

William F. Haddad Oral History Interview – JFK#1, 11/02/1967
Administrative Information

Creator: William F. Haddad
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Biographical Note

Associate Director, Inspector General, Peace Corps, 1961 - 1963; Special Assistant to Robert F. Kennedy, 1960 Presidential Campaign; Campaign Advisor Robert F. Kennedy for President, 1968. In this interview, Haddad discusses the 1956 Democratic National Convention, work on the Estes Kefauver campaign, and John F. Kennedy's 1960 presidential campaign, among other issues.

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William F. Haddad – JFK#1

Table of Contents

<u>Page</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1	Meeting John F. Kennedy [JFK] on the McClellan Committee
2	Contact with the Kennedys at the 1956 Democratic National Convention [DNC] as a campaign worker for Estes Kefauver
5, 15	Dynamics of the 1956 DNC
9	JFK conceding the vice presidential nomination
11, 20	Kefauver's campaign efforts in New England
14	James Roosevelt's support of Kefauver
17	Adlai E. Stevenson's opinion of Kefauver as a running mate
21	Role in Kefauver's 1956 campaign
24	Deciding to work on JFK's 1960 presidential campaign
30, 96	Relationships among JFK campaign staff
33	Contact with Robert F. Kennedy [RFK] on senate issues
34, 92	New York strategy during 1960 campaign
41	Concern in New York about JFK's politics
45	Contact with Stevenson and Lyndon B. Johnson before the 1960 DNC
50, 59, 65	Working closely with RFK on the 1960 campaign
51	Receiving information on Cuba during campaign
52, 61, 79	General responsibilities during 1960 campaign
54	Morning meetings with campaign staff
57	Relationship between JFK campaign staff and the Democratic National Committee
58, 61	Organization of the campaign
63, 84	Kennedy-Richard M. Nixon debates
66	Attending the speech on the Peace Corps at the Cow Palace
68	Election day at Hyannis Port
72	Impressions of Jacqueline B. Kennedy Onassis after election
74	Comments on relationship with RFK
75	Appointing campaign staff to the administration
77	Contact with Nixon campaign staff
80	The press operation during 1960 campaign
86	Portrayal of Nixon in the press
88	Comments on fund raising
90	Involvement in New York with RFK
98	Relationship among administration staff during JFK's presidency

Oral History Interview

With

William F. Haddad

November 2, 1967
New York, New York

By John F. Stewart

For the John F. Kennedy Library

STEWART: Okay, why don't we start by my asking you when you first had some contact with either President Kennedy [John F. Kennedy] or someone on the Kennedy staff?

HADDAD: I think probably the first peripheral contact was when I was at Georgetown when I was with Kefauver [Estes Kefauver], and it had to do with the Senate investigating committee—I guess Internal Investigating Committee, McClellan [John L. McClellan] Committee. I can't remember, the chief counsel,

[-1-]

or the assistant chief counsel, one of those, although we're completely different political ideology, we used to double-date. I was very critical of the McCarthy [Joseph R. McCarthy] era and that whole investigation methodology, and I was asked to do two reports on my observations of their techniques. I think I first observed Robert Kennedy [Robert F. Kennedy] in operation during that period of time. As I recall, quite frankly, I was critical of his methods as well as I was of the Committee's. And it was two very sharp reports, just personal reports, voluntary efforts. I guess the first real contact with the Kennedys came at the 1956 Democratic Convention in Chicago, where I was in Charge of the floor operations for Senator Kefauver on the vice presidential nomination. It was one of those where, as you

know, the Convention was thrown open. Everybody had a crack at it. We had been very thoroughly organized and prepared for a floor fight such as

[-2-]

this. That was our main advantage. We'd been in the primaries; I organized most of the primaries and kept a very detailed card file on each delegate. We knew who was for us and who was against us, who we could depend on. And we had a very tight floor organization, and when the Convention was thrown open, we had all of that going for us. Kennedy came in very quickly and became a major threat immediately, and Bobby was, I guess, my counterpart. He was running up and down the floor, and I was running up and down the floor. But at that point in history we had all the breaks. The day before we had met a Tennessee telephone operator, and as you know, telephones are not allowed on the floor, and we had built three telephones right under the platform so that you'd duck under the curtain and there was the telephone. You didn't have to run off. One

[-3-]

was a direct line to the Kefauver suite. I forget where the second one went. The third was an outside line. And it was manned by Dixon and Lucia Donnelley. Dix is now Assistant Secretary of State, and Lucia is his wife, I think she's with government now, and they manned it. The Kansas and Iowa delegations, I think, were our runners. The irony was that right opposite these phones I put two large chalk marks on the wall where all our runners, which included guys who are now governors and senators—people like that were our runners.... Right above us, by quirk of fate was the Kennedy box, with the whole Kennedy family coming and going out of it. You could almost reach up from where we were and touch them. The irony was never apparent until later when you looked up. I had some exchanges with the Kennedy family, mainly some of the Kennedy girls, during this time when our runners

[-4-]

said it was getting very tight. I didn't see the Senator himself during that period of time, and I knew what went on. They got an awful lot of support; we got a lot of breaks, like Governor Brown [Edmund G. Brown], for instance, was going to announce in California for Kennedy, and the way the procedure of the Convention went that you couldn't challenge the announcement until the end of the roll call, which would have been a stampede then, of course, for Kennedy. Jimmy Roosevelt [James Roosevelt] took a hold of Governor Brown and said, "I'll break your fucking leg if you reach for that microphone and do what you plan to do." And there was a little bit of that. As I ran up and down the floor yelling at people to hold on because Tennessee was going to swing to Kefauver, which was one of the barometers at that time it was being held by Gore [Albert Gore, Sr.]—Mayor Daley [Richard J. Daley] of Chicago grabbed me

[-5-]

and held me in a bear hug so I couldn't move. I couldn't move an inch. He held me, and I think I either wiggled away or even did something horrible like stamp on his toe to get loose. Charlie Bartlett [Charles Bartlett] was there at that particular point, and Charlie Bartlett and I were sitting in front of the Tennessee delegation when Rayburn [Sam Rayburn] recognized Tennessee, I think believing Tennessee was going to go for Kennedy, from Gore to Kennedy. Gore's no particular friend of Kefauver's, but a fabulous guy—it's almost a weird story—a fabulous guy named Colonel Bullard [M.M. Bullard] flew in a helicopter to the top of the Cow Palace, came down and saw Gore, along with the publisher of the *Nashville Tennessean*, and said to Gore, both of them, that they'd spend fifty cents of each dollar they made to defeat him if he went against Kefauver.

STEWART: He was supposedly in a bar someplace, wasn't he?

HADDAD: Who was?

[-6-]

STEWART: Gore.

HADDAD: Gore? No, Gore was...

STEWART: Gore wasn't around, was he?

HADDAD: Yes, he was behind the stage. I knew where Gore was. I had a guy living with Gore. I had a guy trailing Gore, keeping his movements under surveillance so we could immediately be in contact with him if the need be. As I recall, he was behind the stage trying to duck everything. I don't think he was in a bar. I think he was behind there. There were some rooms back there, and I think he was in there. He really went white when these guys twisted his arm. The publisher of the *Nashville Tennessean* really twisted, his arm, and Colonel Bullard, who had all the dough—I can't remember the full name, but I'm sure it's readily available—had it and they twisted it, and they came out. And I guess Rayburn, unbeknownst, recognized—Rayburn being a very pro-Johnson [Lyndon B. Johnson] and therefore, pro-Kennedy...

[-7-]

STEWART: Was he really?

HADDAD: Yes. I think they—they hated Kefauver, that's one. Rayburn hated Kefauver, and I asked Kefauver one day, why. And he said, "I was his bright young man at one point, but then I went one day and sat next to him in a barber shop where I was getting a haircut. We were very close friends, and he was really bringing me along in the House because I was his type of Southerner. And then I said to him, 'What do you got there to cut, Mr. Speaker?' And Rayburn got out of that chair, stomped out

of the barber shop. And,” he said, “he never talked to me since.” So that was one of the things. Of course, Kefauver also wanted to get Scott Lucas [Scott Wike Lucas], who was the Majority Leader of the Senate, and they felt that Lucas lost because of the Kefauver thing. Well, anyway, the basic point being that this recognition.... At that point I was sitting with Charlie Bartlett, who was very

[-8-]

close to Kennedy, and very pro-Kennedy, but also liked Kefauver tremendously well. At that point he felt the counter was wrong. The counter showed us ahead by more than we really were. And his feeling was if the real situation were known that it would have been Kennedy as Vice President; it would have been a stampede. I looked at the—he said to me, “Well, I guess it’s all over for Kefauver now,” thinking Tennessee was going another way. But as circumstances worked out Tennessee went for Kefauver, and that caused a stampede, and that was the end of it. I saw Bobby after that walking around kind of long-faced, depressed, and kind of kicking-the-dirt type situation. I must say, for their own, you know, they had a lack of organization; they had a lot of phone calls coming from all over the world, a lot of pressure, and calling of a lot of chips. But I do remember the most impressive thing that everybody

[-9-]

remembered was that grace and the charm, and the way that Kennedy conceded. I mean, he won the day. I remember the coming down the aisle, I remember just watching him do it, and he did it with such a style and such a grace. And you began to get the first smell of Kennedy as something more than the Irish Catholic politician with a lot of money, and I’m sure that had a national impact. It had an impact on all our delegates, who were bitter about Kennedy coming in, and suddenly he had won a lot of friends by the way he had conducted and handled himself. I saw him and his wife [Jacqueline B. Kennedy Onassis] at that point. I didn’t work very closely with them during the ’56 campaign, I was in charge...

STEWART: Can I go back just a little?

HADDAD: Yes.

STEWART: Did you recall any contacts you had either with people in Massachusetts or people in other areas of New England? Of course, a lot has been

[-10-]

made that this was the first real attempt by anyone in New England to get some kind of unity among the New England states, and they did it to a certain extent. There were quite a few defections in Maine, New Hampshire.

