

**John J. Sparkman Oral History Interview—JFK #1, 5/11/1978**  
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**Biographical Note**

John J. Sparkman (1899-1985) served as a Democratic Senator from Alabama from 1946 to 1979. This interview focuses on Sparkman's evaluation of working with John F. Kennedy (JFK), JFK's stance on civil rights and desegregation, and Sparkman's perceptions of JFK and Robert F. Kennedy (RFK), among other issues.

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Oral History Interview

Of

John J. Sparkman

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Oral History Interview

with

JOHN J. SPARKMAN

May 11, 1978  
Washington, D.C.

By Sheldon Stern and Bobbie Greene

For the John F. Kennedy Library

STERN: Senator Sparkman, I wonder if you might be able to recall your first contacts with John Kennedy in the Congress, either when he was in the House or afterwards when he was in the Senate.

SPARKMAN: I knew him when he was in the House, yes, and then, of course, he came over to the Senate and I knew him still better.

STERN: Do you have any specific recollections of working with him, for example, on the Small Business Committee — on tax cuts for small business, that kind of thing?

SPARKMAN: Well, I don't remember it in detail, but he was a very good man on our committee, and he always stood for what was right, you always got the impression that he was not concerned

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with hoarding and protecting his wealth, he wanted to do what was good for the country.

STERN: Do you have any particular recollections of his service on the Foreign Relations Committee of his, for example, his Algeria speech which stirred up a great deal of controversy at the time?

SPARKMAN: Well, John had an international mind — I'll put it that way. Of course, he'd spent time in England, as you know, and travelled in Europe and I don't know where else, and he had what you might say an international mind and he was always attuned to what was going on in the world.

STERN: Do you think that by 1957 when he was selected for the Foreign Relations Committee that he already had his eye on the presidency?

SPARKMAN: That's hard to say. I would guess, yes. [Laugh] It's just.... It's pretty much like the present situation when people are speculating about Ted [Edward M. Kennedy]. Ted denies he's interested in running in 1980 and yet, as I gather, a great proportion of the American people seem determined that he shall run.

STERN: I was very interested in finding, in the

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Kennedy papers at the Library, that Senator Kennedy's staff, particularly Ted Sorensen [Theodore C. Sorensen] and Steve Smith [Stephen E. Smith], made an extraordinary effort to cultivate Alabama delegates between 1956 and 1960 — there are literally dozens of letters — and he did pretty well in getting support in Alabama. Did you have anything to do with that at all — any contact with that?

SPARKMAN: Well, I wouldn't say.... I certainly didn't set it up, and I didn't run it, but I lent all the encouragement I could to it.

STERN: Uh-huh.

GREENE: What characteristics do you think of President Kennedy appealed to Alabamians — the Alabamians who did support him?

SPARKMAN: I would say his forthrightness, that's the best word I can think of in connection with it. He always had a friendly attitude and people just liked him upon meeting him.

GREENE: What about the matter of civil rights at that point — was there much reluctance to go with him because of his more liberal stand?

SPARKMAN: .... Let me see now, that was in 19 — and...

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GREENE: '59-'60.

SPARKMAN: 19 — the nomination was in the convention of '60. Civil rights as an issue had started to play out at that time, as a matter of fact, in the Democratic convention in Chicago that year, I served on the Resolutions committee — Rules Committee, they called it — and it was resolutions — that was our job to draw up resolutions — and I.... They played me up a good bit out there on the ground that I was taking.... trying to take a.... work out a solution to the civil rights program. By the way, Senator Lehman [Herbert H. Lehman] of New York was very helpful in that, although he was a New Yorker who strongly believed in strong civil rights, and my contention was, all the way through, that it ought to be a matter of each individual state deciding for itself on those issues and it did become, very largely, that, and Jack Kennedy had a friendly idea — was friendly to the idea and he had a very fine and friendly approach to people. It attracted the people of Alabama.

