

**J. Edward Day Oral History Interview – 10/22/1968**  
Administrative Information

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**Biographical Note**

Day, Postmaster General of United States (1961-63), discusses his appointment as Postmaster General, John F. Kennedy's relationship with his cabinet members, and his 1963 resignation as Postmaster General, among other issues.

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By J. Edward Day

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J. Edward Day

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Oral History Interview

With

J. Edward Day

October 22, 1968  
Washington, D.C.

By John F. Stewart

For the John F. Kennedy Library

STEWART: So, why don't we just start by my asking you if you recall when you first met President Kennedy [John F. Kennedy].

DAY: Yes, I first met President Kennedy, then Senator Kennedy, when he came to California in late 1959 to make a number of talks to various groups in connection with his preliminaries toward seeking the presidential nomination. I was the president of a group of business and professional men who were interested in the Democratic Party, and organization called Democratic Associates in Los Angeles County. We received and entertained leading Democrats that came to town in order to give them exposure to a little different segment of the Democratic Party, to the business and professional group rather than the purely party organization or the Democratic Clubs group or the others. We had a breakfast for Senator Kennedy at the Ambassador Hotel. I had never met him before. He gave us a little talk and answered some questions, and I was tremendously impressed with his ability to answer these questions on a great many subjects in a pleasant way and a short way and without handing out too much propaganda. He spoke to four other groups that day, and I went around and listened to him at each of these groups because I had been so impressed. I decided then that I was very much interested in him. I saw him maybe three or four times afterwards when he came to California before he was nominated, but very briefly. But he remembered me and he was always very gracious.

In February of 1960 I went back to Illinois to what had become an annual event, and that was Adlai Stevenson's [Adlai E. Stevenson] birthday party for all his old friends and people that had been close to him. I told him that I wanted to know whether he was going to be a candidate for president, because if he wasn't I was going to come out for Kennedy. He insisted that he was not going to be a candidate and that he wanted me to tell people that were talking about him, Stevenson, running for president to stop talking about it. But on the other hand—as was often the case—he was of sort of two minds on the subject. I could see that he had no

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great enthusiasm about Kennedy as a candidate or me coming out for him. He said, “Well, Nixon [Richard M. Nixon] has got to be beaten, and I think this Catholic issue is going to be very damaging to Kennedy.” I was satisfied that Adlai was not going to be an active candidate, so when I went back to Los Angeles, several of us in this Democratic Associates organization—in fact, as far as I know, all of us—decided we wanted Kennedy for the candidate.

STEWART: Weren't Kimball [Dan Able Kimball] and Pauley [Edwin W. Pauley] pretty much in favor of Johnson [Lyndon B. Johnson]?

DAY: Well, I probably shouldn't say all of us, except those two men were not particularly active in this organization to the same extent a less well-known and less well-heeled group were. There were quite a few lawyers in it and quite a few people who were less big mouths than Ed Pauley. I don't think we ever consulted them particularly; we didn't act as a group. But it just happened that a number of us, particularly a lawyer named Jim Sheppard [James C. Sheppard], who was the one that had started Democratic Associates and the one who had set it up in Los Angeles the very day that Pat Brown [Edmund G. Brown] was elected governor and had asked me to be president and got me involved in it, he and I and some others just, each on our own initiative, decided we liked Kennedy.

I decided to be for him, and about that time they began picking out the Democratic delegation for the convention in Los Angeles. I've always thought there was a great deal of misunderstanding about the disagreements in that delegation because as far as I observed it was intentionally picked to have representatives from all of the different factions and people backing all the different candidates. I was very specifically picked to be a representative of the Kennedy segment on that delegation. I was called by Bill Munnell [William A. Munnell], who was then the state Democratic Party chairman in California and at that time was for Kennedy, and asked to be a Kennedy delegate. He named some others, including Jesse Unruh [Jesse M. Unruh] and Pat Lawford [Patricia Kennedy Lawford] and some others that would be in the Kennedy group. There were others that were chosen that were Stevenson fans, and there were some chosen that were Johnson fans, and even one or two for Symington [Stuart Symington II]. It was, from the beginning, a delegation with all segments in it.

And I went on being a Kennedy delegate and never wavered in being one and never got involved in any of the arguments or fusses over who was going to be for whom. In fact, I

remember in all the numerous caucuses of the delegation up in the hotel rooms, some of the others were so anxious to argue and fuss about it, and Ben Swig [Benjamin H. Swig] and I, since we'd decided we were for Kennedy and didn't want to argue about it, we acted as the

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bartenders and general hosts and entertainers rather than getting in the arguments.

Well, I really had very little to do then with the campaign because I was a senior vice president of Prudential Insurance Company, quite a conventional and conservative business organization. In fact, there had been a dispute within the company as to whether they would even approve of me being a delegate to the Democratic Convention. The president of the company finally did decide that I could. But it wasn't feasible for me to be terribly active in the campaign.

I was asked at one point to be the heads of the Citizens for Kennedy in Southern California, but that was out of the question because I was already involved in some thirty different boards and committees and commissions of a charitable, educational, political, governmental nature, and I couldn't take on anything else. I was very active as one of the chief fundraisers and strategists for the big one and three quarters billion water bond campaign that Pat Brown was so interested in.

So I had very little participation in the presidential campaign and, as a result, never had any occasion to get acquainted with the Kennedy staff people or to really know who was who or to realize how important some of them were in the Kennedy scheme of things. I did shake hands once with Larry O'Brien [Lawrence F. O'Brien] when he was out there in California, but I never even laid eyes on or heard of most of the other people, hard as it is to believe, of those that turned out to be very important on the White House staff.

After the nomination and the election, I just assumed that I would be going about my job in the Prudential in the normal way.

STEWART: Can I just ask you one question? Do you recall any comment that Adlai Stevenson may have made during this whole period specifically about Kennedy? You mentioned that he was a little unsure of the religious issue. Do you remember him making any comments about Kennedy's qualifications to be president.

DAY: No, I don't because I didn't see much of him during that time because he was in Chicago and elsewhere and I was out there in Los Angeles. I was very close to Stevenson from out there in Los Angeles. I was very close to Stevenson from way back when. He had been a partner in this law firm I am back with now before I was hired by the firm in 1938. When he was governor of Illinois, I was first on his personal staff and then in his official Cabinet as state insurance commissioner. I saw him in Washington during the war. I had all kinds of connections with Stevenson and, of course, had actively supported him for president in 1952 and 1956.