HADDAD: Well, you know, McIntyre [Thomas J. McIntyre], who is now the Senator, was our guy in New Hampshire, his wife and himself. I think he was mayor of Laconia or something. We were very tight in a lot of.... I remember that we made a deal about Massachusetts with Stevenson [Adlai E. Stevenson], I think, and we stayed out of Massachusetts. We made some deal with McCormack [John William McCormack] that, frankly, I think related to the career, I think our payment was in terms of the career of his nephew [Edward J. McCormack, Jr.]. I don't know what the—I was in the middle of those negotiations. I've got the papers somewhere,

[-11-]

and I'll look them up. But we stayed out of Massachusetts; we didn't make a big primary fight in Massachusetts; we had a lot of Kefauver types there. I can't remember whether Kennedy or Stevenson was the factor in Massachusetts.

STEWART: Of course, the primary that year was connected with the Kennedy-McCormack fight for the control of the Massachusetts Delegation.

HADDAD: Yes, yes. I can't remember what all the details were, but I remember basically we didn't make a great effort in Massachusetts. But Kefauver had a lot of support in New England because he was, you know, kind of a New England type—you know, tall, gawky, ill at ease, a kind of few worded guy. I can't remember now, the thing went so quick, I had delegations that were solid, like Kansas, and I could put one guy there then who I could be sure would do it. We knew delegations were against us, like

[-12-]

New York, with DeSapio [Carmin G. DeSapio]; the only other person we had, I think, was Senator Lehman [Herbert H. Lehman] in the New York delegation; Hennings [Thomas Carey Hennings, Jr.] of Missouri was tight for us; Alaska was superb, they were another group of runners; Iowa was good; we had a good break in California because of Holifield [Chester E. Holifield] and Roosevelt; Johnson was down on us; Truman [Harry S. Truman], of course, hated Kefauver's guts. As I say, it happened in a twenty-four hour period, and everything was so operational that so much just happened on the floor. I think what saved our neck was our communication system, rapid decisions. If I had a problem, I could get to a phone. Ironically, it was the organization that defeated him. We knew who was strong for us, who wasn't; what we could do when people started

[-13-]

to wiggle, like we had a Jimmy Roosevelt who was willing to break Brown's leg when Brown was going to pull a trick.

STEWART: Was he opposed to Kennedy, or who was he for?

HADDAD: Who Brown?

STEWART: Jimmy Roosevelt.

HADDAD: Jimmy Roosevelt was for Kefauver. He was an old Kefauver friend. I went to his office, and I said, "I want to get the vice presidency for Kefauver." And he says, "Kefauver wants it?" I said, "Well, he'll disown me if I do it, but I think he might." And we got a hold of Chet Holifield. All this took place in the weeks before. Kennedy's name never really entered into our calculations.

STEWART: Before the Convention?

HADDAD: Before the Convention. I never took Kennedy, I just remember all that now, I never took Kennedy's—I thought we were going to get it. I didn't think we were going to be

[-14-]

thrown into a floor fight. I thought that...

STEWART: I was going to ask you that. Did you have any inkling whatsoever?

HADDAD: No, we didn't. No, I talked to John Horne [John E. Horne], one of Stevenson's guys, who was leaning towards Kefauver, was a friend who I could talk to openly. No, we didn't get it—I remember when he told it to me, and I wasn't more than fourteen hours before it happened, he said, "I think that's the way it's going to go." It seemed to me we were going to have a floor fight.

STEWART: This has been bandied around quite a bit...

HADDAD: Yes, and we had meetings, all kinds of meetings around. You know, I was the operational guy, and I was taken by surprise. We were prepared for it. We had cards and runners, we met with—the night before the Convention we met all night. I mean it was a continuous stream of

[-15-]

meetings. We prepared for the contingency, but I think I was surprised, as I recall, in my own mind. I was surprised. And I was surprised at the Kennedy strength. The arguments we used against them were basically, you know, he wasn't a liberal, upstart, you know, a lot of things. But it wasn't really a situation that was controlled by arguments or anything else. We went with what we had. Bobby did a—I think they did a magnificent job with what they had, which was nothing but a quick thing, because there were still phone calls coming in the middle of the night, guys were still getting off the floor to accept phone calls, and various

people while the voting was going on, all of that. Given another week, they might have beat us, but, if they would have beaten us, I think Kennedy would

[-16-]

have never been President. I think, you know, I believe in that, I'm sure everybody said it already, that if Kennedy was on the ticket and Stevenson lost, they'd blame it on a Catholic, and there'd be another decade before they'd put a Catholic on the ticket. So I think to his advantage he was not on the ticket. And he handled himself so well, just so well.

STEWART: I've heard it said that Stevenson personally wasn't overly enthused with Kefauver.

HADDAD: No, very definitely. Stevenson became—I got fairly close with Stevenson afterwards, and through his campaign very close to his staff, you know, Finnegan [James A. Finnegan], and others, and got close to Stevenson. And I've seen Stevenson over the years, up until he died. Stevenson was one of the people who helped me in my own campaign. He did not like Kefauver. Kefauver thought he was a supercilious

[-17-]

ass. Kefauver described him to me once in a hotel room in Alaska. You know, Kefauver, despite what the public opinion is, was a very brilliant, clear thinking, top human being with human weaknesses and other kinds of weaknesses. But I think, Stevenson later told me, they developed a very friendly relationship after the campaign. Stevenson and Kefauver got very close, and Stevenson's staff, at some point, were using Kefauver to push Stevenson off the dime to make a decision. I remember a couple of classic cases where that had happened. Kefauver and Stevenson worked out a very close relationship to the point where Stevenson began to see what those who had been close to Kefauver saw. They worked it out among themselves, and he got to be quite fond, at least he told me he was, and Kefauver rephrased his thinking on Stevenson.

[-18-]

STEWART: This was after the...

HADDAD: This developed during the campaign and continued after '56. I do know Stevenson used to pick up the phone and call Kefauver on certain matters. Maybe because he knew I was close to Kefauver, Stevenson said things to me that he might not have said to other people, in terms, more favorable things about the thing. But I gathered—I know Kefauver felt much more kindly towards Stevenson than he had before. He thought he was—Kefauver had an impatience with an intellectual, non result orientation guy. And he was a lone wolf, Kefauver did what he thought was right, and he didn't care if he was all alone or not, he had his.... He was a tough cookie, a tough cookie.

STEWART: This point you mentioned about contacts with some people in Massachusetts, if you can find

[-19-]

anything on it...

HADDAD: I'll get it, I kept all my books here. I've saved all the communication.

STEWART: Of course, this is a real key part of Kennedy's career.

HADDAD: Well, there was a deal. We made a deal, Cardinal Cushing [Richard James Cushing] was involved in it.

STEWART: Really?

HADDAD: Yes. We made a deal up there to stay out of Massachusetts, not to have a big fight with Stevenson in Massachusetts. And it involved the Speaker, it had something to do with the Speaker's nephew, and I think I probably have the correspondence, I'll look it up. I've kept books on that campaign. You know, just....

STEWART: The Speaker's nephew, I think, ran for Attorney General for the first time that year.

HADDAD: Yes, it was a mish-mosh. Cushing, as I remember, Cushing was involved. We had a meeting with Cushing. It's probably one of those deep dark

[-20-]

political secrets, but I'm sure I can give you a couple of names, and if people want to do it, you can unravel it.

STEWART: Yes, well, it would be quite interesting. Alright, during the '56 campaign, what, just for background, did you do? What was your position?

HADDAD: Jiggs Donahue [F. Joseph Donahue] was the chairman, and I was the administrative guy, I ran it. I mean I ran the line operations for the vice presidential thing right next door to Hy Raskin [Hyman B. Raskin], little thin partition between his office and my office. I learned a lot about politics through that thin partition. And then next door down was Finnegan, and then Newton Minow [Newton N. Minow] was around—yes, I guess it was Newt—and oh, Jim Rowe [James H. Rowe, Jr.] and so on. I was part of that. I ran the line operation for Kefauver, and I was deeply involved

[-21-]

with the Stevenson group, I was part of the Stevenson planning. There were about five or six people, and I was included in it. I just ran the day by day operations.

STEWART: Did you have any contact with, either President Kennedy or...

HADDAD: Little.

STEWART: Robert Kennedy was on...

HADDAD: He was there, but I didn't...

STEWART: He was with Stevenson or traveled with Stevenson.

HADDAD: No, I ran the stuff in the shop. I didn't do much traveling, I did all the—sat right there in that 838 Pennsylvania building, or wherever we were, and I just sat in the office most of the time. I had more contact with Rowe for Johnson than I did with any of the Kennedy people. Jim Rowe came in, and he was the only outside guy that had a lot of power and influence. I didn't have too much contact.

[-22-]

STEWART: Was there anything about Kefauver's campaign in Massachusetts? I think he went there—well, I know he went there at least on one occasion because I was at BU [Boston University] at the time, and he spoke there.

HADDAD: I'll go through that stuff. As I say, I kept a book on that because I was keeping a book for some kind of a Kefauver memoir some day, but I'll dig that up.

STEWART: There might be something interesting because I've heard it said that Senator Kennedy was somewhat reluctant to campaign with Stevenson in Massachusetts. Possibly there were some problems over his campaign with Kefauver.

HADDAD: Yes, yes, you ring a bell now. I remember, oh boy, now it begins. Well, I'll have to think about that. I remember that whole situation, I do remember some problems. I do remember some problems in that area because

[-23-]

it came back to us. I remember because I sat in those morning strategy things. Well, I'll try to recall that.

STEWART: Moving on, what contact did you have with Senator Kennedy or people in his office in '57, '58, '59?