STERN: Do you think that his religion was an issue

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at all in Alabama in 1960?

SPARKMAN: If so, it is prac.... No, I wouldn't say it was an issue at all in Alabama and if there may have been people who disagreed with his religion.... but, it didn't amount to anything.

STERN: Did...

SPARKMAN: It was not widespread at all.

STERN: Did you campaign with him in Alabama when he visited the state during the campaign?

SPARKMAN: I just don't remember now — of course, most of my campaigning was out over the country; I campaigned on a national basis, and, offhand, I do not remember and I don't believe I was with him in Alabama.

GREENE: Do you remember either President Kennedy, or Robert Kennedy [Robert F. Kennedy] or, perhaps, Senator Smathers [George A. Smathers], who was his southern coordinator, coming to you during the campaign at all for advice on issues in the south and how to handle them?

SPARKMAN: Yes, we had talks from time to time. Of course, as you say, George Smathers was the coordinator, and we got along very well in those respects.

STERN: Do you have any — one curious thing about the

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campaign was the fact that, although Senator Kennedy carried the state of Alabama by a fairly substantial margin...

SPARKMAN: Yes he did.

STERN: ...about fifty-five percent, that he lost six of the electoral votes, which were cast for Senator Byrd [Harry Flood Byrd]....

SPARKMAN: [Laugh] Oh well, that was [Laugh] — you see, our electors are elected separately; it's not automatic — we don't have them as a slate for or against but they run as individuals and are elected as individuals and, as I recall, those who did not support him were from the southern part of the state — my home happens to be in the northern part of the state — we're liberated.

GREENE: What impact did you have on your own campaign from the national ticket — was it helpful or was it a problem sometimes?

SPARKMAN: In 1960 — was I running that year....?

GREENE: Yes.

SPARKMAN: No noticeable opposition though.... Well, my opposition was not too strong, put it that way.

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GREENE: It wasn't very important to you then. Do you have anything else on the campaign?

STERN: I don't think so, not particularly.

SPARKMAN: Let me say just this with reference to my campaigns, I don't know how many I've had, I guess a dozen. I've never had but one hard campaign and that was when I first ran for Congress in 1936 — there were five of us running...

GREENE: This is the primary....

SPARKMAN: ... and, by the way, I wasn't in first place — we had to run off the primaries then and I didn't win the top spot. A fellow from the other end of the district where they had a pulling together of two counties as against my one led me by 2,080 votes, but in the run-off, I won over him by 899 votes.



GREENE: "Landslide Sparkman."

SPARKMAN: [All laugh] Right-o.

GREENE: When you were chairman of the Joint Congressional Inaugural Committee, as we discussed before, it might be necessary to repeat some of the things that you said since we're doing this for a different purpose, how did you get this honor, for one thing, I was curious about that?

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SPARKMAN: Well actually Senator Hayden [Carl T. Hayden] of Arizona was supposed to be — that was, as I recall, he was chairman — I want to say chairman of the Rules Committee, but I don't believe that's right — he was chairman of the Appropriations Committee and he was the one that was supposed to serve as chairman and he asked me to take it over because he said he just couldn't do the job.

GREENE; Is there anything that you remember particularly about your conversations with President and Mrs. Kennedy [Jacqueline B. Kennedy] during the Inaugural that would give insight into how they were feeling during that time?

SPARKMAN: Well, we, of course, I mention this luncheon that Mrs. Sparkman [Ivo Hall Sparkman] and I gave for them and we had — it was held in the room upstairs — I don't remember what room it was — oh yes, the old Supreme Court chamber and we had that room well filled with persons who had been invited and we talked a good bit during the luncheon and they were good companions, they enjoyed joking and gagging, etc. and then, of course, we rode down to the Inaugural with them and we chatted all the way, didn't — we weren't

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too serious, but we enjoyed their company.

GREENE: That's nice.