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When the 1960 Los Angeles Democratic Convention was taking place, his group of immediate friends were staying at what was then the Town House. He had a suite and his friends were around there at the Town House, now the Sheraton West in Los Angeles. They gathered there every night to lick their wounds and to discuss things. My wife and I went up there almost every evening because all of our ties were to the Stevenson group as far as personal friendships were concerned.

We didn't have any need to be courted by anybody. They knew I was for Kennedy, but his sister, Mrs. Ives [Elizabeth Stevenson Ives], was infuriated at me for being for Kennedy, but Stevenson never said anything to me. We just had our usual relaxed sort of joking relationship. I never was one of his advisors on issues particularly, so we didn't have occasion to talk about much and I don't recall him ever making any other comments to me. But I interpreted this remark about the religious issue as being just a thing that he thought up as being a reason for being cool to Kennedy but that he still had in his mind at that time in February 1960 that things might come about where he would be offered the nomination and would be nominated. I'm sure he hoped to be nominated. I had been through the reluctant candidate routine once in 1952, and I knew that wasn't going to work again because there were so much better alternatives available than in 1952. Although I interpreted it as meaning that he was still hoping to be drafted, he did say the words that he wasn't going to be a candidate, and that was enough for me because I thought Kennedy was the best candidate and I was relieved from any personal obligations to Stevenson by him saying he wasn't going to be a candidate.

So, I didn't have any participation in the campaign—maybe one or two incidental speeches to small groups, but I was never part of the organizational work or never on any speaking tours. I was a very obscure person as far as the public was concerned. I didn't seek to get in on any part of it and wasn't brought in.

As it turned out, the people around President-elect Kennedy decided toward the middle of December when they had about finished up selecting the proposed Cabinet members that they wanted to have somebody from California. That's harder to come by than one might think because there are so many intensely warring factions among the Democrats in California, and while there are lots of them out there, it's hard to find anybody that the various factions would agree upon. There was some thought of selecting a state senator out there from San Diego—his name slips my mind.

STEWART: Hugo Fisher [Hugo M. Fisher].

DAY: Hugo Fisher. For some reason or another, Jesse Unruh,

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who had been sort of the patron saint of our Democratic Associates organization and had been close to us as sort of a sponsor and backer of our business-oriented group in Democratic Associates, he for some reason or another had it in for Hugo Fisher. We had a session of our Democratic Associates group at the Chapman Park Hotel, just happened to have a meeting; it wasn't anything having to do with selecting people to go to Washington. We just happened to have a meeting, and there was a good deal of



discussion going on afterward in the background. Jesse Unruh and this Jim Sheppard I mentioned, they seemed to have something they were very interested in, and it turned out that they were interested in putting me forward as an alternative to Hugo Fisher. I didn't even know what they were talking about and had no notions along that line.

Then later that afternoon I went to a reception given by one of the title companies down at the Biltmore Hotel and was called out by the message that Senator Kennedy was calling me. He asked me if I would be interested in being the postmaster general, and I said I would.

Even then, I didn't know the Kennedy people. It seems hard to believe, but when I arrived in Washington early in January for the transition period, I didn't know or really know anything about the various ones who were important members of the Kennedy staff. I had never met any other member of the Kennedy Cabinet before except that I had shaken hands with Bobby [Robert F. Kennedy] once at a meeting out in Los Angeles, but he didn't know me from Adam. I hadn't previously met any of the others. I knew a few of the others who were going to be in higher and higher places as time went on, mainly because of my Stevenson connections. That was principally Bill Wirtz [W. Willard Wirtz] and Newt Minow [Newton N. Minow] and George Ball [George W. Ball].

STEWART: Did you have any reservations about accepting the job when he asked you?

DAY: Only financial. My wife [Mary Louise Day] didn't see how we were going to swing it financially because while I had a big income with Prudential, I didn't have a penny of capital. We didn't have any savings or any independent income or anything of that kind. Although I'd made good money and lived very well, we didn't have anything to fall back on and it was going to be quite a reduction in pay.

I thought that possibly the Prudential, which is a struggling little concern of twenty billion dollars of assets, might possibly do something to have some kind of termination pay or at least pay my moving expenses to Washington or something because, after all, that's not uncommon in those situations. Ford Motor Company made Bob McNamara [Robert S. McNamara] rich when he came down here, and Merck did the same with Jack Connor [John T.

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Connor] when he came down here to be secretary of commerce. But just at the very time that President Kennedy asked me to postmaster general, it turned out that the president of the Prudential, who was my great mentor—he'd shot me up very fast and high in the company—departed suddenly from the Prudential entirely because of a conflict of interest situation he had gotten himself involved in. So rather than having any fan of mine back in charge of the home office who would think about my situation a bit, there were instead a group who were engaged in a big power struggle to see who was going to be the president of Prudential, and I think at least a couple of them were afraid that when I found out that the president of the company was leaving that I might give up the idea of being postmaster general and come back and get in the race to be president of Prudential.

So they didn't do a thing for me and I always did have a financial problem when I was down here. I know that is not a popular concept because the salaries aren't that small but we just have a rather free spending family. When I was in Adlai Stevenson's Cabinet for example, my salary was at first eight thousand and then ten thousand dollars a year, so it explains why I had a little difficulty saving up any money in my past adventures. As a member of the governor's Cabinet, I had a chauffeur and limousine and an eight thousand dollar salary. [Laughter]

STEWART: Do you remember when you first met the President when you came to Washington in mid December 1960, before you went to Palm Beach? Do you remember this incident and how he talked to you about the appointment and so forth?

DAY: Oh yes, it was quite humorous. I had this call when I was at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles, and he said to come down here to Washington, and as soon as I got here (which would be the next morning because I would have to fly all night) for me to phone him at his residence in Georgetown. He would then have me come over and he would announce the appointment there at his house in Georgetown.

So, when I got here I went over to the Statler Hotel and took a room to rehabilitate myself after the all-night plane trip. I called the residence and some employee answered, a butler or something like that, and said that Senator Kennedy was tied up on a phone call and would call me right back. After a while somebody called me—I think maybe it was Salinger [Pierre G. Salinger]—and said for me to just wait there and they'd be in touch with me. And hours passed. Of course, I was reluctant to go out to even get anything to eat or to do anything. I was sort of imprisoned in this room because I was waiting for this phone call. That went on quite a while. I imagine it was noon when finally Salinger called me and said that they'd decided that they weren't going to announce my appointment that day, but they

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were going to go down to Palm Springs and for me to meet them out at the airport.

