

**Alex Rose Oral History Interview – JFK#1, 12/03/74**  
Administrative Information

**Creator:** Alex Rose

**Interviewer:** Roberta W. Greene

**Date of Interview:** December 3, 1974

**Place of Interview:** New York City, New York

**Length:** 15 pages

**Biographical Note**

Labor union official, political leader. In this interview, Rose discusses John F. Kennedy's 1956 Vice Presidential campaign and 1960 Presidential campaign, among other issues.

**Access**

Open

**Usage Restrictions**

Copyright of these materials has passed to the United States Government upon the death of the interviewee. Users of these materials are advised to determine the copyright status of any document from which they wish to publish.

**Copyright**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excesses of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law. The copyright law extends its protection to unpublished works from the moment of creation in a tangible form. Direct your questions concerning copyright to the reference staff.

**Transcript of Oral History Interview**

These electronic documents were created from transcripts available in the research room of the John F. Kennedy Library. The transcripts were scanned using optical character recognition and the resulting text files were proofread against the original transcripts. Some formatting changes were made. Page numbers are noted where they would have occurred at the bottoms of the pages of the original transcripts. If researchers have any concerns about accuracy, they are encouraged to visit the Library and consult the transcripts and the interview recordings.

**Suggested Citation**

Alex Rose, recorded interview by Roberta W. Greene, December 3, 1974, (page number), John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

Oral History Interview

Of

**Alex Rose**

Although a legal agreement was not signed during the lifetime of **Alex Rose**, upon **his** death, ownership of the recording and transcript of his interview for the Oral History Program passed to the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library.

The following terms and conditions apply:

1. The transcript is available for use by researchers.
2. The tape recording shall be made available to those researchers who have access to the transcript.
3. Copyright to the interview transcript and tape is assigned to the United States Government.
4. Copies of the transcript and the tape recording may be provided by the Library to researchers upon request for a fee.
5. Copies of the transcript and tape recording may be deposited in or loaned to institutions other than the John F. Kennedy Library

Alex Rose – JFK#1

Table of Contents

<u>Page</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1	Discussion of potential votes for John F. Kennedy [JFK] for the Presidency in 1960
3	The Wisconsin primary
4, 8	The West Virginia primary and how JFK's Catholicism would affect it
7	Hubert Humphrey's interest in the Presidency and its impact on JFK's campaign
12	The 1956 Presidential Election; the ripple effect of Estes Kefauver's campaign for Vice Presidency
Addendum	Name List

Oral History Interview

with

ALEX ROSE

December 3, 1974  
New York City, New York

By Roberta W. Greene

For the John F. Kennedy Library

ROSE: We just talked about a letter of March 14th which I sent to Arthur J. Goldberg. Now, in this letter I pointed out that I had a talk with George Meany when I met the prime minister, Ben-Gurion [David Ben-Gurion]. I omitted from the letter statement that George Meany made to me about Senator Kennedy [John F. Kennedy], after having stated that George Meany's now beginning to believe that Kennedy has a chance to be elected, but he fears, and the others agree, that he may not be able to get the nomination. This point I omitted from the letter, that George Meany told me that I would be willing to settle for the vice presidency for Senator Kennedy. At that point I said to him, "No, I am not willing." I left it out from the letter which I mailed to Arthur J. Goldberg because I thought it would not be proper to have anything on record that George Meany was willing to settle for vice presidency when we were all so anxious to bring about the nomination of Senator Kennedy for the presidency. I will send you a copy of this letter.

GREENE: Fine.

ROSE: Then I will send you also a copy of a letter which I sent.... Well, let me go at it this way. Let me tell you that on the 25th of May after, I think, the Maryland primary, in accordance with our understanding that we were to see each other after every primary, Senator Kennedy came up to our office here. And we discussed in general.... In fact, he showed me all his potential votes. We looked over together, jointly, all his potential votes.

GREENE: He took it out of his pocket.

ROSE: He took it out of his pocket, and I made a note of it. Then he asked me about some upstate leaders in New York of whom I knew very little, and we began to talk about the Kennedy-Humphrey [Hubert H. Humphrey] ticket. I gave him a number of reasons which I thought would make this a very strong ticket.