STERN: After President Kennedy had been in office only a few months he was faced with the problem with the so-called Freedom Riders going into Alabama and immediately became embroiled in a difficult struggle with Governor Patterson [John M. Patterson] over that issue — I wondered if he sought your advice at all on how to handle that issue?

SPARKMAN: I don't recall that he did and I don't know whether he just thought that I would not want to be mixed-up in it or not because it was — there was pretty strong sentiment in the state of Alabama --actually divided.

GREENE: How did you feel about the way they handled that crisis, I think to send in the marshals and to see them....

SPARKMAN: Well, of course, it seemed very harsh at the time, but it worked out all right and I think it was about the best solution that could have been invoked.

GREENE: Uh-huh. Do you think you see that with the benefit of hindsight or is that kind of how you felt about it at the time?

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SPARKMAN: Well, there was a very strong feeling down there. I don't remember that I had any particular revulsion to it. As I recall, I felt that it was necessary in order to prevent a complete breakdown that might have produced bloodshed.

GREENE: Uh-huh. I have one question that sort of backs up a little bit but — your son-in-law Tazewell Shepard [Commodore Tazewell T. Shepard] became President Kennedy's naval aide and this happened sort of dramatically, as I've been able to find out, right around the time of the Inauguration. Did you recommend Admiral Shepard to President Kennedy or was there a prior acquaintance — do you remember how that occurred?

SPARKMAN: I believe there was a prior acquaintance but, yes, I told President Kennedy that I would like to recommend Tazewell Shepard. At that time he was a lieutenant commander and Jack said that, well, he liked him very much, but he felt that the rank of lieutenant commander was a little low for that job.... [Laugh] So, anyhow, he told me — he let me know just shortly thereafter that he was going to call him in — he was at sea at that time out in the

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Atlantic somewhere — and I believe he told me it was two o'clock in the morning when his telephone rang [Laugh], waked him up and it's President Kennedy ordering him to report to the White House the next day.

GREENE: [Laugh] I remember it was rather sudden...

SPARKMAN: Uh-huh.

GREENE: ... and then he was elevated to admiral fairly soon thereafter, do you remember?

SPARKMAN: Well, he was — I'm not sure that he went from lieutenant commander's rank directly to admiral — I'm just not sure. He may have promoted him to a higher rank and then later promoted him to admiral.

STERN: Do you.... one additional...

SPARKMAN: Wait a minute! Did President Kennedy — President Kennedy did not promote him to admiral...

GREENE: That came later?

SPARKMAN: Lyndon Johnson.... Lyndon Johnson [Lyndon Baines Johnson] did.

GREENE: That came later. Okay, I wasn't sure of that.

STERN: One of the — probably the most important — one of the high points of the Kennedy administration was the test ban treaty with the Soviet Union

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and I know that the President felt that you were very helpful in getting it through the Congress and then you took the trip to Moscow for the signing ceremony. Do you have any specific recollections of the problems in getting it through the Senate?

SPARKMAN: Yes, I remember it quite well. I don't recall that we had any particular trouble in lining up for the test ban treaty — it was a limited test ban treaty, so it worked out that two nations agreed and then the signing was set for Moscow and my wife and I went over there for it.

STERN: Did you feel that President Kennedy was as committed, for example, to, well, if we can use the more up-to-date word of detente — with the Soviet Union, as for example Ambassador Stevenson [Adlai E. Stevenson] was at the U.N. [United Nations]? Was there any conflict between them on this?

SPARKMAN: I don't believe so and, I'll put it this way; Jack Kennedy had implicit confidence in Adlai Stevenson and I think if Adlai Stevenson and he got their heads together they would very readily come to an agreement.

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GREENE: This is again backing up a little bit — we won't worry too much about the order of these things. I know that a gentleman who worked for you, Mr. Horne [John E. Horne] was elevated to the Small Business Administration, were there other recommendations for staff positions that you remember — for administration positions that you remember making that were filled...