So I went out to the airport, and I waited around out there. We got on the *Caroline*, and the President-elect greeted me and a few reporters and other people on there, and away we went. Then after he had collected himself a bit, he and Bobby had me come back to the little room that was back in the back of the plane. They gave a run-down on the various congressional people that were involved with the Post Office and the ones I should get acquainted with and the ones I would find important to my situation. I don't recall that there was anything particularly in the nature of discussion of policy or what programs they wanted carried out or anything of that kind. It was mainly about people.

So when we got down to Palm Beach, I went my way with a group of the others that were on the plane and stayed in the motel where most of the staff and most of the reporters were staying and was there that night. The next morning we went over to Senator Kennedy's father's house. Senator Kennedy made the announcement to the press there on the patio. I was the last one of the Kennedy Cabinet members that was announced.

He had just a very short discussion and briefing session before we went out for the meeting with the press. Again it was mainly about people. He had phone calls put through to several of the principal congressional leaders that were involved, such as Vaughan Gary [Julian Vaughan Gary], the chairman of the House Post Office Appropriations Subcommittee, and to one or two others to introduce them to me over the telephone. It was a very good approach to give them a priority position in the thing because the Congress is so important to the Post Office.

Then we went out, and he gave a brief biography of me, and I was asked some questions. He pretty much left everything up to me, except somebody asked me—quite naively, as one thinks of it—if I was going to restore afternoon mail delivery to residences. He whispered to me to let that one go until I had a chance to study it, which I would have commented anyway.

Then I headed on back to California, and that was that until I came down for the transition period. I didn't see President-elect Kennedy during that transition period. I came down and was fixed up with a—well, the pattern was that each one of the departing Republican Cabinet members was going to make space and staff available for his successor to come over and begin to feel at home with his department. I didn't know much about my predecessor, Mr. Summerfield [Arthur E. Summerfield], but I didn't care much for his operation. He wanted to spend most of the time when I was over at the department during that transition period getting our picture taken and showing me movies and so

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forth which I wasn't interested in. So I set up shop over in the staff office of the Senate Post Office Committee [Senate Post Office and Civil Service Committee], which was under the sponsorship of Senator Olin Johnston [Olin D. Johnston] of South Carolina, the chairman of the Senate Post Office Committee, and I spent nearly all of my time over there until the Inauguration and until we were sworn in the following day. I did a lot of getting my staff lined up and finding out some of the major things about the department during that period and just made occasional visits over to the Post Office Department.

STEWART: As far as the selection of the bureau chiefs—they call them assistant postmasters?

DAY: Yes, the second man, who would be an undersecretary, is a deputy, and the others are called assistant postmasters general.

STEWART: Did you have any problems in any of these top appointments and, secondly, were they all made by you or were any or most of the people given to you, so to speak?

DAY: They were given to me with one exception, mainly because I wouldn't have had any idea whom to select anyway. There was no reluctance to let me choose some of them, but I didn't have any pool of people to choose from. I hadn't been that active in Democratic or federal government affairs and wouldn't have even

known who was available. I did bring my personal secretary with me from Prudential, and I brought an outstanding young lawyer from Prudential with me who I brought as a confidential assistant, sort of a special assistant, and he thereafter rose very high in the Post Office and did a great job.

The deputy, the number two man in the department, Brawley [Hiram W. Brawley], was selected and announced the same day I was, the same time I was. Senator Kennedy announced his appointment at the same time he announced my appointment, although Brawley was not down there at Palm Beach. I had never laid eyes on him or heard of him. None of the others were actually appointed or announced until I had at least met them, although they were quite logical choices.

Belen [Frederick C. Belen], who was the real man with the knowledge of postal operations, had been the staff director of the House Post Office [and Civil Service] Committee for years. He knew the Post Office and all the people involved and the congressional issues backwards and forwards. He was chosen to the more important assistant's job.

But a good friend of mine from college, who had never been active

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in politics, showed up down at this little office at the Senate Post Office Committee shortly after I came there, and—his name was Ralph Nicholson—he said that he had been in business in New York and had done very well and had no children and he wanted to come down and work for the federal government; he'd be glad to take most any kind of assignment—as an assistant to an assistant to an assistant, is the way he put it. With no trouble at all I got him appointed assistant postmaster general in charge of the Bureau of Finance, and he has served in that job for eight years. He was, therefore, in charge of all the rates and budget and electronic computers and all the rest of it. There was no problem about bringing him in.

Mike Monroney's [A. S. Monroney] son was sort of the logical one to be my legislative assistant, and a friend of his, a fellow named Jim Kelleher [James F. Kelleher], turned out to be the top public relations, public information man. A young man named Dick Murphy [Richard J. Murphy], who was only thirty-one at the time, was chosen as the assistant postmaster general in charge of personnel. He was the youngest presidential appointee in the Kennedy Administration. There was a man named Burkhardt [Robert J. Burkhardt], who had been sort of the principal full-time man in the inaugural arrangements, from New Jersey, who was chosen to head the Bureau of Facilities. So, let's see....

STEWART: Bill Hartigan [William J. Hartigan], or he came later, didn't he?

DAY: Hartigan came later, yes.

STEWART: Transportation, yes.

DAY: But it's hard to believe how none of these people meant anything to me. I'd never heard of any of them; I'd never had any occasion to pay any attention to

them. For example, when I was still out in California I received a telephone call from a Senator Johnson who only identified himself as Senator Johnson and, of course, had a southern accent, asking me to use the office space that he had when I came down here. After he hung up, I didn't know if it was Senator Olin Johnston or Senator Lyndon Johnson and had to make some inquiries to find out which it was because I didn't know Lyndon Johnson, either.

Incidentally, when I came down to Washington in early January 1961 during this transition period, I soon met this man Brawley, who had been the staff director of the Senate Post Office Committee and was chosen as the number two man in the department. He said that one of the first things we ought to do is go over and pay our respects to the Vice-President-elect, which we did. We went over to his office in the Capitol, and we were shown in eventually. When we came in, Brawley introduced me to Lyndon Johnson. With hardly a glance at me, Lyndon Johnson said to

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Brawley, "Well, Bill, I'm sure you know that if I'd been the president, you would have been the postmaster general," which was a fine start on a happy relationship with him. I think Johnson thought I was probably a pretty poor choice for the job, but he told me and told others in my presence a number of times thereafter when I was still postmaster general that he had had his doubts about some of the appointments, but as he got acquainted with the people involved, he would have made all the same selections if he had been doing it, if he had known the people that well. But I always remember that incident.

So then we had the swearing in and went about our jobs.

