

**E. Barrett Prettyman, Jr. Oral History Interview – RFK#1, 06/05/1969**  
**Administrative Information**

**Creator:** E. Barrett Prettyman, Jr.  
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**Biographical Note**

E. Barrett Prettyman, Jr. was Special Assistant to the Attorney General, Department of Justice, 1963; White House assistant for transportation matters, 1963 - 1964; aide to Robert F. Kennedy 1962, 1964 - 1968. This interview covers Prettyman's personal and professional relationship with Robert F. Kennedy [RFK], and RFK's 1964 and 1968 campaigns, among other topics.

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E. Barrett Prettyman, Jr. – RFK #1

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Oral History Interview

with

E. BARRETT PRETTYMAN, JR.

June 5, 1969

Washington, D.C.

By Larry Hackman

HACKMAN: Okay, why don't you just begin then by talking about the origins of the relationship and where it stood by the assassination of President Kennedy in '64.

PRETTYMAN: Well, I first met Bob in law school. He was two years ahead of me at the University of Virginia. And the reason we became acquainted was that he was then head of the Legal Forum, which is the group that brings speakers down, and he looked ahead a couple of years and wanted me to be the head of it in due course. It turned out I couldn't because of law review commitments. But, in any event, I got to know him there and went over to his house a number of times in connection with speakers who came down. I saw very little of him from law school days until 1962. Occasionally I'd see him on the street or at a party or something and we'd chat a bit, but essentially the acquaintance was renewed at the time of the exchange of goods for the Bay of Pigs prisoners. I was asked to come down to the Justice Department to [Louis F.] Lou Oberdorfer's office and was recruited as one of the outside Washington attorneys to help with the transfer of goods. I was put, more or less informally, in charge of obtaining transportation for the goods, which meant rounding up the planes, trains, ships to take the goods over. And that's a rather involved story in and of itself, but that resulted in my going to Cuba and conferences with [Fidel] Castro and so forth over just a couple of days. And when I came back, and as a result of that, the Attorney General called and asked if I would come to the Department of Justice as a special assistant for six months on a

special project, which was to evaluate the relationship of the Justice Department with the ICC [Interstate Commerce Commission], particularly in relation to railroad mergers. He was having a good deal of difficulty with that relationship, which was a less than happy one. And I did go down. I finished that up in three months, submitted my report, prepared to come back to my law firm, when he then asked if I would go to the White House as a special assistant dealing with transportation matters. He explained that President Kennedy really needed someone knowledgeable in the field of transportation, again particularly relating to the merger area which was very active at the time. So it was as a result of that that I went to the White House, where I was at the time of the assassination. I might say that as it so often developed with the Kennedys, much of my time while at the White House was spent on matters other than what I'd been brought over to do. And I was particularly active in the area of local D.C. [District of Columbia] problems, that is recreation, dropouts, all of the things that Bob was interested in. And we engaged in any number of projects, including charity events, his visits to schools to speak to kids about staying in school.

HACKMAN: Robert Kennedy's visits you mean.

PRETTYMAN: Yes. We built the John F. Kennedy playground. We did a number of these things which were sandwiched in between my duties, principally under [Myer] Mike Feldman, in the area of transportation. I left the White House not long after the assassination and came back to my law firm. And at that point Bob and I remained in contact on and off and on again basis. He or somebody on his staff would call for various jobs to be done. I did an article for a magazine for him, for example, and things of this sort. But it was more or less on a hit or miss basis.

HACKMAN: The article came out under his name or under your own or what?

PRETTYMAN: Under his name, yes.

HACKMAN: What was the article?

PRETTYMAN: It was an article for Nation's Business, entitled "Robert Kennedy on: Government Injustice to Business". Incidentally, I also drafted a statement on the death penalty which he was opposed to. He wasn't sure whether he should make a statement on it, but he wanted to have one in case he decided to do it. That was not used. Then, as I say, the relationship was casual and sporadic in the sense that we had the one sailing trip together, for example, I went up to the Senate in New York when he ran for the Senate. You know, it was odds and ends and bits and pieces during that period of time.

HACKMAN: You got involved in the campaign to some extent in '64 or are you talking about . . .

PRETTYMAN: You mean in the Senate, for the Senate?

HACKMAN: Yes.

PRETTYMAN: No. Not really, No I didn't. No, I just went up for the . . . It was when he announced he was going to run, I suppose. I really forget now what the occasion was. It was somehow related to the Senate thing. In regard to his running for president, I can't put a date on it, although I could probably find it in the diary somewhere, but he called me about another matter back at the time when there was some general talk really about his running, the possibility of his running. And toward the end of the conversation he said, "Do you think I ought to run for president?" And I was really quite startled because although I'd seen a little bit of mention of it in the press, it had struck me then as not being feasible.

HACKMAN: This is what year? Can you at least pin it down this much?

PRETTYMAN: Well, let's see, he announced. What was the date that he announced?

HACKMAN: March 16, or '68.

PRETTYMAN: Yeah, March. And the first talk about it would have been, what, mid-'67?

HACKMAN: The first organized meeting was a meeting in [Pierre E. G.] Salinger's suite in New York in about October of '67.

PRETTYMAN: Yeah, but I mean the first chatter about it would have been much earlier in the year of '67. I'll see if I can't put my finger on that date. But, in any event, I indicated to him that I didn't think he should, and when he asked me why I indicated . . . Can we stop for just a moment?

HACKMAN: Sure. [INTERRUPTION]

PRETTYMAN: I told him that the reason I was opposed to it was that I thought Lyndon Johnson would go to any lengths to see him defeated and that I didn't put it past the President to do anything from manufacturing events on down in order to scuttle him, and that I was very much afraid that, in view of the power of the Presidency and the power



particularly to manipulate events, I thought he was doomed to failure. It was an odd conversation because he seemed to be really seeking the other answer and he rattled off to me the states that he thought he would do well in. And the substance of it seemed to be not that he could really take it, but that at least he had a fighting chance and that in the light of that maybe he really had a duty to run. I was quite startled by it because it hadn't occurred to me that he would be thinking about it so seriously at that time.

HACKMAN: Did he talk about any political contact he'd made with, at that point, [Jesse M.] Unruh or [Richard J.] Daley or anyone? Support he thought he might have had?

PRETTYMAN: As I recall, he mentioned particularly California and the fact that all indications were quite good for California, but he didn't mention specific names, as I recall. The next specific event that I remember was that meeting, I think it was the third meeting of the people in [Stephen E.] Steve Smith's office, and I'm sure you have the details of that. The things that stand out in my mind most particularly were, first of all, the fact that for the whole first half of the evening we were all assuming that we were there to help him make some kind of decision, and then, as you know, when we watched the [Walter] Cronkite program, we found that really the decision had already been made. And there was a good deal of laughter about that. And the other thing that stands out in my mind was the fact that while [Theodore C.] Ted Sorensen was opposed to it for what seemed to me rather sound reasons, by that time I had come to a different conclusion for a reason which I had discussed with [Edward M.] Ted Kennedy, and that was that Bob just had to do it for himself. He just had to do it. He just had to run. And I had discussed this with Ted when we were having our discussions about Vietnam. And he himself, while he, while Ted had a great number of reservations about Bob running, I think probably felt at that point that he sensed in Bob a compulsion to do it, and that Bob would never really be at peace with himself if he didn't and I think for that reason felt it had to be done. And that was more or less the conclusion that I had come to. I still thought that on practical grounds it might have been a very bad decision. But I was persuaded by the time of Steve Smith's meeting that Bob for personal reasons simply had to go, and therefore all of us were ready to go in behind him. And whether Burke Marshall--whether that was the reason why he felt the way he did, I don't know. But I was quite impressed with the fact that Burke, whose judgement is usually impeccable, wound up the early part of that meeting indicating that he was in favor of an attempt even if it proved to be a failure. The last part of the meeting, as you know, was a general discussion about the states and assignments and calls that had to be made and the rest of it. So we were really off and running that evening. The

Oregon thing really came . . .