SPARKMAN: Oh, you mean that I made?

GREENE: ... Yes, this is going back again a little bit...

SPARKMAN: Well, I might tell you the story of John Horne. John Horne came with me when I came to the Senate in January 1947, in fact, he went to work for me in December '46. I was the author of the Small Business Administration Act, and I don't remember whether I was requested — no we had another Small Business man, a fellow from New York — I can't recall his name right now — was head of the Small Business and he gave it up and I recommended John Horne for that place and it was given to him and then, sometime after that — oh, I don't know how long he remained head of the

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SBA — he had an opportunity to go with the Home Loan Bank Board [Federal Home Loan Bank Board] — the Savings and Loan Association — and.... Well, I'm quite sure I recommend his being appointed there and then the head of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board that place became vacant. Now that was during President Johnson's regime. I remember it because I called President Johnson — he was in Houston, Texas — and I called him on the telephone and told him that I — that this place was vacant in — head of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board and I wanted him to appoint John Horne and he said, "John, do you think John Horne can be tough enough with those Chicago and California associations?" (We were having some trouble at that time in getting things straightened out in Chicago and in Los Angeles.) I said, "Yes, he can straighten them out and he can straighten those things out in Texas, too." [Laugh] So, he said, "You got me," and he went on and named him.

STERN: All right, if we can get back to the one question which we discussed briefly before,

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the second phase of President Kenedy's difficulty in Alabama, which was the Birmingham crisis in 1963.

SPARKMAN: Oh yes. Well, we had a mayor down there.... Bull Connor [Theophilus Eugene "Bull" Connor]...

GREENE: He was the police chief...

STERN: Police chief...

SPARKMAN: Police chief — chief of police...

GREENE: Commissioner...

SPARKMAN: Commissioner of police...

STERN: ... of Public Safety.

SPARKMAN: ... and, same thing, except it's where there's a commission. He fought integration and his fight was with the mixing of the races and he was a toughie, but it kind of ran itself down — and came out all right.

STERN: There is some indication in the papers at the Library that both the Attorney General and the President called you to try and get your advice on how to handle Governor Wallace [George Corley Wallace] after he had just been elected and there were threats that he was going to stand in the schoolhouse door. Did you make any attempt to try and moderate that situation?

SPARKMAN: I don't have any clear recollection of it, but

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I'm sure I did because he was, as it goes, standing in the door, that was when Lucy.... Lucy somebody.... (Senator Sparkman's aide is trying to recollect a name and says Aurtherine Lucy.)

STERN: That was earlier.

SPARKMAN: Eh?

GREENE: Do you mean who was going into the school at that time?

SPARKMAN: Well, anyhow they all came along more or less in succession.... Aurtherine Lucy [Aurtherine J. Lucy] was her name. She was the first black enrollee at the University of Alabama, but all of that worked its way out. As I say, she was the first; I wonder how many hundred there are now, but, it solved itself.

GREENE: Their approach was to deal with the community leaders and with the business people, and the labor, and educators and everyone they could get their hands on in advance, to try to ease the situation.

SPARKMAN: That's right.

GREENE: ... Do you remember how you felt about that effort and whether you...

SPARKMAN: Well, I'll tell you, I'll tell you. At that time I was in my hometown of Huntsville. I declare it seems

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like it came before I was elected to Congress, but that couldn't be No, No. I was President of the Chamber of Commerce — my term was expiring and I got the Chamber of Commerce people together and we, in turn — we decided to put on our little program right there and we did. Those people in the Commerce decided that they were going to work this thing out; they went to the drug stores and the other places like that — restaurants — and got them to agree to serve whoever came in without any racial barriers at all, and that thing kept moving until it just came into the whole town. I remember when [Laugh] that came about. The mayor of our city sent a wire to Governor Wallace — he went over to Tuskegee and was going to try to do something there and our mayor sent him a wire and said, "Don't send your men to Huntsville." This was when they were going to integrate schools in Huntsville on the day.... The mayor said, "Don't send your people up here." He said, "We're capable of taking care of it ourselves." And so the mayor, and other leaders of the city went down

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to the school, a black dentist took his little boy by the hand, took him to that school, took him into the door and enrolled him; and that was the way the integration came there. It came not with the help of the Governor but by reason of his letting us solve our own problems.