GREENE: Are these the same reasons you enumerate?

ROSE: That's right.

GREENE: Okay.

ROSE: After he left, I decided to put it in a memo and send it Senator Kennedy's office, the cover letter and the eight reasons, that I called, separately. I then sent a copy of this to Arthur J. Goldberg, and I also sent a copy of the cover letter to Senator Humphrey, which I will give you. I will give you a copy, but you send a copy of the letter from Arthur Goldberg, March 14th, and a copy of the letter which I sent to Humphrey with the eight reasons, and the cover letter which I sent to Humphrey. The copy to Goldberg was the same as the other one, so you don't have to make copies of that.

GREENE: This arrangement that you had, to see him after each primary; how did that come about?

ROSE: It came about that I met him in the early part of the.... You notice in the letter there or in the article that you....

GREENE: The Raskin [Hyman B. Raskin] story?

ROSE: No, I think in the letter from Goldberg to me. Did you notice the letter which he sent to me from the hospital, Arthur Goldberg?

GREENE: You didn't show me that one. No.

ROSE: Well, you'd better look at it.

[INTERRUPTION]

ROSE: Goldberg forgot.

WOMAN\*: Like a diary.

---

\* Unidentified woman, possibly Rose's secretary.

GREENE: I was thinking, could that be the meeting that you had that Raskin refers to, at his home?

ROSE: That would be April 16. Yeah, it could have been. Now, I'll come back to that meeting, I will give you more details of that meeting.

GREENE: Okay. Maybe we could just start....

ROSE: Anyway, what you do is give her a copy of this letter that I sent to Goldberg and he sent to me. Then I'll pick up with that and tell you the story of April 5.

GREENE: Fine.

ROSE: April 6 rather. Now what I will tell you now will be a little by-story. On April the 6th--the primary in Wisconsin was April 5th--by pure coincidence we had an appointment, a delegation of labor leaders, with Nixon [Richard M. Nixon] at three o'clock.

WOMAN: As the vice president. He was the vice president.

ROSE: He was the vice president.

GREENE: And Mitchell [James P. Mitchell], right? Then labor secretary?

ROSE: No. Only him.

GREENE: Oh, then one of the reports is wrong again.

ROSE: Only him. And the delegation consisted of Arthur Goldberg, Jacob Potofsky, David Dubinsky and myself. It was there that we humorously discussed the Wisconsin primary where he made a very poor showing, Nixon, and he admitted to us that he did. See? Neither was, by the way, Kennedy fully satisfied with his results. You must remember that as the result of that, the idea of a Kennedy-Humphrey ticket was growing in my mind.

Anyway, we had a second appointment at five o'clock with Kennedy. We had a little tactical problem, how to go away from our colleagues without telling them where we were going. Finally we found a way of doing it, and we went over to Kennedy's home. When we rang the bell, Jack Kennedy himself opened the door, and he had Caroline [Kennedy] on his hand. And I remember saying to him, "Senator, that would make an ideal campaign picture." As we were sitting there reviewing the April 5th primary in Wisconsin, we told him what Nixon told us. In other words, he confirmed his own disappointment in Nixon, and Jack said he should have done better. Of course, logic was that Wisconsin was such a neighboring state to Minnesota, so it wasn't entirely impossible for Humphrey to accomplish what he did.

GREENE: Right.

ROSE: And then, let me fill you in on what happened really in the home. As we were discussing more and more fully the April 5th primary in Wisconsin, the phone rings and, sure enough, Bobby [Robert F. Kennedy] is on the phone. And here I want you to know that Bobby was very hysterical. He almost used profane language. "Get that"--shall I say it?--"son-of-a-bitch out of the primary in West Virginia. There's going to be a bloody religious war here." And he kept on aggravating, I thought at that moment that I looked at Kennedy's face. Finally Jack said to him, "I've got Arthur here, and Alex here. Talk to them, too." So each one of us talked with him separately, and he gave us the same harangue, how the whole state was becoming a battlefield of religious segregation or religious groupings, he said, and "there's going to be a bloody primary here." And we kept on assuring him that he shouldn't get so excited over it. We said, "We're going to talk to Humphrey. We're going to try and see to it that the whole primary will not take on that kind of a character," which we by the way did the following day. We went to see Humphrey. Anyway, when we got through with him we then began to debate with Kennedy, should he or should he not go into West Virginia?

