

INTERVIEW XXV

DATE: August 25, 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

G: We finished last time with a discussion of the Salt Lake City speech which, I believe, was the end of September. It's clear from going through your memoranda that the scheduling was a major concern and at times a major problem, getting the candidate into the right cities at the right time. Let me ask you to just talk generally about scheduling as it applied to this campaign.

O: This had an element that I wasn't accustomed to. You had a degree of reluctance on the part of Democratic leaders at the state and local levels to have Humphrey aboard. That changed after Salt Lake but it was catch-up ball. Where could you spot him where you could avoid some of this and yet make a media impact? We discussed this at great length. It became troublesome to maximize Humphrey as the candidate and avoid having the lead story not what he said but what occurred in the audience. This was very troublesome. That had a decided impact on the scheduling process.

Following Salt Lake, miraculously almost, all of this seemed to die out and there was acceptance of Humphrey, the nominee of the Democratic Party for president, among Democratic leaders across the country. There was a growing enthusiasm regarding his candidacy. You're trying to compensate in a short period of time for the loss of the prior weeks in scheduling and that complicated it further. But I'll have to say again, the last few weeks of the campaign went quite well on the scheduling side.

Another aspect of scheduling was the emphasis on the candidate for vice president. That was somewhat unique. It became more and more apparent as the campaign progressed that Ed Muskie was a decided plus, even to a greater extent than we had envisioned in Chicago when he was selected. With our limited financial resources we were endeavoring, on scheduling, on literature and of course on public appearance, to underscore Muskie to the point where we envisioned the two of them almost equal in the campaign.

G: Were there prospective campaign stops that you did not schedule because you feared adverse media reaction?

O: There were stops that we would have put into the schedule were we not persuaded local political leaders were not being cooperative. They were rather passive, at best. There were centers of greater concern to us than others in terms of anti-Vietnam activities.

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 2

G: Like California, for example?

O: California would be an example. The Vietnam protesters were vociferous out there. They had a tendency to follow candidates and impose upon them. This lack of enthusiasm that permeated the early stages of the campaign seemed to compound itself in California. There were leaders who just walked away from us. There were others who were giving us token support. There were some who had the courage to step up and speak out. But what would happen is that in bypassing some of these people you knew were not Humphrey enthusiasts, they'd express resentment if they weren't named to specific positions in the campaign. They wanted it both ways. How could we overcome this? We had problems with the Vietnam protesters and the lack of enthusiasm. That went to the scheduling. You had so many weeks, so many events that you could cover, a certain number of opportunities. If you couldn't capitalize on scheduling, you were in a difficult position.

G: One senses from the memoranda a desire to have these stops arranged in such a way that the candidate doesn't spend a lot of time crisscrossing the country, so that he can go from one stop to another in an adjacent state rather than having to come back the following week from the opposite coast or something like that.

O: That's inherent in scheduling, but looking at one of the memos as early as September 16 of the campaign policy committee meeting on that date, you see all the elements of the campaign which were discussed at these policy meetings.

G: Why don't you elaborate on the group?

O: Look at those in attendance: the treasurer, Bob Short; Louis Martin on black issues; George Mitchell representing the vice presidential candidate; Joe Napolitan, media; Fred Gates, fund-raising; Fred Harris, Max Kampelman, Jim Rowe, Bob McCandless; Al Spivak on press and Orville Freeman on issues; Al Barkan, labor; Bill Connell, a close associate of Humphrey; Fritz Mondale, extremely active; Terry Sanford, the head of the citizens committee; Geri Joseph, the woman's division. The make-up of that policy committee was all-encompassing.

The reason why these policy meetings became organized events was that at mid-September, with just barely two weeks under our belt, we had made a number of assignments. We had carved out about every aspect of a presidential campaign by way of assignment and I wanted to be sure that we had the closest coordination. I found in prior campaigns it was extremely helpful if people responsible for elements of the campaign compared notes and had an understanding of the overall campaign. So you have the fund-raisers, the citizens groups, the women's groups, the ethnic groups, the blacks and the rest. They each had their own duties and responsibilities. Meeting to go over the issues and to go over even the basics of the campaign so they would be well understood by all concerned was the objective of these meetings. Note that at least at mid-September

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 3

I proceeded to have regular meetings of this policy committee. Notice the subject matter. The first meeting we talked about scheduling and advancing the candidate. There was discussion. These were very open meetings. Everybody was urged to participate, express their views. For example, in this meeting I'm stating the problems of too heavy scheduling. That meant that we were not properly utilizing the candidate and some of our key people, not taking advantage of built-in crowds. Then I'm concerned that we haven't come up to quality in advancing. Max Kampelman concurs--he says he's kept too far away from the crowds; that would have to do with the advance man. Not enough bands, loudspeakers and what have you. So we get into a lot of detail along with discussions of the broad issues.

G: Do you think in general the advance work was not as professional as it had been, say, in 1960 or 1964?

O: Probably not much different at the same period. I'm a critic through these meetings and I'm encouraging that kind of criticism. You're trying to whip things along but you can't avoid reflecting on the time span, that over Labor Day you tried to construct a campaign organization. Now you're two weeks later or probably a little less. There have been preliminary forays and there have been tests of this structure, for example, on scheduling and advancing. Now you feel the time has come to build in better coordination, hopefully, every hour of every day.

G: How did you bring the advance work up to the level that you expected? Did you have written sets of guidelines?

O: Yes. There was a delay in getting these guidelines printed, getting distribution. Every time you found delay, it went to finances. For example, we said, "The Muskie group is having some problems and manpower is limited. Many advance men haven't been brought up to date on changes in campaign style, more TV time, less traditional stops." Right there on the sixteenth of September we're asking Fritz Mondale to continue to allow his man, Mike Berman, on loan to us, to stay with the campaign full time because we want to move him to the advance desk. We talk about Jerry Bruno being more actively involved.

We are searching for more manpower to fill some of these gaps. On September 16 Bob McCandless reports, "We now have in place four regional coordinators in Washington," the country divided into quadrants. Under them there is what we'd call the semifinal list of state coordinators. The copy attached shows that many, in fact just about all, of the state coordinators have been assigned as of Sunday, September 15. It is called a semifinal list because we're hopeful we can bolster that list. But it's quite an impressive list of state coordinators under these four regional coordinators.

In addition, on September 15 we had set up our "boiler room," as we called it. These were the women that would handle the daily reporting from the field and daily contact with the field. That operation was under the direction of Nancy Lyons, who had been extremely effective, she and the other women, in the Kennedy campaign. She was

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 4

then on Ted Kennedy's staff and he loaned her to us full time for this purpose. Detailed, yes. We were trying to be as detailed as possible and this would follow the procedures in past campaigns. "They will talk to every state coordinator every day," and there were two women assigned to each one of the regions. "They will prepare memos on intelligence and problems which will be distributed by mid-morning of the next day to key personnel. Each morning the director of organization and his regional men will meet to work out the problems in the overnight intelligence reports." Now that is detailed organization and that's the way it should be.

G: Was there anyone following the Nixon campaign or was it simply a matter of reading about it in the press? Did you have anyone--?

O: At this stage, we did not have people in place that I recall.

G: Later did you in the campaign?

O: Yes, people were assigned to that activity. At this point what you have in place is a national organization. You have coordinators in place at the state level. You had the boiler room in place. You had the regional coordinators in place. You have advance men in place. You would like more volunteers, but we were able to cover this reasonably well across the country in every state.

We discussed this at this meeting. Geri Joseph said we need to clearly define guidelines on utilizing the state coordinators and the boiler room. And Mitchell says, "The state coordinators could be most helpful in deciding who to call when the candidates are coming in." That would be another aspect: who should the candidate make direct contact with when he's in the area? Who should be invited to participate with the candidate?

Then a question came up: how would this campaign organization relate to the citizens committee, which is a separate entity? It was decided the citizens group could not be just a paper tiger; that the same concept of organization would be carried out by the citizens group to the local level. But it would be dovetailed with the main organization. Re: the regional meetings--we were trying to have these regional meetings as promptly as possible and Humphrey and I were both concerned that we hadn't gotten the regional meetings going as of the fifteenth.

Joe Napolitan reported on radio spots, five to fifteen minutes in length, ready to go out to local areas. We provide the spots and they would try, through their own resources locally, to utilize them on local radio. The state coordinator would be responsible among his other duties to locate people who'd carry on this effort at the state level. Then to the themes of the major speeches, the campaign theme as such. That was to be dovetailed into all of this through utilizing Orville Freeman to chair an issues group that would meet separately but would report directly to this committee.

G: With regard to the state chairman or state coordinator, how much impact do you think

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 5

that individual's enthusiasm and/or ability had to do with whether or not you carried the state or how well you did in the state?

- O: It would be significant because it is one thing to find a Smith and a Jones and say, "Okay, you're the state coordinator in Ohio or in New York;" it's another thing to have Smith or Jones a man of substance who has ready acceptance locally among Democratic activists and labor leaders. That's the key. If that is the case, obviously his contribution to the overall effort in that state is going to be significant. But does he have the experience and the ability to carry on a very important task? You had to reach at times, but not any more than in the Kennedy campaign, which was the campaign prior to this that required this kind of massive organization with which I had any experience. I can't tell you that all our state coordinators were perfect, that they couldn't be improved upon if you had the manpower to do so. You did the best you could with what you had. I will say that as you peruse the minutes of these meetings you see they're very extensive and intensive. They incorporate every element of the campaign. At the last of these meetings I express great pleasure in what had transpired in a very brief period of time. I was extremely pleased. I felt that we had done an effective job.

Then speech themes. A comment by Jim Rowe, "This is the first candidate I've ever heard of who campaigns on the plank that he won't cut taxes. I don't agree with pushing Nixon on gun controls. We'll lose votes on both issues." There you're into the liberal-conservative or the liberal-moderate, if you will, views. We talked about the gun control stand recommended by [Orville] Freeman and Kampelman reports that Bob Nathan's tax position was cleared with no one in advance. So there's concern expressed about people going off on their own, issuing statements or suggesting positions without my concurrence, or other key members of this committee.

- G: Did Freeman's position give him an advantage in directing what issues would be brought up or what position would be taken on issues?
- O: To some extent, but the fact is that speech writers and researchers have an opportunity for some input. You can have a basic position and find that in the rhetoric it can get a little warped or altered. That's always the concern of the person who has the responsibility for the establishment of the positions. Incidentally, two weeks prior to this meeting the splitting off of advancing, scheduling and issues was necessary, but now we have to regroup. In other words, the Freeman group with my concurrence--and Ed Cubberly has memos in the records of the meetings of the Freeman group--were for a while sort of independent of the overall organization. At this meeting I determine this would no longer be the case. For the purpose of in-depth discussions of elements of a particular issue, they'd meet because time would not allow that with a group this large. But that did not mean they made independent judgments. They simply reported back their views to this group and we made the overall judgment.

And into the public relations resources. Al Spivak was full-time in that area. Bob Squire suggests that the VP staff is spending too much time with the candidate instead of

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 6

the press. These things which sound rather minuscule or insignificant are nevertheless important. I underscore that to emphasize the depth of these meetings. You could discuss the candidate not spending enough time with media or the candidate not being allowed to get close to the public at an airport. "This committee would get into that?" Yes. There was nothing barred from these meetings. They'd run the gamut and there were no holds barred in the process.

G: Would you say then that the central result was to provide a degree of coordination that the campaign needed?

O: Yes, and coordination will come if those involved in the campaign have a basic, overall understanding and knowledge of the campaign as a whole. Bob McCandless in his area should have a basic knowledge of the issues, a basic knowledge of the media procedures, a basic knowledge of the financial situation. Everyone should have an overview of the campaign and they're much better equipped to carry on their own responsibilities when they have that knowledge.

G: Had meetings of this type been held in 1960?

O: Yes. This follows the same pattern.

G: Again, going back to the question of state chairmen. Can you think of a particular state where because of the enthusiasm or extra effort on the part of the state coordinator, you did better in that state than you could have expected?

O: I don't think you could prove that. You'd make the judgment of how well the state coordinator had done. Whether that turned the state would be awfully hard to discern. What you could discern is whether he had made a significant contribution to the overall situation in the state.

What should be emphasized at this meeting--not to pursue it in great detail but it is the first meeting as I recall of this nature and there were several that followed rapidly--is that no aspect of the campaign was overlooked; no aspect, as minor as it might be in the overall picture, was barred from discussion. What was encouraged was participation to the fullest in these meetings to make them meaningful and worthwhile. And indeed they were.

For example, there is a comment, "We need material on the record of the Eisenhower-Nixon years." And Orville Freeman responds, "We have it in great detail. I'm making it immediately available to you." Then there's a query about material on [George] Wallace, and Freeman responds that the research on Nixon is good but the material on Wallace is thin. Then there's a comment, "The Wallace material is critical. We cannot get at Wallace by ridicule. Let's do it by attacking his statements and his record." Then a query about press clippings from around the country, and Spivak's rather defensive response is, "We have a lack of personnel." Geri Joseph points out at that point she has

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 7

women volunteers who are available to participate in this area, which no one had thought of. "All volunteers are listed in the large card file on the first floor, 1100 17th Street."

