

John H. Treanor Oral History Interview – JFK#1, 09/28/77
Administrative Information

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Biographical Note

Lawyer; Member, John F. Kennedy [JFK] Advance Team, 1960. In this interview, Treanor discusses his work with JFK during his 1958 senatorial campaign and 1960 presidential campaign, among other issues.

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Of

John Treanor

To the

John F. Kennedy Library

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Signed: John W. Carl
Archivist of the United States

Date: 8-8-02

John H. Treanor – JFK #1

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Oral History Interview

With

JOHN TREANOR

September 28, 1977
Washington, D.C.

By William J. Hartigan

For the John F. Kennedy Library

HARTIGAN: I'm in the office of attorney John Treanor. The date is September 28, 1977. The purpose of my visit with John is to interview him on behalf of the oral history department of the John F. Kennedy Library. John, for openers, do you recall when you first, when and how you first became acquainted with the former President Kennedy?

TREANOR: Yes, Bill. I was living with my parents in Jamaica Plain [Massachusetts], 1958, as I had for a number of years, and a next-door neighbor of ours was Frank Morrissey, Francis X. Morrissey. Frank was at that time, I think this was before he became judge. In any event, he had a pretty decent law library and I was studying for the bar exam, and as you know, he told me that I could come down and use his Massachusetts reports any time I wanted. So I did that, and I think in the summer of '58, or the spring of '58, he asked me if I would be interested in going to work for John Kennedy. Well, John Kennedy was a name to me in the newspapers and that's about all, but I did need a job until I heard from the bar exam. So, I went into the old Tremont Street headquarters, at Frank's insistence, and met Steve Smith [Stephen E. Smith] as I recall, and my recollections of that first meeting was that he looked like a fashion plate. He had, I remember, a gray suit with white stripes, kind of like the kind you see in the Mafia. Caricatures.

But anyhow, he was a very busy fellow, and I recall that Larry O'Brien [Lawrence F. O'Brien] was in and out of that office, and it was staffed by a lot of lady volunteers. It faced right on Boston Common. So, I met Steve, and about that same time,

either the first or second day I was in there, I think, I met the ambassador [Joseph P. Kennedy, Sr.], who came in with Frank Morrissey as a matter of fact, and I was introduced to the ambassador. Well anyhow, the job that Steve assigned me was as a sound-truck driver in the '53 senatorial campaign, which was against a Republican by the name of Vincent Celeste [Vincent J. Celeste], who was a young lawyer that the Republicans had put up as kind of a sacrificial lamb to run against Kennedy, who wanted a large plurality so that they could go to the convention for what it was worth politically.

So, I was given the keys to a station wagon, a '57 Mercury, which turned out to be Jacqueline's [Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis]. She had donated the station wagon to the campaign. And I was sent down to, it seems to me the Stone Sign Company, Jack's Stone Sign Company. It was down near the South Station. And over the next couple of days, they rigged up a... As I recall, there were leatherette panels on the sides of the station wagon that had a slogan that escapes me now. It was similar to the one that Ted Kennedy [Edward M. Kennedy] used in later days. "He could do more for Massachusetts." And it may come to me.

Then, they built on the top of the station wagon, at the height of about three feet, a wooden rack that was a cradle for the large amplification, amplifier horns on the top of the station wagon. And, there was a microphone built into it, and a cord that must have been fifty yards long, and that became an integral part of the campaign throughout Massachusetts. On the sides, and protruding up about six feet were enormous black and white posters, with the candidate's picture built onto frames. And this becomes kind of humorous in light of an incident that happened later at a place called Eddie's Motel, down in Quincy.

So, I was given the job of going with the cavalcade which in those days consisted of Muggsy O'Leary [John J. O'Leary] in a very old Cadillac, Bob Morey [Robert F. Morey] in another old Cadillac, and that was about it, three cars in the cavalcade. And we went around like every town in Massachusetts, all that summer and all that fall. And I can't think of a place that we missed. We had days on the North shore. We had days on the Cape. We had days outside of Boston, around the Belmont area, that side, and then down into Brockton and Quincy. We were up into Pittsfield. We were in the Worcester-Springfield-Holyoke area.

And normally what would happen on a campaign day, the.... I suppose as a carry-over from the Lodge [Henry Cabot Lodge] campaign, they discovered that the formal evening rally was a big attraction in Massachusetts, and they would purchase, people in the headquarters would purchase ads in the paper. They'd rent the armory, or the skating rink, or whatever hall, civic hall, the town would happen to have, and they would have an evening rally which consisted of usually a band, speeches by minor dignitaries, then a speech by the candidate usually with Jacqueline along. And then there would be a reception line, with coffee and doughnuts and that kind of thing. Well, it was also my job to go out in advance, perhaps by a day, to the town where the reception was to be held and cruise the town, either with or without a loudspeaker permit, usually without, and announce that that evening or the next evening in, for example, the War Memorial in Springfield, there would be a rally and the citizens of Shrewsbury or Springfield were cordially invited to come and meet Senator John F. Kennedy, Mr. and Mrs. or Senator and Mrs. John F. Kennedy. And as things got hectic, I can recall on a number of occasions being in, for example, the town of Grafton and saying over the loudspeaker as I

cruised down the street, “Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen of Brockton. Senator and Mrs. Kennedy will be in your town this evening, and they cordially invite you to meet them at the War Memorial.” And I’d see people on the sidewalk looking at me funny, because it was obviously Grafton and not Brockton.

I had on the front seat of the station wagon an electric phonograph that operated on batteries. And, of course, this was before the day of the tape recorder, and I actually had the turntable on the seat. Well, the seat was tilted, so that when you put the needle on the phonograph, as often as not, the damn thing would slide right across the face of the record and make a horrendous noise. Well, I had recently been discharged from the Army. I was finally going into law school, and I was a great buff of German band music. And I recall a day, somewhere outside of Worcester, we went into a small town. I had purchased an album of German marching music, for whatever martial sounds I could get out of it, and we cruised down the main drag, playing “Anna Lisa” or some other German march with two Cadillacs behind. And later at a lunch stop on that same day, I remember Kenny O’Donnell [Kenneth P. O’Donnell] coming up to me, saying, “John, the candidate would like to know when we’re marching on Poland?” And, I got the hint and got the German music off the system. Well, the next music I bought, the next record I bought, was a current favorite, “The Bridge on the River Kwai” was showing; it was a big hit in the country. And so I went out and I purchased the soundtrack to “The Bridge on the River Kwai.” And I played that for a couple of days. [Humming of a few bars of title song]. Well again, after a day or so of that, Kenny O’Donnell came up to me and he said, “You’ve heard of Foster Furcolo [John Foster Furcolo]?” And I said, “Of course, he’s the governor.” And he said, “Well, the candidate and Foster Furcolo don’t really get along too well, and as a matter of fact, he has been using in his re-election campaign a theme song that’s exactly like the one you’re using.” And the words to it went something like “Onward, for Foster Furcolo.” He said, “Get rid of the records.” So I did.

Well, well, let’s see, Massachusetts. I recall of the candidate not a great deal, except that he was always very decent to me and was most forgiving for lots of things that happened, as they do in campaigns. I recall, on the humorous side, we had a chap in law school who unfortunately was subject to seizures, an epileptic. And, it was always with mixed emotions that the rest of the class would observe him have one of these unfortunate fits, but it always meant that the class would end for an hour or so, in law school. So, anyhow, on the North shore, lo and behold.... No, let me go back a bit. We had a rally in the hotel in Harvard Square, at one of the fancy hotels, Cambridge....

HARTIGAN: Commodore?

TREANOR: Perhaps it was the Commodore, Bill. I recall it vividly because this was the meeting into which Mr. O’Dea [James L. O’Dea, Jr.] came, and that was a story. He had had some bad publicity, and the candidate didn’t want his picture taken with him. But, in any event, at that rally, as the candidate was about to speak, in the very crowded hall with a lot of well-dressed people, all of a sudden there was an epileptic, apparently in the back of the hall, who threw a terrific fit with a lot of screaming and thrashing and so on. Firemen rushed in, and the night was a complete bust. Well, the next day my friend from law school turned out to be the man on the spot in a, I think it was in Billerica there was a GE [General Electric] plant, or Sylvania plant, and

we were met at the front door of the plant by the same chap, a law school classmate of mine. Well, I knew that he was an epileptic and watched him like a hawk all the way through the plant, because I was afraid that if he had a fit in the plant, the candidate would turn to me and say, "Hey, is this the same fellow that had the fit last night and disturbed everything?" Well, luckily, we got through it.

It was the custom in those days to go through plants, and I remember Bill, very vividly a lot of the factories, for example, in Roxbury and South Boston, where the women were behind the machines making plastic raincoats. Row after row after row of women. And we would go down the aisle, usually Kenny O'Donnell and myself were just ahead of the candidate, threading our way through these aisles and we would hand out buttons or literature and the senator would come along behind us. And, it was there, I think, that I became, myself, very attracted to him. He was a striking figure, a very friendly look about him, and it was an astounding thing to see the women who would be farther on down the row continuing to work, their hands busy their feet busy at the machines, yet their faces directed toward the end of the large room where the candidate would be winding his way, shaking hands. This person-to-person contact, I think, is probably the thing about him that I remember the best. He had a way, and I've seen it, I guess, in a thousand reception lines, of greeting people that he knew he would probably never see again, through a ten-second How-do-you-do? and handshake, and "I would appreciate your support" and that kind of comment. He had a way of looking at them, as either they moved past him or he reluctantly turned to the next person to be greeted, he had a way of looking at them that, to me, always bespoke a feeling on his part that life was too short, there were too many people, but yet, he wanted to know each of the people that he met, more often than not, as opposed to so many politicians who would give a kind of perfunctory How-do-you-do? handshake and while shaking that person's hand, be looking to see who the next one would be. Jack was different. I always felt that as he looked at a man or a woman, and as he turned away or they turned away, that there was a sadness about the brevity of the meeting with him.