GREENE: Now, when you are talking about should he or shouldn't he, you mean Kennedy going in?

ROSE: That's right.

GREENE: Not whether or not you should try to get Humphrey out?

ROSE: No. Whether Kennedy.... Kennedy turned around to us and asked, "Now what do you think I ought to do? Shall I or shall I not go into the primary there under these circumstances, that I haven't gotten just a hot report from Bobby?" And I remember that I argued very vehemently that he should. I said to him, "Jack, I don't think that you've got to win the primary in order to win. If you make a good showing in a state where there are no Catholics, even if you get forty percent of the vote, it's a moral victory because then it will be proven that you can get votes in a non-Catholic state."

GREENE : Yes.

ROSE: My argument was very vehement, very strong. I said to him frankly, "If you cannot make a good showing"--these were my words--"in a non-Catholic state, you might as well not run. You might as well face up to reality."

GREENE : Reality, yes.

ROSE: Now, he didn't say at the end whether he would or not. He listened to everything we had to say, and then we left him. On the way out I remember discussing it with Goldberg a little more and he said to me, "Well, I was not sure at first, but I think I agree with you." I really made the whole argument there. But the next day we went to talk to Humphrey.

GREENE: Let me ask you a couple of things. First of all, it sounds as if this was the first time both Robert and Jack Kennedy really got a feeling for what the situation was in West Virginia, which is surprising.

ROSE: Yes, it was, it was, because he was really so hysterical about it, as though he encountered the bloody war.

GREENE: And they hadn't expected it.

ROSE: The man went to a peace-loving country and found a war going, you see. He was terribly upset. He really thought that this kind of a religious war would make it impossible for a campaign to develop. That's the way he saw it, you see. And he kept on saying "Get that son-of-a-bitch out." We calmed his fears and then we said, "We'll do everything we can." Then, the next day, when we went to see Humphrey, if you know the story. At first he thought we were going to come in and tell him not to run. Then we said, "No, you have a perfect right to run. We have no right to tell you not to run." I said, "There's only one thing we have in mind. You're both leading liberals in the nation. You have to conduct the kind of a campaign or primary fight where you can shake hands after the primary and be friends." And that he promised us.

I remember during our conversation he got a telephone call from Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and we stepped out of the room. It must have been the same topic under discussion. The understanding we made was that he committed himself to conduct a gentleman's campaign. And then I said, "Ok, if that's the case, I'll tell you what we'll do. I'll be like an umpire, and if either one of you overstep [*sic*] the boundaries, at least let me know and I'll interfere." And that's what we did.

Now one day Humphrey called me up and told me Bobby Kennedy, they were going around with a satchel with money in it, spending huge amounts of money, you know what I mean? And then I remember getting a complaint from Bobby Kennedy one day, and each time I would get the complaint I would call up the other side and try to mitigate the intensity of the competition that was developing. The last complaint that I got, which was very vehement, I think from Bobby Kennedy, was when Franklin D. Roosevelt, junior, came out here and made the charge. Against whom did he make the charge? He made the charge against....

GREENE: Humphrey.

ROSE: Humphrey. All right, that's when I got Humphrey's call, I mean, the last few days, very angry, very angry. I called up and I really gave it to Bobby for that, too. And he said, "You're absolutely right. He had no business to do it."

GREENE: That's always been a big question, whether Roosevelt did that on his own or whether he was put up to it.

ROSE: Well, I can tell you that Bobby Kennedy told me that he had no right to do it. I



called back and I said to Humphrey, "I want you to know," I said, "Hubert, that as far as I can see it, Bobby Kennedy and Jack Kennedy had nothing to do with that."

GREENE: Do you think he believed it?

ROSE: I have my doubts, but one thing I do know is that the following night, when he lost the primary, he went over to the headquarters and shook hands with him. And it was a very friendly end of the primary, wasn't it?

GREENE: Right, yes.