HADDAD: It all began as the Convention came around. I was up to speak to the Nieman Fellows at Harvard, and Schlesinger [Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.] had been very good to me. Schlesinger had gotten me a Literature Fellowship at Harvard, which I did not take but went to the *New York Post* instead, but he'd been very nice to me, and it was a relationship we developed in 1956. When I went up to talk to the Nieman Fellows, I went by Schlesinger's office, and he gave me a real Kennedy pitch, and Schlesinger I like very much, I said, "Jesus, is the rat

[-24-]

leaving a sinking ship?" And he said he'd like to give me the whole thing. And I said, "Well, gee, you know, you got the loyalty to Stevenson. You really ought to stick with that guy if he wants it." Anyway he gave me a strong pitch, and it had come just at the time that Mike Monroney, Jr. [Almer Stillwell "Mike" Monroney] or John Sharon [John H. Sharon], and one of those guys, called me to work for Stevenson at the Convention, and I'd said, "No." I didn't want to do it. And after that conversation with Schlesinger, I went back and said yes, that I'd do it, and went out there. There was, I remember, one very important contact prior to that with Mike Feldman [Myer Feldman] and Ted Sorensen [Theodore C. Sorensen]. They invited me to lunch and wanted all my primary campaign files. And I went over how we did the primaries, how we organized them, I had all that kind of discussion with them. All our, not our deep

[-25-]

strategy, but how you go about it and all of that, some names, the laws, and what our thinking was.

STEWART: This would have been in '59?

HADDAD: Somewhere, yes. It was in the Senate Office Building. I remember having lunch with Mike and Ted. They wanted me to turn over the whole thing and come help them and stuff. I went to Kefauver's office, and I asked the Senator, I said, you know, "Any dying glimmer of hope?" He said, "Yes and no." But I got the feeling that he wouldn't be jumping up and down if I abandoned that possible lightening striking him in terms of the presidency, because I think once it gets in your blood it never gets out. And so I did not turn those materials and stuff over to Sorensen. I'm trying to remember his attitude towards Kennedy. I don't want to misrepresent it out of my affection for Kefauver.

[-26-]

I can't really remember. I think it was good. I think he thought he was a bright guy. I think he probably thought he was slightly immoral, amoral, and had not shaped his ideas. I don't remember precisely that attitude, but I do remember that conversation with that thing. That was primarily my contact. Then I went out and participated and raised all that hell for Stevenson, about ten of us went out, and I saw Steve Smith [Stephen E. Smith] during that time period of time. I had gotten to know Steve somewhere else, and I can't remember now. Because I knew Steve when.... I very definitely feel that Steve and I talked prior to the Convention. But anyway, he was very nice, and thought I was crazy. I was rounding up all the old Kefauver guys for Stevenson. It was a very reluctant Stevenson at that point. Anyway, when it was all over and then when they put Johnson on the ticket—we had been fighting to get

[-27-]

Mike Monroney to be the vice presidential thing. I don't remember, a lot of things happened all at once. I was all over the floor with the people and was there with George Banker, and others very frightened about Kennedy's lack of liberalism, shocked by the Johnson combination, disappointed in the Stevenson thing, just really up to my ears, and I just got on a plane and came back. But at some point in there, I either talked to Bill Blair [William McCormick Blair, Jr.], or Bill Blair talked to me, you know, and Newt Minow and stuff. I don't know whether I asked them, or they asked me, "What about working with Bobby?" "Yes," was the answer. And that was Nixon [Richard M. Nixon] more than anything else. As I recall, I went down to Washington. Bobby called me, or I called him, and went down to Washington and had a meeting with him, and he said, "Would I come to work," and I said, "Well, I don't want to sail

[-28-]

under false colors, I'm not a fan of yours." He said, "That wasn't the question." This is Robert Kennedy, and so I said, "Yes, I'll come and work with you." And I did work with him and Seigenthaler [John Seigenthaler], and Don Wilson [Donald M. Wilson].

STEWART: That's strange. Who recommended you?

HADDAD: Bill Blair, I'm sure. Bill Blair, Newt Minow, those guys. I think they felt we would get along if I knew him. That was the intermediary, and it was directly with Bobby, right in his own operation. He was superb to me. You can never tell how the ball bounces, but I did a lot of jobs, a lot of different things; he made sure that I stayed close to the Senator; he sent me out on several of the trips; he sent me out on some things where he wanted me to be in touch directly with the Senator. I remember one time I was rather embarrassed because we

[-29-]

were riding on the *Caroline*, and I was supposed to go with him—I forget what the issue was, it might even be in the Cuba thing, I’m not sure—and I didn’t, I said something to Kenny [Kenneth P. O’Donnell] about wanting to see him, and then I called. And I think he really chewed me out, he said, “If I want to talk to Kenny O’Donnell, I’d talk to Kenny O’Donnell.” He said, “I wanted you to talk directly to the Senator.” So my problem was, he had this marvelous, brilliant palace guard around him, and all very jealous of each other, and I’m sure that my observation was the Senator stirred it up out of enjoyment.

STEWART: Really?

HADDAD: Really, that’s my feeling. And if you walk from the first part of the plane to the back part of the plane, all those guys, and you open up the door, and you walk in and close it, you make eighty-eight enemies. So I asked Mrs.

[-30-]

Lincoln [Evelyn N. Lincoln], who was marvelous—she was always very helpful, I just really liked her—I told her what my problem was, and I said, “Why doesn’t he call me in, instead of me walking in there?” So she worked it out, and then I said, “Anytime I have this kind of problem, will you help me?” And she said, “Sure.” He called me in, I think it was on the Cuban thing, and we talked and then I came out. You know, I remember one time in someplace, it was backstage in the Midwest somewhere, all his guys, O’Donnell, Sorensen, Feldman, Goodwin [Richard N. Goodwin], all sitting around and discussing something very important, and I was on the background and he asked me what my view was. It was kind of split, Senator Kennedy, and I said, “If you think I’m going to get in the middle of this, you’re out of your

[-31-]

mind.” I just, you know, I just knew that I didn’t want to participate in those kind of things. They were all very nice to me, I must say. They treated me, I guess a little bit like they treated Shriver [R. Sargent Shriver, Jr.], kind of idealistic liberal who, I think they respected my news judgment, as a newspaperman, because by that time I had won a number of newspaper awards. And I think they somewhat respected the political acumens but they had me written off as a anti-Buckley [Charles A. Buckley], anti-DeSapio reformer who they took with a grain of salt. But always extremely nice to me, but I was never part of that inner circle. I was on the fringes of it. My greatest contribution, I think, to that group was, I found a book of Roosevelt [Franklin D. Roosevelt] quotes that they never saw before or something my wife had gotten at the

[-32-]

Roosevelt funeral. And that was my biggest contribution because at that point everybody, just like Johnson quoted Kennedy all the time, Kennedy was quoting Roosevelt. I think that

my greatest contribution to that intellectual group there was the presentation of that book of Roosevelt quotes.

STEWART: Could I go back just a minute. Did you conceivably have any contact with Robert Kennedy or the Senate Committee when you did some pieces on corruption in municipal government? Was there any relationship between that and the Teamsters investigation, or the labor rackets thing?

HADDAD: No, no, I never got in the labor rackets thing at all. I didn't come up that way with him. I knew Pierre [Pierre E.G. Salinger] and stuff, and I didn't do it, I was more with Kefauver. I was doing the steel stuff at that time; we were after the steel industry.

[-33-]

And I did some stuff with Kefauver in the steel industry. I didn't get involved in the labor rackets thing at all. There's something in the back of my mind where I had some contacts and things, but I can't remember the details of that. But not intimately involved, I wasn't pulled in like all these other great guys were—you know, like all those reporters he brought in that became his nucleus. I was not part of that group, and I don't think I was consulted on it. Maybe one or two phone calls, but....

STEWART: Another thing, this whole business of the New York reform group and all of the dealings that went on before the Convention, just how were you involved in this and was there every any slightest hope that you could do anything with the New York delegation?

[-34-]

HADDAD: Well, there was two points. This is in the 1960 Convention. Well, first of all, I helped organize the New York reform movement. For the first eighteen months they met in my sort of semi-basement apartment in Brooklyn Heights—mostly the outs, and as they started to get in they began to form new groupings. That whole group was basically anti-Kennedy on civil rights and McCarthy, very unsure, very pro-Stevenson. The movement really had developed earlier, in 1952, as an outgrowth of the Stevenson movement. Then when I got involved, in '56, '57, we were putting together as a city-wide group—and that's when we met—the Committee of New York Democrats, something like that, but very anti-Kennedy.

STEWART: Committee for Democratic Voters, or something.

HADDAD: Well, that was the evolution of it. There was

[-35-]

a New York—we had a marriage of that, we had a marriage of money and people. You want me to turn that off?

STEWART: No, that's alright.

HADDAD: A marriage of money and people. Well, but anyway, the...

STEWART: Excuse me, I take it back, it might interfere. Is it possible?

HADDAD: Yes, Carol, do you want to turn off the air conditioner? I'm sorry that comes on with a.... Will you ask Raoul to stop his carpentering for a while? And ask Raoul to stop his hammering for just a little bit.

STEWART: That won't matter.

HADDAD: Oh, that won't matter?

STEWART: I don't think so, but the rumble does get into it.

HADDAD: What time is Mickey, Carol? Did you change that?

CAROL: ...he's not going to be able to come, and he said he'd call you.

[-36-]

HADDAD: Oh, it's the wrong time for these. I know I'm worried more about these little peripheral things, probably than I realize, I know. You were asking me...

STEWART: You were talking about the marriage between the two reform groups.

HADDAD: What happened, there was a marriage that formed the CDV, the Committee for Democratic Voters, which was in existence and powerful and influential and important in New York politics at the time that Kennedy went to the Convention. It had Mrs. Roosevelt [Eleanor R. Roosevelt], Senator Lehman, Finletter [Thomas K. Finletter]. But it was very pro-Stevenson, and as you recall, I was pro-Stevenson at that point, at the Convention, and they formed the bulk of the group that went out, the Washington and that group, and anti-Kennedy.

[-37-]

After I was Bobby's assistant, we came back here, and with the guy on the Supreme Court.

STEWART: White [Byron R. White]? White?