Other vignettes from the senatorial campaign come to mind. We had an, early in my employment we had a habit of going to a restaurant at noontime and of hopefully getting into the back room, where just the staff people would eat and perhaps a couple of the local politicians. And I can recall, in Belmont, about maybe the first week I was working, it was warm, it was in summertime, I had a light tan suit on, and of course, I didn't know the senator from a hole-in-the-wall. He knew me as the sound truck man. I found myself sitting between him, in a dark pin-stripe suit, and a great big fat politician from Belmont on the other side of me at a small restaurant. And we all ate the same thing, steak, it seems to me, and baked potato. The steak came on an oval-shaped plate and I sat between the two of them, feeling very much like a neophyte, which is indeed I was. And the senator and this politician talked and I tried to stay out of the way as they talked across me. Well, as they talked I sawed at the steak with my knife and unbeknownst to me, the plate was inching its way to the edge of this crowded table. And all of a sudden, the plate with all the gravy and the steak turned upside down in my lap, splattering the senator and the politician next to me, and I remember getting a very dirty look from the senator. Well, a couple of weeks later, we were in Quincy, and he'd had a bad afternoon; it rained, and it was Republican territory anyhow. It was not a successful trip through and around Quincy. We ended up at a place called Eddie's Motel. And I recall that Larry,

Kenny O'Donnell, Bob Morey, Muggsy O'Leary, myself, Dave Powers [David F. Powers], had a couple of rooms, went up to freshen up and the senator, of course, had his own room down the hall. It was about five o'clock. And anyhow, the phone rang, and the senator wanted very badly to get back on the sidewalk in downtown Quincy to shake hands. That meant the sound truck would have to be there, and as he progressed down the sidewalk, I would be available with the truck to hand him the microphone should a sizeable crowd develop. This is the way we had the sidewalk tours. So, Kenny told me to get my tail downstairs and warm up the amplifier, and the station wagon, and they would be right behind. So, I ran down and got into the car, the station wagon, and started her up. Muggsy O'Leary and Morey doing the same thing with their old Cadillacs, and we took off from the parking lot at fifty miles an hour, tires squealing. Well, I led this cavalcade right under the portico of Eddie's Motel, which is about six inches lower than all this apparatus on the top of the station wagon. It swept the whole thing right off the top of the station wagon and onto the hood of the Cadillac, with the senator in the front seat. Remembering me from the steak incident a couple of days ago, he's just shaking his head and asking Kenny where this fellow came from. And they went on to their destination downtown and I stayed and picked up a lot of lumber and wire, and so on and so forth. And I became the butt of a lot of jokes for a while. Shall I keep on?

HARTIGAN: Yeah.

TREANOR: I recall also, very vividly a trip to Gloucester, Massachusetts in the rain one day. We'd been out through Salem, stopped at a Democratic headquarters, and then on up into Gloucester for a very sparse crowd by the very famous statue of the Gloucesterman at the wheel, with the slickers, with the inscription about those who have gone down to the sea in ships. I remember him speaking there with seagulls swirling all around his head in the rain. And, I remember a very lonely beach, it seems to me, in Nantasket or Hull, where he spoke to ten or fifteen people, with the weather somewhat colder and election day approaching. I remember also in, it seems to me, Foxboro.... I had in those days a convertible, as well as the station wagon, and somehow I was assigned to drive him, to pick him up in one town and to take him into, either Stoughton or Foxboro. Well, local police would usually lead the way, and of course, when the policeman, or the police escort from town A would have his part of the trip over with, he would drop off by the side of the road, and there would be a waiting motorcycle or squad car who would be from town B, and then they would lead the cavalcade along the road into town B. Well, I remember driving the senator from town A, and as he got into the convertible--he was rather an admirer of new automobiles--he said, "John, stop the car. I want to drive this thing." And so I stopped, the police escort stopped, and he slid behind the wheel, and we took off at what seemed to be about a hundred miles an hour down the highway to town B, which I believe was Foxboro. We lost the escort that we had from the previous town, and we got to the half-way point where the new escort was to pick us up, and we were to stop so that he could fall in. We went by him about ninety miles an hour, with the senator behind the wheel. The next thing, the escort pulled up along side of us with the siren going, red lights flashing, pointing his finger at the senator, obviously disturbed that he was going so fast, and without him. So, we pulled into Foxboro, into the middle of a crowd in front of a big

white church, and the senator jumped out, I slid in behind the wheel, the senator got up on the stage and started talking, and I got a ticket from the enraged policeman who'd been left behind. One I wish I had kept, as a matter of fact, and I remember paying that ticket. There were so many other things I remember about the Massachusetts '58 campaign.

HARTIGAN: What did he have to say with reference to the incident at Ed's Motel down in Quincy, later on, after...?

TREANOR: Well, he.... He never really....

HARTIGAN: Did he bring it up again?

TREANOR: No, he personally never brought it up to me, Bill. I thought that he looked at me funny for a couple of days, and waited for the next, next....

HARTIGAN: The reason I asked, that seemed to be his way. I know that I was in the same predicament many times, and for a couple of days, just the air seemed to say, "You goofed."

TREANOR: Well, he didn't have to say a thing, Bill. I knew that, I think he regarded it as an accident. He didn't have an awful lot of.... Well, he had more patience than Bobby [Robert F. Kennedy] did, I think, about that kind of thing. Bobby had a way of coming down pretty hard on people who goofed during the campaign, even though it happened often. Jack, on the other hand, would look at you. That's all you needed, and the look, usually, was eloquent. Yeah, but, I think he appreciated the fact that most people were, if not volunteers, were the next thing to being volunteers, and he was very grateful, I always felt, for any efforts that were expended by anybody in his behalf. And so, I think he was tolerant of people, and I, of course, was pretty young in those days.

No, he never said a cross word to me, Bill, through all the campaigns that I was with him. He would on occasion say, "Couldn't we do it this way the next time?" and that was as rough as he ever got with me. There were times, I think, when politicians, local politicians that he had little use for would try to monopolize his time and he would grow sometimes rather impatient about being extricated from somebody who would buttonhole him and keep him from doing other things. No, he, I think, as opposed to Bob, had more of a tolerance, or at least an air of tolerance about him toward people who weren't always efficient.

HARTIGAN: Did you witness any incidents with him with relation to other politicians during that part of your activity?

TREANOR: Well, in those days, Bill, I was a very minor functionary and I would not have been in any of the smoke-filled rooms with him, particularly. I

wasn't politically astute. I knew very little about Massachusetts politics, and I don't have any specific recollections of politicians that, of any of his dealings with politicians. That would've been beyond my ken or my domain, in those days.

HARTIGAN: Did you assist any other politicians other than Kennedy in the state of Massachusetts?

TREANOR: The only other politician I've ever worked for was, and actually the first, first politician I ever worked for was Johnny Costello [John W. Costello] from Jamaica Plain who was a year ahead of me in Holy Cross [College of the Holy Cross], and he ran for House of Representatives in 1953, it seems to me. And I went out posting signs for him, and so on, but he's the only other one I've worked for.

HARTIGAN: Moving on, John. The next event that, or events that you participated in were the primaries, is that right?

TREANOR: Yes. Kenny asked me to come out to Wisconsin in the late summer or early fall of 1959. The Wisconsin primary coming up in March, it seems...

HARTIGAN: March, yeah...

TREANOR: ...to me, of 1960.

HARTIGAN: ...yeah, yeah. I was out there. And...

TREANOR: And, so I went out to Wisconsin, not knowing really what I'd be doing out there. I was still, actually, I had flunked the bar and I had to decide what to do from there, and I had the winter more or less off. So, I went out to Wisconsin on a very cold day and checked into the Wisconsin Hotel per instructions from the Kennedy nerve center, which, it seems to me, was in a building on Boylston Street?

HARTIGAN: Kilby Street, wasn't it?

TREANOR: Huh?

HARTIGAN: There's one on Kilby Street, I know.

TREANOR: Who was the treasurer? Who were the treasurers back then? It was the....

HARTIGAN: Well, Steve Smith handled most of that stuff....

TREANOR: Yeah, but it was the nerve center for the....

HARTIGAN: John Ford [John T. Ford].

TREANOR: Yeah, John Ford. Well, wherever his office...

HARTIGAN: Right. I know it.

TREANOR: ...was. It seems to me it was down off Boylston...

HARTIGAN: Right.

TREANOR: ...somewhere. Anyhow, I went out to Wisconsin, checked into the Wisconsin Hotel, might have been just after Christmas or maybe even January of 1960, and I had the address of the Kennedy headquarters, which was across from Marquette University up on, I guess it would have been Wisconsin Avenue, two or three blocks up from the hotel. Well, I went up there, and it was an old drug store, and a rickety flight of stairs went up over the drug store, a couple of signs in the window saying "Kennedy for President" and, I think, a small placard with his picture on it. I went up the stairs and found a volatile, disheveled, apparently disorganized Jerry Bruno [Gerald J. Bruno] on about nine telephones at the same time, shouting at somebody over one of them, slamming another one down. And I walked into the room, I suppose in suit and tie, and announced myself, introduced myself as John Treanor, who had been sent out by Kenny O'Donnell to check in with Jerry Bruno. Well, Jerry gave me a look of utter disdain and asked me to wait, and then I sat there for an hour and a half while he berated people on the telephone, cajoled other people, and finally, we shook hands, and I didn't feel that I was getting a very warm reception, but we went on to become very close friends in Wisconsin, and later in West Virginia.

Well, as it turned out, my job, Bill, was to be that of an advance man in Wisconsin, not a sound-truck driver. I was promoted, I guess. And I would typically be given a number of towns, for example, ten towns and, I would be sent out almost without any contact whatsoever. You have to remember, as I'm sure you do, that Hubert Humphrey [Hubert H. Humphrey] from neighboring Minnesota, was kind of billed as the third senator from Wisconsin, and Jack Kennedy's entrance into that campaign was not exactly a, you know, the state didn't go wild to see him come in. He was a relative unknown. They knew him from the abortive try at the vice-presidency at the convention, the earlier convention, and they knew him as a wealthy Easterner who had a certain amount of charisma. But, other than that, Hubert Humphrey was very much the....
[Interruption]

And so, I'd be sent into.... I would be given ten or fifteen towns, Bill, and my job in essence was to go up there and try to stir up some sort of activity, and pick out towns that would be good for the senator to visit. And of course, as I say, we knew nobody in those towns in those days. I had one or two names, in a given area, of people who might possibly be friendly to Senator Kennedy, but there was no such thing as a network of, you know, operatives who would set everything up for me. I had to do most of it myself. I'd go into a town, I had a rented automobile. It was cold and snowy in Wisconsin. I'd just take off, I had a map, and I'd go into a local town. If I had a name, fine, I would go to that person's house, or place of business. If I didn't have a name, the chances are I'd go to a radio station or a newspaper and I would explain that I was there representing the senator coming in, perhaps through their area, in a week or two, and I'd go from there. I'd just try to be friendly and cultivate as many friends for him as I could, and many was

the time that I would be invited home for dinner to the, by the contact whose name I had been given, or whom I'd met. I found the radio announcers and newspaper reporters very, very friendly because obviously it was a news item, and more often than not the local radio station announcer would be the guy who would, when the candidate finally did come in, would introduce him. You know, there was no Kennedy club in any of these towns, or in most of them. And in those days, if I could have ten or fifteen people in a drug store, or a coffee shop, or in a supermarket, or somebody's house, ten or fifteen people, Bill, that was, the Senator Kennedy would appreciate that, and everybody would think I'd done a wonderful job to get those ten, fifteen people.