ROSE: For which I humbly take a lot of credit. I feel I had a lot to do with it. Arthur Goldberg and I had a lot to do with holding them together to such a point where they did not break completely. The reason that I had this in the back of my mind for your information--it has nothing to do with the Kennedy story--I played a similar role in bringing together Kefauver [C. Estes Kefauver] and Stevenson [Adlai E. Stevenson], but that came after the California primary. The bitterness that that left was so great that I had to work my hat off to get both of them to agree to make the first step towards each other. And some day when I'll tell the other story, you'll find out that even at the very last minute when I was bringing them the Kefauver's two hundred delegates--you hear? Two months before the convention, and in the presence of Jim Finnegan [James A. Finnegan], who was his campaign manager, and in the presence of.... What's his name? He's now in charge of Washington.... Kennedy theatres.

GREENE: Oh, I know who you mean, yes. He worked under Stevenson. He's married to that....

ROSE: Norwegian.... Blair. Bill Blair [William McCormack Blair].

GREENE: Blair, right.

ROSE: Bill Blair and Finnegan were sitting when I brought them the whole proposition and Stevenson was so mad about some of the things he said that he was blinded by it and they were winking to me from both sides not to take him seriously. In the end you know he said, "All right, I'm going to leave you to them." When we walked out into another room and they said to me, "By God, you were doing all right. We need those two hundred delegates. Don't pay any attention to him." You know? So this experience where a primary fight can so divide people that they get blinded with animosity stuck in my memory. That's why I went all out to see to it that after the primary they could work together. And then, of course, I tried to make a ticket that I thought was very logical.

GREENE: Did you make it clear to Kennedy that day in his home that you would not try to get Humphrey out? That you would simply try to get him to agree to what

you eventually did?

ROSE: Exactly. That's exactly....

GREENE: And he was satisfied with that . . .

ROSE: That's exactly what we said. We said to Jack Kennedy, "We're going to see Humphrey tomorrow. We're not going to ask him to withdraw, because he has a perfect right to be a candidate and compete. All we're going to ask him is to conduct the kind of a campaign that when it's over you can both shake hands and support one another, not let too much political blood be spilled." And he thought it was \_\_\_\_\_.

GREENE: You know, the story survives. I don't know if you're aware of it, but as recently as Kenny O'Donnell's [Kenneth P. O'Donnell] book, and maybe White's [Theodore H. White] book, which is, of course, much earlier, that that's not what you did, that you actually went and asked Humphrey to withdraw. And they lump you and Goldberg along with Mrs. Roosevelt and Lehman [Herbert H. Lehman], and some of the other people that were working on Humphrey....

ROSE: Well, then he's all wrong.

GREENE: Well, that's good.

ROSE: You know why he's all wrong? Talk to Arthur Goldberg, he'll verify that.

GREENE: Yes. Besides....

ROSE: In fact, one of the reasons I had the goodwill of Humphrey during the next few weeks is because, to his great surprise, we did not come to ask him to withdraw.

GREENE: Right. It makes much more sense that way.

ROSE: Certainly. First of all, I think it's insulting to anybody to have a candidate who ran in a big primary--made a half decent showing in Wisconsin--to tell him, "Now you've got to withdraw."

GREENE: Right.

ROSE: To begin with, it would have been a mission of failure. Secondly, once you ask a man to withdraw and he doesn't withdraw, you're through with him and he's through with you. And here I was thinking in terms of eventually getting them together, so they can work together for victory, for a liberal victory. Don't forget the fact that there were other candidates in the back. There was a Johnson [Lyndon B. Johnson] running for the presidency. And we were representing the interests of what we thought was

the liberal wing of the Democratic party, of liberals generally. So, no, our moves were very tactful, they were not offensive. The fact does remain that in the end we remained great friends with both, with Jack Kennedy as well as with Humphrey. Until the very last day. I might as well put this on record.

GREENE: Let me ask you one thing before that. Did you make it clear to Robert Kennedy and to John Kennedy that you thought it was essential that Humphrey stay in...

ROSE: No, we did not say....

GREENE: ...to make Kennedy's showing have any real meaning?