HADDAD: White was here, and others, and we met in somebody's apartment—I remember White was in and out of the kitchen of it, and we put all these guys in a room and tried to convince them that Kennedy was okay; this is after he had the nomination. But they, the reformers, my friends, came up with a bill of particulars that they wanted Bobby to subscribe to, and Bobby got up on the chair and said, "I was a reformer before you guys ever knew about reform," and reacted badly, and they reacted badly, and there was all that nonsense, and hardened attitudes back and forth and not too much accomplishment. And Kennedy was committed to Buckley, of course, and DeSapio, and all that, and we were in it death struggle with DeSapio and Buckley.

[-38-]

As is the characteristic in politics, everybody was interested in their own fight here as much as they were in the presidency. That began to change. This was in the beginning, and the hostility was great. And it was all over New York; it went to the newspapers; it was just everywhere. And the disappointment that I reflected in coming home, the disappointment over the anti-liberal Kennedy, the teaming with Johnson, and the whole business of the rejections of the kind of superiority, intellectually, of Stevenson, that was what permeated the whole New York atmosphere—a very bad atmosphere for Kennedy—and resulted in all kinds of campaign structures being formed which were unworkable. But that changed. I mean, he began to excite the groups. I remember his coming back

[-39-]

in on a rainy night towards the end of the campaign, and I remember the enthusiasm with which he was received. It all changed. But that beginning meeting was a bad one, the early days were very bad, and it was the campaign that changed it. You remember, Mrs. Roosevelt took a good crack at Kennedy in those days. Kennedy's charm and his ideas began to break through at that point and change it. It's an interesting thing that happened in New York.

STEWART: Was there every any hope before the Convention that you could have done anything with the New York delegation in terms of getting a few Stevenson people?

HADDAD: No, I think everybody, you know, kind of thought Kennedy was a McCarthyite.

STEWART: Really.

HADDAD: Yes, really pretty bitter.

[-40-]

STEWART: Did you?

HADDAD: I thought Kennedy was not liberal. I was worried—I was concerned about the fact that he was in the hospital when the vote took place. I was concerned about some of his statements. I didn't catch the significance of his ideas and all that. I was still too wrapped up in Kefauver and stuff. I was distrustful of Kennedy, and I was distrustful of Robert Kennedy, and I was disturbed about Lyndon Johnson. I was a little more objective, because I was a fairly top newspaper type at that point. Yes, I was distrustful.

STEWART: This has always interested me as to exactly why something that had gone on so many years before could still arouse such strong feelings in people.

HADDAD: Well, there are crossroads, you know. You don't expect the politician to be a man every day of the week, he's got to get re-elected.

[-41-]

But there are certain crossroads where there can be no honest man, no able man, no courageous man could resist the temptation to be honest, able, and courageous. I think the McCarthy thing had come so far in this country that it required the courage of Kennedy to do it, particularly a Catholic, you know, there was a lot of that in the background. No, that was a—you know, how they vote on one bill, one issue stuff. McCarthy was a crossroads. It was like, you know, the people who left the Communist Party at a certain time; I mean, the people stayed in the Communist Party after that Russian or German thing were, you know, you began to know who were the real people. I mean those were the kind of barometers, and this was one of them. No, it was a very important thing.

[-42-]

Coupled it with his support of DeSapio, who's a hood. Anybody in New York politics knew DeSapio was a hood, tied in with the Mafia, tied into the banks, the works; I mean everybody knew it. They knew they bought judgeships here. I mean corrupt as can be. And Kennedy was an ally. Buckley was an outright crook, a lovely charming rogue, but a god damn crook. I mean a stealing crook with both hands. Road contracts, everything. When you sell judges in New York, I mean, that to me.... You know, you can stand a certain amount of corruption in the executive and the legislature, but when you fool around with the judiciary—and they were selling judges. They still sell judges—judgeships. And Kennedy became tied into that machine,

[-43-]

so you begin to say, you know, "Here he is perpetuating the machine." You being, you know, you begin to have a little—if you pile one thing on top of another, you get suspicions. It takes an awful lot to shake them looses. The thing that opened a lot of people's ears was Nixon. You know, if there'd been anybody else, you wouldn't have had a Kennedy president. But all of the people were beginning to listen and to say, "Well, Nixon's so horrible, we must listen

to what Kennedy has to say.” And they listened and they believed. And I think it was kind of enough people listened and believed to be the turning point. But it was only Nixon that gave them the opportunity to listen. I mean, otherwise they just would have gone in and as doctrinaire as I was without listening.

[-44-]

STEWART: Did you have many contacts with Adlai Stevenson in this pre-Convention series?

HADDAD: Yes, quite a bit. I spent a lot of time with him and his guys. Very reluctant fellow, he wouldn't budge. We had an enormous party for him at some estate, and he had all the dowagers around him, all these women who outlived their husbands and had all the money. And he stood captured by that circle while we brought all the politicians into the—Dave Lawrence [David Leo Lawrence], for instance, was there and stuff, at this big reception trying to get Stevenson to meet him. And it just didn't work out. Stevenson got a little loaded with these old dames in the corner, and it just never worked out. It was just a bad thing. And I remember George Ball [George W. Ball] driving the car back from that thing, and we nearly had a wreck, we were all so mad at Stevenson. He had not performed. We had hoped that he would give these

[-45-]

political leaders some glimmer of hope that they could stick their neck out and do something. And he gave them none, he didn't even look. We had to pull him out of the house onto the lawn, and the sun had set by the time we had done that. He was a very reluctant fellow in that area. I was working with Newt Minow, Bill Blair, and a lot of—I was dragging all these close associates of Stevenson around to say, “Well, these guys wouldn't be doing it if it wasn't Stevenson.” No politician was going to stick out his neck at that point without a direct announcement. I don't think we could have really done anything, in realistic terms, because if you count up the votes, they just weren't there. I went to all the Kefauver delegates, most of them committed to Kennedy.

STEWART: Yes.

HADDAD: Very pro-Kennedy. And very interesting. I picked

[-46-]

up a voter here, a vote there, but no real chance. A lot of fuss and fury over nothing.

STEWART: What contact, if any, did you have with Johnson people at the Convention? Towards the last day I think there were...

HADDAD: Yes. I didn't have any contact with them Johnson people. We were focusing on Monroney, I think, as an alternative—you know, when the Johnson announcement came. What did we do? We did some stuff there—we had some unholy alliances, and I can't remember who they were with. I have to reconstruct in my mind. Everything went so quick. It was a ten day period, and I took a piece of the action, which was the floor, because I knew the delegates. I operated at that level, and then I worked with Ball and Minow and others with Stevenson. Kind of a hopeless cause in a way. But I don't remember too much

[-47-]

about the—I will recollect some of the anti-Kennedy strategy because I sat in on some of those meetings. We used the dominant themes that I told you about, liberalism and things like that. There was a lot to do in the California delegation.

STEWART: That's where I think the Johnson and Stevenson people got together, at least to a certain extent, in trying to...

HADDAD: Right. I was in those meetings. I addressed the California delegation. I'd run a newspaper in San Francisco and had helped in campaigns out there and stuff, and I was introduced as a Californian, and I was in that caucus—you know, the prior caucus. Actually, I went to those caucuses where they spoke, where Johnson spoke and where Kennedy spoke. I'd forgotten about those, being there. I'll have to recollect some of that, I'm sorry I didn't

[-48-]

pull my thoughts together. There's another whole period of history that I'd forgotten. I thought I'd talk to.... Bill Moyers [William D. Moyers] of course, probably, if he'd open up, could tell you an awful lot. Bill and I were at the Peace Corps together and talked about these things occasionally and compared notes. He'd be a good fellow to talk to. I don't know if you have. This would really be good, I think he'd have—I went over some of these points comparing them with him, and what....

STEWART: Okay, do you want to go on?

HADDAD: Well, let's go on a little longer then.

STEWART: Could you just talk a little bit about some of the things you did during the campaign, some of the special jobs you did for Robert Kennedy? Are there any examples that stand out in your mind?

[-49-]

HADDAD: We did a very good investigative job on the Hughes [Howard Robard Hughes, Jr.] loan, where I worked with Carmine Bellino [Carmine S. Bellino] tracing all the Nixon-Hughes thing, and got back to the point where it appeared that Nixon's house was paid for by that Hughes loan. Nixon's house in Washington. One point was this thing I mentioned...

STEWART: It had a restrictive covenant in...

HADDAD: Yes, but you know, it was very interesting because that had come up in the '56 Kefauver campaign because Kefauver lived—it was Highland, I forget the name, 4929 Hillbrook Lane, two blocks away from Spring Valley, something like that, two blocks from Nixon. We went through that whole thing in '56, and the restrictive covenant part Kefauver had, fortunately, thrown out, so I had all of that background, having gone through that argument with Kefauver, that situation, so we knew there was a restrictive covenant. I remember all that.

[-50-]

We were more interested in that loan department. The Hughes loan bit. The other point, one thing we did was, we got that phone call, as I indicated prior to the taping, with Cornell [Douglas B. Cornell], the photographer, who said we were going to invade Cuba.

STEWART: This was during the campaign?

HADDAD: During the campaign.

BEGIN SIDE II TAPE I

HADDAD: During the campaign—I remember where I was, I was right in Bobby's office—he called me up and said we were going to invade Cuba. And I said, "You've been smoking the weed." He said, "No. I've been down in the camp once, and I've gone back again," and all this kind of thing. And somebody else, a second person told me something like that almost at the same time. Enough so I went into Kennedy, and I said, "You know, Cap is a fairly

[-51-]

accurate reporter, and a precise photographer. He says he's been there, he's seen it. He says CIA [Central Intelligence Agency] is training people to invade Cuba." And I think that Bob Kennedy sent me out to talk to the Senator about that, and I did. And then I was also there when that General came out from CIA to talk to Kennedy. I've never talked to the Senator, Robert Kennedy, about it. But I would tend to think the reason he talked to that General was the information that Cornell had given us, and I think I recall Senator John Kennedy saying to me, "That information is not accurate."

STEWART: You first...

HADDAD: After he talked to the General.

STEWART: Oh.

HADDAD: They sent a General.... I forget, some general out there, some CIA general came out to the plane to

[-52-]

talk to Kennedy at one point.

STEWART: This was before...