Then Gates, who was on the financial side, points out, "We have to avoid conflicts on scheduling fund-raising appearances and other fund-raising activities." He wanted to be sure that was totally coordinated. Bob Short, who was the treasurer of the campaign, says, "Neither the VP nor Muskie should make any kind of fund-raising appearances unless they've been approved by the treasurer's office in conjunction with the scheduling desk." That was again noting that there were occasional fund-raising efforts conducted unknown to us or certainly not with our approval.

Then it's pointed out, "We've got to have ground rules on scheduling various speakers at the fund-raisers." That was the nature of the first meeting and that basically followed in the subsequent meetings. If you look at the distribution list for these minutes you'll find that it encompasses the entire campaign. It went from the Vice President to Muskie, O'Brien, Freeman, Mondale, Harris, Sanford, Geri Joseph, Louis Martin, Bob Short, Fred Gates, Don Nichol, George Mitchell, Bob McCandless, Joe Napolitan, Al Spivak, Bill Connell, Al Barkan (labor), Jim Rowe, Max Kampelman, John Hoving, Claude Desautels, Bob Squire, Mike Murray, Ed Cubberly, Bruce Solomonson, Tom Hughes, Jim Thornton, Norman Sherman, Burt Bennett who is a citizens fellow, Ted Van Dyk and my good friend, Dr. Edgar Berman. That list gives you an indication of the key players in the campaign.

G: Let me ask you about Humphrey in the South.

O: Humphrey in the South was in not much different a situation than Humphrey nationally. The Humphrey problem was basically Vietnam. The concern Jim Rowe articulated on any number of occasions was Humphrey being too dovish on Vietnam would be harmful in the South. The attitude toward Humphrey in the South was focused to a greater extent on his liberalism than Vietnam or his loyalty to the President. Some people in the South always had looked askance at Hubert and continued to through the campaign. So, while he would not be too liberal for the Northeast or California, he could be considered a little too liberal for the South.

That was a basic problem in the Vietnam plank at the convention. There was suggestion later that the Vietnam plank should have been more dovish. While it may have reasonably satisfied 60 per cent of the delegates, it's unfortunate it didn't satisfy over 80 per cent of the delegates. Where is the breaking point? The breaking point probably was pretty close in the language of that plank in Chicago. But as far as the South is concerned, Hubert Humphrey's liberalism would have some impact on certain southern Democrats.

G: Well, particularly in terms of civil rights.

O: His early advocacy and his strong position on civil rights. I think the Vietnam issue was so overriding, in our judgment, as reflected in the minutes of these various meetings, that

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 8

it diminished the civil rights problem. You could have mutterings about it, but the fact is that at this stage it wasn't, in my recollection, the issue it had been in past presidential elections.

G: But was there any effort to moderate Humphrey's statements on civil rights in order to minimize the loss of white southern votes?

O: Our suggestion to Humphrey was to make reference to the record--the Johnson record on civil rights, the Democratic Party record. The party has responded to its responsibility.

G: There was one reference in the minutes of these meetings to a planned appearance before a black group in St. Louis and the comment was that this would simply further antagonize middle class whites, that he didn't need to make this kind of appearance, he already had the black vote--that he needed to--

O: I don't know who made the comment or what meeting you're referring to. He didn't need to make a highly publicized appearance before a black audience. He was seeking the middle class white. Avoid antagonizing that middle class white while you're making this major effort to convert them to your cause. Whoever made the comment would be trying to make political judgments.

G: But how did you seek to obtain the black vote in 1968? Certainly you wanted to affect turnout, you wanted to maximize it.

O: You did it in a traditional sense. A key to that effort was Louis Martin. Louis Martin's resources extended throughout black media across the country at all levels--to the blacks who held positions of prominence, to the black professionals, to registration efforts among blacks. Louis Martin was a realist. Louis was a firm believer that the grass-roots registration, the efforts to involve the black ministers and black leaders at the local level should be carried on vigorously, but Louis always pointed out that it cost money. You just had to invest monies in registration drives. You had to invest monies to accomplish registration and get out the vote. It was an activity that, without reasonable financial resources, would not succeed.

The September 15 meeting was followed promptly by a meeting on September 18 with similar attendance where we're discussing such matters as the Fortas issue, how it plays politically, and the nuclear treaty. Order and Justice, as it is titled, was considered an area that would present a side of Humphrey not readily observable--that he was tough on law and order, that he really insisted upon eliminating crime in the streets.

And Jim Rowe, I think, summed up the discussion quite well when he said, "We can't compete with [Richard] Nixon and Wallace on law and order. But we're going too far on the justice emphasis. Let's emphasize order and justice." Then you have Geri Joseph, a great liberal, commenting that "if the election depends on law and order, we won't win. The liberals are very concerned that we are talking so much about law and

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 9

order. We need a careful analysis of what this means to the liberal and why he also ought to be concerned about this issue." So you can see this was considered touchy.

Tape 1 of 3, Side 2

O: Louis Martin commented on this saying, "There's a good line in Tuesday's speech that Nixon is for building penitentiaries and Humphrey wants to build schools and houses. And also the line that Humphrey is running for president and not sheriff." And O'Brien says, "No one is suggesting that Humphrey gets to the right of Nixon or Wallace in this area." Then Van Dyk closed out that topic by saying, "Our biggest problem on this issue is that Humphrey projects as a nice guy, which doesn't fit this issue. Instances such as the Tuesday handling of a heckler do more to help us on law and order than anything else." I don't know what that specific instance was except probably a heckler being thrown out of a hall. There are others who said, "Be sure you have cameras collecting film of all this activity they're engaged in because that's helpful to us."

Then I state, "Our contacts with party people across the country show they have the identical concerns many of us have about our Vietnam position. They feel, as many of us do, that it is high time we clearly identified what our position is in cold, political terms. Particularly in the last forty-eight hours, Democrat after Democrat in the states across this nation have expressed deep concern. They're not happy at all with the Vice President's stance." And Max Kampelman says, "I have concluded tentatively that the Vice President shouldn't say another thing about Vietnam for at least another week. We need careful planning to develop a final definitive position." And Jim Rowe weighs in as he did consistently throughout the campaign, he says, "I'm a hawk on the tough policy side. Until Humphrey gets some kind of lead from the administration, he's going to look like a wobbler and a hypocrite. Let's keep to favoring the majority plank for the time being. Perhaps this will be the issue in October and a bombing halt will be the debate but for the moment I come down on the side of silence." And then I say, "If a position had to be taken today, what position would those of you at this table take?" McCandless, "I have to take it on the dove side." Connell, "I won't answer an iffy question." Then Max Kampelman says, "Our July poll shows there is no majority for any position on Vietnam." Then Bill Connell, who wants to avoid the Vietnam issue, says, "We're trying to switch 68 per cent of the voters in the middle. The best way to do it is with law and order." Then Burt Bennett said, "It is important for Humphrey to take a position with which LBJ disagrees, that they agree to disagree." Then I say, "We can't win by postponing for another week or another month a decision on the most important issue." Then Rowe asked me what I'd do and I said, "I would develop a program for troop withdrawal based on being president January 20."

G: This is really sort of a foreshadowing of your Salt Lake City--

O: Yes.

G: The issue is shaping here and--

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 10

- O: Yes, because Geri Joseph goes on, "It isn't just Vietnam. It really has to do with who is HHH. He has to say, 'I'm the candidate; this is my point of view. I stand on what I said.'" And I point out, "New York, California--we have to carry those states. There's no enthusiasm or interest in those states if we just say, 'Let's wait before doing anything decisive.'"

Then at that point there's a reference made to Humphrey resigning as vice president. There was a period--and it's probably just about this time--when there was a great deal of promotion of this idea. It was promoted, as I recall it, by some of our major contributors, some wealthy New Yorkers who started to push hard that Humphrey resign.

- G: Why did they want him to resign?

- O: They wanted him separated from Lyndon Johnson. I had no problem with that issue at all. I was absolutely opposed to it. It made no sense whatsoever as I saw it. It would be absolutely counterproductive; it wasn't worthy of the amount of debate and discussion that was being expended to bring it about.

- G: Well, particularly running against Nixon who had run from the incumbency in 1960.

- O: That's right. As I say, Humphrey resigning would be adverse.

Then you have, as was the case in all these meetings, a report from Bob McCandless on the organization, the scheduling and advance activities. We were beginning to catch up now. As was pointed out, we had no lead time. This is being rectified quite well. This meeting scheduled for September 24 through October 2 was placed before the group. Then our goal was to move the schedule two weeks ahead. We were trying to build our advance teams of local people and we were developing pre-advance work. It was mentioned that there were some good advance people available we hadn't utilized as yet. We all agreed to bring them aboard promptly.

It was pointed out by Freeman that Humphrey had agreed that from now on in this area he was taking orders instead of giving them. Those who saw Humphrey regularly, very close intimates, were giving him all kinds of advice on scheduling and there was a tendency for Hubert to be agreeable. It took some tightening of the screws on my part to close this out. But it closed out. That was the eighteenth.

Then two days later on the twentieth. An item that I spoke to at the outset of that meeting was the failure in clearance of policy statements or policy letters. I point out that there had been serious communication failure regarding the issue of the recent press releases and other public documents dealing with matters of policy. And I mentioned, "The previous day's press release on the trucking bill was not cleared by the Vice President or this committee, nor were letters regarding the tobacco and textile industries properly cleared. The position of the Vice President stated in the trucking bill release is

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 11

contrary to the President's position. I have met with the textile people and discussed the textile situation with Governor [Robert] McNair. Letters that have never been authorized on any specific position, the publication of these letters by the tobacco and textile industries will hurt us financially. The real problem is the issue of decision-making, the lack of coordination, failure to understand existing procedures regarding the functioning of this committee."

G: How were these statements going out?

O: There were people who were charged with drafting a letter--in some instances, people who were not in the campaign organization, people with expertise, for example, in textile or tobacco. They'd develop a press release, a position paper.

G: But they'd get it approved by somebody, wouldn't they?

O: No. There were instances where somewhere along the route they just issued them. Maybe somebody winked at them, but it was intolerable. I can tell from the language I used here I was not going to tolerate that any further.

G: Well, how much of it was due to Humphrey's own agreeable nature?

O: Some. Sure. You get Hubert's ear and he might say, "That sounds pretty good," or something to that effect. It took a little doing for Hubert to get his back up but when he got his back up he was very impressive. But it took some prodding to get him to that point.

G: Was he different in this respect from Kennedy and Johnson?

O: Yes. It was his nature. He didn't relish confrontation. He had a tendency to be complimentary to people. He appreciated advice and counsel and support. You could interpret that as meaning he was in accord with what you were suggesting, so you'd put it in writing and issue it.

We got into some discussion of the debate issue, too, which was of importance to us. I pointed out that we were having serious difficulty in getting the bill reported from committee. Claude Desautels states that the bill has been passed by the committee and it makes it mandatory for the three national candidates to appear together. This, of course, was doomed to ultimate failure anyway, but we kept pursuing this because I state, "Our position is we will accept any form of bill, although we prefer a provision for two-man debate. Nixon has stated that he will not debate with Wallace, only Humphrey. Republicans and southern Democrats are working mightily to prevent the bill from being reported out of the committee. You should reconsider the possibility of formal invitation to debate to Nixon and to Wallace. It appears there is little chance the bill will be passed." Then I say, "Let's get to the assumption we can't get a bill." I've mentioned that Hubert called Representative Harley Staggers and I discussed the bill with Representative John

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 12

Moss. At my press conference that morning with Ray Bliss, who was the Republican national chairman at that point, I stated that we would accept any kind of debate arrangement but Bliss avoided the issue.

G: Nixon had concluded that it was not in his self-interest to debate because of the lead, is that--?

O: Sure.

G: Did you ever expect him to move from that position?

O: No, but he had been caught in this--at least we had him on the record saying he was going to debate. Of course, he was saying that, not being concerned about the success of that legislation. I point out, "Nixon is safe on the basis of the bill's present status. He hasn't been on TV for two years on an open format. He has told CBS nothing regarding a proposed one-hour "Face the Nation" program in which he'd appear with Hubert."

G: The joint appearance was your next strategy if you didn't get a--?

O: Yes. That's right.

G: I know you've explored this joint appearance thing from a number of angles. Let me ask you to recount this and go through your--?

O: We made the best effort we could to bring about the legislation but, as you can see from the notes of this meeting, I was not optimistic about ultimate success.

G: Why wouldn't the Democrats support you on this?

O: Lack of enthusiasm, basically.

G: Did they view it as simply political?