HACKMAN: Before you start on Oregon, can I go back and pick some things up?

PRETTYMAN: Sure.

HACKMAN: On that meeting at Steve Smith's you talked about Burke Marshall; who else can you remember in presenting views on one side or the other at that point?

PRETTYMAN: Well, to be perfectly honest with you, there were some views from Arthur Schlesinger that struck me as naive and impractical, and several others had the same reaction. I don't recall exactly what they were, but they related to a combination with the [Eugene J.] McCarthy forces, and it was a plan that I thought had no basis in practical politics or that did not seem feasible to me.

HACKMAN: Who was like minded with you on that or who did you feel you shared views with?

PRETTYMAN: I think [David] Dave Burke probably felt the same, although he didn't speak out. But in conversations afterwards, I think he felt pretty much the way I did, that this was something Bob simply had to do. Let's see, do you have a list of those who were there?

HACKMAN: No, I don't with me. It's a long. . . . pretty big meeting.

PRETTYMAN: Yeah, I'd have to look at it again to . . .

HACKMAN: Well, I'm thinking particularly of people like Sorensen--[Kenneth P.] O'Donnell was there for awhile--I believe Salinger, some of the old hands.

PRETTYMAN: Salinger really dealt mostly with the California situation, dealt primarily with Unruh, with the practical problems of filing and time and so forth. John Nolan spoke up because he had been out there gathering the information as to precisely what had to be done, and again, dealt really with the practicalities of getting in the race there as opposed to the chances of winning. Anything else?

HACKMAN: Was any one strongly against it still at that point?

PRETTYMAN: Well, the only one who stands out in my mind was Sorensen. And, as I say, I think his reasons were practical and sound. The difficulty was that they

didn't take into effect the passion of the thing and the realities of Bob's personality and so forth. I might say, going later, that my own view is that where we made our mistake--of course, we didn't foresee the Johnson event--but I think even at the end of California while I knew that there was a fighting chance, what Bob knew that I didn't know was the swiftness with which [Hubert H.] Humphrey was going to go downhill between California and Convention time. I thought Humphrey was going to go downhill, but I didn't think he was going to go downhill fast enough for Bob to have a chance. I now think that judgment was probably wrong and that Bob's judgment was better on it. I think he sensed that Humphrey was going to go downhill rather fast and that that did give Bob a fighting chance.

HACKMAN: Did he speak about that?

PRETTYMAN: No. No. I gathered this really more from talking with other people than in discussing it with him. Although I had chatted briefly with him on occasion about Humphrey, it wasn't really directed toward that element. But I just sensed that his enthusiasm and somewhat limited optimism right after the California result was really based on the fact that that was what was going to happen and that that gave him a chance. I think he was very realistic about it. And my own feeling is that he did have a chance at the Convention. It would have been very, very, very close and if he'd gotten the nomination, he'd have had no trouble at all getting elected. But I misjudged the extent to which Humphrey was going to decline with the swiftness that he did.

HACKMAN: What can you remember about Steve Smith in this, particularly at that meeting at his suite that evening?

PRETTYMAN: I don't really remember anything specific about his attitude on running. I recall only that he had a lot of practical details in hand in terms of people in various states, the number of votes needed and all the rest of it. It was much more along the practical political line. And I frankly don't recall any comments that he made, although he may have done it, about the problem of running itself.

HACKMAN: You had not participated in some of the earlier meetings.

PRETTYMAN: No.

HACKMAN: Let me ask you how you came to get involved in this meeting.

PRETTYMAN: Bob's secretary called and asked me to go. I had no idea why.

HACKMAN: How do you think he looked at you in terms of politics? Had you discussed at length with him before practical politics so that he looked at you as someone who could . . .

PRETTYMAN: No. No. I had never been involved in practical politics and he could not conceivably have looked on me as anybody who had the slightest bit of knowledge about practical politics. My guess is that the only reason I was included was that I was an outside voice. My judgement was untainted by the facts, [Laughter] and I was just somebody whom he'd happened to have done an awful lot of things with and who might add just another and different voice. One thing that we had done, incidentally, which I didn't mention, but one of the trips we took was down in Alabama and Mississippi together when he went to the two universities.

HACKMAN: Early in the campaign?

PRETTYMAN: No, this was before he even ran for president. This was when he was in the Senate. In fact, it could conceivably have even been when he was Attorney General. But he had an extraordinary trip down there which we were quite nervous about. Ethel [Skakel Kennedy] went along. We were quite nervous about the trip because we thought we were going to get a very rough reception and, in fact, even a possibly dangerous one, and instead it turned out to be just incredible enthusiasm on the part of the students at both universities. And it really kind of shook us up. In fact, I think it had an impact on him in terms of this running thing because I think he felt that if he could get that kind of reaction from Mississippi and Alabama, that it indicated something about what he could do on a national basis. Yeah, here it is. The picture in the newspaper was March 19, 1966 and he was then a Senator, but long before the presidential thing. No, going back to your question though--he could not possibly have looked to me for any political advice or know-how because I simply hadn't had it.

HACKMAN: During that '64 - '68 period was your relationship with him primarily on sort of a project type of thing, he would bring to you, or was it a lot of time at Hickory Hill or how did this . . .

PRETTYMAN: I would say it was more the former, that it was more particular projects that he wanted either advice or help on. And aside from that, on the personal basis I think he sometimes liked to have people around who were sort of fun and . . . I mean I really don't know how he regarded me in that light. Ethel has said that I was enthusiastic and that I was happy and that it did him good to

have people like that around. So I mean I was out at Hickory Hill from time to time, but the extent to which I was. . . . I would guess it was related more to the fact that he felt I had done a lot of things for him. We had been successful on a lot of things together.

HACKMAN: Can you just give me some examples during that period of the types of things? Maybe I can work up something and come back to you with more specifics next time.

PRETTYMAN: Well, one thing that stands out is in regard to the Kennedy playground, for example, which began as just a simple idea to try to do a little something about the delinquency problem in the Second Precinct and which ended up with ten thousand children on opening day at an event which was clearly a smashing success. And it was something which particularly appealed to him because of the children and because it did something over time for children. And it was also successful in stopping the building of a totally inadequate school in an area that really needed an adequate school. And that's the kind of thing that . . .

HACKMAN: Was that your idea or does it come out of his staff?

PRETTYMAN: Well, I mean, the way it. . . . No. The way it happened was he just happened to mention one day that the Second Precinct was the worst precinct in the city in regard to crime and delinquency. They were having a terrible time and he wanted to know why and what could be done. And he sent me up there and the police were unanimous in stating that the difficulty was very simple and that was that there were no play facilities. And they took me around to the playgrounds which were all covered with glass and which had the swings taken out because the kids might fall off and so forth, and they were dreary and repulsive and the kids stayed away from them and the kids had no place to go. I might say this, in turn, had arisen out of his experience at the Dunbar pool where, when we were visiting Dunbar for him to speak to the kids, he looked in a window and saw this pool which had been closed for eight years because of a lack of thirty thousand dollars to open, to get the pool repaired. He couldn't believe it. He just absolutely could not believe that in the middle of the worst precinct at a pool which had served not only the kids, but the entire community, that for a lack of thirty thousand dollars the pool had been closed for eight years. And when he asked me to do something about that, we raised that money in less than two weeks from religious groups and got that pool opened and he went out there for the dedication and so forth. And that had taught us that there was money available in this community for the right kind of project with the right kind of leadership.