HADDAD: After I had given it, and I think this was a response to it. He came out, and I think John Kennedy said to me the information was not accurate, or something like that. And I just dismissed it out of my mind as being something else. I think maybe [REDACTED] was visiting in the Florida place where they were training, but he told me about Guatemala or something like that. It just was too wild because we were not, we were really not I think the other guy was, I have a great lawyer buddy, a guy who used to fly who's name is [REDACTED], who's involved in all clandestine activities and had flown stuff to Castro [Fidel Castro] in the hills, and then when Castro killed the Air Force officers,

[-53-]

he became very anti-Castro. I think I called [REDACTED] and I said, [REDACTED] is CIA training to invade Cuba?" And I think he told me, "Yes." And when he told me yes, I think I went to Kennedy. I remember that, it was [REDACTED] that's the second guy, because I remember calling him now. He's a Miami attorney. But, anyway, that was one of the areas that I – I just did a lot of different things.

STEWART: Was there any tie in between this and the Kennedy statement...

HADDAD: We made kind of a speech after that, yes.

STEWART: Right, which was criticized by a lot of people.

HADDAD: Yes, we made that. I remember that.

STEWART: Releasing the refugees, or the refugee groups.

HADDAD: I remember that it was in that sequence. I do remember that was one of the things.

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pages 53-53A

[-53A-]

I'll tell you the other major kind of thing I did. Everything was so screwed up, as all campaigns inevitably are, that we formed a little eight o'clock breakfast meeting, and Ralph Dungan [Ralph A. Dungan], and Roger Tubby [Roger W. Tubby], and the guy from Massachusetts, Dick Donahue [Richard K. Donahue], myself, four or five, met every single morning at eight o'clock in the same place at the Mayflower Hotel, a big table in the corner. We did the same thing every morning. We lifted off the light to see if there was a mike, jokingly, had breakfast, and tried to coordinate the campaign. I had certain responsibilities. I was assigned a responsibility that.... The whole brain trust operation was very bitter about lots of things. There they were pouring out all kinds of stuff, and it was not reaching Kennedy, and they thought Goodwin, and Sorensen and everybody

[-54-]

were re-writing. You know how it is. They had intellectuals coming out their ears writing. That was one of our responsibilities. I think press was partly my responsibility, with Tubby. I mean, just in ideas. But a whole lot, I can't remember all the various things. But we had that meeting every morning, and we reviewed the whole thing. One of us had—oh, Seigenthaler was there—one of us had responsibility for keeping in contact with the field party. We had carefully excluded the Democratic National Committee from the thing. Senator Jackson [Henry M. Jackson] was the head of it, and I guess he had a couple of people who were quite incompetent working for him. And there was always that dichotomy between the Democratic National Committee and the Kennedy campaign thing. They found out that we had these meetings and were not inviting them, and they went to Senator Jackson. And that led to one

[-55-]

of the funniest stories about Robert Kennedy anyway, where they got Jackson all mad, and Jackson was threatening to resign as chairman, and everybody got very nervous. It led to a summit meeting between Robert Kennedy and Jackson. Jackson went in the room there and, "How's everything going?" the Senator said, Robert Kennedy said. Jackson said, "Oh, pretty good, a little problem here and there." And, oh, a good five minute conversation like that. And I trailed Jackson back to his office with his staff, and he said to these guys who'd been agitating to get involved in this morning meeting, "Oh, boy, that Kennedy's tough." You know, I said, "Well, here you go using that toughness." You know. But it was a classic story, at least about Robert Kennedy, of here in order for Jackson not to expose the fact that he didn't resign, saying Kennedy was tough. I think we

[-56-]

eventually let one of these guys into our meeting, but it was a big problem about how to run the campaign.

STEWART: Who were some of these people working for Jackson?

HADDAD: Jackson? Something like Saul Peter, I can't remember. Saul Peter, or something like that, who was Jackson's assistant, and the other one was some big jerk businessman from the state of Washington, a Cadillac dealer, or something, who became Deputy Secretary of Commerce. Hoff or something, just some jerk, a big blunt jerk, and just awful, just typical party hacks, incompetent. I mean, they couldn't make a pimple on the ass of the Kennedy guys.

STEWART: They weren't people who had been with the Committee before, permanent staff people.

HADDAD: Oh, you always leave that whole committee behind. You never pick up anything except the library, and everything you leave behind.

[-57-]

You know, we were pretty disorganized. All this great story about how great the Kennedy campaign was organized, it was just awful. For instance, we had our own printing presses, and we'd put something in at the top of the building, and nothing would come out at the bottom of the building, and sometimes I'd go over there and try to trace it through, it would just get lost in our own building. And we had, what's his name, drove him out of his mind, Hackett [David L. Hackett]—he's a great guy, and he ran that over there. But everything was so screwed up, I thought, you know, and I guess everybody else did too.

STEWART: Screwed up in relation to the '56 campaign?

HADDAD: On, no, just screwed up in relation to what people said about the campaign, how efficient, how organized, how perfect, you know, screwed up in

[-58-]

relationship to the image of it, not screwed up in relation to '56.

STEWART: Well, how would you compare the two? In terms of organization, or in terms of general effectiveness.

HADDAD: About equal.

STEWART: Really?

HADDAD: Yes, about equal. Finnegan was a very good campaign manager. But, you know, I think that Bob Kennedy did a lot personally. I mean, the big decisions, big money raising, big—you know, kept unto himself. And he

has no equal. I don't think. He's got superb judgment. I thought he got along beautifully with people. He had the ability to get out of himself and into you and look at you and recognize your sensitivities. It gives you a lot of power on a human being if you want to use it the wrong way, but I really didn't see—I never did see

[-59-]

him use it the wrong way. You know, for all the stories about what Robert F. Kennedy is, and is not, I never saw him be that tough on, you know, people who he worked with or got in contact with. But anyway, to me, it was a—Bailey [John Moran Bailey] did, you know, he couldn't get our literature out on time, just unbelievable. I remember working with Don Wilson on literature and trying to get things going. I remember once I had this—we took all the.... We were weak in Negro areas so we got this great idea of getting an airplane and putting all these great entertainers on and flying them around the country. I was in charge of that project, and Lena Horne's daughter, who's now married to Sidney Lumet, a great friend of ours, and I got her to help, and I got a bunch—I got that punchy boxer from Jersey, I think, Jersey Joe Walcott.

STEWART: Walcott.

[-60-]

HADDAD: I put him on. But Christ, I tell you, our airplane was lost for a couple of days, I mean, I couldn't find the airplane.

STEWART: Frank Montero [Frank C. Montero]?

HADDAD: Frank was involved, yes. What an operation. It did pretty good in a few places. We got a lot of maximum press out of it, a little, but it was a—oh, it got—"Oh," they said, "what a fantastic stroke of genius. And how well organized." And Christ, it was unbelievable. Jersey Joe Walcott had to get up there and talk for an hour, you know. Anyway, we stirred up some of the Negro things that—but what won the Negro thing, of course, was the Martin Luther King [Martin Luther King, Jr.] thing, I think, anyway. But I did a lot of varied and sundry things, with Seigenthaler and Kennedy, and Don Wilson, Tubby, and it was in that little circle of people in the Kennedy office.

[-61-]

And I did some investigative things. I did another thing that we leaked to the New York Times, I can't remember what it was, because I remember coming up and giving it to Pierre in Philadelphia, and seeing Wayne Phillips walking in as I'm walking out. And Wayne Phillips says, "God damnit," he said, "I wouldn't think that you were here." It was something that we leaked to the Times that I had something to do with. I can't remember, some investigative thing. But just a lot of different things came in.

I made a couple of good swings with the Senator. I made that first swing in Ohio where we went to the steer roast, came out of the steer roast, it was the day before the debate, or the day after it. But God, for eighteen miles people were lined three deep on the road, and screaming and yelling. And Robert Kennedy used to say to me,

[-62-]

another time, he said, “Well,” he said, “they never screamed louder, or bigger crowds that jumped higher off the grounds than in Ohio. And there was no state that we got beat worse.” You know, it was that kind of thing. But I was with them there; we went up to the first debate. I did not really participate in the briefings, I helped, I did some flunky type jobs for Sorensen and Feldman, that group, on information and questioning. I was not part of the direct preparation, but I was in the studio. And I was in the control room when Nixon came in. You could see the Nixon nervousness—you know, we’re really going to have to keep this off the record for a while—but you could see the camera men, what they were doing, and how they were handling it. And it really surprised me that Nixon was so uncomfortable and

[-63-]

looked so evil just then. They were fooling around, you know how they do when they get the things up, and bring it up, and they focus in on his eyes, and I said, “Oh, gosh, why don’t we pay to put him on television like that? Why don’t we just pay to look at him?” I don’t know whether the lights did it, or what they did, but since then I’ve gotten pretty close to Finch [Robert H. Finch], who’s Lieutenant Governor of California—he’s on the board of one of the corporations that I run—and I’ve talked to him about that debate, and he said to me, “I think the most crystal thing of it all was that Kennedy was all of the things that Nixon wanted to be.” And Finch, you know, was Nixon’s campaign manager, and he said, “He just was nervous in his presence.” He didn’t think it was lights, he didn’t think it was anything else. He said it could have been....

