. Hale Boggs and others were heavily involved; David Ginsburg and a number of people on that committee tried to work out an accommodation.

You have the Johnson people adamantly opposed to any kind of plank in the

platform on Vietnam that would soften the President's position in Vietnam. You had that particularly in the Texas delegation. John Connally was engaged in all kinds of threats, which I didn't take very seriously. Fred Harris and I met with Connally in his suite, which was down a stairway from ours in the hotel. He was putting on a mean front. The threat was that he would put Johnson's name in nomination.

Then you had the unit rule. So you had the Vietnam situation and the unit rule. I urged him [Humphrey] to drop the unit rule, at least for that convention. While Humphrey had succeeded in locking up the unit rule and they had finessed it quite well, clearly, McCarthy wasn't going to win that nomination. A meaningful gesture would be to say, "Let's remove the unit rule, at least for this convention. Future conventions can decide." That incurred the wrath of Connally and others.

G: Southern delegations.

O: A number of southern delegations registered vigorous opposition. That created a storm. Humphrey proceeded to formally state his position, removing the unit rule. The Vietnam plank in the platform was adopted three to two.

As you approached the days immediately prior to the convention, you had all of this. George McGovern would be a stand-in for Bobby Kennedy so that Bobby Kennedy delegates could support him or--

G: Or Ted Kennedy, is that right? Was it--?

O: At one point, George McGovern was volunteering to be a stand-in. Then the question was, would Ted Kennedy be a candidate? Then could Ted Kennedy work out an accommodation with McCarthy? McCarthy saying, "I want my name in nomination but at a given moment perhaps I could withdraw." All of this stop-Hubert activity was on-going and it all failed. But it was leaving its mark.

Outside the convention hall was the rioting. It has been reported in great detail 1968. It was an out-of-control situation. The climate was god-awful. It went to the convention floor. It went to the Abe Ribicoff speech directed at Dick Daley. It went to every aspect of the convention.

There was a group of us meeting with Hubert that reached a point in refining what would be the Humphrey position. The Humphrey language for the Vietnam plank would be reviewed with President Johnson to get his concurrence. Hale Boggs was playing a role in that. Charley Murphy was involved. Hubert placed a call to the President. To the consternation of all of us, he was unable to get the President on the line. The Vice President of the United States couldn't get the President on the line.

G: This was during the convention itself?

O: During the discussions on the Vietnam plank.

The rioting was spurred on by the television networks. Daley was playing a hard line. I was never sure how hard a line he was playing, in terms of the Chicago police. The Chicago police were described by media as a bunch of ogres, clubbing poor innocent kids. It was a mess inside the convention and a mess outside the convention. It was extremely distressing. Part of my conversation with Humphrey the night he talked to me about staying on through the campaign was to literally sit in that hotel room with the windows ajar, and hear these people in Grant Park across the street, in unison, thousands of them, "F___ the Humph, F___ the Humph". It went on and on and on. Here's this man who has been nominated by his party for president sitting there with that.

It was rotten in every aspect in the leadership of that so-called peace movement. They all should be ashamed of themselves. They were completely devoid of decency. That was my view. Maybe it was a somewhat warped view at that time, but I don't think so. I had been with Bobby; I had my own views on Vietnam policy but I certainly had strong views regarding Hubert Humphrey the man. To have that situation deteriorate to the level it did and the rottenness--certainly I've never forgotten it. The Chicago Seven or the rest of these characters who were involved during that period were despicable. They were not remotely interested in the democratic process.

G: Let's go back to the convention itself. Was there some thought about changing the location of the convention from Chicago to Miami?

O: No, I don't think so.

G: Really?

O: That might have been voiced but if anybody voiced it, they were certainly being naive.

G: Why?

O: Would they think for one minute that Dick Daley would voluntarily allow the convention to be moved? A convention could never be moved unless Dick Daley wanted it moved.

G: And that was simply because of Daley's power or because of--?

O: Daley's power and the fact that you might as well cave in and say there isn't any Democratic Party if you're going to have a bunch of nuts out in the street dictating where a convention is going to be.

G: Now the next thing, why was the convention so late? Why was it at the end of August?

O: Because the convention was conceived to be a convention to renominate Lyndon B. Johnson and tradition dictates that the in party has its convention last. The preference if

you have an incumbent president is to have the convention as late as possible.

G: I see.