ROSE: No. No, we did not do that. We assumed that Humphrey was going in, and he had a right to do so if he wanted to. The only thing we felt was that the Kennedys should not run away from this challenge. They should not run away from this, what you might call, test.

GREENE: Yes.

ROSE: We felt it was very indispensable for him to stand up and take a test like this. I said to him, "If you can't make a showing in a non-Catholic state--you don't have to win," I said to him, "All you have to do is a good showing--if you can't make a good showing you might as well know it now and not waste your time."

GREENE: Yes. But it does seem, too, that it would have been a much more significant victory if there was an opponent, rather than if you got Humphrey to withdraw and Kennedy didn't run against anybody.

ROSE: Of course. In the end it turned out much bigger, and much better. As it is, that made it. We didn't know at the time that it could turn out that way, and we didn't plan it that way. I will not pretend that we wanted him to go in order to make the victory bigger for Kennedy, but we just felt that here were two men who were equally acceptable to liberals in the nation. Each one of them had a right to compete. The only thing, we didn't want them to get to a point where they cannot unite in the end.

GREENE: How much of your decision and Goldberg's to go with Kennedy back in February--I believe it was then you first made that decision--how much of that was pure pragmatism, that he looked more like a winner than the others, and how much was a matter of sentiment, you might say, or preference?

ROSE: I'll be very honest with you. I have a similar experience now in 1974 when I'm the one who took.... This may not be known completely, but I took Carey

[Hugh L. Carey] under my wings, and I surprised everybody, where we took a candidate who had six points on the polls and made him the winner. And when some people ask me....[INTERRUPTION]

Many people ask me, how did I know. I say to them, "Politics is like medicine. You've got to be able to make a diagnosis." And, frankly speaking, it was my diagnosis, in my own mind, that the country was ready for something new, something young, for something challenging, for something elegant. We felt that in view of what was going on in the country after Eisenhower's [Dwight D. Eisenhower] eight years, the so-called institutional presidency of an Eisenhower lost its appeal, and there's really room for a young, dynamic, active symbol that will really arouse the youth of the country, that can mobilize all the progressive elements and the trade union movement. I also had a very strong feeling that.... The reasons I sometimes give in the eight points--you can recognize the reasons, that I felt he could win all the industrial states where the Catholic voters are prominent, where they are prominent votes in the labor unions as well as in politics. I felt winning in the industrial states with Kennedy would mean a lot more than winning with anybody else, because together with this victory will come a congressional victory. Because for some reason I could never understand the inconsistency where Republicans were stronger in the industrial states, which logically they should not be.

GREENE: Right.

ROSE: This is where the working population is. This is where the advanced political thinking is, and yet they were the stronger. So I felt, to break through in history, to break through this, we needed a candidate to do it with. And when we sat at that famous February AF of L [American Federation of Labor] meeting, and they were all saying that they are going to wait until after the conventions to decide the candidates, we thought they were so much behind, they were so antiquated in their thinking. When we both walked out from the session Arthur and I went off under a palm tree and we began to talk to one another, and we said, "Those fellows don't understand the game. The time to do it is now, not later."

GREENE: And you weren't fearful, like Meany was, of the impossibility of a Catholic?

ROSE: Of a Catholic, no.

GREENE: You saw advantages in it, actually.

ROSE: I was amused when he was offering, and he said to me, "We'll settle for the vice presidency." And I said to him, "No, I will not."

GREENE: Your comment before was interesting when you said that Meany has this attitude.... What did you say?

ROSE: He has the conflicts of a Catholic...

GREENE: Conflicts of a Catholic, yes.

ROSE: ...who are never able to see their own in a national office, and would be glad to make a fifty percent progress for the first time. Whereas I didn't look at it from that point of view, I was looking for the man and not for the fate, you see. I was thinking from a different point of view and I wasn't willing for that.

Well, I have a better story to tell you which is even more dramatic, and it's very poignant, too. How much time have we got? Very little. First of all, I've got to tell you what happened in Los Angeles, which I said before is off the record. I'll say that, and then I'll go back to what I call the poignant story of Kennedy, very poignant. You'll see what I mean by that.