O: You couldn't arouse them. The bill ultimately was enacted in the House by the efforts of John McCormack, the speaker of the House, who locked the doors of the House and kept them in to get the bill passed. It was just tremendous, historic. On rare occasions in American history has the speaker locked the House and kept the members in.

G: But in the Senate you didn't have even the support of the--?

O: On the Senate side, Mike Mansfield was not enthusiastic. Neither was [John] Pastore, who was chairman of the committee. Beyond that, [Everett] Dirksen had notified the Majority Leader that if this bill was brought to the floor it would be filibustered. Neither Mansfield nor Pastore were enthusiastic about that prospect. We, of course, urged that it be brought to the floor. If we had to settle for a filibuster at least we could get a great

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 13

deal of publicity. What was happening was an effort in the Senate to block this legislation to protect Nixon from debating Humphrey, who Nixon feared. We were looking for any edge we could get. With that, you were encouraging the networks--for example, "Face the Nation" would fit that category--where there were established programs to extend the half-hour program to an hour and invite the two candidates to appear. Maybe that could bring about this head-to-head confrontation. Somehow, could you corner this guy Nixon? You probably were not going to corner him in terms of a Nixon-Kennedy type debate.

G: Did it, to any extent, on the part of Pastore or Mansfield represent a lack of enthusiasm for Humphrey?

O: No. They felt they were being realists saying, "There's no way we can work this out on a timely basis where it would be effective in this election. So why go through all this?" We found that our contention, that the effort itself even to filibuster, was bound to inure to our benefit. That fell on deaf ears.

G: What about the possibility of simply debating without Nixon, debating Wallace?

O: No, we would never get into that.

G: For the same reason Nixon didn't want to debate you?

O: We'd accomplish nothing as a result of that. We'd pursue this from all aspects. George Mitchell brought up the possibility that Muskie should challenge Spiro Agnew to a debate. Presently there is no Wallace vice-presidential candidate so we don't have the third candidate problem. You have to remember that the southerners, many of them in the Congress, were opposed to this because the goal was to have a two-man debate, not a three-man debate, and Wallace would be blocked out. Of course, I had already said, "Listen, we'll settle for anything." We could have a three-man debate. We've stated our preferences but if that would get over the hurdle, "Okay, include Wallace." Then we're saying, "Muskie challenge Agnew." I say, "This would help perpetuate the theme of challenge." But, of course, everybody recognized that Agnew wasn't about to debate Muskie on any voluntary basis.

G: Now, how about the alternative of appearing jointly on one of the news programs, "Face the Nation" or "Meet the Press?"

O: The roadblocks were put in through the Republican National Committee, the Nixon Committee and what have you. They weren't about to be cornered. Nixon had learned a hard lesson that probably cost him the presidency in 1960. When he stepped forward to take on this "young squirt" Kennedy and show him up and have it go in reverse was something that he'd carry for the rest of his life and he wasn't about to get involved. We had the debate with Humphrey and Kennedy in West Virginia. Long before that the debate with Henry Cabot Lodge and Kennedy in Massachusetts and then we had Nixon and Kennedy in Chicago. In each instance, Kennedy destroyed them. Lodge never came

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 14

back for the second debate. Humphrey was satisfied that there weren't any further debates in West Virginia and Nixon certainly didn't want to debate again.

We got into, at this meeting, a pretty detailed discussion on the current polls which were dreary. The picture was not very pretty at that stage. We have George Mitchell suggesting perhaps Muskie should take on Agnew rather than concentrating on Nixon. And Kampelman saying, "There are only two main spokesmen for the Vice President. We should develop more. Larry has gotten great press. Governor [Terry] Sanford is also good." And I point out that Harris gets excellent press.

G: One of your observations is raising the question, "How can we assure keeping Agnew alive is an issue?" When did it occur to you that Agnew was or could be a detriment to Nixon's campaign?

O: I think after the initial reactions to his selection. It didn't take long to conclude that this fellow had a soft underbelly.

G: You said, "How can we show that despite certain humorous aspects of his heavy-handed, bumbling style, he is a dangerous man to have only a heartbeat away from the presidency?"

O: I notice I used the phrase here. I don't believe [Tony] Schwartz had developed the "heartbeat away" at that point but you know that became a television spot. I don't know whether that was a throw-in line in this meeting or whether I had focused on "a heartbeat away" as the key to some Agnew negative spots.

G: Agnew did make some unfortunate statements, even a racial slur during this time.

O: As Louis Martin says, "We are getting a great response regarding the Agnew Polack comment." I don't remember the comment, but he had misspoken regarding the Polish. We were into ethnic discussion at that point obviously because we say, "We should make maximum use of [Joseph] Alioto." I comment, "We will have speakers in about seven main areas for Columbus Day observances." Alioto was an excellent speaker and as an Italo-American, it was important to emphasize him. We mention Pastore and Mike DiSalle. Then I comment, "Before we get to finance I have three or four other items," and I mention, "I understand we have a Vietnam paper in progress that Bill Welsh is preparing." And Freeman responds, "That's right." I say, "I would like to see this paper. This fits in with the earlier discussions we had regarding the trucking, textile and tobacco matters. We have to coordinate our positions. This goes back to the gun control position where political judgments were lacking." Freeman says, "All the cabinet members were in on it. There were political"--gun control--"There were political judgments." Obviously, he and I weren't in agreement. Then I say, "I hate to be a minority of one, but I felt otherwise. I never had an opportunity to be heard."

G: What was the problem with gun control?

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 15

- O: I don't remember, but obviously this was handled without coordination. We talk about the grape boycott. "How should we deal with Cesar Chavez? The Vice President will be in California next Tuesday." And Mary Zon reported for labor. "Rarely have I seen the full AFL-CIO executive board so active in support of a candidate. Our lawyers have warned us concerning too much direct activity." This was, of course, labor's strong reaction to the George Wallace candidacy and the obvious fact that George Wallace was siphoning off a segment of organized labor.
- G: Why was this so? Why do you think Wallace was able to appeal?
- O: It was very simple; blue collar, law and order, pointy-headed liberals, very appealing to the average working American.

Then Louis Martin talks about a poor peoples registration campaign and the Jackie Robinson Program is now funded in part. "Medgar Evers is going to work for us in California. We have [Julian] Bond, Philips, Evers, [Aaron] Henry, Robinson and others on tape for radio spots. We need money for a full-page ad. The ad publisher should give us a deal on reprints since we don't have the money for separate literature. Our problem is not the candidate, it's getting the people out." Then I point out, "We have a great opportunity under the registration laws in New York, where we have no money. If we do come up with some it would be best to put it in New York registration."

John Hoving comments, "Louis is the best man I ever saw operating without money." I state, "We need eighty-five thousand to a hundred thousand dollars for New York registration." I mention the Philips Randolph Foundation and Louis reports the foundation has no money. Then I close that discussion saying, "In round figures we are talking about six hundred thousand dollars for registration." We raised about two hundred eighty thousand for the A. Philip Randolph Foundation and that was it.

We had the results that day of the current Harris Poll and it showed Nixon 39 [per cent], Humphrey 31, Wallace 21. Further about scheduling, and George Mitchell talks about the Muskie schedule and says he needs good substantive speeches; his speeches must improve. "The content of many speeches has been poor." That again reflects the nature of these meetings but that meeting was on the twentieth and the next meeting was on the twenty-third.

That meeting emphasized advertising and media with Joe Napolitan leading the discussion. That brought us to campaign materials and Geri Joseph gave a detailed report on women's activities. Bob McCandless reported on the regional meetings which were ongoing at that time; he reported on Denver and Atlanta as good meetings, Louisville as not [good] and that Detroit and Ohio were outstanding. But he does say--this is now on the twenty-third of September--"There's no decision on who will head up southern California. We hope to reach a decision today. And Warren turned us down." Warren Christopher?

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 16

G: Yes.

O: Fred Harris says, "Apparently Warren didn't have Unruh's full backing. Then Harris added, "I like Don O'Brien and Stan Greigg. They are doing a good job in California." Then talk about some of the foul-ups on scheduling Humphrey in California. "Why at Pepperdine, a conservative college?" Then to the issues and poll results. Apparently we were trying to promote some aspects of poll results. It's reported that in this last swing of Hubert's, the crowds are better and the Vice President is speaking well, although some of the crowds are synthetic. But they point out a serious mistake, which upset the Vice President. He is scheduled to attend a mass in Columbus where there is strong anti-Catholicism. We talk about the plane being understaffed. "Could we give Hubert some nap time in late afternoon?" Interspersed through this is the need for money each step of the way. Rowe says that every time the Vice President would state that the war is his number-one priority we'd get an explosive response, but "he says too much about law and order." Freeman says, "I have told him several times that he should separate law and order from the issue of justice." They talk about press reports, pro and con, and the Vice President's calls should be screened. "He's taking too many so-called urgent calls." McCandless says, "This Vietnam thing keeps undermining us. We need one position to be stated all the time. Reporters are claiming that Humphrey is stating various positions on Vietnam in one day's campaigning." Then we have an appendix to this meeting on issues. "Repeat constantly firm, clear, unequivocal stand for law and order."

Two days later the group is again convened and Terry Sanford leads off, at my suggestion, to discuss citizens committee activities. He points out that he needs daily information because he feels in some states we can't win without a citizens organization. "In Kentucky we probably need a citizens organization to bring in the McCarthy people." Then Sanford suggests we need a liaison between the two groups on a full-time basis. He's taking on the task of getting key McCarthy people into the citizens group, the same with [Nelson] Rockefeller and [George] McGovern people. He compliments Steve Mitchell on doing a good job--Steve Mitchell of course was manager of Gene McCarthy's campaign--and suggests I meet with half a dozen key McCarthy and McGovern people.

Then we discuss others--Henry Ford, who is a supporter of Humphrey; trying to have him in a titled position in the organization. Terry also reports that he has picked up some young Kennedy people, a lot of whom are waiting for their cue from Ted Kennedy. We're trying to get Ted Kennedy to announce support. Louis Martin goes into some detail on black activities. His national tour of black leaders is now operating in thirty-nine states. Joe Napolitan reports the media spots, in his judgment, are going well. He tells about the spots that are scheduled for the next few days. We have time buys in the World Series and so forth. Material is being shipped and there's an indication of considerable movement in shipping material.

There's a discussion about the immediate response group. There has been work put into that by this date. We talk about "A Question a Day" format to be put to Nixon.

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 17

Pat Brown expressed an interest in this area. Freeman says it is a problem of coordination and Hughes is assigned the task of getting Pat Brown into action. We talk about blitzing Nixon in Florida on debate evasion with banners and posters. Desautels reports the debate bill came out of committee by voice vote. Al Barkan was present and gave a detailed report on labor's efforts. Barkan's report was upbeat. I point out, "I am tremendously impressed by the boiler room operation." That's in response to a comment by Dave Ginsburg that he thought there were real serious organizational problems in California. And I state, "We have resolved California four different times. If we can get these people to settle their own problems, maybe they can get around to helping us out." Next Kampelman points out the dilemma, "It is clear that law and order and Vietnam are uppermost in the minds of the voters. The polls show people to be hawkish on Vietnam, yet the needed enthusiasm for Humphrey lies with the doves. This puts us on the horns of a dilemma. The same is true of law and order. While the greater portion of the voters want a hard-line emphasis on law and order, the Negro community wants the stress put on justice."

Tape 2 of 3, Side 1

- O: Ira Kapenstein mentions, "The polls are generally against a pull-out in Vietnam. The polls show also, however, that seven out of ten people are dissatisfied with the war and want it ended." I point out the Vice President is getting standing ovations when he talks about ending the war. Ira says, "I call your attention to today's *Washington Post* editorial on Agnew," which obviously was negative, "I have talked to twenty reporters. All are down on Agnew." Then I say, "I also have something for a twenty-second spot on Agnew. It's the greatest I have seen yet." I'm not sure now which spot I was referring to.
- G: Well, it's a statement that Agnew made in New York against savings bonds, it says here.
- O: I think my comment was not related to that.
- G: Oh, I see. Yes.
- O: I guess I must have in mind that heartbeat from the . . .
- G: Yes.
- O: The next meeting is two days later on the twenty-seventh and I open it by [saying] "We'll review the procedures which will be followed on the pre-empting of the NBC time for Humphrey. Promos will start on Monday." Squire reports on the scheduling of the half hour. Short reports it is paid for. It's interesting. We're leading up to Salt Lake and the turning point because, in response to the announcement we made that it will be taped in Salt Lake City, Freeman says, "This is the first I've heard of Salt Lake." I think that's an indication. Freeman was known to be, probably with the exception of Jim Rowe, the greatest hawk in the group. Orville had consistently held that position from the outset. Of course, you had Bill Connell and Jim Rowe [who were] very hawkish. I respond, "That's

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 18

where it's going to be." Freeman asks, "What about taping in Seattle?" And I point out, "We are concerned about leaks if we tape too early."