O: To shorten the campaign, shorten the period your opposition can achieve center stage. So it was established for the latest possible time. It was only a few days before Labor Day weekend when it closed out. Conventions have to be planned long in advance. We have an incumbent president; he's going to be seeking re-election and we'll shorten the campaign as much possible. As circumstances evolved, it turned out to be a disaster in terms of conducting a campaign.

G: Now, there were some problems in Chicago in addition to the demonstrators themselves. There was also some telephone strike or something.

O: Yes, there was a telephone strike, which lessened our opportunity to implement our program of telephones on the floor.

G: Were there any other logistical problems, other than the fact that you didn't have it at the regular convention center either, did you?

O: It was the old Cow Palace, all that was available in Chicago. That didn't lend itself to an orderly convention. I don't know if you were smelling too much manure, but it was an old decrepit building with a great tradition, but it had seen its time.

Chicago was determined a couple of years earlier. Daley wanted the convention, and with the good Mayor, none of us, including the President of the United States, fought him when he was adamant about something.

G: Was there a sense that the Johnson people were really exercising control over the convention rather than, say, the Humphrey forces?

O: It goes to the Democratic National Committee's role in a convention. We made our presentation to the national committee, which has a responsibility for the conduct of the convention. Our requirements for hotel rooms, headquarters space, telephones, messengers, floor passes, gallery passes, the usual. And, of course, McCarthy made his presentation. In addition to that, it's up to the national committee to determine who will literally conduct the convention, who will chair it, who will be chairmen of the various committees, who will be the parliamentarian. We were dissatisfied with what the national committee did for us in terms of our requests. But McCarthy was convinced he was getting a bad deal. Steve Mitchell, who was his spokesman, protested vigorously. They contended that all the key positions were filled by Humphrey people, that they were being given short shrift. That's not unique or unusual. I don't think that the national committee was partisan. By the same token, [John] Bailey, [John] Criswell et al in the national committee would lean toward Humphrey and the establishment in setting up convention activities.

G: Was there some negotiation over the events of the convention such as the LBJ birthday and the showing of the memorial to the Kennedys?

O: I remember Steve Smith meeting with me and discussing the timing of the memorial. Obviously, prior to that, you went to the President's decision not to attend the convention. You had a concern that Steve Smith expressed to me regarding the attention directed to the Kennedy side of the convention. He was suspicious.

G: Really?

O: My recollection is that Steve presented a couple of time frames and one of them was accepted. I don't recall it became a big deal, but I do recall some discussions that I was involved in relative to the timing.

G: Was this, do you think, structured to prevent some sort of a draft Ted Kennedy movement or something like that?

O: It was so conceived by the Kennedy people. I never became seriously concerned about a possible draft Kennedy movement. I think it's somewhat comparable to the 1972 convention. Those seeking the nomination, in this instance McCarthy, or entertaining seeking the nomination have a common interest. The common interest is obvious; stop the front runner.

I assume it occurred in Chicago--where the Kennedy people and the McCarthy people were in communication and, in fact, in negotiations, to see what steps could be taken that might result in blocking Hubert Humphrey on that first ballot. I would not be greatly concerned because when you get into negotiations, the bottom line is who is going to be number one. You're never going to agree on it. McCarthy came close enough to say, "I might support a Kennedy draft, but first I want my name in nomination. I owe it to my people. I would consider probably withdrawing." That's not in the cards.

Tape 3 of 3, Side 1

O: Whether I reflect on 1972 or reflect on 1960 in Los Angeles, you had one interest and that is ensuring that your delegates are kept intact. You have the majority and they've got some problem on their hands.

The Vietnam resolution was adopted by a three to two vote. All of **+the opposition to Hubert Humphrey--Kennedy opposition, liberal opposition, **+peacenik opposition, McCarthy opposition--was all united in that roll call. And it meant it was all over. Now you had a much closer roll call in eliminating the unit rule. That was decided by a margin that was close, and incurred the enmity of the South in the process. Actually, all the delegations acceded with the exception of the Mississippi delegation, I believe.

G: That's right.

O: I think we had seated both delegations from Georgia. None of that is very helpful while you had an assured nomination and you're trying to come out of the convention with a show of unity. If it was an intention on the part of some to have it close without unity, then obviously it's elusive to bring about perceived unity.

G: Can you describe the discussions regarding whether or not LBJ would come to the convention. Was it to be on his birthday?

O: There were discussions. Many of the Humphrey supporters were Johnson people. There was a feeling that he should be there. Those discussions took place. It made sense to me that the President not be there from his own point of view. Why should he be subjected to what was going on there? It would have been gross. I never felt it was worth devoting a lot of time to because I concurred in the President's judgment. I thought it was ridiculous, as well-meaning as some people were, to try to convince him to come to a convention where he was going to be embarrassed. That man didn't deserve that. So I didn't feel that it was really debatable.