[-64-]

It was just that he was nervous in his presence, and because Kennedy was all—in effect, Nixon was an insecure guy, and that Kennedy represented all the things that the insecure Nixon wanted and didn’t have. I guess Kennedy was smart enough to know it and utilize it. I never heard that articulated, but I think Kennedy—I can see Robert Kennedy sensing a situation like that, and making use of it, you know. I saw him with Lindsay [John V. Lindsay] once. I was at dinner with Robert Kennedy and Lindsay at the dinner table at my father-in-law’s house and Schlesinger asked Lindsay a question—I forget what the question was—and Robert Kennedy said, “I’d like to answer that, too.” And Lindsay gave a very self-conscious, nervous kind of answer reminding me of Nixon and Robert Kennedy did just like John Kennedy did, was

[-65-]

very prosaic, and he was enjoying the unease of Lindsay in his presence. Kennedy was smoking a cigar, very relaxed. It was that, it reminded me of that '60—it reminded me of what Finch had told me about that first debate. A couple of memories stick out. I was there when the Peace Corps speech was made. As you know, I helped set up the Peace Corps, and worked with Shriver as his assistant and associate director of the Peace Corps. I was there in all the preparation at the Cow Palace, and Kennedy was speaking, facing the audience, I was behind stage, and there was an archway and I could hear Kennedy and look out that archway from behind stage and see the audience. And Hy Raskin on one side of me, and Kenny O'Donnell on the other, and they were talking about Oregon, and I was in the middle, and out of one ear: How do you get the Negro vote in Oregon? And how much it's going to cost. And at the same time Kennedy was banging through with the Peace Corps speech. And the contrast of Kenny O'Donnell and Hy Raskin talking about the cost of the

[-66-]

Negro vote in Oregon as contrasted to the Kennedy idealistic speech, and watching the audience, had a powerful impact on me. Of course, that speech really, you know, is a fabulous speech. It began to excite, began to shape the dimensions of the young people's involvement with Kennedy.

And I made that swing East. I was there when Kennedy voted. I don't remember too much about that. I was at Hyannis Port. Oh, I do know one good story, yes, I do know a good story. I came on to the grounds about eight o'clock in the morning with some of the Secret Service guys, I believe, and somebody else, and I heard a banging in the window. And I looked up, and there

[-67-]

was Kennedy, John Kennedy, in a bathrobe or what, looking out the window, you know, like that—just kind of “What happened?” like. I did sort of a V, you know, that kind of a thing and kept walking, not realizing that he really didn't know. But he'd evidently just gotten up. They were out there. And the AP reporters—the Boston papers ran the story, because I was walking in with the AP reporters, and they wrote a story about him. I heard a lot of knocking, like, and I looked all around, and suddenly up in the window there he was, and you know that kind of gesture and then the V. And I do remember an AP story in the Boston papers about it. Then I was over at the house when Kennedy came over and Robert Kennedy, I was watching the ticker tape upstairs. I had not been part of

[-68-]

that operation, I was at the Convention Hall, I guess working with Pierre or somebody. But at the house Kennedy said, “Well, there are three things, if you see Minnesota come in or”—a couple of other places come in—“...get the votes, tell me right away.” I think he set something like an eleven o'clock deadline; if they didn't come in, he was starting to call the uncommitted delegates from the South. And he was sitting down at the bottom of the stairs on the couch just getting ready to do it, and I think precisely at eleven o'clock AP said that

Kennedy got the Minnesota votes that put him over. And I still have that piece of ticker tape. I ripped it off and ran down the stairs and told Kennedy, and as far as he was concerned, that was it. And then I was there when Kennedy, the fortunate moment, when Kennedy.... I remember Kennedy was

[-69-]

watching Nixon concede on television. Two fabulous pictures taken by Jacques Lowe, I have them here, one with a deep intense Kennedy just looking like, you know, the weight of the office on him, and in another minute, the charm bursting out, all in about thirty seconds, all watching Nixon concede. Then Kennedy was going to go down to the Coliseum, or wherever we were, had a damn rip in his pants.

STEWART: Oh, really?

HADDAD: Oh yes, right down them. Right down the.... There must have been a six inch rip in his trousers. And we've got to go, and the cars are outside. So he's taking his jacket and pulling it down and going around looking to see if the thing.... Well, I was looking at it, and a couple of us looked and said, "Well, it doesn't quite show, but what if you bend over?" He said, "I won't bend over." How

[-70-]

are you not going to bend over sitting in that car and going up there?" I said, "You know, you're going to show your ass to thirty million Americans." He said, "Don't worry about it." But it was a big long split, and four or five were there, and he gets in the car and, you know, I went, you know, as part of the entourage, and went...

STEWART: He went there that way?

HADDAD: Yes, with a damn rip, right—God, I forget who the others were, it was unbelievable, just unbelievable.

STEWART: I'd never heard that.

HADDAD: Yes. I guess he was in the kitchen trying to do it. The jacket just barely covered the rip, and that's how he went down there, and he was, you know, standing tall everybody thought; God forbid he bend over.

[-71-]

And I went through that whole big thing, you know, these photographers hoping he was going to bend over, and he was going to reach over to shake somebody's hand and there's going to be the big rip. You know, a hole in the shoe is one thing, but a rip in the seat of the

trousers is another. But that characterized the whole damn operation. I mean, you know, this kind of not taking yourself too seriously.

Contrary to what White [Theodore H. White] said in his book, they asked me to find Jackie to bring her back, she was taking a walk on the beach. I went down, and found her and brought her back. And she just was walking alone for that moment when they decided. They made a quick decision about what time to be down there. I went and got her, and I got

[-72-]

a very funny feeling about a very lonely woman.

STEWART: Really?

HADDAD: You know, maybe I was emotionalizing the situation, but I, you know, you had a beach and a kind of warm-cold day, in the sense, you know, half way—when the wind was blowing, it was cold. And I brought her back, and I got a feeling of a woman who suddenly realized that she'd lost her husband—my own feeling about that—and brought her back for it. A very funny walk trying to catch up with her and bringing her back. I remember another moment when Kennedy went over to Merriman Smith, and said to him, "My father said the first guy I ought to talk would be you." And then they went off together to talk. They threw the football around, that kind of thing. Bob Kennedy was very good to me at that point. I had made up my mind I was going back to the newspaper that same day because I'd taken a leave of absence, and I felt I was

[-73-]

bound to come back to the paper. And Kennedy said, "Gee, why don't you go down with"—Senator, whatever he called him, President—"Palm Beach," he said, "Everybody's going to go off all over the world. Senator's going to be—you know, he's going to sit around for a couple of days, but he's not going to sit around very long. And you're going to be the only guy down there helping. And you'd really get to know him, give you a chance to work with him." And for some stupid reason, foolish, whatever reason, I said, "Gee, thanks very much, but I'm going back to the newspaper business." He said, "You sure?" and he talked to me about ten minutes trying to get me to do that, trying to lay out clearly for me what the advantages were. Here suddenly I have an opportunity at a moment of intense planning and everything to shape up the relationships, and

[-74-]

he's looking out for me, being one of his people, and I didn't take it. I went back to the newspaper.

STEWART: Was there much talk or discussion among people during the campaign of jobs within the Administration?

HADDAD: No, no. I remember one time, you know, you hear the stories—I'm going to have to bury this tape come to think of it. We do it for a long time later, not that it's that important. But this great guy who writes on the presidency. I'll think of his name in a minute. I remember that suddenly Kennedy was saying, "You know that guy who writes on the presidency," you know that guy...?

STEWART: Rossiter [Clinton Rossiter]?

HADDAD: No, the other guy. You're close, but not Rossiter. But he went down with Kennedy, it

[-75-]

begins with N. Nevins?

STEWART: Not Neustadt [Richard E. Neustadt]?

HADDAD: Neustadt, Neustadt, yes.

STEWART: Oh, yes, he was at Columbia.

HADDAD: That's right, Columbia, yes. He said, "What is his name?" you know, "Let's call him." It was that thing, who were they going to call, all that, send telegrams. Nobody could remember his name and everything, and somebody says, "Oh, yes, Neustadt. Yes, let's get him, and let's bring him," and all that stuff. And you hear some of these guys talk about, you know, why they were selected, and how they were selected, Neustadt being one. I'm sure he made a tremendously valuable contribution, but a little bit about how he was selected, and how the President had carefully, you know, and all that. No, I didn't hear much of it, I was not in that kind of intimate circle, but among

[-76-]

the guys themselves there was not too much talk about it. It was kind of, you know, it was like the planning started after Nixon conceded. That kind of thing.

STEWART: Did you ever see anyone from Nixon's headquarters during the campaign?

HADDAD: Oh, yes, I knew Charlie McWhorter [Charles K. McWhorter] pretty well, Nixon's assistant. He's a good friend. I talked to him, I talked to somebody else in the Nixon thing. I got pretty mad at the Nixon people right off that—I got pretty mad after that Washington sequence on the Catholic stuff. I don't know if you remember, there's a sequence right at the beginning of the campaign where a lot of anti-Catholicism burst out, Nixon was associated with it.

STEWART: The Norman Vincent Peale thing.

HADDAD: Yes, something like that, plus I did some investigation, and we, as I recall, pinpointed

[-76A-]

what we felt, or what I felt, was Nixon's involvement in it. I can't remember how I did it. It was an investigative type job with some people; it showed Nixon's hand in it, or his people's hand in it. I got pretty disgusted with them on that. You know, I felt that was just awful. So I didn't have too much to do, but I did talk to Charlie McWhorter. I did see Nixon guys at the debates. I think I was at two or three of the debates, I can't remember which, more as a privileged observer than any kind of participant.

STEWART: Was there any comparing of notes, you know, in a light fashion, or what...

HADDAD: No, the only time we got that, of course, and you can get that better from other people, was on the switching of the newsmen—you know, where they're back and forth. I knew a lot of these news guys

[-77-]

very well. My funny feeling about Teddy White, who's an old friend.... Somebody in the beginning of the campaign told me he was doing a research report for some academic institution. That's what he put in my head. And he was always there taking those little tiny notes. And God, he used to ask me all kinds of questions and I'd tell him everything, I'd tell him like I was talking to you, you know, because of the auspices. And I told him everything. He'd ask me all kinds of—if I was at a meeting, what went on, and, I mean, I'd tell him, you know, because they told me to cooperate. And then when somebody told me he was writing a book, I said, "Holy Christ." You know, I thought he was doing a research report for the Kennedys, you know. But he was everywhere, and he was always taking notes little teeny notes, and of course, I'm sure he followed everything and like, he'd ask me all kinds of questions. I used

[-78-]

to see him a lot at the press stuff. You know, I'd talk to other guys, and a lot of times talked to quite a bit of reporters, I spent a lot of time talking to reporters finding out what they thought about things. That was another role I played. You know, fed that information back in. Actually, I did more on that than I realized. I talked quite a bit to debriefed reporters.

STEWART: Was this generally regarded as a good source, a reliable source?