And that, in turn, led him to begin asking questions about the Second Precinct, led me up there. It led to the recommendation of play facilities, and that in turn got us going on finding out about excess military equipment, getting Carl Warnecke involved, getting the plans drawn and getting the money and getting it done. But that was the kind of thing that . . .

HACKMAN: Were there things that came up that he couldn't get done or that you couldn't get done, just got frustrated with?

PRETTYMAN: Usually the frustrations were with day to day things rather than major projects. We ran into an incredible situation in the city every time we tried to push something like this through. By way of example, it'd be almost funny if it hadn't been so serious, but the city was actually going to close down our building of this playground in the middle of it because we were getting some dirt on the street. I mean, you know, they had a regulation that said you can't get dirt on the street, and so they really seriously were going to stop the entire building operation. Things like that which we were constantly having--problems somewhat with the commissioners, but much more with the Corporation Counsel at that time.

HACKMAN: Would he get on the phone frequently and call people on these things or did he leave it up to someone like you?

PRETTYMAN: He would leave it up to someone like me to handle until I got to a point where I couldn't jar anything loose. And fortunately it didn't happen too often. But he was always ready. If you went in to see him and you said, "I can't jar anyone loose on this and the person that we need to call is so and so," he was always ready to do it. The other thing he was ready to do was to thank somebody. If somebody had really helped us, he always called and thanked them which was a tremendous help because the person who was called appreciated that, spread the word, and it really made people feel like getting on the ball and getting things done.

HACKMAN: Do you know of other people around town like yourself that he frequently turned to to help him out on some of these things?

PRETTYMAN: Well, I'm sure John Nolan--he did more than me. I mean I think John was closer to him and was in his outside office, you recall, for a period of time and was, I'm sure, much more active than I was. John Douglas after he went back from Justice I'm sure was. Lou Oberdorfer. People like that. I don't know the list, but my guess is that there were quite a few whom he called on.

HACKMAN: Who of the aides and advisors did you become close to over time, and did you fit in with anyone? People have tried to split people up into groups.

PRETTYMAN: Well, I knew most of them and I liked them all. But I really wasn't part of any camp because, well, I wasn't that close. I was. . . . I think they felt that Bob's relationship with me was sort of outside the group a little bit, that he sort of came to me on special things and not all the time and that I didn't need to be part of any particular set. I don't think I was that important for one thing.

HACKMAN: At the time you left the White House, was this your own choosing or did you go out with Feldman or was it Johnson weeding out Kennedy people?

PRETTYMAN: No, it was my own choosing. I stayed just a few months, long enough to find out that Johnson had no interest in any transportation problems and, to be perfectly honest, I didn't want to stay anyway. And then I went to Bob and told him I was going to leave.

HACKMAN: Did you get any reaction from him one way or the other?

PRETTYMAN: No, except he understood.

HACKMAN: Do you think on the part of his Senate staff, people like [Adam] Walinsky and [Peter] Edelman and [Frank] Mankiewicz, particularly, and Dolan, did he keep these people separate from the social life that you saw at Hickory Hill on the instances when you were going out there or was there any movement back and forth?

PRETTYMAN: It was both ways. It was both ways. Quite often when I'd go out that group would be there with a lot of other people, but more often it seemed to me that they weren't. I think he tended to be very social with his staff in the sense of having them out to lunch, for example, working lunch all the time. But I think just in terms of the parties and so forth it was hit or miss, and sometimes he'd have them and sometimes he wouldn't. How in the world they ever devised which group was to come to what I never knew, but it was always fascinating as to who would be at what. My general impression was that they came more to the really large events such as, for example, a wedding anniversary, as opposed to the smaller social events.

HACKMAN: Could you see. . . . A lot of people have talked about him changing a lot. Could you see much

change in him from '64 to '68?

PRETTYMAN: This is very very difficult. I think most of the basic characteristics remained very much the same --A kind of dead set desire to do the right thing and to do what was necessary to be done in order to improve things, the impatience with all of the reasons why things couldn't be done. When we had the telethon, which was the last thing we really worked on together, I remember when Mayor [Walter E.] Washington came in and I called him and said, you know, I hope we had his cooperation on this. His reaction was, "Listen, I've sat around and watched for many years all of the reasons why we can't do anything in this city and I know every one of them by heart, and now it's time we think of reasons why we can get things done." I think that's exactly Bob's reaction, too. He didn't know all of the reasons because he wasn't that familiar with government when he came in. But he was incredibly impatient with the finicky things that people came up with to thwart what was obviously the right thing. And I think that stayed very much the same. If he changed, I think it was in terms of, first of all a mellowing process. He was perhaps a little less impatient, a little more understanding, with a little more compassion--although he always had that--and a little less harsh, and I think with more curiosity about why people didn't like him. I think he was quite fascinated. . . . We went up together one day on the plane to New York, and it was the second plane of the shuttle so there was practically no one on it. And we sat and we talked about this, about people not liking him, the brutal image. And he really. . . . It didn't sit on his mind and trouble him. He didn't spend a lot of time with it, but I think he was really kind of curious about it as to why it was so and quite curious as to what could be done about it. And I think he'd almost really kind of given up on it. I mean, he just felt that he had to go his own way and that if people really felt this way there wasn't much he could do about it. Although he would have liked to have done something about it, the idea. And I think he really believed not only that the image was false, but that it was kind of unrelated to him. I don't think he was one who thought he was really that way and that people saw it correctly. I mean despite the things that he had done, you know, for his brother--people say that's where the image arose--I don't think he felt that that was really in him. He could be harsh, he could be tough. When things were going bad, even to close friends, he could be less than gentle and less than kind . . .

HACKMAN: Well, let me. . . . Give me some examples of that if you can.

PRETTYMAN: Well, I remember I was out at [Edward M. Kennedy] Ted's house once and I had had a conversation. . . . I had been at a party the night before and [James B.] Scotty Reston had gotten me to one side. And Scotty had just



been up to Harvard, and he made a great point of the fact that Bob should not run under any circumstances, that the impression he'd gotten from both professors and students was that he would have a terrible time and so forth.

HACKMAN: Do you know if this was after [Eugene J.] McCarthy was in or not?

PRETTYMAN: This was before. And this was when we were having talks with Ted prior to our going to Vietnam which would, you see, have been December of 1968, been quite a bit before that. Well, I don't know about quite a bit, but it would have been before that. And I mentioned this to Ted and he said, "Well, now listen I think Bob really ought to know about that because Scotty Reston had a talk with him not very long ago in which he told him he definitely ought to run." So I called Bob from Ted's house and I started in on this and Bob just interrupted. He cut me off and he said he could get that kind of bad news from anybody. And he was really, you know, quite abrupt about it! Now, the thing about Bob you've got to remember though is that the pressures were unbelievable, the cross advice was unbelievable. And I instinctively recognized that I had hit him at a very bad time. I don't know whether he was ruminating about something bad or what, but I hit him at a bad time and I went back and laughed with Ted about it because we both recognized that Bob had these periods and that it was necessary for him to have them. This is the way he let loose and got off a lot of the tension. And I think one of the remarkable things about him is that other than those who were really on the outs with him, those who liked him forgave very easily those few instances where, you know, you'd be the object of that kind of business. If you really knew him and liked him and respected him, you recognized it for what it was.

HACKMAN: Could you see in talking to other people, say people like John Douglas or Oberdorfer or these people during this winter of '67 - '68, that people were holding off on giving him advice or were. . . . You know, was this a common . . .

PRETTYMAN: No. I honestly cannot say what they were doing, because there was very little chatter between us. In the first place, we didn't see each other that often and secondly, when we did there was less talk than you might think about his actual running. Until a certain point and, unfortunately, I can't put my finger on it, but until a certain point, very few of us really thought that as a practical matter he could do it.