HARTIGAN: What was Jerry Bruno's title then, just--I don't want you to--but just...?

TREANOR: Oh, gosh. I don't know that he had a title.

HARTIGAN: Was he in charge? Was he "the" man in charge?

TREANOR: Well....

HARTIGAN: Or was Ivan Nestingen [Ivan A. Nestingen]?

TREANOR: No, it was kind of a combination, it would seem to me. I think Ivan actually had the title of campaign, state campaign manager. He, of course, was the mayor of Madison, and Jerry had been very active in the labor movement in Wisconsin, and as a matter of fact, the story is that he was the first to cross the picket line of the Kohler strike at the Kohler plant that went on for years and years and years, and my recollection is that Jerry is the first guy who crossed the picket line, and as I remember the story, he was supposed to have been carrying a urinal, which is what Kohler made, as he crossed the picket line. Anyhow, that's the reputation that Jerry had, as a guy who knew his way around the state. Ivan Nestingen I met under the same circumstances. I was given his name, and contacted him in Madison, and met Ivan and Jerry, and I think spent the night at their house. I also had the name of Pat Lucey [Patrick J. Lucey], and I likewise contacted him, and Paul Corbin, who was very much in evidence in Wisconsin. But it seems to me, that the only one who had a title was Ivan.

But, getting back to these small towns, Bill, the.... I remember, for example, St. Patrick's Day as vividly as any of the other days, and on St. Patrick's Day, keeping in mind that the Kennedy campaign, or fledging campaign, wanted nothing whatsoever to do with either nuns or priests, because of the play that they would get, you know, in the national magazines, a Catholic candidate for president, etc., etc. The magazine always had a way of putting his picture in surrounded by nuns, given half the chance. So, I had, was either told or had sense enough to avoid going into convents, and parochial schools, and so on, if I had a choice. Well, on St. Patrick's Day, I had set up a trip that started off in a place called Phillips, Wisconsin, cold as Billy BeJesus. And, there were a number of towns: Phillips, Ladysmith, and four or five others. Well, we started off the day at a place called the Inn-Joy Cafe, Inn dash Joy Cafe, and I had been through and had sort of a friend in the lady that ran the place. She was a fan of Kennedy's and invited him back on

a given day to come in, and it happened to be St. Patrick's Day. So we descended on the Inn-Joy Cafe with maybe, oh, I guess, ten or twelve national reporters, and seven or eight automobiles, another name that I shouldn't forget is Pete Dugal [Peter Dugal], who was from [Inaudible], Wisconsin, and was a behind-the-scenes man, who knew lots and lots of people in Wisconsin, and I rather think that Pete was in on that day. In any event, we showed up at this steamy little old coffee shop, eight o'clock in the morning, and she had baked a green and white cake for the senator, and we all had a piece of cake and coffee. And as I remember, there might have been fifteen truck driving type people, townspeople, in that town. And, my recollection of most of these small Wisconsin towns in the winter time was that practically everybody had on a Mackinaw, as we used to call them in Boston. You know, the heavy thing with the hood. That's the kind of crowd it was.

Well, we went on, stopped at two or three other stops. Stopped for lunch in a small town and again we were given the back room, so that we could kind of get out of the public eye, eat, and have a forty five minute recess from the days campaigning. Well, somehow, as we sat around a table in this particular restaurant, with a lot of national press as I remember, and all the other Kennedy operators: Kenny, and probably Larry O'Brien, and Dave Powers, and so on, somehow into that back room came a German, a priest, with a very heavy German accent. And he was probably the dirtiest-looking Roman Catholic priest I have ever seen. I remember he had a vest that had soup stains all over it, a very thick German accent, but unmistakably a Catholic priest. Well, as we sat there eating, he made the rounds of the table, shaking hands with each one of us, including the press. He didn't know the difference between press and staff members, and it was with great embarrassment that I watched him circle this table of perhaps forty or fifty men, shaking hands, and saying in a very loud, guttural accent about how wonderful it was to have a Catholic running for President. Well, needless to say, Kenny O'Donnell came on very hard on me for that. He told me in no uncertain terms that our luncheons were private, if possible, and most particularly, non-sectarian. We left there....

HARTIGAN: Did the president have any reaction to this...?

TREANOR: No. No, he never did to me.

HARTIGAN: I'm sure he did to Kenny.

TREANOR: I think he probably did to Kenny, yes. We left that place, Bill, and we were heading north, up to...

HARTIGAN: This is what city now, you're coming into?

TREANOR: Well, it was in the area of Ladysmith, Phelps, and--I should have a map in front of me to remember all these towns. But, we left there, and were heading for another stop. Well, on the way--and I was driving, as a matter of fact, at this time--I had the candidate along side me in the passenger seat, Kenny and somebody else were in the backseat. Well, as I drove along, up ahead I saw on the highway, which had been cleared of snow, what appeared to be a mirage. And, as we got

nearer and nearer--it was a very bright, March day, St. Patrick's Day, cold, clear--the mirage, as I got nearer, turned out to be, to my horror, about three hundred nuns, who had crossed, and were blocking, the highway, and waving as the cavalcade came nearer. Well, I died a thousand deaths, Bill, 'cause we had just left this priest about ten minutes before, and here I have an entire convent spread right across the road. Well, there was nothing to do but stop, and I do remember the senator at that point turning to me and saying, "Did you arrange this one, too, John." That's all he said. He got out of the car, and was very gracious. The Mother Superior had an enormous green bouquet that she wanted to pin on his lapel, and he shook hands, and smiled, and I remember he clipped off a little tiny piece of green from one of the ribbons on the bouquet, and pinned that to his lapel, and then handed the bouquet to somebody else to carry. So, I heard about that one from Kenny for awhile, and we were.... That anyhow, was St. Patrick's Day, 1960.

I made lots and lots of stops in Wisconsin. I remember taking the candidate into the mines in Hurley, Wisconsin, which is way up in the Lake Superior, on the edge of Lake Superior. We took him down into the mines, he went through the dressing rooms where the miners come up and the room, the steam of these places, and they hang their working gear on so many racks, the lights, and the heavy equipment that they wear. I remember going through a sausage plant. And it was the South Boston routine all over again, Bill. I remember a sausage plant where you saw the cow coming in the back door, and going out the front door with link sausages, and we saw every step in between. In those days, I was, of course, always looking for the place where there'd be the most people. The high schools and the junior high schools were wonderful. They, I can't think of a school in the state of Wisconsin that even in 1960, when Kennedy was nothing more than a senator from the East, who didn't stop everything they were doing to let him come into the auditorium, and get up on the stage. And he almost always kept it non-political. He never talked about the Democratic party, or so on. He always talked about the country should be turned around, and now was the time for energy, and so on and so forth.

HARTIGAN: Did your paths ever cross with Humphrey's campaigning activities in the state, like...?

TREANOR: They crossed once, and it was the occasion that spawned the picture on the front cover of *Life* magazine, of Jack and Hubert shaking hands in a farm.

They agreed to meet. My recollection is that we came in by cavalcade and I think Humphrey came in by helicopter. We met at a cold, muddy farm, and they shook hands in the field, and that, to my knowledge, Bill, is the only time that we actually met. Jacqueline was along, by the way, at that farm, and I remember her walking--she was given a tour of the barn. And I remember the farmer took her through this barn, which was the dankest, foulest barn I have ever been in. It had boards laid down through the mud, and you walk behind the tails of five hundred cattle. And I remember Jacqueline having on a pastel-colored suit, and the farmer took her, and several of us on a tour of the barn, and I remember her walking behind these cows. I don't even know if they were bulls or milk cows, which I think is kind of funny.

HARTIGAN: Did....

TREANOR: That was the only time they met, to my knowledge.

HARTIGAN: What did you observe during the campaign there with reference to the local politicians up there, or did they run away from you?

TREANOR: Well, I've got to think about that one for a minute, Bill. Obviously, since there was not.... You see, the Democratic party structure stayed essentially neutral, as best I can recall. They didn't want to offend Humphrey, you know, who was called their third senator. And so, the Democratic party was not terribly organized to start off with, as I remember it. But they were, in their official capacity, no help to me whatsoever. More often than not, as I say, it was a stranger that I would meet in a drugstore, or a newspaper reporter, or whosoever, who would be the help.

BEGIN SIDE II, TAPE I

HARTIGAN: ...low budget. Do you want to continue? The thought I was trying to bring out was the participation of the local politicians. My recollection was that they were very scarce.

TREANOR: They were few and far between, Bill, yes. I don't specifically remember anybody bearing a title, for example, of Democratic chairman for such-and-such a county, ever doing anything for me as the.... I was really the only advance man they had. When I got to almost every place in Wisconsin, we did have area coordinators come in. I remember Ben Smith [Benjamin A. Smith, II], it seems to me, and Chuck Spalding [Charles Spalding], and others...

HARTIGAN: I was with Chuck up in Eau Claire.

TREANOR: ...in Eau Claire, yeah. But I can't ever really remember now, so many years later, any Democratic official.

HARTIGAN: Well, Pat Lucey, now is currently the governor of Wisconsin. He was State Chairman somewhere along the line...

TREANOR: Uh hmm.

HARTIGAN: ...during the campaign. Well, how active was he? You mentioned you you'd contacted him. I don't believe he was the chairman at that particular time, or was he?

TREANOR: My recollection was that he was not, Bill, that he was simply a guy who was knowledgeable, who was politically savvy, and I remember him being involved, and I know that he and Kenny talked a lot _____,

but I think he participated in, you know, strategy in Wisconsin. But, as I say, I believe--I think, he was in the real estate business in those days. But I knew that I--I know that I met him often in Wisconsin.