HADDAD: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. As I understood the Kennedys, the.... That's where you really got information, you know, from newspapermen. Yes, I thought that was sort of like the best barometer, the best know-how. And, of course, they worshipped Kennedy. And he talked to them. He was great with them. No, that always to me was a prime source of information, something that I carried over into the Administration.

[-79-]

Actually, I'm thinking about jobs, I helped Sarge on that talent search thing.

STEWART: Oh, did you?

HADDAD: Yes, I ran his talent search for him, actually. And I don't remember, there had been very little talk of jobs, very little talk of jobs. We were always looking for great people, you know, for all kinds of things. A lot of them went by political default but a lot they were really searching for fabulous guys, trying at all levels of government to bring people in.

STEWART: As far as the press operation one of the, I don't know if you could say common interpretations, but frequent interpretations is that Pierre Salinger's stature and confidence and role within the Kennedy organization grew from a fairly low point at the Convention to a

[-80-]

relatively high point at the end of the campaign. Would you agree with that?

HADDAD: I don't know about how it grew, but he certainly played a key role in that whole, I mean, I don't know whether it grew because I don't know what the internal observation was—there was very keen competition in there. You know, you had a Roger Tubby, who was a land-based press guy, and you had Pierre in the field, you have communication problems, and then you had the Sorensen-Feldman-Goodwin operation, and you had the Kenny O'Donnell operation. I don't know their relative stature, but Pierre was regarded, even at the beginning, as a key insider whose information could be relied upon, who could speak for the Senator. He certainly emerged in the campaign as a powerful personality, you know, partly by his mannerisms and his way, and partly by association with the Senator, and

[-81-]

partly by his, you know, intellectual ability. He became a person, but I don't know how much of it was before. Newspapermen liked him, they thought he wasn't always the most accurate guy in the world, in terms of saying whether there were forty-seven or forty-eight hats. You know, he'd sometimes say there were four dozen hats, and somebody would say, "You mean

forty-eight?” And he said, “Well, maybe forty-seven. Well, what the hell’s the difference?” There was a little bit of that kind of criticism, but his role, as far as I recall, was very well accepted. I didn’t get too much of a negative feeling. I actually did a report on what the reporters were saying about Pierre, at one time, just as a—because it came up so often. I think I did put in a note that I wrote back, a by-the-way kind of thing. I think I did write notes back on what the reporters were saying. That whole, you know,

[-82-]

I buried all this in my mind. I never played any significant role, but I’m just retelling what I did there with the reporters. And reporters who knew me, you know, would call me up with information and stuff. The reporters, come to think of it, were a hell of a source of information, a hell of a source, and I think they were probably even a source of information on the Nixon campaign—not only on general ideas and attitudes and trends and stuff, but I think they were a very good surveillance operation of the attitudes and methods and things of the Nixon operation. I think in a purely ethical over-a-drink kind of way, but I think that they were the best barometer of.... If you had to make judgments about Nixon and what he was going to do, the information that the reporters told you and wrote about was probably as good

[-83-]

a base for making information as anything else, and was accepted as good a base as making anything else.

STEWART: Can you think of any examples of types of things that...

HADDAD: Well, during that whole whether we were going to have a fifth debate or not. We had no intention of having a fifth debate, we just wanted to drag it out. We were pretty convinced that they didn’t want one either, you know, so we could, you know, we could play it for all it was worth. I think a lot of the information came from reporters. Roger Tubby kind of handled that. The feeling that they could lose, which we exploited very well, the fact that Kennedy could win, which began to develop, came as a result of information, you know. I’m sure the strategic turns that Robert Kennedy took were quite frequently

[-84-]

Related to the attitudes within the Nixon camp, that kind of thing. Where else did we.... Well, the Senator, well, you know, I think he’d always say to these guys, “Hey, what’s Nixon doing, how’s he doing?” And they’d lay it out, and that kind of thing. Very, you know, very clearly he, you know, he heard in a firsthand way, and what’s Nixon saying, and what’s the crowd reaction, and you know, that kind of stuff. But all in a.... I’m sure Nixon could have asked, if Nixon was a little looser, he could have asked the reporters, “Hey, how’s Kennedy doing, what’s Kennedy doing?” Nixon was never that loose; he was always up tight,

frightened a little of reporters because they weren't.... So I don't think they would divulge, not to defend my profession, because they were obviously pro-Kennedy, there are not

[-85-]

two ways about it. I think it showed up in their stories. I think it helped shape the attitude; they were definitely pro-Kennedy; Nixon was right about the press being pro-Kennedy. I think when you sit down at the typewriter, you have your choice of a word that lacks luster and one that has luster. So you can have a passive crowd of fifty thousand or an excited crowd reaction to the, you know, whatever it is, you know. And your writer probably subconsciously.... You know, you're really writing your interpretation of the story, and then when you write you lead that way, the headline guy sees it, and he puts his headline on top: "Cheering Crowds Greet Kennedy," you know, that type stuff.

STEWART: But you think it was sort of an unconscious thing with many of these guys?

HADDAD: Well, they got to hate Nixon after awhile.

[-86-]

I think they're so.... Trouble is when you first like a guy, like Kennedy, you lean over backwards to be neutral, and so you hurt him in the beginning, but I think it just crept in subconsciously. And they really didn't like Nixon at all, they really—God, they had names for what happened. They called the Nixon—I can't remember what it was. They'd come from the Nixon plane to our plane. They'd really have names for that whole Nixon operation. It was like coming—"Ahh freedom!" you know. They were greeted like they just came back from a desert island somewhere. And they went down to the hostesses, and the hostesses welcomed them back from the desert island kind of thing, you know, with that attitude about the Nixon operation.

STEWART: It wasn't just Nixon personally, it was the whole thing?

HADDAD: The whole thing. But Nixon contributed

[-86A-]

to it. I think basically he was up tight, you know; Kennedy was very loose and, you know.... I'll tell you what I think did more to give the image of efficiency to the Kennedy campaign than anything else, that they had worked out—some kid guy from American Airlines worked out a deal where the baggage left the reporter's hand in one part of the country and it was in a hotel room in another part of the country. I think that did more to create the myth of the efficient, slick organization than anything else, it had nothing to do with Kennedy, some American Airline guy did it. Campaigns, by their nature, are not really efficiently organized, but that kind of thing, you know.

STEWART: Were you at all involved in any fund raising?

HADDAD: Me?

STEWART: Yes.

[-87-]

HADDAD: No, no.

STEWART: Either as a person who went out to see any people, pick up any contributions, anything of this sort?

HADDAD: I remember—as I say, we'll burn this thing eventually, or bury it for a long time—no, I remember doing a great investigation for the *New York Post* once, and I went to.... Wait a minute, just a second, I can't remember whether it was Kennedy or—well, I'm not sure. I think probably it related to the '56 campaign. But I went to Raskin, Hy Raskin, because I knew he had represented.... I said, "What's the story on this?" He said, "Well, kid, you keep digging on that, and you're going to find out who's been paying your salary." You know, when I worked for the.... I think that was the '56 campaign, I can't remember. It was either '56 or '60. I don't remember which one. But it was the one where I did that

[-88-]

investigative story; I thought he'd be a great source. No, I didn't get involved too much with that. I think I got zero involved in the financial end of it.

STEWART: There were, of course, investigations of people who were offering contributions...

HADDAD: Might be.

STEWART: ...of their backgrounds and...

HADDAD: No, I didn't do any of that.

STEWART: ...and even rejections, I'm sure.

HADDAD: No, I didn't do any of that. You know, money in politics is—anybody that's going to talk honestly to you, you know, how money comes in politics.... It's awful, it's got to be changed, you know, but it comes in,

basically, from people who want things done, and it comes in a variety of conduits, and I think the Kennedy campaign was no different than any other campaign before or after; from Eisenhower [Dwight D. Eisenhower] to Johnson,

[-89-]

back to Calvin Coolidge, maybe, I don't know. But there was a.... It's awful. Money just comes in from all kinds. The law is violated a thousand times a day—not only the intent of the law, but the law. I doubt if the Kennedy campaign was any different.

STEWART: Did you get involved in New York after you were with Robert Kennedy?

HADDAD: Yes, a little bit, trying to work on reforms, but we gave them up as hopeless. Bill Walton [William Walton] came up here. I thought an artistic paratrooper was a good kind of combination, but Walton worked with him here with limited success, because what we ended up doing was running two separate organizations.

STEWART: Tony, what's his—Akers [Anthony B. "Tony" Akers]?

HADDAD: Tony Akers, ah, boy, he was a, yes he was the nominal head of it.

STEWART: Of the whole citizen's...

HADDAD: Yes. Nice, very nice guy, a lovely guy,

[-90-]

but not a line operator, kind of weak, just, you know, gentility. I like him very much, he's just a decent, decent human being, but kind of white Protestant gentility. They must have ripped his stomach out, the reformers, because they were, you know.... I think I did get involved with some of the complaints. We got him literature and we did all kinds of things, you know. There were always having of problems with the organization, but I did come up here three or four times to work out problems, I'd forgotten about that. I remember some classic problems I came up to work on. I just shop up here for a day or so to get something untangled, to get somebody off somebody's back—kind of a trouble shooter in that sense.

STEWART: This, relating to Walton, then the...

HADDAD: Relating to try and get them from strangling each other, try to get some cooperation

[-91-]

and some sense into them. Some practical things, like they weren't getting their literature and stuff, I'd come up and talk to Bill. I think I gave Bill a pretty, kind of a ball player's score card of where who was and who was doing what, that kind of stuff. I think I gave him pretty good briefing, of course, Walton's been a friend, and he's a hell of—one of the most decent human beings going. He's a good friend of George Bacchus, who's a good friend of mine.

But it was an impossible situation. They contributed, I mean, but they contributed because they got convinced by Kennedy, later on. For the first days it was awful. As they got to the end, they were all whipped up, very pro-Kennedy whipped up. You know, something like the Peace Corps speech had sent them six miles up in the air. And they began to

[-92-]

transfer their intellectual enthusiasm from Stevenson to Kennedy, and some of the transferences stuck, lots of them did.