HACKMAN: In other words, there was no one on the Senate staff who was coming to you or whom you were talking with frequently who would say they had a

meeting in New York or this was . . .

PRETTYMAN: The only person I can think of in this regard was Adam Walinsky who was so vehement on the subject of Vietnam that he had really convinced himself that Bob not only should run, but could win and would win. My own view was that Adam felt so strongly about Vietnam that his judgement was clouded in terms of the practical result of Vietnam. But again, in retrospect, Adam may have been a lot brighter than I was and maybe my judgment was clouded because I didn't see--at least prior to the time I went to Vietnam--I didn't see it as big a political thing as it became. It was only after I went there and was horrified at what I found. And particularly when I came back and talked to some of the officials, I was even more horrified . . .

HACKMAN: This was the '68 trip?

PRETTYMAN: Yeah. That I began to see just what this issue was really all about.

HACKMAN: At that meeting at Steve Smith's, I don't think Walinsky was there.

PRETTYMAN: No, he wasn't.

HACKMAN: But Dave Burke and some people, even yourself-- what kind of attitude would people like Sorensen, Salinger, the people who've been around for a long time have towards someone like yourself? Could you feel resentment if you spoke up at all or was it . . .

PRETTYMAN: In the first place, I didn't speak up in the meeting. We were all sitting in a, virtually a circle and out of the, say, fifteen people who were there--I don't know the exact number--really the actual discussion was centered in, I would say, maybe five people. And a few others expressed a kind of conclusion. But I was right at almost the tail end of the group there, and even before they got to me, why somebody'd come in with the news that Bob had made the statement and that he was going to be on Cronkite, so it kind of broke up. So frankly I never felt any resentment. I think that the group, the really "in" group, saw me for exactly what I was and that was not so much as an intruder, but as just somebody whom Bob went to from time to time for particular things, and that I performed the function because I really cared for him and liked him although I didn't always agree with him, and I think it's hard to resent somebody like that because I'm not trampling on anybody's toes.

HACKMAN: Can you talk about some of the things during that period that you disagreed with him on, and how

they were resolved, if at all.

PRETTYMAN: I was perhaps a little bit more of a conservative than he was on economic matters.

HACKMAN: How would he discuss something like this? Only in terms of particular cases or would he ever discuss something as broad as Keynesian economics?

PRETTYMAN: No. Not with me. I'm sure he did. But I think mostly that was in the context of the seminars that he had out at the house and things of that sort. As you know, he was relatively uninterested in the philosophy and theory of things and much more interested in practical results. He was horrified, for example, by the tax inequities. One thing that I very much agreed with him about, but which I think he got too little understanding and credit for both before and after the campaign, was in regard to Welfare. He was a Republican on Welfare. He felt strongly that the entire system had to be revamped, that it was sapping the vitality and dignity of the people who received it and so forth. And I think, really, I've noticed since his death, talking with people, that they're not at all aware he felt this way. No, I can't think of other things at the moment that I disagreed with. I just remember from time to time, going all the way back to Justice days, that I would feel perhaps could have been done differently, but I mean overall. . . . The important thing is that overall we saw things very much the same.

HACKMAN: Did he every discuss the Welfare thing in terms of what could be done, the minimum income or whatever?

PRETTYMAN: Well, there's a group here in Washington called Washington Tapes, a group of girls who got together this project, and they make tapes with famous people and then they rent or sell them to high schools around the country. And they asked me if I would arrange for them to make one with Bob, which I did. And he was interviewed by Nancy Goodrich, and most of the tape was really related to welfare. And it was quite fascinating because she is conservative and was quite shaken by just how conservative he was on that subject, if that's the right word. And in that he was talking about revamping it entirely in order to make payments go more to the people who should really have them, and getting jobs or some other kind of dignified way of spending time for people who really should not have it.

HACKMAN: Did you ever discuss with him businessmen, people who went into business? What kind of ideas did he have about someone like yourself?

PRETTYMAN: Yes, now you see, that is something he did rely on me for a little bit because he knew virtually none well. I mean you can run off on your right hand the [Thomas J., Jr.] Tom Watson's and the others he really knew, but I mean in terms of the business community around the country he was quite aware of the fact that they despised him and feared him. And while he knew that he could never put them in his camp, he also felt that it was not a good idea to have them so fearful of him that they would use any means to prevent him from getting in. And several people had told him that he ought to forget the entire thing, that he could never do anything about business people. But he was willing, at least, to take a stab at getting to know a few and I was just beginning to take a few by to see him. They were funny meetings because. . . . I remember one in particular where I took the president of Capitol Records by to see him in his New York apartment, and as you know Bob had no social chit chat whatever. He had never done it and I don't think he liked it and it never occurred to him to do it. And so it was really kind of funny, because you'd introduce the gentlemen--this happened any number of times--you'd introduce the gentlemen, and then Bob would just turn to you and look at you and he'd expect you to get through the initial period. And if you didn't. . . . Once I didn't, I just kind of waited for a little bit. It was funny--and there was just absolute dead silence until I did. But he had none of that whatever and it really was kind of amusing. But the idea was for him to meet a reasonable number of those people with the idea of letting them know that he wasn't a four-headed monster. And to be perfectly honest with you, a number of those whom I contacted, although I knew them personally, declined to meet him. I don't know what they feared, but it was interesting that the business community was a definite problem for him, particularly in view of the money at their disposal.

HACKMAN: How would you approach these people when you'd talk to them?

PRETTYMAN: I'd just say, "Would you like to meet Senator Kennedy?" This article I had done for him was kind of a jumping off point, that, you know, he would like to get their reaction to it and so forth. And that was kind of the lead in. The business thing was a problem. He never understood them. The remark that President Kennedy is supposed to have made about them, whether made or not, was really pretty close to the mark, I think. It wasn't that Bob disliked them so much as that he felt their view of life was somewhat alien to his in the sense that it was drawn primarily toward profit and getting things produced; whereas he, as a business man, would have directed much more of his energies toward plans to benefit the community. And he was extremely anxious to get business people involved in community endeavors. Our playground thing was an example of where he was able to do that, but it was

on a very limited basis. And I think that if he'd become president, he would have made a very serious effort in this regard. He was impressed, with the few projects he had had that had been successful, with the fact that business people, people with money, once directed could really do substantial amounts of good, and that it was much healthier than just using government money.

HACKMAN: What would the conversation finally get to once you got it started in these instances?

PRETTYMAN: Oh, it would vary. It could be about the man's own business. It could be about his section of the country. It could be about general problems he might be having with the government, and I don't mean in terms of specific cases, but that, for example, he thought that hearings were too long and drawn out or that one agency or another really wasn't being fair in its procedure or something of this sort. It was mostly just really a way for the two men to get to know each other a little bit. That was all.

HACKMAN: Were these mostly New York people or were they Washington people . . .

PRETTYMAN: No, and there weren't this many of them. I couldn't name them for you, but no they weren't. They were from several places around the country.

HACKMAN: Did you discuss with him in this '64 to '68 period his thoughts about President Johnson, the whole development of this thing? Would he talk about this frequently at the type things you were working with him on?

PRETTYMAN: We had one long talk about it. And I would really just as soon, even for the purpose of this tape, not repeat it except to say, in general, that he had serious questions about not Johnson just as a leader, but as a man, and that he thought that time was running against the country in terms of Johnson, that we couldn't afford much more time with him, that it was a progressively bad situation.

HACKMAN: Well let's talk about the trip to Vietnam with Edward Kennedy. And if you know anything about then what was reported from that trip to Robert Kennedy and any impact it might have had here.