GREENE: How understanding do you think President Kennedy was, and to an extent, Robert Kennedy, who was the Attorney General, of course, and had all the responsibility for many of these problems. How understanding were they of the regional differences between where they came from and the south and the problems that you had?

SPARKMAN: I think they fully understood it but recognized it as a problem and they worked with it in such a way that it did, as I said a while ago, more or less solved itself.

GREENE: There are some indications in things that I've come across that, on occasion, you had to say one thing publicly when, privately, you might have felt somewhat differently and.... Was there an understanding, first of all, is that accurate and second of all, was there an understanding on the part of the President that

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sometimes you would have to say things to your constituents which differed, to some extent, from what you were telling them?

SPARKMAN: I can't recall any instance of that.

GREENE: It wasn't necessary?

SPARKMAN: No. I've always been rather outspoken and spoke my piece. And, as I say, too, I think my home had something to do with it, living up in the extreme

northern part of Alabama and we're more liberal there than — certainly in those days we were. As a matter of fact we used to have a gag down at Mobile — Huntsville is just as far away from Mobile as you can get and still be in Alabama. And the Mobilians used to say that everything north of Montgomery — everybody north of Montgomery were Yankees, and all of those north of Birmingham were damn Yankess, [Laugh] and my home was a hundred miles north of Birmingham so you see....

GREENE:               So it really depends on where you're from...

SPARKMAN:           ... however, let me say this, that my heritage was the state of Tennessee. My mother's father came from eastern Tennessee, in a rock-ribbed Republican territory, and she was a Republican until the day she married my father. My father's people came from around middle Tennessee, Sparta, and they were rank Democrats,

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so I had both sides to work with.

GREENE:               That's what makes you such a good senator.

SPARKMAN:           The city officials — one of the city officials — the mayor, I believe it was, of my hometown when I was a boy, was a Republican, my mother's brother, and .... so it went. We lived together.

GREENE:               I have a couple of questions too, about two judges that were appointed from Alabama, Judge Clarence Allgood [Clarence W. Allgood] and Walter Gewin [Walter Pettus Gewin]....

SPARKMAN:           Gewin (Goo-in).

GREENE:               Gewin (Jew-in).

SPARKMAN:           Gewin (Goo-in).

GREENE:               Oh, Gewin (Goo-n).

SPARKMAN:           Hard "G."

GREENE:               Oh, Gewin (Goo-in), oh, okay, I didn't realize.... hard "G" — Gewin (Goo-in).... to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals and have heard that Judge Allgood was actually your choice and Senator Hill [Lester D. Hill] went along with that recommendation — that's not accurate?

SPARKMAN: No, no, as a matter of fact, I was trying to think where we were, Senator Hill and I were together.... It seems to me we were in New York

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and I did recommend Clarence Allgood. I had known him as a student at Auburn, a member of the same fraternity that I was. I had known Walter Gewin in Tuscaloosa and there was a very fine political leader down there named Fritz Clements and Fritz was very strong for Walter and I — no, it wasn't a case of Lister going along with me with Walter, we were both for him. My recollection is that we either called him on the telephone or wired him to tell him of the appointment.

GREENE: There was some controversy over the Allgood appointment because, if you remember, he got...

SPARKMAN: Which one?

GREENE: Allgood — Clarence Allgood. He got an unqualified rating from the ABA [American Bar Association] and they had to adjust it.

SPARKMAN: Well, the ABA made a mistake if they did because Clarence Allgood was one of the keenest lawyers we ever had in Alabama.