STEWART: Could I ask you, do you think Summerfield was purposely uncooperative, or do you think he was just not aware of what you people needed as far as the transition was concerned?

DAY: Well, he didn't mean to be uncooperative. He meant to be tremendously cooperative, but he and I just didn't think on the same wavelength. For example, I asked him a number of fairly simple questions about the Post Office budget and their financial situation, and I might as well have been asking a chair because he wasn't interested in all those details. He didn't know that sort of thing. I am told that when he testified before congressional committees he always had a bunch of assistants hovering around him and whenever he was asked a question, people passed him notes and whispered things in his ear, which isn't too unusual except I just like all that kind of detail and I can lap up facts about something like that like a vacuum cleaner. So I didn't feel that I was getting anything worthwhile from him. He would show us movies that were made in connection with certain commemorative stamps, a movie of Mt. Vernon or something of that kind. Well, at that point, with all the urgent things I had to get ready for, I wasn't interested in that sort of thing or sort of visual aid displays of what they were doing in the way of various research projects. But he meant to be very cordial.

Of course, there had been a lot of bad will between him and the people over in the congressional groups, so I wasn't encouraged to get too close to him. For example, at the

time we took over there were twelve hundred Republican postmasters who had been appointed who had never been confirmed, so they had never acquired tenure. And when we took over they were all subject to being removed and nearly all of them were removed quite promptly. Their confirmations had been held up for I guess a year or more by Olin Johnston because of the possibility the administration was going to change.

But Summerfield was courteous to me and tried to be helpful.

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STEWART: During all this period, or namely in the period before the inauguration, did you have any discussions with the President or with people around him on exactly how he was going to operate as far as he and his Cabinet was concerned?

DAY: Not in the least. I didn't see the President during that period at all. I didn't see any of his staff that were functioning on issues of substance. I didn't hear anything from anybody about how he was going to function as far as the Cabinet was concerned or what if anything he wanted done as far as the Post Office was concerned. But it was assumed by all concerned, and I guess it had been discussed with Brawley, that the Administration would immediately come in with a proposal for increasing postal rates, and that seemed to be the big preoccupation and the big interest as though nothing else mattered to some of the people involved in that preparatory period. But I heard nothing directly or indirectly from the President and didn't see him. I guess I saw him at—no, I think I didn't actually see him until the Inauguration.

Then when we had our first Cabinet meeting there wasn't much said about his plans for using the Cabinet. He had everybody around the table give a five minute run-down on what they had found in their departments that they were taking over. One of the main physical changes that was made in the setup in the Cabinet is that instead of a large number of assistants and back-up men and deputies being in the room during the Cabinet meetings, there were only five people aside from the members of the Cabinet who were in the room: the chairman of the Civil Service Commission; the head of the Council of Economic Advisors; the secretary of the Cabinet, who at that time was Fred Dutton [Frederick G. Dutton]; Ted Sorensen [Theodore C. Sorensen], counsel to the President; and Bell [David E. Bell], the director of the budget. That made for a more informal atmosphere. I had the impression from various things that there at the start the President planned to have fairly regular Cabinet meetings and vaguely thought in his mind of a schedule of every two weeks or something like that, but, of course, that never worked out.

STEWART: You mentioned in your book that you thought, at least—correct me, if I'm wrong—the reasons he didn't have the Cabinet meetings more often and didn't rely on the Cabinet were that the members of the Cabinet were independent people and people who in fact had their own responsibilities and would act more independently than, for example, people on the President's staff and that perhaps President Kennedy got a little restless and impatient at having to sit at big meetings and listen to people who had their own independent views on a lot of things.

DAY: Yes, I think all of that is true. I think a number of these things he planned to do in his own way with

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advice from his people that he was used to having around him, a few very close personal advisors. He didn't care to have a town meeting on all these subjects, plus the fact that he felt that simply because one was the head of one of the executive departments didn't make him an expert on everything that might come up in a Cabinet meeting. He stated in an interview one time that he didn't see any use conferring with the postmaster general about Vietnam. I always assumed he was using that merely as an example because I think probably my views on Vietnam are better than a good many of the people in that room as it turned out.

We weren't encouraged to get into a discussion of things outside of our own fields, and I thought at every meeting that he was quite anxious to get it over with and didn't encourage extended debate on subjects and didn't seem to want to have that particular group function on things. Of course, he was principally interested in the international field and the political problems and the public relations aspect, and he had his own experts on the international problems. There was some discussion at one of the meetings as to whether the various Cabinet members were going to be briefed on international issues so that they would be able to speak with some competence when they went on trips and were in press conferences and so on. Arthur Goldberg [Arthur J. Goldberg] was quite anxious to be briefed so that he could be up-to-date on international issues. I felt it was absolutely impossible with everything else I had to do to keep briefed. Even if I had been thoroughly briefed one day, in a couple of days I'd be out of date, and if I attempted to comment on the Cuban situation or something, being out of date by several days, it would only get things messed up and get me in trouble. So I never had any particular desire to be briefed regularly, and we actually never were.

Then I proceeded on with my job. Just by accident I turned out to have a lot of things in my background that made it a good spot for me, plus the fact that I liked being in Washington. I had always wanted to be down here, and I liked politics and government, but also I had been with a very big organization. The Prudential is remarkably similar to the Post Office with offices in every town and large numbers of employees, it has a lot of money to handle and has to give service, it has a corps of inspectors going around checking up on people. There are many parallels. So when I came to the Post Office, I often felt as though I had just moved to a different desk in the same big organization. I think I was able to catch on to the situation more rapidly as a result of that kind of background. And I did, in the persons of Belen and Nicholson and Murphy and a number of the others, have a remarkable staff. Really, I've never been around people with such imagination and capability and reliability, all the things anybody would seek in running an operation of that kind. So I got deeply involved in all the

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details of the department very soon.

STEWART: Were there any other members of the Cabinet to your knowledge who were sort of unhappy with the President's approach to Cabinet meetings and his treatment of the Cabinet in general?

DAY: You say "Other." I didn't say I was unhappy with his approach. But I think some Cabinet members were. One time Secretary Hodges [Luther H. Hodges] said in a Cabinet meeting that he would like more opportunities to meet with the President. That was really part of the same problem: people such as myself and Hodges who were not in jobs that had to do with the international crises very seldom saw the President. Hodges said he would like to see him more often. One of the other Cabinet members spoke up, quite unnecessarily and rudely, and said, "Well, anybody that has to be advised about how to run his department shouldn't be a Cabinet member."

STEWART: Would you care to say who that was?