PRETTYMAN: Well, Bob was the one that suggested me to Ted. And John Nolan and I had both worked on the Cuban exchange together, quite good friends, worked well together. And I'm sure Bob suggested John. The others, the doctor and John Summers, I did not know prior to the trip. I had not really known Ted well before those series of meetings. I'd

known him, but until we began meeting at his house, getting ready for the trip, I had really not known him well. Bob was extremely interested in the trip and in the results of it. And as soon as I came back, I called him or he called me, I forget which. But in any event, we talked for some length on the phone about it and particularly about the corruption issue and I gave him a general evaluation of the trip and of what we found. He was quite interested and he was also wondering very seriously as to whether he should go himself. I was personally of the view that he should because, foreseeing a campaign at some point--if not then, at some point--it just seemed to me that he could talk a lot more intelligently and with more authority if he had actually been there even for a relatively brief period. And I knew from the experience with Ted that you could work it, that he really could see and talk to the people you wanted him to as opposed to the people they set up for you. We, on Ted's trip, we had no briefings at all when we got there, either for him or for us really. We had all of those at the end and we went around. We made the choice of where we were going to go. We went wherever we wanted. We set up the interviews for him and he got, Ted got an extraordinary variety of opinion all the way from the brass and the administration people on down to violently anti-commitment people, people in the field, and so forth. And I knew we could do the same thing for Bob, so I was in favor of his going, but that didn't work out.

HACKMAN: Had Nolan gone out early to advance this trip, or did everyone just . . .

PRETTYMAN: He and I were the first to go and I was the only one who really stayed all the way through. Nolan came back early and the others arrived a little later.

HACKMAN: What exactly did you tell Robert Kennedy about the conditions, and what was his reaction?

PRETTYMAN: Well, it was pretty much really what went into the report later. It was both in relation to the futility of the military situation, the extent to which we were destroying the countryside, the extent to which the commitments made to the refugees had all fallen through, the corruption at every level, the disappointment of the refugees, our inability to protect them. And you've got to remember, this was pre-Tet. We got out just before Tet. And, of course, Tet proved all this disastrously true. But it was the civilian casualty problem, the extraordinary number of people in hamlets and villages whom we were destroying or injuring, just the bleakness of the whole situation.

HACKMAN: I don't know if you know, but before this when he was in California on a trip to see Unruh he talked

to Rand Corporation people at a meeting out there and they had sort of predicted that Tet was going to happen and a number of people were talking about it. Do you remember him discussing this at all?

PRETTYMAN: No. No. I did not know about that at all. It's interesting that when we were in Vietnam even though we were there in January and got out, just, as I say, just before Tet began, although there were rumors all over the place about something big happening, some of the rumors that we were going to do it. I mean there was no. . . . It wasn't clear even at that point exactly what was going on or who was going to do it or what was supposed to happen. This lack of knowledge has been an incredible thing if you adopt the Johnson theory about our presence there. There was a story in The New York Times the other morning about a hamlet where they had put two hundred VC [Viet Cong] over night and then shot some rockets in the morning and we had gone in and destroyed the town. And, it was the fact that even though we considered this a pro-ally village, there was not a single, solitary peep from the villagers about the VC coming in during the entire night.

HACKMAN: Did you ever talk to Robert Kennedy about his feelings about McCarthy and the McCarthy campaign after it got going?

PRETTYMAN: Well, no. He did say that night, as I guess you know, the night that he came up to New York after the Cronkite interview, he said that night, that as between McCarthy and Humphrey he would have to support Humphrey. I don't think it was so much of a rift as it was just that he had a low opinion, I think, of McCarthy as a man and as a performer and as a stabilizing influence and as the kind of man who ought to be President. And when you think about it you can hardly imagine two men further apart in almost everything from philosophy to action.

HACKMAN: I think you'd said earlier that you don't recall anyone saying that if Robert Kennedy goes in, Johnson might pull out. Is that correct?

PRETTYMAN: I didn't say it, but I don't. You mean at the meeting?

HACKMAN: Yes or anytime before he made the decision to go in. Do you remember anyone saying it?

PRETTYMAN: No.

HACKMAN: The weekend of the telethon, do you remember anything at all political, calls made or contacts made at that time? A lot of people were in.

PRETTYMAN: Yeah, he was very taken up with it at that stage, but I was so completely involved in the mechanics of getting this damn show on that while I saw him talking to an extraordinary number of people, I really recall nothing specific about politics. I think the earliest comment that I recall--it was kind of a tipoff--was a sailing party that we had, a two day sail from Long Island to Senator [Claiborne] Pell's place in Newport the first day, and from there up to Hyannis the second day. This was an incredible trip because this was the one where Kathleen got off at the end of the first day and she was in a horse event and the horse fell on her. And they sent a Coast Guard boat out to our sailing ship which was in the middle of an incredible storm and announced over the loud speaker that a horse had fallen on Bob's daughter and she was seriously ill but he didn't have to worry unduly, but he'd better come to shore. And there was no way to get him to the Coast Guard cutter because the waves were so high and everything. And he finally jumped overboard and it was really a very dangerous time and we were very concerned, but they got him on board and he went back and, you know, that's another whole story. But I do recall in the first day of that, we were all lying there on the deck and it was sunny and nice. And he was talking about politics and some of the problems and then he actually talked about. Let's see this goes all the way back to September of 1965. But it was clear to me from these few remarks that he was actually thinking ahead to the possibility of his running for president at that time.

[INTERRUPTION]

HACKMAN: Were there other things like this, outings or the adventure things that you went on with him, any trips or. . . .

PRETTYMAN: No, I think I've mentioned most of them. The two that stand out in my mind mostly are the sailing one, because it was two days, and the Mississippi and Alabama one because that was also, as I recall, two days.

HACKMAN: Getting back again to that meeting at Steve Smith's, after Robert Kennedy was there and the people broke up into discussions, what discussion did you get involved in and what can you remember about calls made or decisions or whatever that evening?

PRETTYMAN: I think I was in a relatively small group in the dining room going over a list of states and the people and the contacts we had there and the people who should be contacted. But I was of relatively little use really because, as I say, I had not been involved, for example, in President Kennedy's campaigns and had really been



quite non-political. And therefore although I had, you know a few names and a few suggestions really I was superfluous to that job. I do think, however, that that was the first time that the possibility of my going to Oregon was mentioned.

HACKMAN: How did that come up?

PRETTYMAN: Well, it's funny you know there are two books out which say that I was in charge of Oregon and what really happened was that we had a specific problem in Oregon at the time. And the problem was that the people who were for Bob in Oregon were. . . . Well, one was a hairdresser and another was a state senator in the lower half of the state who was a wild man. And it was a very bad situation!

HACKMAN: The hairdresser was a lady that used to be a National Committeewoman, I think.

PRETTYMAN: No, a man. No, it was a man.

HACKMAN: Oh my God, that's worse.

PRETTYMAN: Yeah. Very bad. And. . . .

HACKMAN: Biggs, Bob Biggs? That guy?

PRETTYMAN: No. And Bob felt that the one person who could bring order to the situation and primarily dignity to his campaign in Oregon was Edith Green. Edith Green had vowed that if Bob Kennedy sent a single person back into her state who'd ever been there before, she'd have nothing to do with the campaign. And that just goes back to a lot of difficulties she'd had before.

HACKMAN: Bruno and . . .

PRETTYMAN: Right. Therefore, the reason I was asked to go to Oregon, as I understood it, was not to take charge of Oregon as a complete neophyte, but rather to . . .

HACKMAN: I'm sorry. We're at the end of the tape. I'm going to have to . . .