GREENE: One thing Raskin says is that you and Reuther [Walter P. Reuther] were sort of the watchdogs in West Virginia. Is that the kind of thing you just described?

ROSE: Not in West Virginia.

GREENE: Well, where each side could come to you if they had a complaint about the other. Is that what he was referring to?

ROSE: I was the one. Reuther had nothing to do with that.

GREENE: Not Reuther?

ROSE: No.

GREENE: He's wrong on that.

ROSE: Because when Arthur Goldberg and I went to Humphrey, Walter Reuther was not with us. In Los Angeles--let me give it to you quickly--the AFL-CIO [American Federation of Labor, Congress of Industrial Organizations] had a meeting of their executive council. They were not all of the executive council, but all those who were going to be in Los Angeles. There weren't quite two-thirds, maybe, present. No, I'm wrong. There were more, because they had a real meeting in a few days. At that meeting they adopted a strong resolution against Johnson. Do you recall that?

GREENE: Yes.

ROSE: At that meeting we also designated an official committee to be in touch with the candidate, and everybody knew that meant Kennedy, and to be in touch with the whole political situation, and to keep George Meany informed. And the committee--as you remember there were three of us who worked together and we became four--they named Joe Kennan [Joseph D. Kennan] too, and we became four. And we kept in touch with him right along. But the first thing that we did was to wait for Humphrey to

arrive. We felt that Humphrey will throw his support to Kennedy and there'll be no problem. We were confident, anyway, that we were very close to getting it, and we felt that with Humphrey coming in there'll be no problem. When Humphrey arrived we got hold of him, the three of us, and we had a conference with him. We urged him to come out for Kennedy and he didn't say no, but he never said yes. And for twenty-four hours we were still hoping he was going to do it. In the meantime we saw Bobby Kennedy. We kept on going to Bobby Kennedy's headquarters almost every few hours. Bobby Kennedy on one occasion said to us, "If..." There were other candidates on the scene. You remember? There was...

GREENE: Sure. Symington [W. Stuart Symington].

ROSE: ...Scoop Jackson [Henry M. Jackson], Symington. "Let," he says, "Humphrey come out with a statement and that settles it."

GREENE: Do you think in close consultation with his brother on that?

ROSE: I'm pretty sure he was. I have a right to assume he was. I wasn't there to hear it but I can't imagine would make a categorical statement like that without being sure. Anyway, as the hours were going by and we couldn't get a statement from Humphrey, we realized something is wrong and subsequently one of the knowledgeable men in politics, whose name I don't remember, said to us, "You'll never get Humphrey to come out because he's committed himself to the rich contributors that Stevenson has, that he will be for Stevenson."

GREENE: As part of a stop Kennedy thing I assume?

ROSE: At that time. And that commitment must have been made early in the year.

GREENE: Right.

ROSE: But we realized that Humphrey one day will want to be a candidate himself in his own right and he'll need support. If he ever goes against his own word he will lose standing with a lot of people, so we realized we couldn't get him. Then we went to work on Stevenson himself. We made an appointment to meet with Stevenson, and the appointment didn't come through and then Walter Reuther himself went over to see him. Of course, as you know, he couldn't budge him.

GREENE: What was Stevenson's explanation? He had been so lukewarm to the whole thing all along, why didn't he at that point...?

ROSE: Why didn't he want to withdraw? Evidently there was a very strong feeling on the other side that if and when Kennedy would be stopped, all the votes would start rolling to him. It was one of those one out of a hundred chances people cling to when they are a candidate.

Now I'll stop at this moment and tell you what I wanted to tell you before the poignant story. In 1956 when I got Kefauver together with Stevenson, I did not make any deals for second place. I told Kefauver, I said, "Estes, I don't intend to say to you or even to suggest to anybody that you should become the nominee for vice president. But I also tell you, without any deal, the logic will lead to it. In fact if you make that kind of a deal it'll never materialize, but if you don't make it it will come that way." So when we came to Chicago, as you remember in '56, for reasons that I couldn't understand but a reason that aroused Kefauver, at the last minute Stevenson threw the vice presidency to the floor. When he did that, I was ready in my hotel, the Ambassador East, and I got suddenly a call from.... I heard it on the television myself. I wasn't in the convention hall. I got a call ten minutes later from Kefauver, and he says, "I'm packing up and I'm leaving Chicago with a blast. They double-crossed me." And I pleaded with him not to do it. I said, "I'm going to dress and come down to the Statler Hotel, where he was, which I did. Here comes the whole story that I haven't got the time to tell you but all I can say is that I reconciled them. They convinced me and they convinced he that he had enough votes to be nominated the next day. That's why they did it. The next day when it came to a vote.... You know, when it was all over, Kefauver went to work all night long to round up his delegates. And when it was all over, as you recall, he through just by a handful of votes.