HARTIGAN: So Ivan Nestingen, mayor of Wis--Madison, was the...?

TREANOR: Ivan showed up on every platform. Anyplace Jack Kennedy went, if at all possible, Ivan was there, and was always introduced as the mayor of Madison, Wisconsin. I remember [Inaudible] Jackie seldom wore a hat, and it was always cold at these outdoor rallies. And I remember Ivan in a camel's hair coat as clearly as if it were yesterday, and Jack.... They were on every platform together. Gosh, they went together to the, for example, the Menomony Indian Reservation up in--I guess it's now Menomony County, up in Northern Wisconsin.

HARTIGAN: So Ivan, in effect, was the only not--recognizable politician that you had out stumping with you, right?

TREANOR: Yes, that's my recollection, Bill.

HARTIGAN: So, it pretty much makes him the, one of the first in the country to be out there.

TREANOR: Ivan?

HARTIGAN: Yeah.

TREANOR: Oh, there's no question about that...

HARTIGAN: Yeah, yeah.

TREANOR: ...you know. Now, Bill, before I arrived in Wisconsin, there had been forays by the family into Wisconsin, you know. I don't have any knowledge of any of that. I've read, of course, in Teddy White's books, and so on.... [Interruption] You know, I think Bobby was making trips out there, and Steve Smith and so on.

HARTIGAN: Kenny was based himself out in Milwaukee, didn't he...

TREANOR: Yes.

HARTIGAN: ...in a hotel out there?

TREANOR: Yeah, the Fister Hotel.

HARTIGAN: Fister Motel.

TREANOR: They had a.... The headquarters moved from that dingy old drug store, eventually, downtown nearer the Wisconsin Hotel, into, I think, an old five-and-dime store, and Arthur Garrity [W. Arthur Garrity, Jr.], now Judge Garrity, was the--he was the guy who ran that headquarters, and he was responsible for the, you know, the materials, and so on and so forth, in and out of that headquarters. Because I remember standing with Arthur on election day outside the headquarters, handing out buttons to people who passed.

HARTIGAN: You mention a name, Paul Corbin, which brings a name to my recollection. During your activities there, do you ever recall running into the former Postmaster General, John Gronouski [John A. Gronouski]?

TREANOR: I never met him. No.

HARTIGAN: Okay. I just wanted to.... He came from...

TREANOR: Oh, yeah, I know he came from Wisconsin.

HARTIGAN: ...and...

TREANOR: I never knew him, never knew him.

HARTIGAN: ...he was Commissioner of In--of Insurance, or something like that.

TREANOR: Something like that.

HARTIGAN: Yeah, But, you never met him during the campaign?

TREANOR: No.

HARTIGAN: Okay.

TREANOR: You might be interested, Bill.... The first day of the campaign out there, as I look back on it, was really the most exciting. It was--he started off the day at about four-thirty in the morning in front of the Oscar Mayer sausage plant in Madison, or just outside of Madison. And I remember going over to his room at four o'clock, or thereabouts, and bitter, bitter cold. I mean cold, and waking him up, and getting the candidate out into the car, and driving him over with Kenneth to the plant. I think just the three of us went. There was a watchman's little shack, just outside the shack and this was really the first time I'd campaigned with the then senator in a presidential campaign. This was the first, first day that I had ever done it. You know, before it had been when he was running for the Senate [United States Senate]. So it was a big day, and, as I say, it started off--it was pitch dark, bitter cold. We got to that little watchman's gate, and there was sort of an in-and-out driveway in front of it, and then the factory up behind. And I stood out front for what seemed like the longest time, with Jack. I had an arm full, Kenneth had an arm full of the *Reader's Digest* reprint of the PT109

incident, and maybe some of those red, white, and blue brochures. I'm not certain we had those that early. And the wives of these workers would drive them up to the, to the turn-around driveway. They'd get out usually with a lunch pail and the heavy Mackinaws, and kind of huddled-up, they'd come up the sidewalk and Jack waited in front of the timeclock.

Well, as was often the case in factory workers going in, they were much more interested in getting in and getting that clock punched and getting out of the cold, as they were in meeting a politician outside. And, it was quite a thing to see Jack Kennedy stand there--remember, with no hat on, he seldom wore a hat--with a blue overcoat, with the collar turned up--unusual for him. And these people, some of them even with a cup of coffee still in their hand, coming out of the cars, pitch dark, head's bent, coming up the sidewalk, toward the light the guard's shack, or the timekeeper's shack, and then looking up kind of in surprise as I would accost them first to say something innane like, "Senator Kennedy from Massachusetts is here and would like to shake hands." And you'd either get a grunt, or a kind of a surprised look, and then more often than not, they'd glance down at the brochure, look up, and then see him, and any indifference that they had shown when I approached them, or when Kenny or others handed them something--you could see their faces change, the vast majority of them, as they recognized this face. It was always kind of a shocked look on people's face. You know, they'd glance down at the brochure then look up and they'd be looking right at him. We did that for a couple hours and then eventually got inside the plant for coffee and doughnuts, and you know, the warmth of the place. It was very welcome.

HARTIGAN: What about the actual election day?

TREANOR: Golly, my recollection of the election day are pretty vague now, Bill. Election day, as often as not, was a tail-off kind of thing anyhow for people like myself. The job was either done or it wasn't done, at that point.

HARTIGAN: That was a great cross-over state ballot....

TREANOR: Yeah.

HARTIGAN: There was no read, no.... There was no party affiliations...

TREANOR: Right.

HARTIGAN: ...as I recall. So there was....

TREANOR: And, of course, as you remember, it came out six-five in the Congressional districts. Six to five: six for Jack, five for Humphrey, and the popular was, as I recall, something like sixty-four to forty-six. It was not a resounding victory, in any event. And Humphrey was still alive after it.

HARTIGAN: What do you recall with reference to your observations regarding his

chances during the campaign? Did you have any feeling that he was going to do even that well?

TREANOR: It's funny, Bill. I never...

HARTIGAN: Never gave it a thought?

TREANOR: ...never gave chances a thought during any of those campaigns. No, I never did. I think perhaps in West Virginia we thought of it a little bit more than Wisconsin. I think....

HARTIGAN: Well, how--well then, did you proceed then from...

TREANOR: Yes, I went right from there to...

HARTIGAN: ...to....

TREANOR: ...to West Virginia, yeah.

HARTIGAN: You might as well take on West Virginia then.

TREANOR: West Virginia. We checked into the Kanawha Hotel, which is an old run-down hotel, the second-best in town. I immediately ran into Matt Reese [Matt A. Reese, Jr.] sloshing down hamburgers and milkshakes, and Bob McDonough [Robert P. McDonough]. They were at the Kanawha. And again I was an advance man, this time with Jerry, and we separated and went to different parts of...

HARTIGAN: Jerry Bruno, now...

TREANOR: ...the state.

HARTIGAN: ...you're talking about.

TREANOR: Yes, with Jerry Bruno. Ah, to do, let's see....

HARTIGAN: Mel Cotton? [Mello Cotton]

TREANOR: Well, no, Mel was actually not an advance-man in West Virginia. He was from Logan, and he came up later, I think at Jerry Bruno's invitation, to the headquarters and was hired, but I don't think he did any advance work.

HARTIGAN: I think he participated in one of the visits' of the candidate to his area. He was a schoolteacher down there, if I recall.

TREANOR: Yes, he did. Yeah, he was...

HARTIGAN: And then...

TREANOR: ...teaching at Logan.

HARTIGAN: And then, after that he got...

TREANOR: Right.

HARTIGAN: ...he got the bug and joined in.

TREANOR: Yes.

HARTIGAN: Yeah.

TREANOR: Yeah. He was a volunteer in that sense.

HARTIGAN: Yeah.

TREANOR: He met Jerry, and Jerry said, "Why don't you come to Washington?" so he did. Actually, I think the first time I met Mel was election night in Hyannis, at the armory, I ran into him.

HARTIGAN: What do you recall about West Virginia?

TREANOR: Oh, golly. West Virginia, after Wisconsin, was like going to Florida after spending the winter in Maine. You know, it was starting to get warm. Springtime was in the mountains, so to speak. It was entirely different. The people were different, the towns were different. I remember having the feeling that it was a place of, if not abject poverty, Bill, it was the next thing to it. It was a--even a city like Charleston had about it a sort of an impoverished mountain feeling, if you know what I mean. It was a--people didn't dress as fashionably. Of course, the press made a lot of noise about the Catholic issue. It was mostly Bible Belt, rampant anti-Catholic.... Interesting to note that in Wisconsin, there was a fellow whose name doesn't ring a bell, Ken somebody, who followed Jack around, handing out "The Pope is going to take over the White House" type leaflets.

HARTIGAN: It wasn't Ken Stabler, was it?

TREANOR: Stabler, yeah.

HARTIGAN: Go ahead.

TREANOR: It was Stabler, yeah.

HARTIGAN: Yeah.

TREANOR: Lo! and behold, he showed up in West Virginia, and by now, he and the candidate were not friends, but at least they were friendly adversaries, and of course, the candidate always saw him out there in the crowd, handing these things out. And--this is getting ahead of the story a little bit--toward the end of the campaign, Bill, he made a speech in Fairmont. Now, Fairmont is a one-street town, with a movie arcade, sheriff's office, and you know, just a one-horse town. It was also the town into which Sam Huff [Robert Lee "Sam" Huff] came to introduce Jack on the platform. He lived in a nearby town and he was a very big figure. I remember we stopped on the highway on the way in town to pick Sam up. You know, from the--men with the Giants [NY Giants football team]. On the platform, in a drizzling rain in Fairmont, some heckler in the crowd got started on Jack, who was, as usual, giving them the "my brother gave the oath, I gave the oath as a congressman to uphold the Constitution, my brother gave it as a naval officer, etc., etc., I will take that same oath if elected President, and my allegiance will be to my country." It was that kind of speech, again, in response to a rather heckling kind of question from the crowd, but this time he said it like he meant it. It was different than the other time he said it, Bill. He was, I think, angry. He had had enough of the question, to start off with--that is, about his divided allegiance as a Catholic, and in Fairmont, I think for the first time, he, he, his Irish was up, and he.... I remember him jabbing his finger and saying, with a great impatience, in so many words, that he had had enough of this talk, that as far as he was concerned he was an American, that he would uphold the Constitution and that there was going to be no conflict in his mind between the, between Rome and Washington. And that same fellow, Ken Stabler, was at that rally. And it was at that rally, as I heard the story later, that Ken Stabler decided that maybe Jack Kennedy in the White House wouldn't be so bad after all, which was, that was one convert that was a long time in coming.