DAY: Yes, that was Ribicoff [Abraham A. Ribicoff]. He was a very abrasive and unpleasant personality to be around. When he retired to run for the Senate, the other members of the Cabinet had a party out on the Sequoia, one of the government yachts, to wish him good-bye. The wives were there, Dean Rusk [Dean Rusk] and Mrs. Rusk [Virginia Foisie Rusk] and a few top members of the White House staff and all the other Cabinet members, so far as I know. Dean Rusk made a very gracious speech, very nice little remarks. I was called on to say something briefly in a friendly nice send off, and when I got through Ribicoff said, "Well, if this son-of-a-bitch Day, doesn't get more political over there at the Post Office, we're all sunk." That was his response to my remarks. He wasn't trying to be humorous by any means. He was sore about some announcement of a little two bit Post Office building in Connecticut, and he had his facts all wrong at that. The silly thing was announced under the accepted system through political channels. He also said in his remarks, "You know, up there in Connecticut the Democrats don't go for all these super-liberals, and it's not doing me any good to have people up there think that I've been down here associating with all out liberals like Orville Freeman [Orville Lathrop Freeman] and Arthur Goldberg." Bobby Kennedy spoke up quick as a wink and said, "Abe, you just tell them up there the President practically never has any Cabinet meetings and you never even met those fellows." Which had a little bit of truth in it.

STEWART: Do you ever recall any instances of actual resistance in getting appointments to see the President, or was it always a matter of just putting you off and saying his schedule was tight that particular day or...?

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DAY: Well, I didn't seek to see him very often because I enjoyed and felt comfortable in the responsibilities of the department. I'm a decisive type of a



personality, and there was never anything that caused me to think that he was dissatisfied with the way things were being done over at the Post Office. He actually was bored to death with the Post Office. I don't think he was the least bit interested in it or wanted to hear anything about it. He seemed to be interested in more than a perfunctory way when I would make comments on various other subject at Cabinet meetings because I didn't bring up the Post Office in Cabinet meetings. I used to hear about how Summerfield was always bringing up the postal deficit in one Cabinet meeting after another, and I can't imagine anything more tiresome to other people.

I didn't seek very many meetings, although I did tell Mike Feldman [Myer Feldman] one time, I said, "I think it would be so helpful if the President would see each of the Cabinet members that he doesn't otherwise see for only five minutes every couple of weeks." Now, my reason for that was because a Cabinet member, particularly in a highly political department like the Post Office and with all the employees organized into very militant unions with lots of stresses and power plays, your power and prestige is only derivative. I was nothing on my own. Everybody keeps up with who is getting in to see the president, and it's a big thing as to whether you're thought to be close to the throne or whether you're just thought to be kind of left out. I really wanted that kind of identification for the purpose of strengthening my hand in running the department, but Mike said, "Oh, well, he just doesn't like to operate that way."

And it's true that he didn't and there were practically nothing in the way of meetings over there that involved postal problems. Many members of the White House staff were dabbling into postal matters, principally on appointments and jobs. Nobody over there seemed to be very much involved in the policy issues, management issues of the department. That was all right with me because I enjoyed running my own show. I didn't like the White House staff people calling so many different Post Office people and giving so many different orders about Post Office job appointments because I wanted to avoid scandal and bad publicity or bringing incompetent hacks on board. I was perfectly adjusted without any back seat driving to going along with the patronage aspects of the Post Office and I had had a lot more direct experience with patronage than most of them the White House staff people because I had been high up in Adlai Stevenson's administration and there was lots of patronage in Illinois. As far as policy things were concerned, there wasn't much of anybody at the White House who took an interest in them. And I very seldom sought an audience to take up anything.

I only had three meetings with President Kennedy on purely Post

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Office problems where I just went in and sat down and talked to him about them. I tried to convince him very early in the game, a few weeks after I was appointed, that the rate increase he wanted to ask for the postal rate increase, was too high and that it wouldn't be saleable over in Congress and that we ought to have a modified rate increase. He quite understandably didn't agree with that, and we went ahead with pushing in Congress the increase that had been proposed. Then I was over there about a year later about a very complicated matter on parcel post. An I then went over one time for a meeting where I had three things that I wanted to do in 1963 that were rather major decisions. I ticked them off with him, and he

listened and approved all of them. He didn't show any signs of wanting to go into them very deeply; he was going to leave it to me.

STEWART: As far as your relations with the White House staff, any problems that you did were primarily over appointments?

DAY: Yes, they were a combination of too many people over there calling too many people in the Post Office and giving them orders direct about who to put on the payroll or people they wanted promoted or personnel problems of a detailed nature, that they had some friend who was a letter carrier and wanted to be promoted or all kinds of things like that, just messing around in details, and some of them quite major as far as appointments were concerned.

And then also it was a matter of dealing much too much with the deputy and by-passing me. I believe that the thought was that since Brawley had had an extensive experience on Capitol Hill and I had had none and since Brawley was supposedly a postal expert and I was not and he was very political and I was not, that I would be sort of the front man and the businessman in the top job and that Brawley would take care of the filling of the jobs and of relationships with the members of Congress and things of that kind. That didn't work from the beginning because Brawley was a person of very limited ability. He simply wasn't able to do those things as far as anything of substance was concerned. He was very much under the thumb of the White House staff people. Whenever they called him, he'd jump. So they were able to issue a lot of orders through him that I usually would have gone along with but I certainly thought it was proper I should function on, because I never was cut out to be a figurehead. I don't know whether President Kennedy ever thought in his own mind that that was the arrangement particularly. He probably did think that he was going to leave all the political end of it to his staff people and to such people in the Post Office hierarchy as they worked with because I don't think he was interested in all that detail.

The problem of the relationship of the top man and the number two

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man in the Cabinet departments was not confined to the Post Office, of course. When Celebrezze [Anthony J. Celebrezze] came in as secretary of H.E.W. [Health, Education and Welfare], he very soon was not on speaking terms with his number two man. Bill Wirtz as secretary of labor had a long drawn out cold war with his number two man. It's a symptom of the fact that in no organization can you have two bosses. Some of them may have thought that I was going to be docile and let somebody else run things, but I couldn't possibly have adjusted to that situation.

Some of the White House staff people were very disturbed that I didn't just accept everything that they wanted done. There was one appointment that there was an attempt to push down my throat in a very high position in the department, and I simply couldn't accept the man, although the man is still very friendly with me, he was a pleasant personality and so on, but it was out of the question to put him in the job. I felt that Kenny O'Donnell [Kenneth P. O'Donnell] never forgave me for refusing to accept this man in this job. O'Donnell, I

thought, always made it difficult for me to have access to the President and also was glad to exclude me from anything he could as far as White House activities were concerned.