BEGIN SIDE II TAPE I

PRETTYMAN: As I say, the reason I was sent to Oregon, as I understood it, was that we had to get on the good side of Edith Green. We had to get her involved; she had to become chairman of the campaign. And I was sent, as I understood it, because she didn't know me and because they felt I was the type of person she might not have the same objections to

that she had to some of the others. And so I went out on March 19th and I spent the 20th, 21st, and 22nd both with her and also preparing for Bob's trip, and then went with him of the 25th and 26th. Now during that first time Edith Green was obviously feeling me out and attempting to see if she was going to get more of the same she'd had before. She was trying to get a commitment from me that Bob would be reasonably on time, and he'd always been, you know, three hours late to everything. And she was trying to make sure that if she joined up, her decisions were going to be at least listened to and given weight, if not actually followed. And she was making reasonable requests as a condition to her participation. Also we were waiting for the results of a poll and we got these results, I think, maybe the second day I was there which showed Bob leading. And this was the final thing she was waiting for. She wanted, I think, to have some reasonable expectation that he could win before she joined up. And the combination of my assurances to her, the kind of new blood--and I spent a lot of time with lunches and driving around with her and so forth--plus the results of the poll persuaded her that this was something she wanted to be part of.

HACKMAN: Who did the poll, incidentally, do you know?

PRETTYMAN: I can't remember the name.

HACKMAN: Was it a Kennedy poll or was it an outside poll or do you remember?

PRETTYMAN: I honestly don't remember.

HACKMAN: Well, I can find that out I'm sure.

PRETTYMAN: In any event, that first trip was really taken up --those three days--in addition to making arrangements for him was just taken up with trying to get her in tow, which we did. I went out on April 14th and I spent the 15th, 16th and 17th getting ready for his trip, then went around with him on the 18th and 19th. The third trip was devoted entirely to Joan Kennedy and Warren Beatty. That is, I went out on May 20th. I spent the 21st and 22nd going around the state with Joan Kennedy and Muffy Wentworth and then the 23rd I spent taking Warren Beatty around to various places which was a real foul up. And the 24th was just miscellaneous odd jobs. Now that was my total connection with Oregon. And I came away feeling that, you know, I had done what I'd been asked to do which I considered to be extremely limited. I think maybe one of the foul-ups is that either other people thought I was doing more than I was doing and really thought that, you know, I was kind of running things, or that I didn't maybe get as full a picture as I should, or whatever. But, in any event, my participation was relatively limited and also it was based on--you know, I'd never done this kind of thing before. I'd never been, for example, an

advance man or anything of the sort. Bob's reaction when he got there. . . . I remember he gave me hell at one point because there were more McCarthy placards in one crowd than there were Kennedy placards. And I was on the phone to the next town to make sure that they were turning out placards. But I think his reactions to the various situations were quite different. That is, we would go one place and we'd get a terrific reaction and things looked good. We'd go to another place and there'd be a very bad reaction. And he, of course, sensed, because of his experience, the things which I certainly didn't and which Edith Green didn't. The problem of Edith Green is an interesting one because we saw it ahead of time, and I saw it at the time as one of getting a state organization involved, and someone who was recognized as truly responsible and with dignity and so forth involved, because frankly we were a laughing stock before she got there. That is, the people who were pushing Bob Kennedy were strictly on their own and yet nobody else represented him, and consequently you were looking to a hairdresser for. . . . If you wanted to put in a call and say, "I want to work," that's where you went. And so it seemed extremely important to get her involved. And I still think it was important to get her involved. If there was a mistake made, it was in assuming that because of her success in politics there, she could make the decisions in terms of a national campaign. We were pretty much in her hands, at least for the first half of the campaign, because that's the way she wanted it. I think it was late when they began to get worried about Oregon. They began to take over a little more. And, frankly, I just simply was not involved in that at all. My own feeling about Oregon is that while the first poll which showed Bob ahead may not have been entirely accurate, I do think he tended to go downhill in Oregon. But I'm not sure it was because of anything that he could have done an awful lot about. It's a strange state, as you know. It's a state where they claim to have the highest percentage of intelligent people of anywhere in the country, very educated state, one that's very oriented toward the universities. A very proud state, they are proud of that fact. As you know, and it's been said many times, you don't have there the types of problems that Bob was permanently addressing himself to, minority groups and so forth. And I think that the only way he possibly could have won in Oregon would have been to take a pitch that was so totally alien to the entire rest of his campaign that it would have seemed even more out of stride than talking about law and order in Indiana. It would have to have been almost a philosophical, a McCarthy type musing, a quiet, kind of intellectual look back and look forward over the entire range of history and where we're going and what we are as a people and so forth. And I think that was just too much to expect. I think Bob had that in him. In other words, if Oregon was the only campaign he had to win and he'd been properly prepared, Bob could possibly have pulled that off. But to expect him to fly in from a tumultuous meeting in San Jose where they tried to tear him apart and go for two days in Oregon

and fly out again to more of the same and expect him to just be different--it just was too much. McCarthy was simply the ideal candidate for an Oregon-like situation, even as fouled up as his campaign was there. We had one very funny experience with him. I was with Joan and we were in some little town in Oregon, I forget, maybe Coos Bay or something like that. And we arrived and somebody said, "Well, you arrived just at the right time. McCarthy's plane has just arrived, he's down the runway." Well, we picked up a newspaper and the story on the front page said something like, "Gene McCarthy will arrive this afternoon at 3 o'clock." And then there was a big, half page ad inside saying, "Meet Gene McCarthy at the airport at 2 o'clock." And here it was 1 o'clock and the plane just landed. They had no ladder and there was no way of getting them out of the plane. So his plane comes up--of course, there's nobody there to greet him --and they got this step ladder and it was just hilarious watching this crew of cameramen and female reporters and everything coming backwards down and the wind blowing and everything else. And here finally is the candidate, and yet practically the only person to greet him other than the people who were on the plane with him was Joan Kennedy. And she saw the whole thing with a great deal of amusement. I said, "Do you really think you ought to greet him?" And she said, "Oh, yeah. We're old friends." And she went up to him and he was terribly cool and totally without aplomb and really almost acted as if the thing had been set up to insult him. He was not with it. And I got a very good glimpse into some of his problems just in that slight incident. I think anybody in political life would have been able to carry that off better than he did. He didn't see the humor in it at all.

HACKMAN:           Okay. You said the first time that the possibility of you going with Oregon was suggested was in that Steve Smith meeting.

PRETTYMAN:         It seems to me it was. Now my memory is a little bad, but. . . . And incidentally it's been said that it was because I had business friends there and because I knew Edith Green. I didn't have any business friends at all in Oregon. I'd never been to Oregon in my life and I didn't know Edith Green.

HACKMAN:           Any idea where that comes from then?

PRETTYMAN:         Well, I just think it was this kind of conversation: "Now let's see, what are we going to do about Oregon?" "Well, one thing we've got to do is get Edith Green involved." "Yeah, but she's mad at us for what happened before." "Well, now we better send somebody new out. Who can we send?" And I said, "Well, you know, if that's something that you want me to do, I'll be happy to do it." That's probably the way it went, just as casual as that.

HACKMAN: Who was making assignments at that point?  
Everyone has talked about the early days being very confused.

PRETTYMAN: Yeah, they sure were.

HACKMAN: I mean, did you have that impression?