G: Who wanted him there?

O: Some congressional people and a number of southern governors. I think John McCormack and others in the leadership in the Congress were dismayed that their President would not be present at the convention, particularly because it did fall on his birthday, which was intended. These people took their eye off the ball. You were going to defiantly bring your president into a convention to be subject to what would have certainly been an embarrassment.

G: From Humphrey's standpoint, what was the significance of Johnson coming or not coming? How would it affect him?

O: His gut feeling was that he wanted to have the President there. It was his loyalty to the President and his feeling that it was just unseemly for him not to be there. But my judgment at the time was that Lyndon B. Johnson had made a firm decision and people who would try to pressure him, as well motivated as they may have been, were not doing him any favors.

G: Was Humphrey having a difficult time during this period separating himself from Johnson? Should he have been so more definitely?

O: Not during this period. I don't recall any serious discussions about separation. The discussions went to trying to negotiate a Vietnam plank that would hopefully bring about unity. Also, discussions, as I've said, were lengthy and intensive regarding the unit rule. In both areas, it was an effort to nod to the liberal wing of the party, in substance saying to the liberal wing, "I'm not steamrolling; I don't want any undue advantages, you detest the

unit rule, I have this convention locked up with the unit rule, I am going to remove that barrier and let the chips fall." That was our approach.

On Vietnam, any lessening or limitation in a plank was again to see if we could not get the McCarthy and Kennedy elements of the convention into accord. And that failed because you wouldn't have had a roll call. With a three to two win, a substantial number of delegates were registering their disapproval of Johnson's Vietnam policy. There was no language that we could come up with. And I can tell you that creative writers such as David Ginsburg and others were deeply involved and some well-meaning people on the other side tried mightily. Charley Murphy's express reason for being in Chicago was to see if he couldn't be helpful.

It wasn't doable. But as far as separating from Johnson, which became extremely significant in the course of the campaign regarding Vietnam, I don't recall discussion on the plank or the unit rule was related to trying to separate from Johnson. It was focused solely on, "Can we come out of this darn convention with unity and tackle Nixon?"

G: Did LBJ, during the time before the convention, the early summer, indicate that they were making progress on Vietnam and that if Humphrey would continue to support the administration's policy on Vietnam, that Johnson thought he could bring the peace negotiations?

O: Yes. There were occasions when there was hope. There was communication with Hubert. I remember there were rising expectations on several occasions on the part of Hubert. He constantly remained optimistic about a major breakthrough on Vietnam. He was given to understand there would be a major breakthrough. At least, that's what he reported to me on occasions, even to the point where something specific was to occur on a specific day that would be extremely helpful. This never came about, through the Chicago convention. It never occurred. Throughout, Hubert, I guess of necessity, remained optimistic that there would be a breakthrough, that the President would work something out that not only would be helpful in terms of the Vietnam debacle, but would be helpful in terms of Hubert's candidacy.

G: Did LBJ threaten to oppose Humphrey or weaken his candidacy if he parted with the administration on Vietnam?

O: I don't know. I would have no knowledge of whether he transmitted that kind of a threat to him. Certainly that was part and parcel of Connally's posturing. Any departure from the Johnson Vietnam policy would be considered by him and southerners he claimed he was speaking for as totally unacceptable, and would bring about disruptions in the convention up to and including Connally putting Johnson's name in nomination. Meanwhile, Connally was disturbed about the unit rule and very concerned about disruption of the Texas delegation by the convention. He had that foremost in his mind. My relationship with him during those days was amicable. He chose to berate Fred Harris to me. He kept telling me privately that everything was fine between Connally and me.

But he didn't trust Harris. And, by God, he wasn't going to sit idly by and let Harris pull the rug out and they'd better know what the consequences would be. Now, obviously, while he was being pleasant with me, he was sure that the threats he would make would get back to Humphrey.

G: One of the press accounts described a meeting with you, Connally and Harris as a shouting match.

O: I don't recall it as that and there was more than one meeting.

G: Were they heated exchanges?

O: I wouldn't call them heated, but Connally was arrogant, abrupt and dismissed Fred out of hand in tone and attitude.

G: How did Harris react?