STEWART: Did you ever try to sit down and straighten this out, you know, especially, say, during 1961, or didn't the situation become that difficult until later?

DAY: Well, I told the President pretty early in the game, that it seemed to me—I felt that O'Donnell had it in for me because I know one of the visits I paid over there, it seemed to me it was fairly early in the game, the President had arranged for me to come into his office through Mrs. Lincoln's [Evelyn N. Lincoln] office rather than the usual way in through Kenneth O'Donnell's office.

O'Donnell never called me on the phone or communicated with me. He was always very cold to me, but, of course, he had a highly political background and I play my politics in a different way. I'm not non-political and not naive about political considerations, but I felt that when you get up on the presidential level, where you're absolutely under the microscope of a very alert and observing press, that you've got to do things differently than you do on the state level or the local level as far as playing politics is concerned. My philosophy was that good government is really the best politics at that level and anything that is crude or poor judgment is likely to be found out and to come back to haunt you; that's what I felt about this appointment of this man to this high job. I could just see it turning into a scandal for President Kennedy, and whether O'Donnell wanted it or anybody else, I wasn't going to run the risk of President Kennedy having that bad publicity and that

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black mark on his record.

STEWART: Was he appointed?

DAY: No, he was not. I absolutely refused to accept him. Of course he was hopeless; he never did get anything of any significance. He was just a crony of Kenneth's that didn't have any qualifications in any respect, and this spot where O'Donnell wanted to put him was the bureau of the department that had the responsibility for about a billion dollar-a-year budget and for some of the most complicated and sensitive contracts the Post Office has. But he never was appointed.

STEWART: Do you care to mention who it was?

DAY: Well, I think I'd probably better not.

STEWART: In June of '62, as I understand it, you almost resigned?

DAY: Yes. Well, things went from bad to worse with the relationship with Brawley. He was constantly trying to act like he was the postmaster general, and he was

completely disloyal and treacherous as far as I was concerned. In addition he was hopelessly incompetent as far as ever carrying out any of the real management duties of the department. He's one of these people which are quite common in Washington, especially over on Capitol Hill staffs, that spend all their time on the telephone, kind of whispering conspiratorial gossip and so on back and forth to other people, but if you'd ask them to actually put something down on paper or get something important done or organized, why they're at an absolute loss. But I could have easily gone along with that if he had just fitted into the organizational setup.

But there were more and more incidents where he was doing things without checking with me and quite deliberately so and seemed to be anxious to embarrass me by having things happen that I hadn't had a chance to function on. Just a little example, and it's not big in itself, but it's highly typical: this fellow Kelleher I mentioned, who was in charge of public relations and who also was in charge of the programs for special stamps, for commemorative stamps, was an absolute genius. When they began talking about the space program and having a man go into space, he conceived the idea of with complete secrecy of preparing a commemorative stamp for the space program and having it all designed, engraved and distributed to all the largest post offices on a completely confidential basis so that it would be available immediately after the first space flight was completed. It's hard enough to do anything secretly in the government, particularly in the Post Office because it doesn't have any real security aspects, but

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doggone it, it was achieved and these stamps were all ready for the first date that John Glenn was supposed to make his flight. And it was postponed many times, but even during those postponements the thing never leaked out. When Glenn did make his flight, within ten minutes after he came back to earth, we released this stamp all over the country, the Project Mercury stamp. And it was quite a sensation, and it pleased President Kennedy considerable because it was quite a nice recognition.

Well, because there had been so many postponements I happened to be up in Canada checking on postal mechanization at the time the stamp was actually released. I got back to Washington the next day, and there was a note, surprisingly, that Kenneth O'Donnell had called me and that when I wasn't there he had talked to Brawley. So I went in to Brawley and said, "What did Kenneth O'Donnell want?" He said, "Oh. Oh, he just called to talk about a man you wanted appointed to a position in the department."

Well, that didn't make sense to me, so I called O'Donnell. He was rather sheepish, and I said, "Well, what did you want?" He said, "Well, John Glenn is going to be in Washington on Saturday, and the President wanted you to be over here to be part of the welcoming party and give him a special album of those Project Mercury stamps." I said, "Well, that's very nice. I'll certainly be there."

So I inquired after O'Donnell hung up where the special album of Project Mercury stamps were, and it turned out Brawley had it, that he'd arranged with O'Donnell for him to go over there and present the album to John Glenn in President Kennedy's office and he wasn't even going to tell me anything about it. Well, it was so childish and so outrageous that it's almost beyond description. Then when I asked him to give me the album of stamps, he

wouldn't give them to me. We had a terrible blowup about that, and I told him then—as I did a number of times—that there was only one Postmaster General. But he just sulked around. Well, that was just one of the numerous things that were really outlandish.

So we got up to the middle of 1962, and the postal rate bill, a new postal rate bill, was very active and was about to go through then. There was a very important strategy decision as to how to handle the bill, whether to tie up the increase in postal rates with an increase in federal employee pay, and I was against that and said I was. The next thing you know I attended a meeting, and Arthur Goldberg was there. He said, "Well, Brawley had advised us that the Post Office Department wants the postal rate increase tied to the postal pay, which was Brawley directly violating my orders and operating on his own and dealing with people he shouldn't even have been dealing with.

So I went over and saw President Kennedy and told him that I

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wasn't going to be able to continue with Brawley any longer, that one of us would have to go, I didn't care which one. He just wanted to put the thing off. He said, "Well just wait until after the election." This was in the summer, and I didn't know what the election, the congressional election in the fall, had to do with it, but he said let's just put it off until after the election. He was so nice about it and had so many other problems on his mind that I reluctantly went along with that.

I left, and I got back to the department, and within the next couple of days there were even more outrageous incidents of Brawley trying to undermine me and running the risk of getting me and everybody else in trouble. So one night at home I got fed up with this, and I told my wife I was resigning the next morning, no ifs, ands, or buts. I got down to the office the next morning, and I called up President Kennedy, and I said, "I am resigning today. I just can't stay any longer with this Brawley situation. I'll just leave quietly, and that's all there is to it."

So very soon Bobby Kennedy called me and asked if he could come over and see me. I said, "Well, there really isn't anything to talk about because I've made my decision and it is absolutely final."

STEWART: What was the President's reaction when you told him? Do you recall?