PRETTYMAN: Yes. Very. Although, you know, there's always that confusion around a Kennedy operation both in terms of their office, which never seemed to make any sense at all and Bob and I used to talk about that quite a bit, and in terms of these campaigns and operations. And yet the very frenzy of it somehow brings more out of people than if the whole thing was just calculated to the nth degree. And my own feeling was that somehow out of all this chaos, there emerged really a great deal of productive work which wouldn't have been gotten done with a lot more control over it. I may be wrong. He was quite worried about his office, I know, when he was senator. And one time coming in from Hickory Hill after lunch in the car, he talked at some length about the fact that his office really wasn't run just the way he wanted it to be. And he didn't quite know what to do about it, because he couldn't just hire an awful lot of people in an ostentatious way and make it into some huge bureaucratic organization. And yet they obviously were unable to handle the situation, and particularly the mail. He was getting mail of the type that should have been acknowledged immediately even if it wasn't going to be answered for a matter of months, and instead of that it was just not being answered. And I remember one night in New York when he and I went out to dinner and came back, there must have been a dozen messages, all of them extremely important, from ambassadors and from people overseas and things of that sort. And it was clear to me that those messages were not going to be answered in any way. There was just nobody there to take care of it the way it should have been, and I think a lot of people's feelings got hurt as a result of that. People who had a right to expect some kind of reply were not getting it, and I considered this a serious weakness in his staff work. And I told him frankly that if, you know, if he ever became president, there was going to have to be an awful lot of difference in terms of just plain management.

HACKMAN: Did something like that upset him a great deal, the fact that the mail wasn't getting answered?

PRETTYMAN: Well, I don't think it upset him as much as it should have. What happened was that it was like a lot of problems that would come back to haunt him on occasion, but then he'd sort of put it to one side because he didn't really see a ready answer to it. The answer, the obvious answer to it, and that was getting enough people to

handle the job, was something which was anathema to him because he had a horror of huge, ostentatious organizations almost as much as he did of having policemen around him at a rally.

HACKMAN: From your early understanding of the Oregon thing, say in the discussions you had before you went out, what idea was given to you of the differences between Robert Kennedy and Edith Green in the past? What were all these things that upset her so much in the past?

PRETTYMAN: Well, I think the two things that upset her were the men who had come in who, after she and her people had made very careful plans and commitments, changed everything around, cancelled commitments or changed meeting places, really without proper notice either to her or to the other people involved. That was one thing that upset her. And the other was that she thought that keeping people waiting for an hour in the rain was a mortal sin. And we had one very funny experience as a result of this. I told Bob about her feeling and I said, "Now we've got to do something to make her feel you're really going to be on time." So at one point, I think it was during that first visit, they had a reception planned for, let's say 6 p.m. And I worked very hard to get him through all of the things that we had him do prior to that, and at ten minutes of six he walked into this reception hall. There wasn't anybody there except Edith Green and a few other people and they were just tacking things up and so forth. She turned around; her mouth dropped. And he came up to her and said, "Well, [Laughter] here I am, early as usual." She was so delighted by that. She talked about it a great deal afterwards, the fact that I had really been able to get him down to some reasonable times. And, of course, as the campaign went on, it went back to the old situations again, but at least she'd had her moment of punctuality.

HACKMAN: Super-advance man for one day at least, eh? I know that '66 trip has to be Bruno and that whole labor lodge, whatever it was out there? Were there other people? was this a blanket thing? no other Kennedy people or was it just Bruno . . .

PRETTYMAN: No, I think it was a list of four or five people, but they were the ones. I mean when she said, "no one who's been here before", she was talking about the four or five people who'd been in there before.

HACKMAN: Do you remember if [A. Wesley] Wes Barthelmes was on that list? He previously worked for her.

PRETTYMAN: Well, I don't remember. No.

HACKMAN: Did you have any discussions with him in the

couple days before you went out on how to put the thing together?

PRETTYMAN: No, I don't think so. But I did have a discussion with Wes at some point. I have a feeling it was in between these trips. And also I think that his name came up when they were trying to figure out who should really take charge of Oregon. And his name was one of those that was suggested. And then there was some problem as to just exactly what his relationship was with everybody, and I don't remember the ultimate result of that. [INTERRUPTION]

HACKMAN: Okay, we just talked about Wes Barthelmes. Whom did you talk to in the couple days before you went out that first time? Can you remember spending time with anyone on Oregon? Had there been work done before the announcement on Oregon by anyone?

PRETTYMAN: My memory is very, very hazy. It seems to me that I had some telephone calls with people who'd been there, but it really wasn't very much. I principally relied on Jack Beatty, I think his name was. . . .

~~HACKMAN:~~ . . . after I got out there. And there again, I mean Jack is a top notch guy who was extremely helpful and everything, but there's obviously a strong difference between a good local man and a guy who's familiar with a national operation. And it was the latter type we lacked in Oregon until quite late.

HACKMAN: Remember any checking at all with [Wayne L.] Morse or [Robert B.] Duncan or their people?

PRETTYMAN: No, and it was her decision to stay away from them. She obviously had chatted casually, I think probably with both, certainly with Morse. But I think it was her feeling, as I recall it, that getting in the middle of that fight would get us nowhere and then we just kind of stayed away from them in general.

HACKMAN: While you were out there, out in Oregon, in the first few days, was anyone back in Washington making phone calls like this to Morse. Edward Kennedy had been in Oregon a lot in '60 when he had the West. Now was he doing much at this time in Oregon?

PRETTYMAN: I don't know. I talked to Ted several times during these trips about Oregon, but the thrust of the conversation was that Ted was, I wouldn't say more in demand than Bob, but that there were elements out there who were against Bob who were perfectly happy to have Ted talk. And therefore Edith Green was extremely anxious to have Ted

participate as much as he possibly could in Oregon and thought that Oregon would have been particularly receptive to Ted. The more I think about it, the more I think that advice was probably quite good, and that perhaps, just because of the peculiar situation, a little more of Ted as compared with Bob at certain places at certain points might have been quite a good idea.

HACKMAN: During the first couple of days before you went out, did you get involved in any of the big, organizational meetings? I think there were a couple, one in Senator Ted's office . . .

PRETTYMAN: No.

HACKMAN: Can you remember touching base with anyone other than Edith Green when you got in the state, Democratic party people.

PRETTYMAN: Well, yeah, the two of us went around to see a number of people and I don't remember their names now but state senators. And we went around to see several wealthy people in an effort to get them to contribute. And a couple of them were quite receptive. But we did that together. I'd never, as I say, I had never been in the state, so I was not going around on my own at that stage.

HACKMAN: On the fund raising side, were these primarily Edith Green supporters or were they . . .

PRETTYMAN: Yes. I think they were people who had helped her in the past and whom she was trying to convince should help Bob. And some of the reactions we got were quite good. Some were non-committal and some were very much against.

HACKMAN: A couple of the names that I had, and maybe these will ring some kind of bell with you--the Democratic state chairman was a guy named [Edward N.] Ed Fadely, I think. Do you remember where he stood at this point?

PRETTYMAN: Oh, we had quite a bit to do with him, but I'm sorry to say that it's passed by me now. There were so many names and so many people that I'm . . .

HACKMAN: James Redden is another one I believe.

PRETTYMAN: Yes, I don't remember him as well.

HACKMAN: I'd mentioned Robert Biggs a while ago, remember anything . . .



PRETTYMAN: No, I'm really not clear on these names. I'm sorry.

HACKMAN: Can you remember any discussions of how you deal with Vietnam in Oregon? It supposedly was hawkish and was going in the other direction, I think, at that point.

PRETTYMAN: You mean, with how Bob dealt with it?

HACKMAN: How he should if he came in the state.