G: Well, why the advantage of taping [there]? Why does he want to tape in Seattle rather than Salt Lake City?

O: I think he felt there'd be a time frame there; why not do it there? We had a reason not to. You want to tape as close to air time as you possibly can.

G: So that the word wouldn't leak out, was that what it was?

O: Yes. "It should be noted that we're running newspaper ads. Our promos will be in terms of a major policy statement. We've alerted Senator Muskie's staff that the Vice President wants the Senator to be with him when he makes the television address and he suggested that we should announce the speech for the Sunday newspapers." Spivak objects to that suggestion but I respond, "After all, Nixon knows we've pre-empted TV time." And I point out, "The reason we're keeping it in this room is that the traveling party has not told us we can go ahead. Everyone here is important on the orchestration. Each of you will have to be available the entire weekend."

Dr. [Evron] Kirkpatrick, Jeane Kirkpatrick's husband, gives an in-depth report on the polls. We're naming Arthur Goldberg our New York state campaign manager. The latest California data, "We're running nine or ten points behind and it's a bleak picture." And he said, "People want peace without capitulation," whatever that means. "They do want to end the war. Over 50 per cent regard it as the greatest failure of the Johnson Administration, and Humphrey inherits this failure." Joe Napolitan tells Kirkpatrick, "We're faced with an inconsistency in logic. People are unhappy with the administration but still support its policy." Kirkpatrick says, "Only a low percentage agree with the policy." I ask him, "What about the suggestion that Humphrey isn't his own man, that he's an LBJ stand-in, not the current leader of the Democratic Party?" Kirkpatrick says, "I couldn't agree more. All this relates to a picture of indecision, lack of leadership and lack of independence."

Joe Napolitan complains about the lack of reservation of time for Humphrey to do taping and this filming. Joe feels it would take two or three days. We talk about the lack of preparation in some of the taping. There's a good deal of complaining on the part of the professionals, Squire and Napolitan. We expressed concern about the report from Governor [Richard] Hughes in New Jersey.

It closes with Kirkpatrick and I agreeing that it's an image problem, that people don't pay much attention to the record, the Great Society programs and the rest. It comes to the problem of the Humphrey image. We canvass the Democratic employees on the Hill and we have collected about two hundred volunteers from the House and Senate.

Ira Kapenstein reports that in Denver, Nixon said he would debate Humphrey.

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 19

"Humphrey sent a telegram to Nixon last night welcoming Nixon's stand and naming Chairman O'Brien as the representative to work out arrangements with the Nixon representative. First response was through a Nixon spokesman who said the debates were presently out of the question because of the pending legislation. Nixon then accused the candidate of kid stuff. Humphrey shot back, noting Nixon's lack of statesmanship." I was sending another telegram stating that Nixon and his spokesman had misunderstood the Vice President's proposal, outlining in detail the procedures for debating regardless of congressional action, with an offer to share the cost of purchasing TV time for debates. "Humphrey is willing to debate Nixon separately from Wallace." Joe gives us the scheduling of the three national TV spots for that week.

G: Why do you think Nixon made that statement?

O: Probably there was inadvertence. Obviously we tried desperately to latch onto it. It's interesting to note that we were proud to have purchased a spot on the NFL, but in response [to] "Do we have an Olympic time," we had to admit we just can't afford it. Attached to these minutes is detailed analysis of the public positions regarding Vietnam, the bombing pause, law and order, with further statistics on poll results, which I assume was the material that Kirkpatrick utilized at the meeting. Further attached is a *New York Post* article, "HHH's Speeches, They Do Go On." "One trouble with Vice President Humphrey's campaign is he talks too much."

(Interruption)

O: The next meeting of the policy committee was on October 5 and the first item of business was a report on polls. Joe Napolitan had some polling information from [John] Kraft and Crossley showing an improvement, but not substantial. I notice we had thirteen state polls. We were going to release the polls but I say, "I will not release the Illinois poll."

G: Why was that?

O: I assume it was because it was so poor. And I say, "I'll make California public tonight." California at that point was 33-44 for Nixon. On this date the poll results still were depressing. Of course, you can torture yourself with polls and we proceeded at that meeting to do just that. I announce that our next half-hour program will be a week from this meeting on CBS at 7:30 p.m. and it is on law and order. I reported that as of the prior night, we had received some \$149,600 as a result of the Vice President's Monday night TV speech, which was pleasing.

Joe Napolitan reports that we're working on spots requesting money, featuring Kirk Douglas, Lauren Bacall and Gregory Peck. We were placing considerable emphasis on fund-raising efforts tied into TV to assist the sad financial situation. I mention that, "The Monday night request was off the cuff and no one really anticipated the tremendous response. So next Saturday we'll want to gain maximum impact." Joe Napolitan reports, "There are fund-raising requests built into both of our thirty-minute films."

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 20

Then we get to handling hecklers. Max Kampelman had prepared a memo on this subject, which I read and opened the matter for discussion. Jim Rowe contended that Humphrey is not handling himself well, that the hecklers are bothering him more than they should. Jim was concerned because he said, "After the Salt Lake City speech, a newsman indicated he felt Humphrey wanted a bombing pause," and this was the general reaction of the press and he saw youth with signs after Salt Lake City reading "If you meant it, Humphrey, we're for you." In Florida, NBC overplayed the disturbances. Jim said that he understood that Douglas Kiker was reprimanded for the overplay. It was a minor brush with some labor people and peaceniks. Jim said, "I personally feel that the matter of hecklers is a dying issue." He went on to say, "I think things have been working out fine since Salt Lake. The kids are now identifying with Hubert. There was no real trouble in Charlotte."

There was a feeling the same people are following Hubert around--and Jim Rowe talks about the SDS [Students for a Democratic Society]. Joe again says, "We should follow this crowd with cameras. It would be great film." Then back to how should Hubert handle this. Jim Rowe saying, "I'd rather see some scuffling than have the police move in." Apparently Seattle was a fiasco because there's reference that the newsmen felt the hecklers should have been thrown out. There are suggestions: "How about the use of labor teams standing near the demonstrators or try to have a preliminary speaker draw the fire?" All of this, general conversation, not coming to any specific conclusions. Interestingly enough, the hawks had a tendency to suggest tougher measures at these meetings.

G: What was your feeling on that?

O: I was not for force. You had to live through it--the candidate, that is. Interrupting the speech was a horrible situation but stay with it, don't allow them to force you to quit.

G: Martin raises the question, "Can't we infiltrate?" And you said, "We have not yet been successful."

O: I think that was more the suggestion that at these meetings, obviously, we had a reasonably strong labor representation. Why not have them located near the hecklers? That might deter them but no one was suggesting combat. They would be applauding vigorously while the hecklers were heckling. That sort of thing.

G: I thought the context was referring to infiltrating the demonstrators and actually getting--

O: I don't know of any attempt that was made. I notice Martin makes reference to that. This discussion that goes on here at some length was really no more than that. We're concerned about it. There's some indication it is lessening, which it was. But it was a little too early to be sure that was the case. You come to no conclusions about what to do about it. Do you have the police quell the mob or do you see it through? And if heckling

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 21

continued, how long could that continue to be the lead story? As far as infiltration is concerned, I have no recollection we ever made any real attempt. I don't know what would happen if you did infiltrate.

The campaign fact book has at long last been printed and it will be ready on the following Monday. I mention there was a discussion with the Vice President on the lack of materials. It was precipitated by a misunderstanding regarding an alleged hundred thousand dollars sent from West Virginia for materials when in actuality we were sent \$1,960 for one hundred thousand items. We had spent a hundred seventy-five thousand dollars to date for all campaign material and I underscore that, "This amount wouldn't be justified for one large northeastern state. We have sent eight thousand catalogues listing purchases at cost by local organizations." That was a major effort we undertook. We'll sell to you. Under that system the manufacturers would mail directly to the local organizations. That would be a smoother operation.

Berman says he has released eighty-four thousand dollars that day for materials; "By Monday we'll have another twenty-four thousand for a total of a hundred and ten thousand." He said, "We've heard claims from Chicago, for example, that they have fifty thousand they would use to purchase materials. We distribute our catalogues at the regional meetings and through our coordinators. And we'll be able to stay ahead of the Vice President"--that would mean on his travels--"with basic simple materials which are referred to as bumper stickers and buttons." We talk about further production and Jim Rowe says, "John Bailey paid money months ago and has not yet received his material." I point out he hasn't paid any money. "In any case, you can't ship out materials when you've only invested a hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars." So that was a nagging problem and we just had to cope with it as best we could, but people would say they didn't have materials. We, in turn, would have to admit they didn't have materials nearly sufficient for the purpose because we didn't have the money to pay for the materials. We even got to--"We are also going to have ten million people stickers. These are made of paper and are very inexpensive." They read, "If I had a button, I'd be for Humphrey and Muskie."

It was a sad situation. By this time we had a well-organized operation; we had a lot of people working as volunteers in various capacities, but the shortage of money was dragging us all the way. Joe Napolitan mentioned how many radio spots had been cleared and "we've sent two thousand ad managers miniature reproductions of our ads and they've been asked to solicit from local Democratic organizations the money to utilize the ads. We'll have another ten to fifteen spots available in the next two days. However, we are off regional television as of Monday"--and this is October 5--"as of Monday. We have no money. We do have a five-minute network spot scheduled for this Monday." Joe points out you can buy five minute national exposure now because the networks, CBS in particular, have shortened some of their half-hour programs to twenty-five minutes and a one-minute spot on the NFL game cost forty-six thousand dollars.

Then to the TV spot on Agnew. I say, "We have that spot. It's excellent."

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 22

Napolitan responds, "We have an oscilloscope. You can hear a heartbeat. Two names flash on the screen, Spiro T. Agnew and Edmund Muskie. The viewer is asked about which one he wants a heartbeat away from the presidency." I say, "You'll be hearing criticism, no doubt, on this Agnew spot. There is another one involving laughter that runs for about twenty seconds." That's the one that we discussed earlier where the person becomes hysterical at the thought of Agnew. Joe says, "The only audio on this spot is a man laughing. The camera opens up on a TV screen reading "Agnew for Vice President." The commentary is, 'If this weren't so serious, it would be very funny.'" I comment, "I mention it because some people may not think it's particularly funny. We have a newsletter going out using the same theme."

Then to labor and scheduling which is attached to this memo in detail. The plea by Mary Zon is for more exposure of the Vice President to labor. Jim Rowe points out the crowds are getting better and better and labor has a lot to do with it. Then into the scheduling of the candidates and pointing out adjusting the schedule to labor conventions. This discussion goes back and forth. Bill Wirtz joins in by saying, "I think you're all missing the point by a mile. No longer is it valid that the labor rank and file is tied to the Democratic Party. The problem is the leaders getting to the rank and file. You miss the point when you talk of seeing a few of them. To see larger groups is basic. There is a gap between Humphrey and the rank and file labor millions that's miles wide. But they are getting the impression that nothing is being done to bridge it."

"Humphrey can turn any convention into a success," Mary Zon says. And Bill Connell says, "I've seen fifteen conventions this year. Humphrey turned them on every time. We just can't schedule any more." It was a question of time. Then there's a debate on whether the stop in West Virginia was valid or not. Rowe contends it wasn't; Freeman thought it was a wise scheduling move. And there was disagreement between Rowe and Freeman on the impact of it. We get into some of the nitty-gritty of the schedule, whether there should be a stop in Utica or whether we should visit the Westinghouse plant in Schenectady and so forth.

- G: The business on the schedule, particularly with what Rowe says, "Every member of the national press was on my back. It was a disaster. The whole day was wasted." Who was really responsible for determining the schedule? Was that a collective decision that--?
- O: Yes. It had to be centrally approved. Rowe is saying it's a disaster; Freeman saying it was good. The fact is if you had gone through the campaign without a West Virginia stop, there would have been significant criticism. So whether the actual stop was as good as it should have been is questionable, but Freeman probably would be as objective as Rowe and they viewed it from different angles.

Then to closed circuit television fund-raising. That's been refined over the intervening years. There's a suggestion that we discuss it with Roger Stevens. Napolitan mentions Nixon raised five million dollars this way. Republicans had a capacity to raise far more money than we could, no matter how they approached it. This was a matter we

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 23

discussed a month ago and came to the conclusion it was not feasible. It's simple to say, "Let's have closed circuit television fund-raising." Then the implementation, the cost factors involving it. A ray of hope at this stage was our national pleas which were producing reasonably good results; as I've said at a prior meeting, surprising results. We hadn't anticipated we could pick up one hundred seventy-five thousand dollars in a quick twenty or thirty-second fund-raising pitch on national TV.