GREENE: You don't remember anything then necessarily about that nomination...

SPARKMAN: No, I don't remember any difficulty on that.

STERN: The White House appointment books — President Kennedy's appointment books indicate that you came to the White House fairly often to talk

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with him about a number of things. Do you remember what these sessions were like?

SPARKMAN: No. They were always pleasant and a lot of times we'd jabber a lot, but I did see him quite often. I was.... Let me see.... trying to figure out when he was the President; it was 1960 to '63 — he was killed November '63. By the way, I had an appointment to see him on December 4th; I wanted to talk to him about the Tennessee [Tombigbee River] and we made.... He.... I had been down to see him once before and he had suggested a way that we might work out to get some some money and I was to go down and see him on December either the 3rd or the 4th — I don't remember which and he was killed on the 22nd and Lyndon Johnson came in and I called Lyndon and told him that I had an appointment with Jack for December 3rd, and I wondered if it would be all right for me to come



on down and talk with him. He said, “No, John. Let me get straightened out in this first.” So we went — we

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did and I went down to see him, oh, at some little time after that and he said to me — I wanted — I think the starting amount was a hundred thousand dollars and he said, “Listen, I’ve got a hundred thousand dollars in a surplus fund and I can make that available, but, he said, “before I do it I want you to bring the senators down here with you from that area” So I got the senators from Alabama and Mississippi and Tennessee and maybe Kentucky — I guess I did have Kentucky — and we went down there to see him and he said, “Now I just want all of you to know — I want to know that all of you... [Interruption]

[END TAPE I]

GREENE: Do you remember that you were telling us about the visit to the White House with Lyndon Johnson with the other senators?

SPARKMAN: He wanted the senators from those states through which the canal — this was to dig a canal in the Tombigbee River so we could have shipping by water through there. We had to find rail service — by the way, the railroads didn’t fight too hard on this and the two have worked together throughout the years — and he wanted to

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know that these senators would stand behind the program.

GREENE: Good. In 19 — well, actually, during the campaign, President Kennedy kept speaking of the stroke of the pen. Do you remember that phrase referring to what he said President Eisenhower [Dwight D. Eisenhower] should have done by way of issuing an executive order to desegregate federal housing so...

SPARKMAN: Oh yes, yes, that’s when housing came....

GREENE: ... and it came back to haunt him, of course, because he received a great deal of pressure from civil rights groups....

SPARKMAN: To make a “Stroke of the pen?”

GREENE: Yes, to make the “Stroke of the pen,” but it got all wrapped up in his elevating the housing to a department level and appointing Robert Weaver [Robert C. Weaver] — what do you remember about that issue and how did you feel about the President’s strategy?

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SPARKMAN: Well, you know, we had had — prior to that, we'd had what we called the...

GREENE: Federal Home Loan Agency...

SPARKMAN: Federal Home...

GREENE: ... Finance Agency, Housing and Home Finance...

SPARKMAN: Housing and Home Finance Agency.

GREENE: That's right, I was thinking of...

SPARKMAN: We'd had that agency and Weaver, by the way, was head of that. He was from New York and I believe — well, I believe he originated in the District of Columbia, if he's the one, and he handled housing here and then they took him up to New York to handle housing and then he was named head of the Housing and Home Finance Agency, and then later, it was turned into a department and I believe he continued to serve the department.

GREENE: But there was a controversy, if you remember, because there was an opposition to the elevation to department status because there was a southern opposition to Weaver becoming the first secretary.

SPARKMAN: I don't remember that.

GREENE: Okay, and then later when it finally — it didn't pass

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but President Kennedy decided to go ahead with his executive order on housing. We have a telegram and other records which show that you did oppose that — oppose his signing that executive order on the grounds that it would hurt the economy. I wonder if you remember that.

STERN: This is the "Stroke of the Pen" order, as it was called at the time.

SPARKMAN: The what?