West Virginia had a million little towns. I take some credit, and I hope that my memory's not embellished through the years, but I remember riding with the candidate outside of Charleston. I think we had come from the coal mine, where he had met the miners coming up out of the ground, like so many combat soldiers, really. Tough, tough looking guys, and six or eight of them sat with the senator on a log, just at the, what they call the "tipple" or the, you know, the head of the mine. We left there. He had as serious a talk with them, I think, as he had with any group of perspective voters that he met anyplace during the campaign. They talked man-to-man. They had tough questions for him about the economy, and so on, and I thought that he had a great talk with those people. But in any event.... I've lost my train of thought.

HARTIGAN: He was at--meeting these miners.

TREANOR: Yeah. He left the miners.... Oh! I was driving back from that mine. He was to go on television that night in the first debate.... [Interruption] The night of the first debate against Hubert, and Jack talked about that on the way back from this coal mine, and he kind of wondered aloud what should be said about West Virginia in that debate. He was looking for a key. Well, I had some strong feelings about what I had seen in West Virginia.

HARTIGAN: Like what?

TREANOR: Well, like the shanty-towns, Bill. Like children that had pinched looks about them. About women you'd see on front porch of some of these shanties. Too many shanties in West Virginia. They had a look of poverty. Too many children, old washing machines, dogs, burn-out automobiles, that's--if I have any impressions, besides the natural beauty of the mountains in West Virginia, it's that in too many of those areas, there was just abject, dirty, Southern, Appalachian poverty. I don't think that Jack Kennedy saw as much of that as I did, and others like me, who were out, you know, beating the bushes. But I think he was starting to get the picture that it was a, that here you had Americans who were by birthright entitled to the same kind of breaks that kids in Montgomery County, for example, were entitled to, in terms of food and education and clothing and opportunity and so on, and I honestly.... Well, I believed then, and I believe now, that he was very, very, very much affected by what he saw in West Virginia.

Well, anyhow, as we came back from the coal mine, he wondered aloud how he could portray what his feelings about the state were on television, and I think that I suggested to him that on television he use some concrete example of--that would, would paint a picture of the federal dole that these people were on, which was so inadequate. They call it the "mollygrub." And these people, coal miner's families that were out of work or whatever, would go down to some central place and stand in line, and they would be given cans, Bill, of stuff like peanut butter, peanut oil, that kind of thing, and it was just a, just a bare sub--you know, subsistence level. There was nothing more than that. There were so many pounds of bacon, for example, per family, per month. It was a starvation diet, and these people looked it. So I think that I suggested to him that he use--I had seen the cans. They were what we used to call in camp years ago the Number nine can, the Number ten can. Cans about, you know, about a foot high, and they came with a government inscription on the outside, stenciled on it, and they were easily identifiable as being a hand-out kind of food: lard, and stuff like that.

Well, anyhow, I dropped him off at the radio station, I think, later that evening and then I went someplace else to watch him on television, back to the hotel or whatever. Bill, in the middle of his, either his speech or one of the answers that were, I think there were questions coming in over a bank of telephones, I was astounded to see him reach down, under the podium, and hold up a Number nine, silver-colored can, no label or anything on it, except the printing, and said, "This is what people in West Virginia are getting from the federal government." And I always thought that that first debate was, you know, a telling victory for him. [Interruption] What else? What else would you like to know about West Virginia?

HARTIGAN: I think [Interruption], before we were interrupted you were giving your impression--you were completing giving your impression of his television appearance during the debate: lifting up the can.

TREANOR: Well, it made a great impression on West Virginians, Bill, because they knew that he knew, you know? They knew that he knew. It was that simple.

HARTIGAN: John, with reference once again to the same question I asked before in Wisconsin: what was your impression, with reference to the local politicians and this guy from the East?

TREANOR: Huh?

HARTIGAN: Was there any cooperation? Lack of cooperation? Indifference?

TREANOR: Well, now, let me see....

HARTIGAN: As I recall, you had Matt Reese, Bob McDonough, were there two bases, basic locals you had with you, is that right?

TREANOR: Umhmm. [Assent] We had more names in West Virginia. You know, Jack Kennedy was starting to look like a bright star on the horizon to a lot of people down there. Every one of the--you heard the story--every shack down there had a picture of John L. Lewis on one end...

HARTIGAN: Roosevelt [Franklin D. Roosevelt].

TREANOR: ...F.D.R. on the other, and they were waiting for another one to come along, and Jack Kennedy, to a lot of those people looked like that. I'm getting away--I'm not directly answering your question, Bill, but the religious issue, to me, down there, was never really an issue. Now, what people did... Well, you know what people did in the voting booth. But I must say that on the street, and in the towns, and in the high schools, religion was never much of a problem.

HARTIGAN: Well, my impression was the same, too, down there. What I read in the paper, I couldn't--I couldn't...

TREANOR: No.

HARTIGAN: ...witness it by....

TREANOR: No. I, you know, I've seen a little of the Deep South and I think that there are, there are places that are truly Bible Belt areas of this country where Catholics are an anathema. But I must say that among the mountaineers of West Virginia I never, never got that impression. Now, there were, for sure, there were lots of little frame churches around. I've forgotten--it wasn't a Sunday, but it was some other night during the week that was always a good night in the churches, but it never made any big impression on me, Bill, as being a problem. Golly, in towns like--I was in many of those little towns: Logan, Oceana.... Why, in Logan, they treated Jack Kennedy, coming into Logan, the night he came in for a rally, like a conquering hero. He walked the length and breadth of the main drag in Logan to get to where he was going--the bandstand affair. He had his coat off. He walked straight down the middle of the street. Traffic stopped, people poured around him, and there was--of course, Logan is

nestled amongst the mountains, and like any other mountain town, there's an air about it. You know, it's a solitary kind of a place: clean air, and so on. Jack, I think, he had an almost an instant love affair, looking back on it, maybe it's romanticizing a bit, but the people of Logan honestly believed in this guy, and they showed it. Now, politicians, again, I don't remember that there was a ch--you know, a chain of Democratic headquarters, for example. I think it was a lot like Wisconsin, Bill, where you had a--they had too many other problems in West Virginia. It wasn't so much the Democratic party that mattered to people down there, I think, as much as the local courthouse. That was the name of the game in West Virginia: who controlled the patronage. You know, the marshal, the bailiffs, the sheriffs, and so on and so forth, and the courthouse was the center of activity.

HARTIGAN: John, it would be reasonable to assume--at least I felt this way--that evidently empty bellies meant more to the people than religion...

TREANOR: Yep.

HARTIGAN: ...or emotional feelings.

TREANOR: No question about it and...

HARTIGAN: And everybody was just reading it wrong, and the papers, I think, were trying
to stir an old...

TREANOR: Yeah.

HARTIGAN: ...wound that people weren't buying.

TREANOR: No question about it, and Logan, for example, whereas in other towns, they put on an--in Wisconsin even, as rural as Wisconsin was, Wisconsin was genteel enough in its attitudes that the cocktail party, reception line in Wisconsin, went over very well, even in rural areas, not just in wealthy, liberal Madison but also out in the hinterlands. But in West Virginia, you have--well, I think we did have them. I remember Jacqueline came to a big reception in Charleston. I remember my dad met her. She had heard of him through one of his books. But, for the most part in West Virginia, and Logan is a good example of it, you didn't have a reception line, Bill, you had beer and hotdogs. You had food. The people, you know, they'd go home with a full belly, if nothing else.

HARTIGAN: What do you recall about F.D.R. Jr.'s [Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr.] activity down there?

TREANOR: Well, I remember him only that he was late all the time, and was there some of the time, and spoke, and--it seems to me Jack had a throat

problem along about that time and there were some places that he just couldn't go and speak.

HARTIGAN: Do you remem...

TREANOR: Teddy and F.D.R. filled in. He made his impression, because he was a Roosevelt.

HARTIGAN: Do you recall his speech that he made knocking Hubert Humphrey for his war record, or lack of one?

TREANOR: I remember it, and I remember also that there were those on the Kennedy staff at the Kanawha Hotel who were of like mind--you know, that wanted to feed that stuff about his war record. He had been on the school board, or something in Milwaukee, and then got classified 4-H, and then he ran for mayor, it seems to me, and got deferred again, and there were those amongst the Kennedy staff who weren't above using that stuff. And I remember...

HARTIGAN: Was that effective?

TREANOR: [Laughter] Well, I don't know, Bill. I would have to say....

HARTIGAN: Were you at that particular function, that he made that speech?

TREANOR: I don't remember. I just don't remember.

HARTIGAN: I wasn't, but I know the aftermath, but I was just wondering what the response was.

TREANOR: I don't remember.

HARTIGAN: Any other recollections in the West Virginia activity?

TREANOR: Oh, I've got lots of recollections, Bill, but how politically significant they are, I don't know. Again, it was my job to stir up crowds. I didn't participate in lots of backroom discussions. You know, I had a limited function. The advance man was out there trying to smooth the way. I have lots and lots of memories of the state and its people.

HARTIGAN: In other words, summing up West Virginia, it seems as though that the then Senator Kennedy, and now former--late President Kennedy read the people pretty well. When he first went there he got a pretty good reading.

TREANOR: Yeah...

HARTIGAN: And reacted in tune with them?

TREANOR: Yes, Bill. Jack Kennedy, I think, for a rich man's son, and a guy who was used to good clothes, and good shoes, expensive leather, and, you know, the sailboats, and the life of the beautiful people, was nevertheless well-rounded enough. Now where he got this kind of background, I don't know. But there was something about him, maybe simply his, the, you know, his Irish heritage.... I'm just not certain where he got it. But, he didn't have any trouble recognizing people's problems, and he recognized West Virginia as a place where people had some really gripping problems. You know, it's.... In other parts of the country, people have a couple of cars in the driveway, and they're working. You don't, you know, you don't.... Their problems aren't quite as obvious, but it was written all over West Virginia. You could see it in the faces of the children.