Then California strategy. Supposedly the UAW is beginning to help. Somebody points out, "I understand we can get an endorsement from Cesar Chavez but it won't do much good unless he has people to lead. Our coordinator met with the Mexican-American group recently. They're talking about the Mexican-Americans submitting a hundred thousand dollar budget. We feel we might be able to pick up twenty-five thousand." I comment I wasn't aware of Hy Raskin's efforts in this area but he was to be told he has a green light. I also mention that "I had an experience a few weeks ago in Los Angeles. A get-out-the-vote campaign in a Negro neighborhood cost seventy-six hundred dollars." And I suggest, "The budget can be reduced if you work on it." But Louis Martin says he wants to get some permanent fellows in California like Clarence Mitchell.

Then to the problem of organized labor. We say, "Maybe our coordinators should forget some of the western states and go to California." Phil Hoff and Clarence Mitchell are in California as we're discussing it. We talk about Fred Dutton coordinating the scheduling in California. Fred at that time was working on a legal analysis if the election were thrown into the House. Jim Rowe says he thinks Dutton's presence would cause problems in California. Pierre Salinger is mentioned. We talk about other states and other coordinators, general scuttlebutt--who's doing a good job and who isn't. We throw some names around.

Jim Rowe reports that the politicians thought the recent attack on Wallace was good. I felt it had impact outside the South. Jim Rowe mentions on law and order that Hubert is getting away from the social justice angle, putting more of himself in evidence, his experience as mayor. On the Vietnam speech, the general impression is he favors a bombing pause all the way. I say, "That proves again that people don't read. I think it was very well done." Jim Rowe is still somewhat rankled because of what happened in Salt Lake.

Then a problem regarding the SOS reports brought up by McCandless, they've got to be circulated more promptly, and those responsible for getting them into circulation are alerted. I say, "I couldn't be more impressed by those girls and the operation on the third floor. The reports are outstanding. They are the heart of this operation. We've all got to support Bob in his efforts." Then I point out, "I'm at fault on this, too, because people were making direct calls, not coordinating them through the boiler room activities." I said, "I've made direct calls on occasion. We should stay in channels. Maximum cooperation with Bob is essential, the coordination of all information for the system to work properly. This system is solid and proven. It has been refined to the point where it's

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 24

the best I've seen." Then Max Kampelman closes out the meeting by saying, "I understand McCarthy is speaking out next week." And I report, "We have had people in contact with him. Arthur Goldberg is going to introduce him." I don't recall what resulted from that.

We're back in session on October 11 talking about promotion of the upcoming Saturday speech and the strategy on releasing it, the timing of the release. Freeman mentions the speech has been gone over and over again and it's now left entirely up to Humphrey if there are any late adjustments. It was noted that Humphrey was not feeling well and had canceled a couple of engagements. It seemed to be a case of plain exhaustion. The objective of this upcoming speech is to identify Humphrey with the lower middle-income whites. Kapenstein says, "I'd like to underscore that Saturday night isn't the Vietnam speech. It's a much different ball game. We've got to get the text to the press early Saturday." Then we mention that we have serious competition on Saturday night, the Beatles movie and the Apollo shot. I say, "We were aware of this when it was scheduled. Thursday was the only other time available and perhaps it should have been taken. But the pros advised that Thursday was 25 per cent lower than Saturday on ratings and Frank Stanton recommended Saturday night."

Tape 2 of 3, Side 2

Gates reports, "We are still getting hundreds of letters a day from our first appeal. We have collected well over two hundred thousand dollars."

I say that the Vice President is adamant that he's going to present the three-way debate format at a press conference. I said, "I feel the Vice President should move to a direct challenge tomorrow night. The Republicans have had a good argument in characterizing the present legislation as a Democratic bill which would give equal time to a racist third party candidate." I felt the Republicans had made a strong point there. I point out this was a bill that was called up by the Senate yesterday; it's not our bill. "As I indicated, Humphrey is insisting on the three-man format. He says that Wallace is obviously a national candidate, the race is three-way. It's my feeling that we can compromise this by stating that since Nixon has foreclosed a three-way debate, as provided by the legislation, we'll challenge Nixon alone to a privately financed debate." We apparently discussed a Scotty Reston suggestion about Madison Square Garden in the debate context. I respond, "I don't want to spread the debate story too thin. I think someone should make a note regarding how we should work out our appeal for money also. It can be a complicated matter. We don't want to ask money for purposes of financing a debate and then the debate is independently financed."

I point out that "Issues and Answers" sent a telegram indicating they would air all three candidates on an equal basis. "Larry Spivak has had a long-standing invitation for joint appearances. It's agreed to contact Spivak and [Martin] Agronsky in setting up a joint invitation." Then I say, "If I were Nixon, I'd wind up going on 'Issues and Answers.' The whole question would be fuzzed over. To keep the debate question as simple as possible, you want three television dates." Apparently CBS had offered time on the

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 25

twentieth for a first debate. I talk about Wallace possibly challenging Humphrey which I say I fear because "the CBS invitation apparently extends to any two candidates." Kampelman recommends that if that came first, debate Wallace. "The overseas press called and asked Humphrey and Nixon to appear together. They'll also be together next week in New York at the Al Smith dinner," to which Jim Rowe says, "That's a Republican gathering. They're all lace curtain Irish."

(Laughter)

I tell Jim, "That's one thing you could never say about me, Jim." I point out the coup that Kennedy pulled in 1960 at that dinner. We recorded his remarks and sent them all over the country; it was a tremendous boost to our workers. Then Louis Martin discusses a Negro rally to get out the vote, apparently under the direction of Reverend [Ralph] Abernathy.

Joe Napolitan reports that Nixon has two hours on NBC, 9:00 to 11:00 p.m. the night before the election. We have two one-half hour prime time programs the night before the election. On our film showings, we'll have two during the week of the twenty-first, two during the week of the twenty-eighth and three during the last three days before the election. This will give us seven prime time spots in less than a three-week period. We will maintain our network schedule this week and next but we'll not have regional TV for these two weeks. Then I said, "If the budget is maintained, however, in the last two weeks we anticipate matching Nixon dollar for dollar in TV time. Since Nixon has been dominating television to this point, we should gain a psychological advantage."

"The telegram is going out to state chairmen and state coordinators, telling them that we had the production materials and our polls show us doing much better than some newspaper and private polls indicate and generally encouraging them regarding our situation in the campaign." It's mentioned that the spots with Senator Kennedy are good. "We have five-minute and one-minute spots and are working on another thirty-second spot and we're using it on the network." We go into the cost factors of television, radio, regional, local, national and the various materials we have, the clips we have.

One suggestion had been made to rerun the Nixon-Kennedy debates. Wirtz brought up Nixon's famous California press conference. I pointed out we had the same idea. We looked at the film a couple of weeks ago and concluded in general that Nixon came off rather sympathetically. Jim Rowe agreed. He said it was about time somebody told the press off. Various spots were discussed.

Then to the get-out-the-vote report from John Hoving, in which he talks about a plan for financing phone banks; all this information regarding phone banks will be available shortly. Bill Welsh suggests that everyone ought to be urged to go all-out on an anti-new left, anti-SDS theme. Joe Napolitan mentions the *New York Times* editorial, "Knocking Hard at McCarthy," and Joe is going to try to build an ad around it. What McCarthy is

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 26

saying is that parties should be put ahead of country. We talk about the citizens committee; they claim a million volunteer participants in this get-out-the-vote drive that they've been publicizing. And then Bill Wirtz brings up the subject of a possible election stalemate. That surfaced from time to time and was a particularly interesting subject for experts on the process and historians, but the realities were another thing. Wirtz said, "I would say to the people on the get-out-the-vote committee that George Wallace has publicly declared he would make a deal. Wallace has stated that his intent is to prevent anybody from winning so he can make this deal. What kind of a deal?" Wirtz goes on to say, "He spelled out seven points last July. They concern an undermining of poverty programs, civil rights programs, foreign aid and so forth. They are direct quotes. He's going to swing his votes to the person who makes concessions to these policies. I think people should be told about this. We can point out that Nixon has already made one deal with Strom Thurmond. The only possible deal is between Nixon and Wallace. Larry thinks this is what is going to happen and people should be told about it. The Wallace quotes on this matter are unbelievable. Wallace has made the statement he is not going to let the election go to the House to a group of men he doesn't know. Nixon has made a very strong statement, while the Humphrey statement is less clear."

Then the TV format. I'm worried about the fact that many people I've talked to are writing us off; specifically the *Christian Science Monitor* story, which was current, was a killer. Apparently we started to contemplate picking up the Humphrey student theme, "I need you and you need me." Ginsberg tells me, "I think that you must be directly involved here." Rowe comments, "The three of you, Humphrey, Muskie and yourself, should probably appear on the program." "If you can bring this Wallace thing into the same package, you could help me," Louis Martin says. I say, "I would like to have Joe and Bill get together on it. It has potential."

We talk again about Wallace throwing his electorates to Nixon, keeping the election out of the House. We get into the New York lawsuit regarding McCarthy's name on the ballot, which was a troublesome matter at that point, too. "We have in New York a strong possibility," I advised them, "the name of McCarthy will be on the ballot. In Ohio we're waiting for a Supreme Court opinion on Wallace's qualifications as a presidential candidate." Someone mentions the Coalition Party in New York--McCarthy originally petitioned to take his name off the ballot and the Secretary of State complied. The trial division of the New York Supreme Court sustained the decision but the appeals division reversed and ordered McCarthy's name placed on the ballot.

We had a very lengthy discussion on how we should handle this. We ask Goldberg and he referred us to Kostekian, who is his law partner. Kostekian, in turn, referred us to Justin Feldman. I got the idea the firm was too busy with other matters. Then I blew my stack. "We are now going to have a meeting with Kostekian, Feldman, Goldberg--if he can be there--Klein and a representative of Walton's law firm." This is Freeman reporting. Then we talk about the time frame, "Do we have enough time?" I asked, "How can we resolve this?" Freeman said, "Well, either we're going to have to file de novo or pressure [Louis] Lefkowitz" and it goes on from there. "Has anyone approached McCarthy?"

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 27

Freeman said, "I called him yesterday. I talked to him on the phone. That's the reason I had to leave the room. McCarthy said, 'What has the Democratic Party done for me? I wrote a letter to the Secretary of State. You're asking me to destroy myself. If you had any sense you'd back me in New York and California and then we could talk about my electors. Furthermore, I don't like these inside petitions and editorials regarding my neutrality. If it keeps up, maybe I won't be neutral.' McCarthy asked why the only person he talks to is Norman Sherman. He asked, 'Why not Humphrey or O'Brien?' O'Brien responded, 'I can't talk to him. On the basis of the conversation that Humphrey had with him two or three days ago there is no use of my talking to him.'"

G: What was--?

O: It was not a good or pleasant conversation. McCarthy was up to his old activities that he was well known for. Typical of Gene would be to say to Freeman, "What's the Democratic Party done for me? Why don't you support me in California and New York?" He had his cynical shoes on and was playing games, which he obviously was enjoying. We went on again back to this New York situation, "No political lawyer in New York wants to stick his neck out." Again talking about who we can get to represent which is a sad commentary when you think about it. What Democratic lawyer in New York can we spur on to handle this? I say, "There must be other people. We can't allow New York to be stolen." Jim Rowe responds, "Maybe Barry Goldwater was right, they should just cut it off." "Nothing is more important," I said, "than this situation in New York. The GOP poll today showed only a 2 per cent Nixon margin. Our poll shows us leading by 3 per cent. On an honest judgment I know we have New York." I say, "There is no doubt we are leading. They are stealing it from us. Kostekian and Goldberg just don't want to get involved. Regarding that meeting tomorrow, those going had better pack their bags and prepare to stay there until the job is done."

We moved off the New York situation to New Jersey briefly, and mentioned that "Alioto is scheduled for only three out-of-state appearances between now and election day. There is a lot of pressure on him at home to look after his local responsibilities." We decided we're going to have to get Alioto more involved.

McCandless gave his field report. "Remaining materials out to the big electoral states, the states that look promising, New York, California, Texas and so forth, including seven thousand fact books." We discuss other states, Michigan, Delaware, the SOS reports we're sending out. Apparently Lou Rivlin, who was one of our state people, was disturbed because the Vice President turned down a meeting with area leaders. I comment, "I can't imagine anyone more important than a state adviser." Jim Rowe said, "Humphrey was always looking for them on the plane so I don't understand his attitude this time. Maybe he just had a bad day." McCandless brought up a point, "We're getting a lot of questions about the President. As soon as we have information on his availability and schedule, let's get it out." I say, "I think the Vice President should discuss this with the President again. The President launched his campaign very successfully last night. He told the Vice President last week that he would do anything that was asked of him."

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 28

Rowe said, "Leaders in Tennessee and Kentucky want the President. I also think the President should go to southern Delaware and Maryland." I say, "I feel the Vice President should discuss this matter with the President one more time."