O: Harris didn't respond. Harris is a tough fellow himself and he just rode with it. He felt that he was the fall guy and that he saw through Connally's charade, as I did. I remember the one occasion and the others when he asked to see me alone. That's when he decided to use a "I trust you, O'Brien, but I don't trust Harris" gambit.

But what Connally was concerned about more than anything else was his position and his role. If the Texas delegation was dismantled, Connally was going to run wild. I don't think it was so much his concern for Lyndon Johnson as it was John Connally.

G: Well, to what extent can this sort of disaffection be attributed to the fact that different ones in the Humphrey organization were telling different southern leaders varying things about the unit rule and Humphrey's support of the--?

O: Support of the unit rule?

G: Yes, or as opposed to doing away with it.

O: I don't know who was telling them.

G: You don't feel that different commitments were being made?

O: Not that I'm aware of. There were Humphrey proponents who ran the spectrum from moderate to liberal. I would have to assume that if those kinds of commitments were being made or discussed, they were not being made or discussed with Humphrey's approval because on the unit rule I dealt directly with Humphrey. We discussed it dispassionately, practically, and came to a decision, which was the right decision. You were trying to blunt as much as you could this opposition from the McCarthy-Kennedy wing. Okay, let's get rid of the unit rule. That ought to make you happy. This isn't the

casual decision. We've incurred the enmity of a large segment of the delegates. That shows that we're decisive people who are interested in your concerns. We disapprove of the unit rule as you do. You came to the conclusion that that was the best political approach, but the reality of the matter is that you could afford it.

G: Well, did you see Humphrey then, during the convention, as being strong-willed and decisive, rather than subject to influence and ambiguous in his own--?

O: He was acting in a very practical, sensible, realistic manner. That would go all the way to selecting his running mate. It's similar to my experience in 1960 in Los Angeles, or quite similar. In Los Angeles, we were going to be nominated. No matter what the opposition tried, it was not going to affect the end result. We had done our homework. We had control. In Chicago, Humphrey is going to be nominated. But what is the nomination going to be worth? Is there anything that we can do to bring about unity? That was not an overriding concern in Los Angeles because there was no one seeking that nomination who could have the temerity not to totally support the ticket.

Here, with the McCarthy movement, you obviously had to be concerned about continuing defections and you were most concerned about establishing a record at the convention of fairness and equity to blunt what you knew would be an ongoing problem. We were forced to an intensive prolonged debate on the Vietnam resolution and an ultimate roll call. We were forced into an intensive debate and an ultimate roll call that was close on the unit rule, despite our efforts in both instances to avoid that kind of controversy.

G: Anything else on the unit rule?

O: On the unit rule, Humphrey's proposal was the elimination of the unit rule at *that* convention. Now that was our effort to try to balance this out; we weren't forever dismissing the unit rule. That could be taken up in future conventions.

To summarize, the unit rule was reaching out to the liberals. It was an attempt on the part of Humphrey to have the record show he was not dictating the convention. It was along with our attempts to negotiate acceptable language on the Vietnam plank.

G: Apparently, the Humphrey forces opposed the black challenge to the Alabama delegation.

O: It was not a well-presented or well-formed challenge. The legitimacy of the challenge itself had to be questioned. It wasn't a difficult decision.

G: During this period, did you talk with Ted Kennedy with regard to his own possible candidacy or his own possible candidacy as the vice presidential nominee?

O: No.

G: But I have a note that said that you placed midnight calls to Ted Kennedy to join Hubert Humphrey as a running mate.

O: I may have. On the question of his candidacy, I would never have taken that seriously. That was not a disturbing possibility. On the question of joining the ticket, I certainly would have strongly favored that.

G: Would you?

O: Yes. I would have felt that that was the best move we could make. Didn't guarantee anything but it would, I think, enhance the ticket. If I broached it to him, it might have been for the record. I would not have seriously considered that he would accept.

G: Who was considered as vice presidential. . . ?

O: After Hubert's nomination, we put together a meeting of key Democrats, with emphasis on southern and border state Democrats. Hubert and I attended the meeting and it went on at some length and was not a difficult meeting. Humphrey wanted the input of leading Democrats. He wanted all those present to have an opportunity and he would appreciate suggestions on whom he should select, with the understanding that it was his ultimate decision to make. That meeting was a heavyweight meeting. There were perhaps twenty to thirty leading Democrats.

G: Would they be people like John Connally or--?

O: Yes. Several governors were there.