HARTIGAN: The election day activity was memorable to you, or were you on to other battlefields at that time?

TREANOR: No, I was there, I was there. I don't remember what exactly what I did on election day. I remember being in the Kanawha Hotel that night...
[Interruption]

HARTIGAN: ...we were just wrapping up West Virginia. There were all sorts of rumors and money, buying votes. You hear it all the time, in every election you have that in West Virginia and I think it's pretty much the same kind of a category as the religious item: it's good print, but I don't think as significant as what people made it out to be. Any final thoughts on West Virginia, before we move on to the election?

TREANOR: Well, no, Bill. On the money, if you want a response from me on the money situation.... The county courthouse was the name of the game down there and people voted by what was called a slate, and it would be common knowledge in any, in many of those pockets of poverty, at least, that, you know, the way to stay on the right side of the local politician was to kind of vote the slate that he was backing. And the slate that got picked as often as not was the slate that could attract the most money from either side of the political controversy. Now, it's been said, and I don't have any personal knowledge of it, that people would sell their votes for a pint of whiskey, or a half-pint of whiskey and a two-dollar bill, or one or the other, and I'm certain that there was a lot of that going on down there, but not to the extent that an election could, you know, a state-wide election, could be bought. It's true that the Kennedy's spent lots of money down there, but they spent it in mostly legitimate--no, entirely legitimate ways, on advertising, on campaign-- and other campaign expenses: hotels, automobiles, payrolls, materials, and so on. But I know that cash was handed over to local leaders for election-day walking around money, if you could call it that, and whether this bought food, or it bought votes, I couldn't say, but I do know that they were distinctly loyal, oftentimes, in these pockets of poverty, to the guy that come in there with the most money. But I think that those places were probably isolated incidents, and, if anybody said that Kennedy bought the election down there, it would just be outrageous.

He won the election through the... Certainly, certainly the, the use of money in this day of the mass media is the name of the game. I mean, the guy that can't get his name on TV is not going to win. So, I think that's where the money got spent. And to that extent, certainly you could say that money bought the election. Money buys lots of things, but I think that the attraction of the candidate was the other element that won for him, given the money situation. Humphrey got all his, despite his money problems down there, got plenty of play. And, I rather think that even without TV advertising, that the national press, because of the, you know, the significance of the story would've given all the play he wanted anyhow. So....

HARTIGAN: After West Virginia, where did you head, John?

TREANOR: Well, let's see, Oregon. I went to Oregon, which is the next primary...

HARTIGAN: Did you go right...?

TREANOR: It rained more.

HARTIGAN: Did you go right from West Virginia to Ore--Okay.

TREANOR: Right to Oregon. I went to Oregon and I was in Eugene and Salem, and helped run the headquarters, set up the headquarters. There wasn't much advance work to be done there, Bill, 'cause he did very little campaigning there. I don't even remember--I remember he came into Eugene and Salem. Good crowds, friendly people: everybody working, well-dressed. People that were concerned, for the most part, with keeping the Northwest free of the influence of the rest of the country. They had it pretty well made up there. And, it was not a serious campaign. Then, Los Angeles, the convention, I guess, would have been there?

HARTIGAN: Yeah.

TREANOR: Ah, Jerry Bruno and I ran the transportation for the Kennedy machine, and I lived for about six weeks in the Biltmore Hotel, and that was never getting out of it. And Jerry and I had something like three hundred Rollins rent-a-cars that were at the disposal of the delegates and other dignitaries. And, we accepted volunteer drivers that would come in with licenses to show who they were. We'd give 'em a car and tell 'em to pick up Ethel Kennedy [Mrs. Robert F. Kennedy] and three kids, you know, and that--or the delegates from the zoo. So we, in essence, ran a taxi service all over Los Angeles, for a month or so. I was present at most of the convention, I guess, and help a little bit on the floor. I have some pretty vivid recollections of the shenanigans at the Biltmore Hotel. You know, with the--people with the Oval office buttons, and steal bands, and so on and so forth. But it was a typical and very exciting convention, but I was not a--I wasn't part of the inner circle by any means, so I had not too much knowledge beyond problems of what my job was. After the convention, then the nomination.... Oh! I do have one other recollection of Los Angeles.

Teddy White, in his book, criticized the choice of the Shriner's Auditorium as the election eve rallying place, as opposed to the Coliseum. Maybe it was a couple of nights before the--before the nomination, not the election. I had a choice of the Shriner's Auditorium, which is a pretty big place. It seems to me it held fifty, sixty thousand people. Maybe not that many, maybe forty thousand. The Coliseum held like ninety something thousand, and anyhow, I booked him into the Shriner's Auditorium, and it was absolute pandemonium, with people falling all over each other to get in. I remember Ken O'Donnell had locked out a couple of big wooden doors, and the guards wouldn't let him in. There was a mad crush and I would have done it all over again, because it was a, you know, it was a great spectacle and all. There were as many people outside trying to get in as there were inside.

HARTIGAN: Well, that was the name of the game, wasn't it?

TREANOR: Oh, that was always the name of the game, because later on in Des Moines, Iowa on a Sunday afternoon, in the fall, I discovered that I had the candidate coming in on a Sunday. There was an air show going on outside of town. Every farmer in Des Moines was going to it. There were no bars, it seems to me, in Des Moines, and the civic auditorium, Bill, held about forty thousand people. This is a great big brand-new place, and it was just a, you know, you couldn't possibly fill it. Well, I went up there and looked the place over. The manager told me that they had sliding doors. It would cut the place in half. So that's what we did. And I brought the press all in one entrance, draped the whole thing with buntings, and covered up these sliding doors, and they never knew the difference. They thought they were in a jammed civic auditorium, when in effect, they were in half a jammed auditorium.

HARTIGAN: Did you.... Did you proceed right into campaigning after the...?

TREANOR: After the nomination?

HARTIGAN: ...convention? At the convention?

TREANOR: Well, we went down to West Palm Beach, if you remember, and had a couple a days in the sun down there, went swimming at the old man's pool. I remember Stuart Symington [William Stuart Symington, II] coming in as a supplicant. What did he want to be? Secretary of State, or something or other. And after that, I went to--to a.... Well, let's see.... I set up stop in Miami, Tampa, back out to the West Coast, Los Angeles, San Francisco, back up to Oregon, Washington, Seattle, which was a dud. Lexington, Kentucky, outside of Chicago. Chicago was the place--of course, the crowds, by now, were out of control, you know--but Chicago was the place we had him up on a rickety platform after just a horror show of caledades and screaming police cars and throngs of people, and I was standing right behind him on the stage, and looked down--this was a nighttime rally in Joliet, Illinois which is just outside of Chicago--and there was a baby a three- or four-month-old infant, actually being borne on the top of the crowd by the, you know, the sheer density of the crowd and there was nobody holding him! And I remember Jack reached down and picked up the infant and

held him up until the mother recognized him and put her hand up. It was that wild. Joe O'Brien was an advanceman, and I remember we were at the O'Hare Inn. Do you remember Joe O'Brien, with the gimpy leg? He had a lot of pizzazz.

HARTIGAN: Was that the day that Sorensen [Theodore C. Sorensen] had his pants locked in his suitcase.

TREANOR: I think so, yeah. At the O'Hare Inn. We had all stayed at the O'Hare Inn, and there was another advanceman with a wooden leg who used to tell some very funny stories about his sexual escapades with the wooden leg, and he and Joe O'Brien, of course, both limped very badly, and they were kind of late becoming advancemen of the campaign. Well, anyhow, they were at the O'Hare Inn, and I was staying behind after Sorensen, and Pierre [Pierre E.G. Salinger], and the rest of them, and the candidate had departed. I had to go some other place, and I was staying overnight. Well, anyhow, the Kennedys left--Now wait a minute. Let me get this story straight. Yeah. The Kennedys left.

HARTIGAN: We were in a long, long motorcade after we left.

TREANOR: There was a big motorcade. The motorcade left, and Nixon [Richard M. Nixon] was due to come in to the O'Hare. There was a big crowd out in front of the motel now that Kennedy was gone and Nixon was coming. All right, now we've got it. As usual, we had left behind a certain amount of Heinekens and bottles of, you know, liquor, when we left the motel. And I was waiting outside, out of curiosity, to see Nixon come in. Well, he was late and the crowd got kind of restless, and it was growing. Well, all of a sudden, there was a siren in the distance. A big police car pulled up and--thank you--a police lieutenant jumped out of the front seat of the car, ran around the back, and the band struck a Nixon-type tune. The policeman opened up the back door and out jumped Joel Terry and Joe O'Brien, with a police escort, and the two of them, you know, hobbled and limped all the way into the hotel with this lieutenant. They were going back to drink the booze! [Laughter]

HARTIGAN: You mean our two advance men.

TREANOR: Yeah, the two advance men! So, let me see, I also had.... I advanced a trip that Jerry Bruno and Joe Gargan [Joseph F. Gargan] down to the LBJ [Lyndon B. Johnson] ranch, which was quite an experience.

HARTIGAN: Was that the time that we went over from.... That was after the--that was....

TREANOR: It was after the nomination.

HARTIGAN: Yeah, that was after the election.

TREANOR: No. No, it wasn't, Bill.

HARTIGAN: Yes....

TREANOR: It wasn't.

HARTIGAN: When he went over to the ranch he was the president elect now.

TREANOR: It was after the nomination.

HARTIGAN It was at--after the election, and he was the President-elect, and Johnson wanted to meet him over at the ranch. Kenny and I flew over with him from West Palm Beach. Was that the one you're talking about?

TREANOR: No. No. This was the time that he shot the deer over....

HARTIGAN: That was...

TREANOR: [Inaudible].

HARTIGAN: ...after the election.

TREANOR: That was after the election?

HARTIGAN: Yeah. Jim Williams and I went over there, and we got.... It was....

TREANOR: We didn't have Secret Service people at that time.

HARTIGAN: Uh, yes we did, didn't we?

TREANOR: That's what makes me wonder whether it was before the election or not, Bill, because we would not have advanced that trip by ourselves, it would seem to me, because I remember picking out the bedroom, and where he was going to sleep, and Kenny O'Donnell, and....

HARTIGAN: I was there. Our wives were back at the Palm Beach Towers. But, anyway....

TREANOR: Yeah, but that was after the nomination.

HARTIGAN: Well, at any rate, go ahead, tell us the story.