Then there's talk about other stops and other states and we get back to the New York problem again. "Let's get the pressure on tomorrow. Let's get Louis Nizer arguing for us." I say, "What about Lefkowitz?" Freeman reports he has done nothing. Jim Rowe says, "We should blast them both." That terminates the meeting.

The meeting of October 21 opened with a discussion of our position in the event of no electoral majority. I raised the question regarding what Humphrey's position should be in the event he does not receive a plurality of the popular vote and Nixon does not receive a majority of the electoral vote. I mention, "This was posed on 'Face The Nation' yesterday and it could well be a question we'll be faced with. He has taken the position he would abide by the constitutional provisions, saying he would fight it out in the House. I think there may be some difficulty in that there may be a public issue here." Spivak mentions Kirkpatrick's comment which was to the effect, "Because the House will select someone whom it felt was compatible with Congress, this would strengthen the elected president's hold on the government. A lot of people are speaking of the ability to govern with less than a majority of the votes. A majority expression of support from the House will strengthen his ability to govern." Wirtz said, "I felt the Vice President took the right approach to play it straight with no hanky-panky and no deals." Connell said, "No deals with extremists. This is a good posture."

I ask what consideration were we giving to a Nixon-Wallace elector deal. "What steps are available to us if this occurs?" Freeman states the fact that there are sixteen states in which electors are required to vote for the candidate in whose name they were elected. I point out that the electors meet on December 16 and that there is some question about the role of the current Congress. I say, "It's my understanding that Congress could be called back in session by the President before the electors meet." This comes to no conclusion at this meeting. Wirtz summed it up, "I don't think we should touch this situation. Under no circumstances should we make any deal. The Vice President could have stopped yesterday after his first sentence, 'I will not make a deal under any circumstances.'"

To the election eve television plans. I call on Napolitan and Squire. "This evening we'll know whether we've made a purchase." I query, "Assume we do have time, how will we proceed? We're negotiating with ABC for two hours, eight-thirty to ten-thirty, and if they turn us down we'll have to go to NBC on equal time basis. On NBC, Nixon and then Humphrey would each have an hour and a half and Wallace would have a half hour. The ABC prospect looks very good at this time. Do we anticipate any other problems regarding election eve?" Apparently there were alternatives depending upon how the situation flowed. Napolitan says, "Muskie will appear with Humphrey on the telethon and tomorrow night we have a five-minute Muskie spot. We have another five-minute spot on Saturday, Red Skelton Show and Jackie Gleason Show."

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 29

This emphasizes the role of Muskie in this campaign. I don't think in the past you could find a situation where the candidate for vice president is being emphasized to this degree. Everyone agrees that Muskie does very well. We comment that you have to be impressed with the Harris Poll this morning. Wirtz mentions that he's been out in the field for four days and the enthusiasm regarding Muskie is great. [John] Gronouski says that's been his experience. McCandless says, "I received a report from Senator Harris on Ed Muskie, who has been with Senator Harris in Oklahoma. Muskie is adamant that it doesn't matter where he goes at this point. He feels the election is not going to be influenced except by the media. Senator Harris disagrees a hundred per cent. I suppose that it is Ed Muskie's schedule but it's Humphrey's campaign." I say, "It's clear to me that Muskie has geared many of his stops to assist Senate friends. Right now I think we should try to settle for exposure of Humphrey and Muskie together on national television. I feel we dropped a real opportunity in last night's mob scene. Muskie ended up with a thirty-second introduction spot in which he was not even identified. I understand that reached some seventeen million adults. The amazing thing is that we lost only about 1 per cent of the audience between half hours. My point is that we use Muskie for just thirty seconds on that program." Joe Napolitan mentions, "I think it should be noted that Muskie didn't want to make the solicitation for contributions yesterday."

We discuss a program involving Humphrey and Muskie which Squire points out would mean probably changing the schedule. I comment, "I was thinking in terms of split screen," which is not nearly as effective, as Squire points out. I respond, "There are problems. But I feel very strongly that we must get Muskie and Humphrey together on a half-hour network program." Somebody suggests, "Let's produce the program before we decide." Obviously, there is unanimity of opinion regarding the need to have Muskie and Humphrey appear jointly.

G: Was this in any way a reflection on Humphrey?

O: No, it's a reaction to the reports from our field people, supported by reports from people in the field occasionally, like Gronouski and Wirtz. There's unanimity of opinion that Muskie is making a very solid impact and that we're not fully utilizing him. We've got to upgrade even more the Muskie role for the remaining period of the campaign. What's interesting is that you don't detect in reviewing the minutes of this meeting any quarrel about the Muskie role. It's unusual to have unanimity of opinion in these meetings on any subject.

G: Humphrey himself would not feel that this was cutting in on his--?

O: Not at all. During all of our activities in this area I never got from Humphrey anything but total approval of whatever decisions we made on the utilization of Muskie. He was perfectly amenable. And as Terry Sanford points out, "We have a remarkable team to offer the American people." Wirtz said, "Humphrey was great yesterday. We should get Muskie in on it." Squire posed the question, "To get the feel of what is being proposed, is

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 30

it suggested that we put Muskie along with Humphrey into the same discussion group?" Wirtz said, "I'm just hoping to get the two together. I think that's the greatest punch we have. It's not a move of desperation; it's a show of strength." And Louis Martin said, "The appeal of Muskie is spilling over into the Negro community also." Everybody gets quite exercised as the discussion continues, to the point where everyone agrees we've got to move on this and assure it. We discuss where Humphrey and Muskie will be over the next several days. I told John Hoving, "I'm assigning you and Governor Sanford to work this out. It's got to be done." Then to another subject.

Back to polls. On this date, Connell, who was the source of the advance information on Gallup Polls--and this date is October 21--reports that the Gallup Poll shows us still 12 points behind, 43 per cent Nixon, 31 per cent Humphrey, 20 per cent Wallace, 6 per cent undecided. Even though we show a 3 point pickup we are nowhere near Nixon. We gained 4 points in the East, 1 in the Midwest, 10 in the South, where we went from 19 to 29, and 2 in the Far West. The advance made in the South is encouraging.

G: How do you explain the improvement in the South?

O: The *Daily News* poll in New York reported we're running about 19 points ahead in New York City. We question Gallup's reconciliation with the *Daily News* poll. Somebody suggested [Thomas] Winter, [Richard] Scammon and Harris meeting together; maybe they can help us. I asked what was the difference between Nixon and Rockefeller before the Miami convention and Connell said, "I think Gallup showed a 7 point spread. He was 10 points off in 1948." So we were busy trying to knock the pollsters. We talk about Harris: "When is the next Harris Poll?" We are talking about having a Harris-Gallup press conference. Al Spivak advises, "The AP has written a long wire story on the differences between Harris and Gallup and it amounts to some seven million votes. We've got to say the polls are very inconclusive because of the wide margin between Harris and Gallup and we will have a favorable Harris Poll, probably, next time out because his polls have been moving stronger in our direction than Gallup." They sum it up, "The Gallup Poll agrees with the others regarding an upswing for Humphrey. Nixon is down and Wallace is down. The only question is can we catch up before election."

It is pointed out that the middle of the Gallup Poll that we're discussing that day was conducted about twelve days earlier. That brings me again to our contention that playing catch up ball from the outset was difficult at best. Any changes in the polls in our direction we couldn't promote, because the poll results would reflect voter attitude of ten to twelve days earlier in those days. At least that was our contention. John Gronouski reported he was informed by some press that a Humphrey spokesman observed that Humphrey could win if the campaign were two months longer and [Gronouski] pointed out that we all must be very careful regarding what we say to the press. I commented that the prior day I had spoken to Alan Cranston at length regarding an allegation that California was being written off. I explained, "Contrary to this we are enlarging our media budget in California and programming another visit by the candidate. The fact is we are

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 31

always going to be harried by the unfounded views of some people. We just have to anticipate statements of this nature." On that note I closed the meeting.

We met again on the twenty-third of October. I wanted to discuss the media policy for the remaining days of the campaign. I had gone to St. Louis to look at the Humphrey biography film and was impressed with it. The party film, so-called, had been shown the previous Sunday and I referred to the last meeting where the consensus was to get Humphrey and Muskie together. I had talked to the Vice President that morning and it was clear that he shares our view. "He is strong in his feeling. Regardless of any other views you may hear, on the basis of my direct conversation with Humphrey he wants the joint format even if this means a significant adjustment to the schedules." Then there was a discussion of the Sunday program; the general reaction apparently was quite good around the country. Gates mentioned that on the basis of the mail the prior day the contributions were running close to seventy-five thousand dollars and he expected that the mail that day would be even heavier. We made a hundred and twenty-five copies of the program that morning; fifty-four of them had been ordered. Those who order make all the arrangements and pay for the time; all we do is send the film. We used to say we want to get the full hour out rather than portions of it, if we possibly can.

We review some of the local area activities in utilizing the media. The help we're getting at the local level is becoming impressive. We talk about the contents of the various spots that are being finalized; get into issues, projections of the Democratic economists about unemployment. I point out, "Nixon is hitting hard at Humphrey as Wallace has dropped in the polls, but his radio format is the loftier presentation of the issues." We talk about staying on the Nixon attack, trying to balance it. I say, "It seems to me that all Humphrey needs is a one-page summary which he can refer to while giving his standard speech. This way he can include the issue by easy reference to the summary. I remember Kennedy did this." "We could extract a few key paragraphs," Bill Welsh says, "for him to study. He could make the proper references having in mind that UPI and AP stories have been filed on the basis of the release statement." Terry Sanford added, "Tell him at the bottom of the summary, 'For God's sake, don't elaborate.'" (Laughter)

We talk about an open letter to Wall Street and Bob Nathan's involvement. On the Humphrey speeches and appearances, crowds became more enthusiastic, filled with young people who want to help. He asked, "Could Humphrey have a truck load of material to distribute at rallies and speeches? Is this feasible?" Poor Mike Berman says, "Maybe a trunkful. The problem is quantity." "We've sent everything you had to L.A.," Sanford says. So I asked for a materials report and the schedule was distributed by Mike Berman who said, "By Monday, all materials that we have will have gone out. The tallies are shown on the list, in the end we'll have distributed about eight million pieces--

Tape 3 of 3, Side 1

O: "Everything on order has been completed and is being shipped out." I asked about throw-aways and Berman says, "So long as money can be obtained, they can be printed."

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 32

McCandless reports that he appeared in my stead at a local debate and the Nixon man admits that within the Nixon staff there's an argument as to whether Nixon should debate. He ended by saying there's still that possibility that Nixon may accept the debate.

I say, "Along the media materials line we are making a concerted effort to beef up our campaign in selected areas. This does not include print advertising but there will be a significant increase in radio and TV in selected states. This will mean that our program for the remainder of the campaign will at least equal Nixon's and we will probably be ahead on media time." Nixon has been advertising during the Olympics and we don't have any Olympic spots; they cost about seven hundred fifty thousand dollars. When the time buys were made, seven hundred fifty thousand dollars was obviously out of the question. By the same token I feel we are compensating for this slow start now. Louis Martin said Walter Reuther said he was willing to--

(Interruption)

G: Say there is simply no time to be had?

O: Yes.

G: What do you mean by that?

O: Well, at the networks, there's no time for political use left.

G: They've sold it all out?

O: Yes, all that they will allow. I said, "He can get his own time and pay for it." I said I would talk to Walter Reuther about this immediately and if he buys time I don't see how that can be charged to us on an equal time rule because they were apportioning this time on the basis of maximum allocation to each candidate. Bob Squire gives the final report on the election eve time: "Telethon will run from 8:30 to 10:30 p.m. Eastern Time, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Central, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Mountain, and 8:30 to 10:30 p.m. Pacific. The program will be taped in L.A. between 5:30 and 7:30 p.m. It will then be fed back to the West Coast at 8:30 p.m."

We talk about the difficulty of getting Muskie and Humphrey together in Los Angeles for the taping. That obviously has to be resolved, then there will be two segments to the program. "One will consist of the phone-in portion and the other of top-notch entertainment during the phone-in breaks. The phone-in itself can be done in two ways. In the standard format, a celebrity takes the call and writes down the question. The host or another celebrity reads it to the candidate. We are also planning to use the direct phone-in. Here the caller talks directly to the candidate. Calls are pre-screened by the show's producer and by an additional seven-second delay mechanism. We may have major political figures and other celebrities dropping in. Probably we could use film reports from different parts of the country."

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 33

Then about the telephone company, because in California Nixon will be running at the same time we are. It's emphasized it's necessary for Muskie to be in the same studio. We review the possibility of telephone tie-ups and adverse reaction. Welsh says, "Since we have both ABC and NBC tied up for the same half hour, run the telethon on both networks." That is our option. We discuss getting out releases on various aspects of the telethon.