O: The response to the invitation to attend the meeting was excellent and we covered the bases we wanted to cover. But it's interesting that the discussion was along this line: "I would be satisfied with whomever you select. I don't have anyone specifically in mind." Why would that happen when all these heavyweights were there? Because they suspect each other. Nobody's going to start naming a candidate who probably isn't going to be selected anyway and might create animosity with whoever is selected, or animosity with some of those who don't agree.

It was so limited and low-key that the only name that I can recall that was mentioned with a strong recommendation was Cyrus Vance. I believe that related to his role in the Vietnam negotiations. I thought it was a surprising recommendation only because Cyrus Vance was not a member of the political establishment. There was a sense of appreciation that Hubert had called the meeting; that was clear.

G: Were you yourself considered?

O: I saw a memo after the convention. I got a kick out of it because I would have had to step aside in the selection process, if I had any feeling I should be considered or that people

were advocating my consideration. There was a conversation reported by John McCormack. He had discussed with Lyndon Johnson on the telephone the selection of the running mate, and either Johnson had recommended me or he had recommended me to Johnson. I don't know whether it took place. My guess is it did. John McCormack and I had become very close associates by then. That was mentioned to me during the course of the convention, which I dismissed out of hand. It could have been mentioned to me by John McCormack. But there was never a word between Humphrey and I regarding me. I would have been inhibited if that occurred, because I wouldn't have felt that I could be as candid as I was in expressing my views if somehow or other I was remotely personally involved.

G: How about Sarge Shriver?

O: I don't recall.

G: Was he on the list, too?

O: There was a list but that list was pared down quickly, if indeed there was a formal list.

G: Well, he had a good reputation, I assume?

O: Sarge's name could have been bandied about. I think there probably were a number of names, but in quick order it came to a selection between two. The more people who think they may be selected, the more assistance you're receiving in getting the nomination. Your whole focus is on your own nomination. That was the story of Kennedy; that was the story of McGovern, and it was the story of Hubert Humphrey.

Fred Harris had a keen interest in being on the ticket. There had been a circulation of Fred Harris material in the convention and an advocacy of Fred Harris on the part of a number of people. There had been no Muskie advocacy or Muskie effort. Fred contributed to Hubert's nomination success, which was significant. Fritz Mondale was not in that position. He came from Minnesota and there would be no consideration. I don't know who introduced Muskie into discussion. We had, I'm sure, various names bandied about.

But that morning the decision had to be made. There were only two being considered. We invited both to Humphrey's suite, Ed Muskie in one bedroom and Fred Harris in another bedroom. Jim Rowe was there and I was there. Hubert was torn because he felt a great indebtedness to Fred and rightly so, yet he was intrigued with what he conceived Muskie might bring to the ticket. My recollection with the three or four of us, including Hubert, standing in the living room, was people were being a little cautious. It's hard to speak out under those circumstances.

I remember Hubert standing there and with his index finger, punching me with a finger on my chest three or four times. He said, "All right, enough of this. I want

somebody to be specific here. I'm asking you right now," and he punched me on the chest, "who would you select?" And I said, "Ed Muskie." That was my strong view.

G: Why did you favor Muskie?

O: For a lot of reasons. I thought Muskie had a recognition factor that was very favorable. He was ethnic, which could be helpful. He was from the northeast, which could be helpful. Ed Muskie had a presence that would add a significant dimension to the ticket. I'm not suggesting for a moment that Hubert Humphrey selected Ed Muskie because I said Ed Muskie. Hubert Humphrey selected Ed Muskie. That was his decision. I think he was getting a little aggravated because time is running on you. It's absolutely amazing. You have to do this in the next half hour. It's unbelievable those decisions are made under those circumstances. Just as Kennedy made his decision on Lyndon Johnson. So Humphrey had narrowed it down to two. And the time had come. We can stand and posture and triple talk, but now the decision. At that point Humphrey said, "I will go to Fred Harris' bedroom; you people call Ed Muskie out."

G: Did LBJ or the White House have a favorite?

O: I don't know if they did.

G: Were there southerners considered, perhaps Terry Sanford or Carl Sanders?

O: There were several names mentioned prior to Hubert's nomination, not by Hubert, but by people who were advocates. I think a lot of people felt they might have a piece of the action. There's never a dearth of potentials for second spot on the ticket.

As it turned out, Ed Muskie proved to be an extremely effective member of the ticket. We placed great emphasis on the visibility of Ed Muskie. We felt that with Hubert's problems Ed Muskie could play a significant role. We even had an Ed Muskie bio. We placed Ed Muskie with Hubert in our media efforts. His involvement in the campaign was as total as we could make it.