STERN: The so-called Stroke of the Pen order.

SPARKMAN: Oh.

GREENE: He actually signed it four days after this telegram — that was in the period when...

SPARKMAN: And this was setting up the department? No, integration of house — .... Yes, that's right, yes; that was my attitude at that time.

GREENE: Do you remember discussing it with him and trying to persuade him not to do it and what his reasons were for going ahead with it anyway and were you able to

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modify it in any way?

STERN: Did you mention, for example, that you had discussed it with him?

SPARKMAN: I don't remember anything beyond this. It was quite a problem and it came up more than once and, it seems to me — I'm not sure of this — it seems that in some areas the local states were willing to take the integration and in other areas they wouldn't, and so you had that conflict. That's the best I remember.

GREENE: Okay, because there was also a disagreement on the scope, whether it should be strictly enforced to federal housing or it should be expanded to include all housing.

SPARKMAN: Yes, that's right.

STERN: My last question has to do with the Medicare vote which is one of those that President Kennedy lost in the Congress by just a few votes. Do you have any recollection on that?

SPARKMAN: No, I don't remember anything about it at all.

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GREENE: I was wondering how you felt about Kennedy's legislative operation in general, how effective they were, Larry O'Brien [Lawrence F. O'Brien] and his staff?

SPARKMAN: Let's see, they were known as the "Irish Mafia." [Laugh] They were very good; I enjoyed working with them. I remember Shriver [R. Sargent Shriver, Jr.] for instance. Shriver.... Oh, one thing that Kennedy set up, and, by the way, he campaigned some on this issue, and that was what became the Peace Corps and Sargent Shriver was the first Peace Corps head and did a great job in getting it started and, of course, you know it's going strong now. Later he became Ambassador to Paris; we visited — my

wife and I visited them over there — while over there. It's quite a family, when you take in the Shrivvers and the Smiths and the Kennedys and....

GREENE: All the Kenendys, there are so many of them....

SPARKMAN: All of them, and even today, Ted.

GREENE: That's right.

SPARKMAN: And Rose [Rose Fitzgerald Kenendy] — don't forget Rose.

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GREENE: You know, I was going to ask you that when we were talking about the Inauguration because it's such an extraordinary experience for parents to see their son become President of the United States — for both parents to survive and see it. I wonder if you have any recollections of them at the time of the inauguration or conversations with them?

SPARKMAN: Not a great deal. They were in the parade down to the White House and Mrs. Sparkman [Ivo Hall] and I were sitting right — almost directly behind — I believe we were immediately behind him, within just a few feet of the inaugural stand and it was a great day for them.

GREENE: Could you contrast, in any way, since you served with Robert Kennedy in the Senate also, the differences pershaps between the kind of a person he was and the way he worked as opposed to his brother?

SPARKMAN: Well, I felt that Jack was more outgoing. Bobby always gave you the impression that he was deep in thought and he didn't want anybody to disturb him.

GREENE: Was he less approachable would you say?

SPARKMAN: No, no; if you were willing to break in, he was

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quite approachable. I don't want to leave the impression that he didn't want anybody to break in, I just said that it seemed he was quite pensive, always a thinker.

GREENE: Well, I had only one sort of wrap-up question; I was wondering if you have any thoughts on the impact that President Kennedy might have had on either the country or the office.

SPARKMAN: Well, I think he certainly would have moved both forward. I think he would have given us, to a great extent, a new outlook.

GREENE: Would you say he was in tune with the mood of the country at the time?

SPARKMAN: I believe so. Let's see, didn't they have something called the New Frontier, wasn't that Jack Kennedy's cry?

GREENE: Yes.

SPARKMAN: Yes, the New Frontier, and that was quite descriptive.

STERN: Thank you very much.

GREENE: I think that's all. Thank you very much, Senator.

SPARKMAN: Fine.

GREENE: I think you've been very helpful.

[END OF INTERVIEW]