GREENE: Right.

ROSE: And if I did not do what I did that night, if I did not bring them together, if I didn't work my head off for the next two hours to stop Kefauver from leaving town with a blast, Kennedy would have been nominated vice president.

GREENE: And lost the election....

ROSE: And the election would have been lost, and everybody would say, "A Catholic on the ticket, you can't elect the ticket." He would never get the nomination after that for president but he would be alive today.

GREENE: Which was his own reasoning, after he could look at it a little more objectively. He realized that it was the best thing to have happen, to have lost it.

ROSE: But you realize that he would have been alive today?

WOMAN: He would have been, yes.

GREENE: Yes.

ROSE: That's why I say it's poignant. While I indirectly helped him become the candidate in 1960 and win, by blind faith I almost brought about his tragedy.

That's what I mean by poignant. But if I didn't.... He would have been the nominee the next day without any trouble. There would be no.... What's-his-name would not even want to challenge....

GREENE: As much for my own curiosity as anything else, had Kefauver made a deal with Humphrey or did he just assumed that it would come to him? Had he followed your advice and not attempted to...

ROSE: Deal with him?

GREENE: ...get a commitment from Stevenson?

ROSE: Commitment? He got the commitment.

GREENE: So when he says he double-crossed him, he meant he had an unspoken expectation.

ROSE: Yes. He made no deal, because I was the go-between for the next several.... I even have the date in July when I flew to Washington and I gave the report to Kefauver. Then finally, when Kefauver decided to withdraw, he phoned in here to this office to read to me the statement of withdrawal.

WOMAN: I took it over the phone.

[INTERRUPTION]

ROSE: She took it over the phone and gave it to...

WOMAN: Blair?

ROSE: ...Bill Blair in Chicago simultaneously. And we were in touch with the situation. The logic was there. It turned out that way. The reason why he threw it to the floor I still don't know but when I had a conference with Wyatt [Wilson W. Wyatt] and Finnegan and Bill Blair they me that this was not a double cross. They went over the figures, and they know he's going to be nominated tomorrow. In other words, they didn't want it to be like a deal. you know what I mean? They wanted him to be nominated from the floor. On the other hand, he wasn't sure that he could be nominated and he was right. You see how close it was. Anyway, I can't say another word. Let's go.

GREENE: Oh, I'm so sorry.

[END OF INTERVIEW]



## Name Index

### B

Ben-Gurion, David, 1  
Blair, William McCormack, 6, 13

### D

Dubinsky, David, 3

### E

Eisenhower, Dwight D., 9

### F

Finnegan, James A., 6, 13

### G

Goldberg, Arthur J., 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10

### H

Humphrey, Hubert H., 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13

### J

Johnson, Lyndon B., 7, 10

### K

Kefauver, C. Estes, 6, 12, 13  
Kennan, Joseph D., 10  
Kennedy, Caroline, 3  
Kennedy, Robert F., 4, 5, 6, 8, 11

### L

Lehman, Herbert H., 7

### M

Meany, George, 1, 9, 10  
Mitchell, James P., 3

### N

Nixon, Richard M., 3

### P

Potofsky, Jacob, 3

### R

Raskin, Hyman B., 2, 3, 10  
Reuther, Walter P., 10, 11  
Roosevelt, Eleanor, 5, 7  
Roosevelt, Franklin D. Jr., 5

### S

Stevenson, Adlai E., 6, 11, 12, 13  
Symington, W. Stuart, 11

### W

White, Theodore H., 7  
Wyatt, Wilson W., 13