DAY: I'd say he pretty much just listened. I don't recall him giving me any argument. He knew what the situation was, and he knew how strongly I felt about it because I'd been to see him just shortly before.

So I said to Bobby there was no use coming over. He insisted and said, "Certainly you should allow me the chance to come over there and see you and talk to you." I had told a few of the top staff people in the department that I was leaving. Unknown to me, completely unknown to me, they all gathered in an office, Mike Monroney's [Michael Monroney] office, young Mike Monroney's office, which was a couple of doors away from my office. All of the top officials, the presidential appointees and even a couple of the very highest career employees all gathered in there and soon delegated Mike Monroney to go stand outside the building and wait for Bobby Kennedy. When he came in the building—of course, Brawley

wasn't part of this. I'd given him a few words that morning after I talked to the President, and that was the last I ever saw of him.

So Monroney waited for Bobby, and when Bobby came in the building, all completely unknown to me, they asked him to come in with all this group. And all this group said, "If Day leaves and Brawley stays, we're all leaving today, too, because it's

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absolutely intolerable to be here with Brawley." And I doubt if Bobby cared much for that because it sounded like throwing down the gauntlet.

But when he did come into my office after that delay (which I didn't know the cause of it until afterward) he had been told that. He talked to me very persuasively along the line that this would hurt the President and I had a duty to him and that he would see that Brawley was removed from the job that day and that the contacts with the White House would be limited to just one staff man over there rather than having all these people calling. And Brawley was taken out immediately.

So I did stay on, which I was very glad I did because that additional period was freed of all these tensions. I then had Belen as my number two man. In fact he was never named the deputy at that time, although Johnson named him deputy thereafter, after I had left.

STEWART: There was some problem, wasn't there, in appointing him?

DAY: Not that I ever knew of. I always thought that the refusal to give me a number two man for a whole year was a little bit of—more than a little bit—of punishing me for having taken such a firm position and insisted on leaving and really forcing the issue. I tried to get Belen appointed and never could get anyplace on it. And then, right toward the end, Bishop [Sidney W. Bishop], who was the man I'd brought with me from the Prudential, was appointed. He's a very fine man and I think the world of him, but he wasn't at all suitable to be the deputy. He didn't know about the operating end of the Post Office. He'd had to do with the building and space. So that was apparently purely and simply a mix up over at the White House. Apparently some of them thought when I did have to resign in the summer of 1963, simply because I was in debt and running out of money, I guess some of them thought that was another maneuver and that maybe if they'd do something to please me that I'd stay on. I guess they thought Bishop, being the man I'd brought from Prudential, if they'd put him in as deputy I'd be delighted. But I'd decided definitely to leave then and did leave shortly after Bishop was appointed. He was only there rather briefly after Gronouski [John A. Gronouski, Jr.] came in, and then he left the Post Office entirely.

But that situation in the summer of 1962 was a terrible big crisis, and all of it was complicated by the fact that I didn't know any of these individuals and only got to know them very slightly and very gradually as time went on. [Interruption] ...because I'm quite a gregarious person and I can adjust to most any kind of people. But not knowing any of the persons involved and particularly not knowing how important and powerful Kenneth

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O'Donnell was or not knowing others at the White House well enough to feel relaxed and confident about talking to them about my problems, I felt rather out on a limb about this particular personnel problem. It's the only one I had. The other top people were either outstanding or else such few of them as weren't they weren't any problem for me.

STEWART: Donahue [Richard K. Donahue], as I understand, was the main contact between Post Office and White House staff after June 1962. How did that work out? Was he generally satisfactory as far as you were concerned?

DAY: No, that didn't work out well. Donahue was not sympathetic with my way of doing things. He didn't really do anything to facilitate my situation. When Bobby Kennedy asked me who I would like to have as the one man who would be the White House contact with the department, I said Ralph Dungan [Ralph A. Dungan]. Bobby agreed to that at the time, but then he phoned me shortly afterwards and said that Dungan was too tied up with other things and it would be all right to have Donahue. I scarcely knew Donahue, but he wasn't a very good one for the purpose. [Interruption]

STEWART: Ted Sorensen makes a statement in his book that, and I'm quoting, "Unfortunately he," meaning you, "was more capable of making uncleared and uncalled for public statements than of dealing with the practical political channels through his deputy."

DAY: Well, the only case of that that I can think of that would, as far as I know, have come to Sorensen's attention had to do with the awful mess we had on a colored letter carrier down in Savannah, the famous Law [Wesley W. Law] case. I tried my best to get this straightened out quietly. I did have some very poor staff work on that which got the problem all fouled up. It never should have even been a problem, but it was one of those things that was out of hand before I ever heard of it. This man had been—this letter carrier had done enough so that he certainly didn't fit into the traditions of a good postal employee.

Then it got into a big political fight. Senator Case [Clifford Philip Case] kept putting ugly statements in the Congressional Record accusing me of discrimination and so on. I got very mad about the situation, and when the board that I had appointed decided that this letter carrier could not be fired, I made the statement that we would have to keep him because I had no choice, but he wasn't the kind of a person that I would want delivering mail to my family's house. This was because the thing he was charged with was relieving himself on the front lawn of a patron's house. But he was the state president of the N.A.A.C.P. [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People] in Georgia, and it was a

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sensitive thing for that reason.

So the President was asked about my statement during one of his press conferences, and he said that he thought perhaps I would want to recast my statement. So after I heard that

I did get out the statement again without that last sentence. And I'm sure from where Ted Sorensen sat—and he was a very, I wouldn't say he was a palsy-walsy type of friend with me, but he was a tower of strength as far as issues of substance and understanding the problems of the Post Office and being somebody that one could work with on an intelligent basis—but I can see that that, from where he sat, was a pretty controversial statement because this fellow was the head of the N.A.A.C.P. My statement made it look to a lot of outsiders as though I was right and wanted to fire this man but that for political reasons I had been overruled. That overruling, of course, could only have come from one source, and when I made an angry statement, it sounded like a criticism, to some, of the President. So that's about the only thing I can think of because I didn't really have much occasion to come to the attention of the White House.

As far as the other part of his statement that I wasn't political enough, I did insist on following the law which says that promotions of postal employees must be on the basis of merit and not through political influence, and that hadn't been followed in the past. There were a number of Congressional and political people, particularly from the New York City area, who were infuriated that I wouldn't let them manipulate all the postal promotions. I'm sure some of those complaints got back to Ted Sorensen and others. All Postmasters General say they're going to have only merit promotions, but it's usually not followed, and that's the sort of thing where Brawley was undermining me. He wouldn't follow my instructions on something like that.