STEWART: Was the decision made fairly early that Prendergast [Michael H. Prendergast] would have to go afterwards?

HADDAD: I was there when that damn thing happened. Because we were trying to seat people on the platform. There was a big blowup about Mrs. Roosevelt sitting on a platform, and here in New York they...

STEWART: Herbert Lehman...

HADDAD: Yes, Lehman. Yes, I was there at that thing and went through all that. I was here that day, I was involved in it.

STEWART: The story, at least one of the stories I've heard, is that someone told DeSapio to make sure that Lehman was there, and he never relayed it to Prendergast and that, in effect, Prendergast was an innocent victim of the whole...

[-93-]

HADDAD: I remember that the, I remember how the—that was an incident that really, you know, broke, I mean it was the straw that broke the camel's back. But I remember that situation; I was here that day when it was all resolved; I can see in my mind the chairs on the platform, it was up on a stage somewhere. They finally got there, I think, at the last minute. It worked out, and of course Kennedy was mad about it. And it was a rainy day, too, and I think we were up at 90th Street and we go some of the people who weren't there Kennedy was seen with them up on 90th Street. I don't remember all the details for that, I can't give that, I'm sorry I'm not that precise. I was there when that whole thing happened, but I just don't remember how it came out. I had no love for the organization, I just felt they were all, you know, having been an

[-94-]

investigator before, I felt they were all crooks. I just felt, you know, maybe you have to deal with them, but....

STEWART: How did Robert Kennedy, or did he ever, justify to you the fact of having to deal with them, or did you ever talk about it with him?

HADDAD: Very impatiently on that subject.

STEWART: With you?

HADDAD: Right. He was result oriented and if you could produce results and get.... And he was not really defensive, but just, I'd say, impatient with my attitude, and so I didn't get into big discussions. I used to get to—I'd get teased a lot by guys like Kenny O'Donnell. I remember one time at the White House, I came over to have breakfast with Schlesinger about a Latin American affair for the Peace Corps, and then there was something that happened, DeSapio had

[-95-]

wanted something. It was in the newspaper, and Kenny O'Donnell and Larry O'Brien [Lawrence F. O'Brien] and Dick Donahue came in, and what a ride they gave me! "Oh, you great liberal, great politician." And just really, you know, typical Irish riding a man; I'd give it to them back in kind, you know. And I noticed that Schlesinger wasn't eating, and we had so upset Schlesinger that he couldn't eat because, you know, I talk like a seaman, and they would give me the baloney, and it was just kind of an exchange where I gave in return what they gave me. And it was just to antagonistic to a guy like Schlesinger that he just couldn't eat breakfast; I mean we really upset him so much. And that was the kind of bantering was that we, you know, that we handled the damn thing. I told my arguments with Kenny O'Donnell, I said, "You think you're a great politician.

[-96-]

Give us three years, we'll have one returned Peace Corps volunteer in every precinct in America. Then you'll see if you got yourself a political..." You know, it was that kind of banter back and forth, but it was good natured and very good friendships. I mean, Kenny and Larry and those guys were very good to us at the Peace Corps, very good to me personally—I mean all of that. But it was, you know, a bantering relationship that some intellectual types never could understand. I mean, it was really tough and hard. I remember one classic thing about the presidency. We did the most stupid thing ever imaginable. I remember what it was, and I blew up over at the Peace Corps. I went over to Kenny O'Donnell at the White House, I said, "Kenny, you think you run this fucking government, you don't run it from here

[-97-]

to across the street.” And I really let loose. It was some major thing that went wrong, I mean, it was a presidential decision, and I don’t remember what it was. And he said to me, he said, “Well, kid, the only trouble with you is you think we don’t know it.” Which I thought was kind of a significant remark. And I’d talk about it later with some of.... When I reported to the President about AID [Aid for International Development], I got some of that same kind of reaction about his attitude towards the bureaucracy, and what could and couldn’t be done. I was saying, acting as if he and the others did not know what was going on, and with the naïve assumption that the powers of the presidency were such that he could make it happen. He couldn’t even get Moscoso [Teodoro Moscoso] secretaries, I guess you know that story. You know that story?

STEWART: I don’t think so.

[-98-]

HADDAD: Well, Moscoso said he got a call, the head of Alliance [Alliance for Progress] got a call twice from the President. Once on something else and once when he told them I was coming over to work with him. And as a result of some of this, anyway, there was a meeting over at the White House with the President and Moscoso and everything, the major problems of the Alliance for Progress, the thing that got Ralph Dungan and everybody else upset was that the first thing Moscoso said, “I can’t even get secretaries.” Kennedy said, “I know that problem about getting secretaries. That holds up the whole works.” And he said, “Well, let’s get Kelly girls.” So they take up.... I mean they talk about life and death and war and peace and everything and here, so he gets on the phone and he gets Kelly girls for Moscoso. And then GSA [General Services Administration] or somebody says that the President couldn’t do

[-99-]

that, and they overruled the President. But, you know, Dungan and those guys who were down on Moscoso, and some others were saying, “Look at him, Moscoso, he gets all this great time with the President, and he talks about getting some secretaries.” And, of course, Kennedy, I think, understood what the failure to get secretaries meant to an administrator.

STEWART: This is just about running out here.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[-100-]

William F. Haddad Oral History Transcript – JFK #1
Name List

A

Akers, Anthony B. “Tony,” 90, 91

B

Bacchus, George, 92
Bailey, John Moran, 60
Ball, George W., 45, 47
Banker, George, 28
Bartlett, Charles, 6-9
Bellino, Carmine S., 50
Blair, William McCormick, Jr., 28, 29, 46
Brown, Edmund G., 5, 14
Buckley, Charles A., 32, 38, 43
Bullard, M.M., 6

C

Carol, 36
Castro, Fidel, 53
Coolidge, Calvin, 90
Cornell, Douglas B., 51
Cushing, Richard James, 20

D

Daley, Richard J., 5
DeSapio, Carmine G., 13, 32, 38, 43, 93, 95
Donahue, F. Joseph, 21
Donahue, Richard K., 54, 96
Donnelley, Dixon, 4
Donnelley, Lucia, 4
Dungan, Ralph A., 54, 99, 100

E

Eisenhower, Dwight D., 89

F

Feldman, Myer, 25, 31, 63, 81
Finch, Robert H., 64, 66
Finletter, Thomas K., 37
Finnegan, James A., 17, 21, 59

G

Goodwin, Richard N., 31, 54, 81
Gore, Albert, Sr., 5, 6, 7

H

Hackett, David L., 58
Hennings, Thomas Carey, Jr., 13
Hoff, 57
Holifield, Chester E., 13
Horne, Lena, 60
Horne, John E., 15
Hughes, Howard Robard, Jr., 50, 51

J

Jackson, Henry M., 55, 56, 57
Johnson, Lyndon B., 7, 13, 22, 27, 28, 33, 39, 41,
47, 48, 89

K

Kefauver, Estes, 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12-15, 17, 18,
19, 21, 23, 26, 27, 33, 34, 41, 46, 50
Kennedy, John F., 1, 3-7, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 20,
22, 23, 24, 26, 28-31, 33, 35, 37-44, 46, 48,
52-55, 58, 61, 64-76, 79-82, 84-90, 92, 93, 94,
98, 99, 100
Kennedy, Robert F., 2, 3, 9, 16, 22, 28, 29, 33, 38,
41, 49, 51, 52, 56, 59, 60, 62, 65, 68, 73, 74,
75, 84, 90, 95
King, Martin Luther, Jr., 61

L

Lawrence, David Leo, 45
Lehman, Herbert H., 13, 37, 93
Lincoln, Evelyn N., 31
Lindsay, John V., 65, 66
Lowe, Jacques, 70
Lucas, Scott Wike, 8
Lumet, Sidney, 60

M

McCarthy, Joseph R., 2, 35, 40, 42
McClellan, John L., 1
McCormack, Edward J., Jr., 11, 12

McCormack, John William, 11
McIntyre, Thomas J., 11
McWhorter, Charles K., 76A, 77
Mickey, 36
Minow, Newton N., 21, 28, 29, 46, 47
Monroney, Almer Stillwell "Mike", 25, 26, 28, 47
Montero, Frank C., 61
Moscoso, Teodoro, 98, 99, 100
Moyers, William D., 49

N

Neustadt, Richard E., 76
Nevins, 76
Nixon, Richard M., 28, 44, 50, 63, 64, 65, 70, 76A,
77, 83, 85, 86, 86A

O

O'Brien, Lawrence F., 96, 97
O'Donnell, Kenneth P., 30, 31, 66, 81, 95, 96, 97
Onassis, Jacqueline B. Kennedy, 10, 72, 73

P

Peale, Norman Vincent, 76A
Peter, Saul, 57
Phillips, Wayne, 62
Prendergast, Michael H., 93

R

Raoul, 36
Raskin, Hyman B., 21, 66, 88
Rayburn, Sam, 6, 7, 8
Roosevelt, Eleanor R., 37, 40, 93
Roosevelt, Franklin D., 32, 33
Roosevelt, James, 5, 13, 14
Rossiter, Clinton, 75
Rowe, James H., Jr., 21, 22

S

Salinger, Pierre E.G., 33, 62, 69, 80, 81, 82
Schlesinger, Arthur M., Jr., 24, 25, 65, 95, 96
Seigenthaler, John, 29, 55, 61
Sharon, John H., 25
Shriver, R. Sargent, Jr., 32, 66, 80
Smith, Stephen E., 27
Sorensen, Theodore C., 25, 26, 31, 54, 63, 81
Stevenson, Adlai E., 11, 12, 15, 17-20, 22, 23, 24,
27, 28, 35, 37, 39, 40, 45-48, 93

T

Truman, Harry S., 13
Tubby, Roger W., 54, 55, 61, 81, 84

W

Walcott, Jersey Joe, 60, 61
Walton, William, 90, 91, 92
White, Byron R., 38
White, Theodore H., 72, 78
Wilson, Donald M., 29, 60, 61