As to get-out-the-vote, I point out, "Let's return to a more mundane subject." John Hoving reports, "We have projected thirty-two hundred phone banks in eighteen states. We now have ordered or authorized some 1818 phone banks in thirteen states. This represents 57.5 per cent of our planned final operation. The AFL-CIO and Gordon St. Angelo already have a significant phone bank program in operation. The get-out-the-vote program of labor is also under way and the UAW and the Teamsters have agreed to coordinate their efforts." It's pointed out, "This is a coordinated effort involving labor, our organization, the citizens committee. People on the Hill, everyone who can be spared out to the field to work on get-out-the-vote. We need a few more people in New York. We have a pretty clear idea in response to my question as to the minimum amount of money required. The good part of last night's meeting is that it included everyone." I ask, "Why can't we get all this committed to paper?" I'm assured this will be done as soon as the New York meeting takes place. We talked further about emphasizing the coordination of labor's rather massive get-out-the-vote effort with ours to be sure that the potential is maximized. We talk about mass mailings that have gone out that week, including polling information as well as other information that could be helpful locally.

What is coming out of this conversation about the get-out-the-vote drive and the thousands of people that'll be involved, the phone banks and the rest is the enthusiasm. There is report after report of a pickup in every section of the country and the comment was made that unfortunately for a long time people thought we would lose. They sat on their hands; now they have no program so we have to make up for this as best we can, because while the enthusiasm is late in coming it's there.

G: Hoving raises the point that essentially there is no woman's program.

O: Yes, well, that's a point he raised that Geri Joseph would quarrel with because she had the responsibility for the woman's program, and my recollection was it was well-organized. You'll note repeatedly in minutes of meetings it came up constantly, Geri was always promoting the utilization of women and the availability of women in various categories rather than just a woman's committee. That was what we were trying to emphasize. The tradition was a woman's committee with well-known women on the committee and have a few social gatherings, but that was in the past. Women should be full participants in all phases of the campaign and they were in this campaign. When comments like that are made they overlook the boiler room. They overlook a number of our coordinators. They overlook a lot of the activities that are being carried out by women across the country.

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 34

- G: So you feel that in terms of get-out-the-vote, there was a significant national--?
- O: Perhaps more than I had seen in prior elections. On another aspect of get-out-the-vote--there should be special communications to the senators and congressmen in key areas, which we agreed to. I made the comment that the Vice President had a typical recent experience in Connecticut along these lines. Senator [Abraham] Ribicoff, who initially met with Humphrey, adjusted his schedule to ride with him in the motorcade. Many now feel more comfortable with Humphrey. As the days have passed in the all-too-brief campaign of just a few weeks, there has been a decided change in the attitude of prominent politicians, obviously reflecting public attitude. At this point we could feel comfortable about this contact we were developing on get-out-the-vote with senators and congressmen. A month earlier it would have been useless to contact them in this regard or any regard. There was a disinterest, a coolness. Bill Welsh says, "[Get] the addresses where key congressmen and senators can be reached in the field at home because," he points out, "Pres [Governor Preston] Smith in Texas is a good example of somebody who after holding back for a long time is now fully committed." And Bob Squire chimes in saying the entire reception in Texas yesterday was just great." Martin said, "It was so good it was hard to believe."

Then I say, "I should note that on Friday we will meet for the last time as a group. Beginning Friday afternoon many of us will be on the road concentrating on get-out-the-vote. I will be having meetings with those of you involved in particular projects. Friday, however, we will wrap up the policy meetings." We talk again about Muskie's and Humphrey's participation. And as Squire describes it, "We have again two different half-hour shows. Certain questions can be directed by the Vice President to Muskie or Muskie could add his own comments to Hubert's answers. The entire tape could be edited down to the most desirable questions and answers. Plan to have Humphrey and Muskie sit down together and hold a conversation on the campaign and its issues. This will be either the best or the most imaginative format of its kind ever put together or the dumbest and the worst." And, incidentally, this was all put together and it worked out beautifully. I excused myself, I notice in these minutes, because Muskie was on the phone and I went to take the call.

I asked Marty or Al to discuss our election day operation. Ira points out I'm referring to our three-pronged program regarding election day legal matters. On the legal side, Freeman responds, "We will have several things going on election day. Already we've contacted some thirty states in our Operation Watchdog program. We will have cadres of attorneys in all the states watching out for any election day problems. Secondly, we have asked Tom Downes, who I understand is an expert in recounts, to help us with this contingency. He'll be coming in Monday. Third, we have been in touch with the Department of Justice. They are keeping an eye out on any election day obstructions. The United States attorneys have also been alerted. We have two other projects going. We are studying the procedures, should there be no majority in the electoral college. One aspect of this is the question as to whether we should keep the Wallace electors pledged to

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 35

Wallace. We are also studying the various problems which may arise if the election goes into the House. A lot of the governing procedure here is not statutory and is ancient history. We must be prepared for all these eventualities. We are reaching for the very best legal talent available. We may put out an Operation Watchdog story because we heard of some threats in this area." And it's pointed out by Hoving that in his experience the lawyers should defer to the public relations men in making decisions on press releases. Bill Welsh says, "I'm convinced that any premature talk of this kind is counterproductive. It puts us in no man's land. We should be laying out a story for Nixon. If we limit it to the Wallace-Nixon deal, which we're still talking about, that there is a deal, it would be good.

Then Ginsburg got into the Vietnam situation. He met with some State Department people. "Should there be a peace development? They urge us to take a statesmanlike line with no gloating or no politics. We should state for this one important step toward peace that we want to wait and see what happens. The Department of State itself doesn't know how things will develop." Then we talked about a half-hour daytime buy. Bob Squire mentioned, "We're running mostly fives. The Muriel Humphrey spot ran yesterday as a prime daytime slot."

Then Gates closed the meeting on money received this week. "We received roughly seven thousand pieces of mail amounting to over \$77,000 in contributions. Today I predict perhaps five thousand pieces adding up to fifty thousand dollars or more." So there was a flow of money coming in in small denominations as a result of these pitches on television. Attached to this is a complete record by state of the distribution of all the materials in the campaign and just looking at the record would indicate that this was done in a very systematic, businesslike way considering the limitations imposed on us financially. So the volume wasn't nearly what we would have liked to have seen.

To the October 25 meeting, the last meeting of the policy committee. I asked Napolitan to give us a report on the media campaign for the final days and he went into some detail, which is worth noting. "Starting this past Tuesday"--which would have been the Tuesday prior to this meeting--"we will be spending about \$200,000 a day on media. Starting next Tuesday and continuing through Monday, November 4, we will be spending about \$250,000 a day. This will be for combination network and local spots. We're arranging a taping for Humphrey and Muskie here tomorrow. Depending how this session comes out we'll see how our final week's time is allocated." Then he pointed out in addition to the half hour on ABC for that night, "We have half hours on Friday, November 1 on CBS at 8:30 p.m., Saturday, November 2 on NBC at 9:30 p.m., and Sunday, November 3 on NBC at 8:30. This last half hour we're holding open for the President. On Monday the fourth we have purchased, as you know, two hours on ABC from 8:30 to 10:30 p.m."--that's the telethon. We're now trying to beef up the week preceding. "Next Tuesday we'll begin showing half-hour spots on a local basis. We have been getting a good response from the states on this. Senator [Ralph] Yarborough has purchased the entire hour from last Sunday for a Texas showing. We're getting similar requests from other states. We have culled our one minute and twenty second spots." And I noted, "We

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 36

have ordered off the Agnew laughter spot. There were some complaints but I feel it has already fulfilled its purpose." I concurred. "We're substituting the twenty-second spot on the heartbeat." Our Spanish radio programs are now coming in and we have four different language spots.

I added that at the session for the following day which was at 2:30 p.m., "We'll set up a format that can be altered in any direction. Humphrey will be flying in, going directly to the studio." I express the hope that he wouldn't be tired. "We will have an opportunity this time to completely control what happens. We should be able to make very clear in the course of one half hour program or any shorter spots what we want to emphasize. I told both Humphrey and Muskie that the only matter brought up at these meetings which was unanimous was that the two of them should get together in the remaining days for this taping. I have high hopes." We point out we've been promoting the half-hour show in selected ads. We talk about what type of questions we'll use, the producer we'll use, how we'll tie all this together. Apparently there was a Senator Kennedy-Wallace speech that we're trying to promote on television. Time buys which use tough spots are our next objective. We talk about Mayor Richard Daley's office requesting the Sunday hour. Kampelman talks about a two-page ad that he was asked to bring to the attention of the committee. Joe Napolitan responded that he thought that one page was fine but he didn't think anyone would take the time to read the second and he could name six other ads we already had which were much better. We reviewed all the print material and all that for local use and all the promotional aspects of these final days.

Then of course to money again and the availability of this material for local use with local financial support. We talk about the costs in California and I have rough calculations. We're talking about seven hundred fifty thousand to a million dollars. The expenditure problem is obvious. The ad concept is discussed in great detail, including trying to have a coupon on it, Bob Short says, "for solicitation of funds." Joe Napolitan feels the expenditure on an NFL spot on November 3 is a better investment and I chime in by saying, "At any rate, we have had many ads appearing. A full-page businessmen's ad was in the *Wall Street Journal* this morning." Bob Short points out the ad cost \$17,500 and they paid for it. But we're making the copies of the ad that Max Kampelman presented for general use. We'll have mats. Bob Short complains, "Why should we distribute this ad without a coupon?" He wants everyone to understand we've gotten almost one million dollars in small contributions from our various appeals and this is ten times more than the DNC has ever received in any campaign. Everybody agrees we can't go off television. Then referring to the prior Sunday's show, we comment on how great it was. Many people want to purchase it at fifty thousand dollars a purchase. I advised, "I want everybody to look in tonight. I saw the biographical film in St. Louis and I share Joe's view. The film has real merit. I want all of you to advise us tomorrow of your reaction. We haven't got time here to view it. We had to make a judgment and decide to let it go tonight."

G: What did you think of the film?

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 37

O: I thought it was excellent.

G: Do you think it had an impact?

O: Yes, very much so. I think it was the best biographical film I had seen in politics. It was very well done. It was widely approved. Of course, there were some people who had criticism, but I never recall anything being so widely approved. We consider the remaining material in the can, making a determination of what material we're going to use and what we're going to discard. Bob Short is pressing hard for this fund appeal in all areas, in all television and all spots and he's speaking like a true treasurer who is in dire need of funds. We also consider repeating the spots on the Nixon record.

Then to the speakers' program for the remaining week and the entertainment blitz. We have planes scheduled in Ohio, California, New York, Baltimore; press people aboard. We're coordinating with county chairmen, setting up local programs. These were entertainers and stars who agreed to go on that last swing across the country. We have the final report for the purposes of this meeting on the get-out-the-vote effort. John Hoving reported that 76 per cent of our phone operations are now authorized on a twenty-four hour basis. "We're well along to meeting our goal. Our basic problem now involves the expenditure of a small amount of money in the black community." Bob Short asked, "How much do you need?" Hoving: "One hundred twenty thousand." Bob Short said, "You've got one hundred thousand." Louis Martin responded, "We're in business."

Apparently at this point Al Barkan was expressing concern. He'd be happy to have that money. Hoving says he can't have any of it. He was apparently extremely concerned that labor had extended itself, while we had done nothing in this area which, of course, was not the case. Then I commented, "It's been my feeling we had to program this campaign properly. I didn't want to be confronted with statistics showing that X number of workers multiplied by Y number of dollars meant that Z number of voters would be gotten out. This is the way it had been done in the past. I have insisted that the program be spelled out specifically. We should know who is directing any local program and what is being done. There is little doubt in my mind that we can come up with something better than in past years, which amounted to spending money. Now we have a specific program which we are in a position to implement."

If I can interrupt this thought, "I have just been handed the results of the Gallup Poll last Sunday: Nixon, 44 per cent, Humphrey, 36 per cent, Wallace, 15 per cent, undecided, 5 per cent. These figures were compiled between October 17 and October 20." This represented the best picture by far through the campaign. It showed us 8 points down as of October 20, roughly two weeks before election day. The Gallup Poll gap has closed from 15 per cent to 8 per cent in three weeks. Joe Napolitan pointed out, "The final day of the poll period ended before our media campaign started on the twenty-second. Nixon is not moving at all. We show a net gain of four points." So with that rather pleasing news we got back to the get-out-vote effort coordinated with labor's effort. This was two polls in a row that showed an upswing.

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 38

G: Short says, "The smart money is now coming in."

O: People who had decided they could pass this one and not have a problem on the record of failure to contribute felt now they should take out an insurance policy. We hadn't gotten to the insurance policy aspect of this until just about this time. In past campaigns you generally had a certain amount of insurance contribution--people giving you a thousand while they were probably giving your opponent five thousand. They wanted to just be on the record. But we weren't the beneficiaries of that kind of contribution until this late period.