STEWART: Well, you people did put through a merit promotion plan which was the first one on paper, anyway, that existed.

DAY: Yes, we did. We did. We put it through, and we followed it very conscientiously.

STEWART: You mentioned before the postal rate bill that was introduced in 1961 and finally passed in 1962. Were you generally in agreement with the way this was handled as far as the White House was concerned and as far as accepting the reductions and the compromises that had to be accepted?

DAY: Well, I wanted a lower increase because it was higher than the pattern of increases in past postal rate bills. I wanted to have something that would be accepted over there in Congress and would pass. But as I mentioned, I couldn't convince the President on that, so we

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couldn't get the bill passed at all in 1961. In 1962 we modified it considerably and reduced some of the increases, and it was passed. I didn't have any particular objections to the way that was handled.

One of the things which I didn't approve of which was typical of the operation of some of the others was that I didn't want to use a whole army of postal employees and postal officials to go over to Capitol Hill and lobby in favor of all kinds of administration measures



and bills that didn't have anything to do with the Post Office. I resisted that; I didn't like that system. I didn't think that that was a proper function for the Post Office Department, and I didn't think we should be expected to do that. It was again something that was worked out with Brawley and I was never asked about. But as far as the postal increase itself, that worked all right, and we got the bill through.

STEWART: Do you ever recall any conversations with Adlai Stevenson during the Kennedy Administration, specifically regarding his relationship with the President and his difficulties at the U.N.[United Nations]?

DAY: I can't pinpoint any conversations, and I can't be sure of my impressions because Adlai had a habit with his friends of sort of complaining and seeming to be feeling sorry for himself, acting as though he was put upon and so on. But I certainly had the feeling that he wasn't really in the inner circle as far as the Kennedy Administration is concerned.

I remember afterward—well, when he used to come down here to Washington during the Kennedy Administration, he used to almost always stay over at the home of Dr. Paul Magnuson [Paul Budd Magnuson]. After the assassination and after President Johnson had taken over I remember asking Dr. Magnuson how Adlai was, and he said, "Oh, I never see him anymore." He said, "During the Kennedy days whenever he came down here, he always stayed at our house, but now that Johnson is in he always stays at the White House."

I had the feeling Adlai wasn't too close to the situation. He very seldom attended the Cabinet meetings. I don't suppose he attended more than three or four of them during the time I was in office.

STEWART: Was there ever any discussion either within the Post Office or with people at the White House of the type of reorganization or total look at the Post Office that's gone on in the last year or two?

DAY: No, there wasn't. There have been proposals, and I became familiar with them fairly soon. There had been proposals over the years from way back when to change

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the Post Office to a government corporation or a T.V.A. [Tennessee Valley Authority] type corporation or something of that kind. People wrote to me with the idea as though it was a new suggestion on various occasions and I responded to them and commented on it, but I'd say it never got any very serious consideration. I think from the standpoint of people who are deeply in the Post Office problems, the idea doesn't make too much sense, but it's very popular with people on the outside, particularly the Chamber of Commerce types. But I'd never heard any discussion of anything of that kind.

Everything along that line as far as President Kennedy was concerned is part of the fact that he didn't show the slightest sign of being the least bit interested in anything about the Post Office except to some extent the designs and subjects of the commemorative stamps.

And he didn't have the time available or make the time available so he could learn very much about it. I don't suppose I could have forced my attentions on him because he didn't want to get into postal problems, but being the kind of person I was, I was satisfied to run my own show anyway, so I didn't see him very much.

STEWART: Just one last question. Ted Sorensen also says that the President never fully understood your reasons for leaving in 1963 when you did. Do you recall whether you sat down and talked to him about your leaving and what his reactions were?

DAY: Yes, I do. I mentioned earlier, however, that I think that some of them and possibly the President himself felt that I never really got over my resentment about this Brawley situation and about the relations with O'Donnell and that sort of thing, although they shouldn't loom too large in the total picture as far as I was concerned because I enjoyed the job and in relation to others who have been in it recently I did better than average.

But I went over to see the President, and it was purely and simply a matter that I was running out of money. I had a lot of expense and a lot of commitments. I didn't have anything to fall back on, and I was doing a lot of worrying about money. I'd borrowed money from my old father [James Almond Day] who was in his nineties, and I refinanced my house, and I borrowed on my life insurance. I generally got fouled up financially, and it was getting me down. I was waking up many times during the night worrying about finances. So I went over and told him in May of 1963 that I was going to have to quit purely because of financial reasons, that it had nothing to do with any past problems or any dissatisfactions or anything about the job or about relations with him or his Administration, there was just no way to avoid it. He said, well, he could well understand, and he was very understanding. He said he would look around for a successor and

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to say nothing about it until he'd gotten somebody else.

I heard nothing more about it directly. The news didn't leak out, although I suppose some of those White House staff people knew it. It was about that time that this surprising appointment of this Mr. Bishop as deputy came through. As I said, I think that must have been thought of at least by some of the White House staff people as a thing they thought was going to appease me, and that was completely wrong because it wasn't that kind of a problem at all. I was just leaving because of the money.

So I didn't hear and I didn't hear, and my worries over finances were getting worse and worse. Weeks went by, and I didn't hear anything. In the first place, I had a terrible time getting an appointment with the President to talk to him and to tell him I was going to resign. I guess they thought I wanted to talk to him about this Deputy thing or something, but then, after I finally did...

STEWART: Didn't Senator Engle [Clair Engle] get involved?

DAY: Yes, after I didn't hear anything I finally asked Senator Engle to help me out, and he called the President. The President did call me right back and tell me that it was going to be announced the next day. I heard thereafter that he was quite irritated about that. He felt he was being rushed, and he felt I was hurrying things and sort of leaving him in the lurch. I did leave, and they didn't announce my successor for over a month thereafter. In fact, I think it was about six weeks before Gronouski actually took over.

But that's all there was to it. It was purely and simply financial. As far as the considerable amount of in-fighting over there, while many people assumed I didn't like that, I rather enjoyed it. And as far as the decisions and the problems and the crises, I enjoyed those, too. But I always had this preoccupation about the finances.

STEWART: Did you see the President after that?

DAY: No. He did send me an unusually warm letter which is up there on the wall. Ted Sorensen and Mike Feldman wrote me a very warm hand-written letters expressing their regret about my leaving. Then some of the people in the government wanted to have sort of a typical Cabinet level goodbye party and were told, I assume by O'Donnell, that that was not to be, so there never was any such.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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