TREANOR: Well, anyhow, we got in there--Jerry and I, and Joe, went down. I'll tell you when this was, now, this is when Mansfield [Michael J. Mansfield] became Speaker of the House [House of Representatives]. And the reason I remember that is there was a cocktail party that night at his radio station penthouse, up

on top, and Jerry and I, and Joe went, and LBJ and some gal who was his secretary, kind of a blonde bomber type...

HARTIGAN: Mary Margaret [Mrs. Jack J. Valenti].

..

TREANOR: Mary Margaret. Mary Margaret, and somebody....

HARTIGAN: She became Valenti's [Jack J. Valenti] wife.

TREANOR: Right. She was sitting there in a negligee, eating poached eggs when Jerry and I banged on the ranch house door and she called the senator down. And we told him that, you know, why we were there. I don't know whether he knew we were coming or not, and he proceeded to take us through the bedrooms upstairs in the ranch house, and we had one very important mission: that was to have a direct line bypassing his switchboard and, you know, we had some difficulty in diplomatically explaining this to him. Well, we did, and I remember that as he went in and out of each bedroom, Bill, he would call up on a--they have a master intercom system--he'd call the switchboard down below and actually let Mary Margaret, eating her scrambled eggs downstairs, let her know what room he was in as he went from room to room in his own house, over the intercom. Well, then we got into a bronze-colored Lincoln Continental, and there was to be a pool of press--it was some ridiculous combination of three people, like Mary McGrory, Stewart Alsop [Stewart J.O. Alsop], and Bill Lawrence [William H. Lawrence], or some combination of people that just wouldn't get along very well.

HARTIGAN: It was a pool.

TREANOR: It was a pool.

HARTIGAN: A press pool.

TREANOR: And it was no place there for them to stay, so Lyndon allowed as how he had a guest house, so he could show it to us. So Jerry and I get into the in the convertible....

[BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2]

HARTIGAN: Let's see, we left you off while you were in the convertible, and we missed the purchasing of the bull, so go ahead.

TREANOR: Well, as we're driving along in the convertible, Bill, there's a CB [citizen's band] radio in the car and a voice comes over it, and it's the manager at a cattle auction downtown someplace. And the bid for the bull that was on the block was up around twelve thousand dollars and Lyndon, over the radio, put a bid in for twelve thousand, five hundred, and promptly bought the bid, err, the bull, sight-unseen as he was talking to us, driving along. Well, then we got to the...

HARTIGAN: Guest house?

TREANOR: ...guest house, which turned out to be the little gray cottage in the west kind of a place, way out in the middle of the cow flats and the sage brush. And he showed us around, and Jerry just shook his head, and said, "They can't--those people can't stay here. It's too far from the guest house, there's no telephone, no icebox, no nothing." And Lyndon was really put out about it. About Jerry's reaction to the guest house. Where they stayed, I've kind of forgotten. They all came in that night on a DC-3, and it was raining to beat the band, end as soon as, you know, the horde landed--horde as in staff people--he insisted on showing everybody around the farm: here his parents were buried, the river, the pecan grove, and all this other stuff. It was pitch dark out, pouring cats and dogs. Everybody got shoved into a bus and driven around in a blinding rainstorm. It must have been ten o'clock at night. A lot of unhappy people. The next morn--no, the next night, after I think Jack and Torbey MacDonald [Torbert H. MacDonald] and Kenneth and Lyndon and some others, had gone off on a deer hunt. I remember taking off in that DC-3 from his airport, which was.... Of course, this was pre-presidential days for Lyndon, and it was kind of a rolling thing that had twelve light poles from beginning to end of the runway. And I sat in the rear seat with Bill Lawrence, who was tight as a tick, and the plane was loaded far beyond its capacity. It was, it seems to me, it was Lyndon's own plane.

HARTIGAN: It was a conveer.

TREANOR: It was a conveer. Was it a conveer?

HARTIGAN: Yeah.

TREANOR: All right. Nah, it wasn't a conveer, it was a DC-3. Well, in any event, that plane took off, Bill, and everybody in that plane was aware that there were twelve light standards marking the runway and no more, because that was the end of the runway. And they started counting, as the thing rolled down the runway, everybody drunk, "One, two." And then they got down to "ten, eleven, twelve," and we're still on the ground, and the damn thing finally took off with great cheer.

HARTIGAN: Incidentally, that pilot smashed that plane...

TREANOR: Yes.

HARTIGAN: ...and got killed.

TREANOR: Yes, I remember that. Was that a conveer?

HARTIGAN: Yeah, 'cause he used it during his campaign, we had the Caroline.

TREANOR: Yeah. It's.... The reason I thought it was a DC-3 is I seem to have a

recollection of things being at a tilt, which the conveyer....

HARTIGAN: He could've had one of those, too.

TREANOR: Maybe it was. Well, then from there, Bill, we get into the New England aspect of his presidential campaign, just before the election, and I had the Waterbury, Connecticut stop as the big one that I handled up there. And I guess that was probably the best of the bunch, as I look back on it, because there was something like a hundred thousand people at four o'clock in the morning that turned out to see him at the Roger Smith Hotel. That was an incredible scene.

HARTIGAN: John Bailey's [John M. Bailey] show.

TREANOR: Yeah, and it was interesting, and I always like to take some credit for that, in a way, because John Golden [John M. Golden], who was the National Committee [Democratic National Committee] and Dick Lee [Richard C. Lee], the mayor of New Haven.

HARTIGAN: Let me call this [Inaudible]. [Interruption]

TREANOR: Again, as I say, oh, I had got into an argument with the state people: Bailey, and Lee, and John Golden about what route to take the candidate from to get to Waterbury. They wanted to come, because he was flying in from New York, and apparently, as things turned out, he had a very bad day in New York. It rained, and....

HARTIGAN: Yep, and we got lost.

TREANOR: Uh...

HARTIGAN: He got lost.

TREANOR: ...yeah.

HARTIGAN: Then the motorcade got broke up, and....

TREANOR: Right. So I held...

HARTIGAN: Was that his...?

TREANOR: ...out. I held out, Bill, for the old Route 8, which came from that little airport that he flew into, Fairfax airport,...

HARTIGAN: Yeah.

TREANOR: ...into Waterbury. It was the back way, but it was through all those towns.

I mean, you have Sonia you have Derby, the Naugatuck Valley...

HARTIGAN: Yeah.

TREANOR: ...as opposed to the highway, the superhighway, and I prevailed. Well, I remember it as you remember. We hit those little towns about two o'clock in the morning and I was amazed, because I had done no work there, except that we had told the people that we'd be there, sometime around eleven o'clock. Ha ha ha. It was about two o'clock in the morning, and geez, they had the fire engines come out, they had the hook-and-ladders, you know, forming a "V" over the streets with flares. It was like Caesar coming back to Rome, and it must have taken us an hour and a half to get up through those little towns. Old ladies with night shawls on, you know. Well, then, coming into that green at Waterbury, I can remember being in the lead police car, with the doors open, which gave you a wider part through the crowd if you held them out wing-to-wing, so to speak. The air was filled with smoke, and right behind us came the band that marched in the Inaugural parade with the tri-corner hats, you know, and the old rifles; what do you call them?

HARTIGAN: Minutemen.

TREANOR: Uh...?

HARTIGAN: Min...

TREANOR: They didn't really look like minutemen. They had some other name. But anyway.... Well, the pianist.... Who was the pianist that made a lot of money? Victor Borge. He lives in Waterbury and I had run into him, or he had called me at the Roger Smith Hotel. And he had assigned me one of his aides, a guy named Bazutto, Jimmy Bazutt. He was kind of a character _____ some money of his own. Jimmy had offered to construct two platforms for two different bands in front of the hotel. He had arranged to have something like fifty thousand balloons filled with helium released from the ground, another fifty thousand without helium released from the roof at the same time, so that fifty of 'em would come up and fifty of 'em would go down. He had a couple of these criss-crossing search lights, and they supplied all of that stuff.

Well, needless to say, and as you remember it, there at the Roger Smith Hotel there was absolute pandemonium. He got up on the balcony overlooking that green that had to have eighty, ninety, a hundred thousand people jammed in at two, three o'clock in the morning. It was a wonderful, wonderful rally. And then, when that was over, I hopped on the plane, and went up to Providence? I remember you were in Providence. I remember that.

HARTIGAN: I was at Waterbury, too.

TREANOR: Providence, and then into someplace in Maine, Littleton, or....

HARTIGAN: Uh...

TREANOR: We made a stop in Maine, late at night. Concord, New Hampshire?

HARTIGAN: Nah, we didn't swing up then. Lewiston?

TREANOR: Lewiston, Maine.

HARTIGAN: Or Prescott, was it Prescott?

TREANOR: No, I think it wasn't Prescott. I Remember Lewiston. And then back down the next day, to.... There was a big rally, wasn't there, at the Boston Garden?

HARTIGAN: Boston Garden.

TREANOR: And the thing I remember about that was that there was a good-lookin' gal who sat right down in front of us, a striking blonde. My memory may be playing tricks on me a little bit, but I remember we sat there waiting while there was an interminable number of Boston politicians that had to be heard before Jack was introduced, and I was kind of like behind him. I had come down through the middle of Boston in the cavalcade. The convertible got all banged up, the windshield got broken by the crowds, oh, it was a horror show. And, I hope my memory's not playing tricks on me. Either it happened to me or I heard about it, as so often the case when you're trying to remember these things. But it seems to me that Jack Kennedy gave me a piece of yellow, folded-up paper, and told me to go down and give it to the girl in the front row. He gave me the paper. It was a note, and I got down there, handed it to her, and I was able to see it, and it said on the note, "Smile if you got any last night." And of course the girl broke out laughing and I just disappeared. But, no, I think that that happened, and I hope....

HARTIGAN: Yeah, and uh--that was...

TREANOR: [Laughter]

HARTIGAN: ...I know who the girl was. It was Ann...

TREANOR: Yeah, I know who it is.

HARTIGAN: I just saw her at...

TREANOR: Maybe he didn't even ask her.

HARTIGAN: I just saw her. No, it's true. I just saw her at Kenny's funeral.

TREANOR: Anyhow, then we went down to Hyannis the next day, and I remember we

went down on the--one of the chartered planes, it seems to me? And the pilot.... No, now maybe it was the Conveer, I've forgotten now. The pilot asked the crowd in general on the plane if there was any place they wanted to go, because it was a twenty minute flight down to Hyannis, and we were having champagne on....