We were anxious to get these poll results out to the state coordinators and through them widespread distribution to spur on effort. We go back again to the various priority areas, the various assignments, the total implementation of the get-out-the-vote in the last waning days of the campaign. We discussed various states and various participants, including some commotion about our representative in Maryland. It's best described by Hoving saying, "In the last phase of the campaign you always run into this nonsense. Everybody is looking for somebody to blame. It is important we get all the intelligence here for evaluation. [Daniel] Brewster is a frightened man. He is going to have to sweat it out." This is the senator from Maryland. Apparently Brewster was making some threats of publicity of a negative nature. I add, "We're all in together in Maryland. I can't see Brewster risking this kind of publicity." So we dropped it. Mike Berman says, "It seems that everybody is planning to go on the plane this last week. This cannot be done. The Vice President's plane has been overloaded twice already. We will be carrying a hundred and sixty press people next week. We'll be having a rally tomorrow at 1:15 at National Airport. The Vice President has requested this. I'm determined any staff that are not there will not be permitted on the plane to Minneapolis election day." Mike is making a pitch for this rally. And then they discuss who has been put on the list and who is being contacted to draw a crowd for this rally.

Bob Short says, "Today has been the toughest day yet. I've had to come up with two million dollars. It's not easy but we'll make it. By Monday it will be up to 2.3 million if we get that additional NBC time. If we make the NBC buy, you won't be able to watch television election eve without seeing Humphrey. I think we'll even be competing against ourselves. This is largely borrowed money but we'll get it back if we win." Then to show that there's always a little more nuts and bolts as you wind down, "It should be mentioned that we are putting out a two-weeks' notice as of today regarding campaign employees." Bob Short says, "Yes." Then I say, "That notice should stress that employees will be given a one-week salary extension as compared to the past." In other words, the tradition in campaigns was you were cut off as the polls closed and no provision was made for any kind of a break. Ira says, "I suggest we get that out to the press. Also, that we make reference to inaugural plans in such a notice."

Then I say,

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 39

There is one more matter. I want to thank everyone for their attention and for the high attendance of these meetings. There have been differences of views on a variety of subjects but at no time has any view been imposed by one group upon another. I have spent a lifetime in this business, as you know, and never have I worked with a more cooperative, able or dedicated group of people. I shall retain this experience as one of the high points in my career in politics and I will communicate this thought regarding your individual performance to the candidates. Many of you will be working on specific activities next week, particularly on the get-out-the-vote projects. We are not closing out the campaign. I will be available to any of you in any of these areas. I would like to conclude by expressing my deepest gratitude. You have made it a wonderful experience for me and I hope you feel the same. Thank you.

In reviewing parts of those memos which are reasonably detailed, and unusual in terms of campaigns--it's a rarity to have detailed, concise reports of meetings of this nature. In fact, that's what is wrong with campaigns, the record-keeping aspects. In this instance you could refer back to a series of meetings that included every element at the top level of the Humphrey-Muskie campaign from beginning to end. Every view, some of them off the wall, some ridiculous, some significant, some creative. Everybody had an opportunity to be a participant to have knowledge of all aspects of the campaign. That is unique. It came about to a great extent because of the shortness of the campaign, the tremendous problems of launching, to quickly coordinate a national campaign.

The Vietnam speech in Salt Lake turned the corner. The Muskie candidacy was a major plus in the campaign. We were able to play catch-up ball, not nearly all we would have liked to. We did stay in the fight with Nixon, pretty evenly matched in terms of media exposure and campaign effort over the last two or three weeks of the campaign. If that convention had been scheduled as it would have without an incumbent president to be routinely renominated, the convention would have been a month earlier. If you could schedule the convention after the President withdrew as a candidate, you would have scheduled it a month earlier. But that was impossible, because conventions have to be planned a year, two years and even longer in advance. The Vietnam issue was overriding. We placed great emphasis on law and order, with some relevance in the campaign. Economic issues had some relevance. But the overriding issue was Vietnam. The corner was turned in terms of public perception with the Salt Lake speech.

But it was a perception and it was amazing. There was a perception, which Jim Rowe expressed concern about, but this perception on the part of many liberals and many anti-Vietnam young people across the country was favorable to Humphrey. Anybody who carefully analyzed the speech word by word, phrase by phrase would have difficulty concluding it was capitulation from existing administration policy. But be that as it may in the political world, it was enough to--

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 40

O: --push a button and we tried to capitalize on that to the best of our ability in the short period of time that was left to us. You were probably talking about six, seven weeks.

G: What was the purpose of having this record prepared of the campaign policy--?

O: That was the kind of staff I had. Ed Cubberly, who I would send to meet with the Freeman group on issues, would report back in detail, probably more detail than I needed. He was a very solid young man who took his assignments seriously. During the campaign I didn't make any particular reference to these minutes, inasmuch as I had all that in my own mind. I was rather surprised when I went over my papers to find there was such a detailed accounting of these meetings by Cubberly and in a couple of instances I believe Ira Kapenstein. They really acted as secretaries of the meetings.

G: But you don't recall any effort to track the decisions that were made at the time?

O: Oh, yes. I'm talking about the minutes themselves. You were tracking; you were evaluating, you were resolving, and I don't think I probably found it necessary to go to these documents for recollection. You'll notice these meetings for a period were almost back to back. Notes were dutifully taken, submitted to me and circulated. That was one purpose, of course, for those who were absent--

G: Those who were absent were able to keep abreast of the meetings?

O: The list for circulation was rather lengthy. I'm sure I didn't suggest to either Ira or Ed that they follow any particular format. The purpose of taking notes primarily would be to circulate them, so I wouldn't run into people saying, "I wasn't at the last meeting; tell me now." I wouldn't tolerate that. You may have a good reason for not being there, but you had no reason not to be knowledgeable about what occurred.

G: Well, this seems to be almost verbatim. It does seem to be verbatim.

O: I think with Ed Cubberly particularly.

G: Two questions arise from this. One, what is the significance of the fact that Mondale and Harris and, to a large extent, Freeman stopped coming to the meetings?

O: With Mondale and Harris, they were in their areas of activity. They were expected to be out in the field. They were taking on speaking engagements. It's like Al Barkan; Al Barkan didn't attend many of the meetings but Mary Zon, I am sure, reported in detail to Al Barkan. He was kept fully abreast. These were not for the most part meetings that established overall policy. These meetings did not establish the Vietnam position at Salt Lake, but none of those positions after the early stages were carried out without my approval. I always made sure to get the input of anybody who wanted to make input, encouraged input.

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 41

This was a good team, well representative of a campaign organization. It was a rarity that somebody wasn't present at the meeting who could have input into a particular area of discussion. You had Terry Sanford quite regularly at the meetings; you had Orville Freeman pretty regularly at the meetings, but Fritz and Fred really had become more involved in appearing at functions, filling in for the candidate. They drifted away from the nuts and bolts.

But, you see, while every subject possible is discussed, you'll notice there's no reference to the role of the President really, if any, in the campaign. That would not be something that would come into discussion among a large group. There is no reference to the ultimate content of the Vietnam speech purposely. You can be open, but there are limitations. There were people at these meetings who were in organization and registration and get-out-the-vote and ethnic matters. I would not want a major policy discussion particularly. Not that you'd want to bar them, but it would not be productive in that type of a meeting.

The Vietnam impact on the campaign, crowd reactions, what to do or not do, all of that was part of those meetings. There were many things I was engaged in that didn't directly relate to these meetings.

G: Another question. There seems very little input from the candidate himself in these discussions, not so much in terms of his own presence because I realize he can't be there but in terms of feedback from the candidate. Why is that?

O: Feedback from the candidate often came to me and he and I would talk regularly, often. If he were in town I would be at his apartment in the morning or we'd have coffee together, but I made it a rule that the candidate was to have limited involvement or non-involvement in most of the areas of activities that we were discussing here. That is an unnecessary burden on the candidate.

What you had to avoid or eliminate was the situation in which three or four close friends hung around with him bending his ear. They have little or no knowledge in most instances of the overall campaign, but somebody complains about something. I had any number of calls from Hubert Humphrey throughout that campaign saying, "I was out somewhere last night, Larry, and somebody told me there's no literature," things of that nature. Or he'd call and say, "I'm told I really ought to do the following on law and order. What's your view?"

My views were given to him with the bark off and, I must say, were solicited. The impasse we reached on the Salt Lake speech underscores that. I was in high dudgeon. That really wasn't the right way to approach it, but I blew up. And I didn't know where I could find Hubert within the next three or four hours so I'll get something out on a wire that will get to him faster. I'm not going to spend the rest of the day trying to find him and have him respond, "I appreciate getting that hard-hitting thing but you might be interested to know I haven't read the speech."

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 42

G: Tell me, you've mentioned spending some time with him at his apartment when he was in Washington. Run through the range of other alternatives, phone calls.

O: Oh, yes.

G: Would he call you in the evenings or would you call him? How would that work out?

O: Most of the time he would call me, very frankly, because it wasn't very easy to contact him when he was on the road. I didn't find it necessary to contact him on the road but I would get calls from the road with regularity.

G: Were they generally in the evening or not necessarily?

O: Not necessarily. Whenever he had an opportunity to--

G: How often would this communication take place?

O: We communicated almost on a daily basis.

G: Okay. Did you ever travel with him?

O: Yes, very limited. At the end I traveled with him. Also, I was forced to travel with him for a couple of days because of the Salt Lake situation. I think I stated way back in our interviews--going back to directing Jack Kennedy's Senate campaign--that I feel a campaign manager or director is responsible for organization. If he is spending time traveling with the candidate, he's not doing his job. Jack Kennedy and I used to kid each other because I would see him rarely. The candidate is out there--that's his job--breaking his butt campaigning. Your job is to see if you can bring that 3 per cent we've talked about that might make the difference, through campaign organization, strategy and implementation. So if I hear that some campaign manager of a candidate for president is at the shoulder of that candidate all the time, he's no campaign manager. He's just another hanger-on.

G: Did you feel that you had local people who were able to assess his impact in a given situation, that you were getting good feedback?

O: For the most part, although you can get varied impact from the same incident. It depends on the eyes and ears of the beholder. You make that judgment on the basis of your knowledge of the person giving you the input. You would find almost without exception that you could get a solid objective appraisal of a situation, an incident, from people whose judgment you had confidence in and you feel comfortable with. That wouldn't mean somebody picking up the phone in high dudgeon because he didn't get a chance to shake hands with the candidate would impress you. People involved in coordinating and organizing learn early on that they should be candid and objective and not gild the lily. If

O'Brien -- Interview XXV -- 43

they gild the lily they're going to pay a price for it sooner or later. They must fulfill their role in a responsible manner. I have found that uniformly the case. There are able people who participate in politics and able people constantly coming into the political world at the local level and moving along. It's a matter of giving them the opportunity.

End of Tape 3 of 3 and Interview XXV

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON LIBRARY

AND

JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY LIBRARY

Legal Agreement Pertaining to the Oral History Interview of Lawrence F. O'Brien

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 21 of Title 44, United States Code, and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth, I, Lawrence F. O'Brien of New York, New York, do hereby give, donate and convey to the United States of America all my rights, title and interest in the tape recordings and transcripts of the personal interviews conducted on September 18, October 29, October 30, December 4, December 5, 1985; February 11, February 12, April 8, April 9, June 25, July 24, July 25, September 10, September 11, November 20, November 21, December 17, December 18, 1986; April 22, April 23, June 18, June 19, July 21, July 22, August 25, August 26, September 23, September 24, November 3, November 4, December 10, December 11, 1987 at New York, New York and Cotuit, Massachusetts and prepared for deposit jointly in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library

This assignment is subject to the following terms and conditions:

- (1) The transcripts shall be available for use by researchers as soon as they have been deposited in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library.
- (2) The tape recordings to which the transcripts relate shall be in the possession of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and shall not be available for use or review of or by any source during my lifetime and for a period of time thereafter ending with the 10th year anniversary of the date of my death. At such time, access to the tape recordings by researchers shall be permitted but only for the limited purpose of background use, and researchers may not cite, paraphrase, or quote therefrom under any circumstances.
- (3) During my lifetime, I retain all copyright in the material given to the United States by the terms of this instrument. Thereafter the copyright in the transcripts shall pass to the United States Government. During my lifetime, researchers may publish brief "fair use" quotations from the transcripts without my express prior consent in each case, but no other quotations from the transcripts shall be published, except with my express prior approval in writing.
- (4) Copies of the open portions of the interview transcripts, but not the tape recordings, may be provided by the library to researchers upon request, subject to the terms, conditions and restrictions set out herein.
- (5) Copies of the interview transcripts, but not the tape recordings, may be deposited in or loaned to research institutions other than the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library or the John

Fitzgerald Kennedy Library, subject to the terms, conditions and restrictions set out herein.

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

Accepted by Donald Wilson, Archivist of the United States, April 25, 1990.

Original Deed of Gift on file at the Lyndon B. Johnson Library, 2313 Red River, Austin, TX 78705.

ACCESSION NUMBER 92-36