G: Did you ever consider or did Humphrey ever consider Nelson Rockefeller?

O: That was mentioned by some people that that would be a coup. I had no contact with Nelson Rockefeller nor did I participate in any discussions regarding him.

Tape 3 of 3, Side 2

G: Another idea that was put forward was the proposal that Humphrey himself resign the vice presidency.

O: That may have surfaced during the convention. It certainly surfaced during the campaign. There were some strong views expressed. I had strong views and there were strong

views on both sides of the issue.

G: What was your view on it?

O: There was lengthy debate on two or three occasions during the early stages of the campaign. There might have been reference to it at the convention. I clearly remember the discussions in the early stage of the campaign. My position, which didn't require any great genius, was that Hubert Humphrey had been elected vice president of the United States. There could be no conclusion if he resigned other than an attempt to separate himself from the President of the United States, which would be an act of disloyalty that the pundits and media would ridicule. It would be counter-productive. I had no reservations whatsoever. That was brought up by two or three major fund-raisers who did not specify that failure to resign would mean they would close their billfolds. They were fine people and they were staunch supporters of Humphrey. But they were politically naive.

G: Were the [Evron and Jeane] Kirkpatricks in support of this, too?

O: I don't recall.

G: Do you recall who brought it to your attention?

O: It was initially brought to my attention in a discussion with Hubert.

G: What do you recall about the nominating and seconding speeches?

O: Well, I recall we came up with proposals to Humphrey. He did not accept some and accepted others. [Joseph] Alioto would have played some role on that.

G: Is that right?

O: Yes.

G: Why was this?

O: He had achieved some national prominence. He was known to be an excellent speaker. And he was ethnic. He was not a delegate and there had to be some parliamentary decision to clear that aspect. Alioto, at that time, also was one of those on the list as a possible vice president.

G: Oh, was he? Did LBJ have a presence at the convention through some of his assistants? Who represented him there?

O: The fellow who seemed to be involved was Charley Murphy. He was very much involved in the Vietnam aspect, the unit rule, and was recognized as a spokesman for the

President's interest.

G: Was Marvin Watson--?

O: I don't recall.

G: --involved there?

O: No.

G: I have a note that says that LBJ's control of the convention was so complete that Humphrey's son-in-law had to stand in line every morning for tickets for the Humphrey family.

O: I don't accept that--

G: Really?

O: He continued to control the Democratic National Committee at that point. The national committee makes those decisions and they're not going to deviate from the President's guidance. Criswell could have been talking *+to LBJ every day or every hour. The fact is that the Democratic National *+Committee did make an effort to remain evenhanded. If that's the case with the tickets for the family, you can be sure that somebody was standing in line for Kennedy tickets or McCarthy tickets. I wouldn't place any particular emphasis on that. He had control of the convention, running the convention. I'm sure that John Bailey, John Criswell and others couldn't name a chairman or a parliamentarian or chairman of a committee without clearance with the president if he was that interested.

Humphrey was one candidate at the convention. He was not in control of the machinery of the convention or the leadership of the convention.

G: Should he have been?

O: No.

G: One of your memos, I think, indicates that you were having trouble just getting a tentative schedule of the events and the floor plan of where the different delegations would be.

O: There was delay and inability to get specifics. And that had to do with the internal operation of the national committee and their formalization of the convention. There was an inordinate period of time before that was resolved and I think that goes to the fact that Lyndon Johnson was not a candidate. It's Lyndon Johnson's national committee and the national committee probably was having considerable difficulty getting guidance and direction. The result was a degree of disarray. But most of the disarray had nothing to do with the national committee; it had to do with the thousands of people who were in

protest.

G: There's another memo in these files that is really a draft of a letter to John Bailey suggesting that young people have some forum for expressing their ideas.

O: Yes. That is another example of our efforts to establish contact and dialogue with the young people, which was extremely difficult. I sent this to Humphrey as a draft motivated by the desire to come up with ideas that would indicate to these young people that Humphrey wasn't an ogre. We wanted to see if we couldn't give them a forum, an outlet, and hopefully lessen the other activities we anticipated they were going to engage in. There were memos on anticipation of the problems of Chicago. There were reports of conversations with some of the leaders of the peace movement and assurances from a couple of them that it was not their intention to engage in any violence, that they wanted peaceful expression. They in turn were concerned about Daley and the Chicago police and how they might react to them.

That was of great concern to us. This would be an aspect of effort we were trying to expend to contain the situation and to the point where emissaries from our side dealt directly with the leaders.