HARTIGAN: I provided that for you.

TREANOR: Yeah. And I remember saying, "Let's go to Nantucket," because I had...

HARTIGAN: And we...

TREANOR: ...lots of friends there.

HARTIGAN: And we took the wives with us....

TREANOR: Yeah.

HARTIGAN: ...and we circled around for....

TREANOR: We circled around...

HARTIGAN: To go down....

TREANOR: ...over Nantucket, and I remember getting on the microphone up in the cabin and giving the "One Colonel Davenport" speech, over the loudspeaker.

HARTIGAN: Yeah, we had that champagne breakfast.

TREANOR: Yeah, yeah. Do you remember the "One Colonel Davenport"...

HARTIGAN: Yeah.

TREANOR: ...speech? The Speaker of the House of Representatives in 1789. Do you remember that?

HARTIGAN: I remember you gave it. I don't remember the whole...

TREANOR: You don't remember it? Well, I'll give it to you.

HARTIGAN: Well....

TREANOR: Or maybe the interview....

HARTIGAN: Well....

TREANOR: With my recollection.

HARTIGAN: We'll have to--we'll have to--yeah, you can do that, but when I go beyond that....

TREANOR: All right.

HARTIGAN: After the election, and with that you have us down in--down the Cape, now election night, sweating in the returns. We did go to Florida, and for the interviews of prospective Cabinet members.

TREANOR: Yeah. Right.

HARTIGAN: And, I think you recall now that that was the time we went over to the ranch, because Mansfield became Speaker.

TREANOR: Yeah, well, I do s...

HARTIGAN: Yeah.

TREANOR: ...sort of remember that, yeah.

HARTIGAN: And so that we got this is the sequence of the story.

TREANOR: Okay.

HARTIGAN: You played a part in the inauguration, John, as I recall, too, didn't you? Did you, or was it just...?

TREANOR: Oh, Bill, I guess I did, because I got a letter from someone thanking me and I swear I don't remember what I did. I just don't know.

HARTIGAN: Okay. Then...

TREANOR: [Laughter]

HARTIGAN: ...you did join the administration?

TREANOR: Well, it was.... Let me get that. [Interruption, phone ringing]

HARTIGAN: Before we were interrupted, after the, no, after the inauguration, you did join the administration, is that right, John?

TREANOR: Well, I joined it in the sense that I went down initially, Bill, to the post office, and was the administrative assistant to Bill Brawley [Hiram W.

Brawley], it seems to me it was, for awhile Deputy-Postmaster General. But I was only there a very few months, and I was anxious to be in a legal job. I ran into a classmate of mine from Holy Cross who was in the United States Attorney's office. No, no, no, no. Let me go back a bit. I went down to see Bob Kennedy, and I told him I wanted to be in the Justice Department [Department of Justice] as a staff attorney, which is what I did and I was there for about a year in the organized crime section of the Justice Department. They're involved in the Carlos Marcello and Jimmy Hoffa [James R. Hoffa] investigations. And then I ran into a friend of mine who was in the U. S. Attorney's office, and I was interested in trial work, so I came to the U.S. Attorney's office here in D.C., and stayed there prosecuting felony cases about four years until Bob ran for the Senate. And then I resigned and went with Bob to New York, and then came back to the United States Attorney's office. And then in '68, he asked me to go out again, and I did. I resigned in '68, and went out to, to Nebraska, and Oregon, and California. And about that same time, my wife, or then my fiancee, who was a stewardess for American Airlines-- and I got her on board the American. As a matter of fact, she could even....

HARTIGAN: Right. Right.

TREANOR: And she was a stewardess on Bob's plane for a while, and was in the ballroom when he was killed, as a matter of fact, at the Ambassador [Ambassador Hotel]. So then I went into private practice, where I am now.

HARTIGAN: John, where were you when you heard about the President's assassination?

TREANOR: I was trying a felony case, prosecuting a felony case in the courtroom of Judge Luther Youngdahl [Luther W. Youngdahl], who was the former of governor of Minnesota, a federal district judge here in D.C. I was in the midst of a felony trial in front of him when I heard about it.

HARTIGAN: What was your reaction?

TREANOR: Shock, like everybody else.

HARTIGAN: Any thoughts on it?

TREANOR: Do you mean now, or back...?

HARTIGAN: At the time?

TREANOR: Yeah. Yeah, I had thoughts at the time, Bill. I have always--and I don't know if this is anything you really want to tape or not--I have always felt that the Texans, and I'll leave it go at that. I've always felt that there were those powers in Texas who wanted Jack Kennedy killed.

HARTIGAN: You didn't advance that trip, did you?

TREANOR: No.

HARTIGAN: I, I... We do have an interview from a couple of people that advanced it. It was an interesting.... But I thought maybe you might have been on it...

TREANOR: No.

HARTIGAN: ...but you weren't.

TREANOR: No. Jerry was on it.

NARTIGAN: Jerry, and Jim Corcoran [James T. Corcoran].

TREANOR: Yeah, that's right. Jim was on it. I'd forgotten that.

NARTIGAN: But, we've--we've taped them on that and it's very interesting. But, of course, even Kenny, in his book, indicated the concern about him going down there and he knew, he was aware of the talk, that there was a real bitter struggle going on down there in Texas.

TREANOR: Yeah.

HARTIGAN: It wasn't helping. But, any other general observations, John, you'd like to make, with reference to your great experience with the Kennedy era, that long and....

TREANOR: Yeah.

HARTIGAN: One question I'd like to ask you. My memory did not serve me too well, because I had assumed that you were involved before the 1958 campaign. I thought you were involved in the...

TREANOR: No.

HARTIGAN: ...Lodge campaign.

TREANOR: No.

HARTIGAN: No.

TREANOR: No, I was.... What year was that, '52?

HARTIGAN: Yeah.

TREANOR: No, I was getting out of Holy Cross and into the United States Army in '52. I was overseas during that campaign, I think. Either that or at Fort

Benning.

HARTIGAN: Well, what, what...

TREANOR: What are my...

HARTIGAN: ...summation would you like...

TREANOR: Summation?

HARTIGAN: ...to make?

TREANOR: Well, Bill, it sounds ethnic, I suppose. I've always felt that the Irish....
[Interruption, phone ringing] Let me call you?

HARTIGAN: You were giving me a summation, and you got as far as you didn't want to make it sound ethnic.

TREANOR: Yeah, Bill, I don't want to make it sound ethnic, but I have always been convinced that there was something about the New England, or the Boston Irish. There was a quality about the Irish, most of the Irish, many of the Irish, that nobody else really had in this country. Now, I had an uncle--to illustrate what I'm trying to say--I had an uncle who was a very, very successful trial lawyer in New York City. Boston Latin School, Holy Cross, I think Boston University Law School, but a, an Irishman, you know, thorough-going Irishman. And we got discussing one day the merits of the Harvard Law School versus the, you know, the place where the Irish for the most part went, like Boston College. And I remember him saying to me, that in his firm, which is a large firm in New York, of two or three Irishmen--the other names aren't important. My uncle said to me that they hired for the backroom research Harvard Law School boys. But, he said, when it came to winning these cases in front of a jury, he said it was the Irish flair, the Irish appreciation of his fellow man that carried the day. And so his point was that while the intellectuals were needed on the payroll, when it came to a real appreciation of what the problem was and how to win it, when it came to people-type problems, the Irish had a way of doing it. I think that's what was so attractive to me about Kennedy way, that he was a tough Irishman. He was an Irishman that--it's true that he grew up in the lap of luxury, but he had enough of the strain so that he knew what the other side was like, and he, I think more than anything else, loved people, which is the kind of a mark of most Irish. You know, outgoing people and they like other people--love other people, and I think to me that that's what Jack Kennedy was, he was simply a guy that had all the qualities of the Irish patriot, and he had enough appreciation of the problems of his fellow man to be a good listener as well as a good leader. Now that's not well-put, but that's kind of how I felt. He was tough. He was tough. There was nothing phony about him.

HARTIGAN: John, I want to thank you for the interview, and I'm [phone ringing] sure the library also does....

TREANOR: Okay, Bill.

HARTIGAN: And, listen, what about.... [Interruption] When I called you sometime back you mentioned that you were going to check to see if you had any memorabilia, papers or stuff that you'd like to donate to the library.

TREANOR: Yeah, I've got--I just happen to have a pile over here. I've got some more someplace at home. This is only on the Massachusetts campaign, okay? And, I tell you what I would like. I'd like to get--can Dave get somebody to xerox this?

HARTIGAN: Yeah, Yeah. I'll tell--I'll do that. I'll get that done myself.

TREANOR: Send me a xerox back.

HARTIGAN: Back.

TREANOR: ...'cause that's the only--I think I--whatever happened to the...

HARTIGAN: Uh, Uh, Uh....

TREANOR: ...original, I don't know.

HARTIGAN: No, I'll--I'll make copies of this, and send 'em back.

TREANOR: Then my kid can have 'em some day.

HARTIGAN: No, I'll do that.

TREANOR: Okay.

HARTIGAN: You have--you have another--you have more of those, don't you?

TREANOR: I have some in Wisconsin and West Virginia, yeah.

HARTIGAN: If you send those in, we'll send you back--make copies and send 'em back.

TREANOR: Okay.

HARTIGAN: Okay.

TREANOR: It's not as--I think this is rather well put together, Bill, if I could say so. The other may be....

HARTIGAN: That's all right. Do you have any memorabilia, pictures or things that you'd want to have an appropriate place for in the library?

TREANOR: Well, geez, I can't think of anything I'd have that, Bill, you know, that you probably don't already have.

HARTIGAN: Well, what we do.... We'd like to look. A lot of times people assume that we get a lot of things, and, once again, we can make copies of stuff, and even if there's copies that we have, you know, they're going to be happy with it. And, or course, we're getting down to the wire, and they'd like to have everybody that should be on tape and all the memorabilia that they'd like to have on display as a contribution towards the success of the library, then we'd like to get it done before the building, and that's going to go down with, you know, within the next year. They're going to, you know....

TREANOR: Yeah.

HARTIGAN: You know they already broke ground. The dedication will be in about a year.

TREANOR: Geez, memorabilia, I don't know.

HARTIGAN: Well, think about it, and I'll be in touch. John, thank you very much.

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