G: The mobilization group?

O: Yes. As one of the memos will indicate, there were many elements involved, from the liberal to the far left to the wild-eyed. It was clear that if they were motivated, we were not going to control the situation.

G: Did the Humphrey letter to Bailey go out and was it released to the press?

O: My recollection is it went out and I assume it was released to the press.

G: I want to ask you to describe a little more of the scene in the Humphrey organization's hotel rooms there in the Hilton Hotel. You mentioned hearing the demonstrators outside. Was the tear gas also in evidence?

O: The hotel became a battle area. People were urinating in the lobby and throwing things out the windows. It was known to be the headquarters hotel for Humphrey. We didn't have any incidents in the actual headquarters area.

As you moved from the hotel to the convention hall or from the hotel to another hotel, you observed a great deal of activity, much of it peaceful. But eruptions escalated dramatically. And Grant Park became a scene of considerable violence. Depending on your point of view, the violence was caused by the youth movement or the police overreacting. There were elements of the youth movement intent upon violence. The fact is that the Chicago police had a reputation of being tough. So I think you could find some fault on both sides. The majority of the police probably tried to act in a professional

manner and, certainly, the vast majority of the youth movement similarly tried to act. You had a lot of young people who had no desire whatsoever to be involved in any violent acts. But you can't have thousands and thousands where you're not going to have some problems. The record has been pretty well established by those who have reported the convention as overreacting on the part of the police. But what I observed outside the hotel and in the lobby and the immediate environs certainly was not the result of police actions.

G: How did Humphrey react to the spectacle of these--?

O: When the obscenities were being hurled at him from Grant Park late that night into the early hours of the morning when he and I were discussing the matter that I've reviewed, neither Hubert nor I made any comment. It was the most depressing situation for him in human terms. You talk about unfairness, insensitivity and lack of decency, that's the worst example I ever experienced. Hopefully I'll never experience anything like that again. There were just the two of us in the room and you could hear this clearly. I didn't say, "Isn't that horrible?" to him or he didn't say, "God, will you listen to that" to me. Nothing like that. He had been forced to accept that kind of attack.

G: Do you think that at Chicago he was aware of the extent of the upheaval there in the streets?

O: No, because I wasn't. Other than the immediate vicinity of the Hilton Hotel, that was the only time I had the opportunity to view and hear.

Activities in the convention itself? No. I was located in the Humphrey rooms in the convention. We were operating from our own areas. I was on the convention floor a good deal. The incident of Abe Ribicoff attacking Dick Daley from the podium was probably the most intense moment that I observed in the convention hall.

G: Let me ask you to recall as much as you can about that.

O: It was the usual convention floor mob scene, pushing and shoving, crowded aisles and all that. Suddenly--and I wasn't paying any attention to what Ribicoff was saying--his voice and tone reached a crescendo and I happened to be where I could view both Ribicoff and Daley. Daley rose and screamed. I didn't hear what he was saying, but he attacked Ribicoff from the floor vociferously. You could see his face redden and he was damned mad. Ribicoff was very vigorous in his attack. It created a lot of commotion, but not any violence.

I think one of the top anchormen was forcibly removed from the floor at one point or not allowed on the floor. But that had nothing to do with the youth movement. It had to do with security and his reaction. He hadn't gone through security check or something like that. He reacted violently himself because his ego was bruised in the process.

G: Who was it?

O: I don't remember which one.

I don't remember having any difficulty in moving in the convention hall. I assumed protesters were being kept at a distance. When you're involved in so many matters with a time frame that locks you in, you're apt to be oblivious. You're concentrating on what you do next or where you're going next or who you're going to talk to next.

Back to the hotel, on a couple of nights, very late, I did observe this obscene aspect and I observed the trashing of the lobby. It was childish stuff, kids urinating in the lobby. But you hustled to your elevator, had somebody escorting you, ignored it to the best of your ability.

G: Were you aware of the confrontation between the McCarthy campaign workers and the police in the hotel?

O: I don't know as I would have separated out the McCarthy campaign workers from the others. No, I don't recall.

G: But there was a point, apparently, when McCarthy himself intervened in trying to protect some of his people who were being pushed down.

O: I don't know.

G: At what point do you think Humphrey became aware that the nomination itself was diminished by all of this violence that accompanied the convention?

O: Well, I don't know as it was the violence that accompanied the convention nearly as much as the Vietnam policy.

G: Really?

O: I think that that was the specter from the beginning; it took no time at all to realize the degree of adverse impact his candidacy had on the public generally.

The convention closed out in late August. It was necessary to immediately focus on the campaign. We decided to spend a few days at Waverly. Humphrey had a guest cottage there. We'd be isolated there. I went out with Ira Kapenstein and Joe Napolitan, using the guest cottage as we worked on the development of the campaign. We were joined, I believe, the following morning by Orville Freeman, Bill Connell and others. Humphrey came over to the cottage from time to time, in and out. We worked through the night. Joe Napolitan, particularly, is an amazingly creative fellow. He didn't need a secretary because he started life as a newspaperman. I've never seen a man operate a typewriter as he does or be more creative.

We developed this campaign outline. I do recall one aspect of it was the obvious launching of the campaign. Hubert was scheduled to go to New York for the Labor Day celebration. Traditionally this is a labor activity in New York, but we've got to have a big street show in a major city immediately. This would be a motorcade. We agreed that was the candidate's first step. That should be the first major appearance.

We tried to determine what city or cities we could consider for this. It turned out to be a useless effort. We made preliminary contacts in two or three cities. One of them, I remember, was Boston. Either I talked to Teddy or someone did and the reaction we got from preliminary check-out was it was premature; later in the campaign would be a better time,and a clear feeling they didn't want him. That was the first cold shower.

G: The fear that there would be unrest or that he--?

O: No, he was a negative to them. So, for what is going to be a very brief presidential campaign, that wasn't a very good start. However, other than that, we did accomplish a great deal, organizationally, in the media approach to which I referred. There was a great deal accomplished and I felt awfully good about the stint at Waverly--the contribution from everybody, the old-time Humphrey people and us new arrivals. Ira and Joe were extremely bright and able. Ira didn't have the political experience but was innately bright and quick. Joe has a great deal of political experience and was equally bright and quick. So [with] the input of the others, we had things lined up in our mind.

As the campaign began to progress, my role as party chairman brought me into the national committee headquarters. I took over John's office and it brought the whole campaign into national committee headquarters. We decided it would be a separate campaign. It would be under the aegis of the national committee. That was simple because I was wearing both hats.

G: Why did you decide to do this?

O: It seemed to be the obvious thing to do if the campaign chairman is the national chairman. Secondly, there was a practical reason. There was space there and we didn't have to go chasing around. We were going to have a broad-based citizens committee, functioning in the traditional role in a national campaign. It was to be conducted identically as the citizens committee in the 1960 campaign. All the elements of the citizens committee, youth groups, women's groups, professional groups, you name it, people that may not be political activists. There were probably twenty or thirty different segments. Terry Sanford was chairman of the citizens committee. They established headquarters in another location. The space need would require that. They would function coordinated with us. Terry was given a great deal of leeway and I reviewed all of this with him. Terry had been early on involved with Hubert.

Of course the most important function was the candidate and his role. As we

busied ourselves implementing the campaign as we envisioned it, we put it in writing at Waverly and part of the campaign was the Humphrey speaking schedule. The apparent concern of well-meaning Democrats regarding the early presence of Hubert in their state or cities was underscored when we started the candidate touring. He was being berated at every stop; he was being interrupted at every appearance. It was a disaster. What happened to Hubert, the banners, the yelling and disruptions, became the story, not what he was saying or attempting to present on the issues.

You couldn't have had a more difficult situation. When you look at the Chicago convention, when you look at the early stages of the Humphrey election campaign, it was an absolute disaster. The first national poll that first week, right after Labor Day, showed Humphrey losing the election by sixteen points. Frankly, we were never able to catch up. Every week there was a poll and we were alert to it--generally candidates have some access to the results before publication. We could see, not early on, but after the first three or four weeks, some movement. You tried to promote that movement. You'd call selected reporters; you'd tip them off. It was a yawn. If you had a movement one week, it really didn't become publicly known for another week or ten days. You're always playing catch up. I don't think there was a pundit in America who felt in that last week of the campaign that Humphrey had closed the gap to 5 per cent or less. There was absolute dismissal of his candidacy from beginning to end and it was unanimous across the country from media that he was a loser. The consequent loss of monies that might have been available flowed from it. Then to have it a close election was a terrible experience and the most unfair, as I see it, conclusion. But that was the case.

As we've discussed the campaign we particularly discussed the turning point of the campaign, which was the Salt Lake City speech, we have to have in mind that we were a rather desperate coterie trying to keep the dam from totally breaking.

End of Tape 3 of 3 and Interview XXIII