PRETTYMAN: No. I don't remember specific discussions about that. I know that we ran into a lot of flak with Beatty--Warren Beatty, that is--at the universities. I think his trip was a typical example of a lack of organization, because I was standing around early on the morning he was to arrive. They didn't hear until the day before that he was coming. Nothing had really been arranged for him. They arranged it all very, very quickly. I met him at the airport. We didn't even have a car there. We had to wait and have coffee before the transportation came. He had never campaigned for anybody before and was extremely nervous about it. And it was clear later that he should have been used almost exclusively in the big shopping centers where he was a tremendous hit with the ladies and he could kiss them on the cheek and give them a button and so forth. And instead of that, they sent him to several universities where he got quite a bit of flak. And while I think he, under the circumstances handled himself pretty well, to have someone get up and say, "Now would you just tell me what the hell you're doing here? Did you come all this way to tell us how to vote? And what do you know about the situation any more than we do?" It was difficult for a guy who wasn't a Paul Newman and acquainted with the entire process.

HACKMAN: Can you remember anything about. . . . Well, were there any attempts to try to get some kind of student groups going in Oregon and what, if anything, did Mrs. Green have to do with that or how did she react?

PRETTYMAN: Well, yes there was definitely an attempt to get student groups, and the difficulty was that some of the younger people who were involved were not necessarily in tune with her and had different ideas about how it should be done. And I have the impression that there was some rancor there, that the student groups did not like the way she was doing things, and that she didn't like the way they were doing things, and each blamed the other for what they regarded as ineffectiveness of that endeavor. Actually, a couple of his university appearances, I thought, were quite good and

extremely enthusiastic. But there's no question that if the head of the state for Kennedy and the students for Kennedy had been more attuned, everything would have been more effective. But, you know, I think it kind of got to be a thing with the students in Oregon that to be kind of "in" you really had to be for McCarthy, and it was a mark of something not too good to be for Bob. At one university we asked for a show of hands as to "who would all of the students for McCarthy turn to if he wasn't available?" And I think a smashing majority of them said Rockefeller, rather than Bob.

HACKMAN: This was when Robert Kennedy was making an appearance when this was done?

PRETTYMAN: No, this was one of the Warren Beatty appearances.

HACKMAN: Had you ever talked to Robert Kennedy after one of his university appearances and how did he react to this McCarthy thing with the kids?

PRETTYMAN: Well, he sensed that there was this feeling and I think he felt somewhat frustrated as to just exactly what to do about it. My guess is that he felt pretty much the way I said a little while ago, and that is it would really take kind of a reversal on his part, a really dramatic change of tactics in order to really get in with them and that it just wasn't feasible under the circumstances. I think he handled himself awfully well in the university appearances that I saw, considering the situation. I don't find any fault with the way he did it, and I thought the audience each time was a better audience at the end than at the beginning. And I know he gained some adherence, but I think, again, that the situation was simply inherently untenable.

HACKMAN: In setting up the Robert Kennedy trips, the first one in March and then the second one in April, were you handling all the advance work out there on your own, or did you have any help from anyone else at all out from Washington?

PRETTYMAN: It seems to me that Jack Beatty and I were really doing, such as it was, in the early stages; and maybe it's for that first trip. And then that what's his name? was really top rate.

HACKMAN: Herb Schmertz?

PRETTYMAN: Yeah, Herb. Herb came out thereafter. And Herb really did what you would call advance work. Herb really did that. He had been an advance man and was a very good one, and I never had. I don't think Herb was there for that first trip, and such as it was done, it seems to

me we did it. Jack and his people and I did it.

HACKMAN: Do you remember any problems in finding good appearances to make?

PRETTYMAN: Well, this was mostly Edith Green, you see. You know, I didn't know the state. Edith Green really was in charge of setting up places he should go. And essentially the theory was that the whole eastern part of the state could be ignored in view of the population situation and where the problems were, and that he ought to concentrate on the western section and simply swing up and down it as much as he could. And I think that decision, as far as it went, was probably correct.

HACKMAN: Were there people at the Washington headquarters, which probably were just getting off the ground that first time, but then the second time, that you were calling on the phone a lot for, not just advice, but for help of various kinds. Were there transportation people or materials or anything like this, or were these things you were involved in?

PRETTYMAN: Well, it seems to me that most of those calls were related to problems that Edith Green had--such as how much money are we going to have for Oregon? how many separate trips should we have? should we employ a PR [Public Relations] outfit? what should we do about TV spots? should we hire a polling group to conduct further polls?--all of those kinds of decisions. And those decisions were not being made with the alacrity with which they should have been made in view of the time schedule. I think much more care was going into each one probably than we really could afford. But in any event, they did require some calls back, but very little in terms of the nitty gritty of advance work.

HACKMAN: Why do you think that was so?

PRETTYMAN: I don't think that she appreciated the number of details involved in having a national candidate swing through the state. And she was more involved with certain basic, what she considered to be basic, assumptions.

HACKMAN: Let me see if I understand this correctly. She was frequently calling back to the Washington headquarters?

PRETTYMAN: Well, I was. I was.

HACKMAN: Did you have any problem knowing whom to turn to for things like this? Was there someone

definitely assigned to Oregon back here? I mean Carol Paolozzi was--I don't know if you remember--she was handling the Boiler Room thing, but that's only second level.

PRETTYMAN: Yes. I don't recall off hand that there was anyone who was sort of our Oregon man in Washington. But here again, you see, I was there for such a, what I considered to be, a relatively limited job, which is not as it should have been. In other words, we were doing things by the second trip or even later that should have been done much earlier and that was, I'm sure, partly my fault. But if it was, it was because of a lack of information on my part as to what I was there for and also the things that needed to be done.

HACKMAN: You mean in terms of appearances made or in terms of contacts made or . . .

PRETTYMAN: Well, in terms of setting up groups. For example, the student groups at the university should have been organized long before they were. And the problems between Mrs. Green and those student leaders should have been settled long before they were. But you can't arrive and spend three days in the state and really understand that there are any problems there unless you're spending all of your time on that, which I wasn't. I was spending my time at Mrs. Green's side in an effort to do whatever she wanted done in order to mollify her.

HACKMAN: What did you get involved in then after that first trip, between the first trip and the second trip?

PRETTYMAN: Well, I don't know the exact times, but the only other thing I did in the campaign, I went to the University of Virginia once to kick off the drive in Virginia for Bob. And that turned out to be really rather successful. I went to Nebraska once and made a luncheon speech to a student group which I did not feel was successful, largely because it was almost completely a Humphrey, I mean a McCarthy, group at the luncheon. I made a trip to . . . [INTERRUPTION] I was with him once, incidentally, in California and that was at San Jose which was a wild time. Wow, what a reception! I went to Charlottesville on April 10th and I went to Nebraska on April 27th, Young Democrats Annual Convention. I went to Kalamazoo and made four speeches on May 16th to a Negro group, students, lawyers, delegates and that actually went quite well. And then May 17th was one of the wildest times I have ever had in my life. They called me late in the night May 16th and said that there was a big emergency in Virginia, and that there was a huge dinner in Richmond the next day and that it was the most important thing they were going to have in Virginia, and they were getting Abba Schwartz to come in from New York or someplace, cancel an

engagement so that he could come down there. So I flew all night, the night of May 16th. I got home at 5 o'clock the next morning and 4 o'clock in the afternoon I flew down to Richmond for this dinner. Well, it turned out that wholly outside the state organization, some character in Richmond who'd been a Kennedy admirer had thought up this dinner and had gone around peddling these tickets to it without the slightest indication that anybody who bought a ticket was going to come. And he had sold Washington on the idea that this was an extremely important affair. But in truth it was an absolute disaster and Abba and I got there and met this guy and his group--extremely strange. And we went down the stairs and there couldn't have been over a dozen people in this room that must have had, you know, three hundred seats anyway. And Abba was so mad. He was supposed to have flown to California to see some extremely important Chinese group or something or other. I don't know what. And they brought him all the way in and me all the way in, and it was so bad that I mean it really got to be kind of funny after a bit. Abba even refused to come downstairs. And I finally ended up chatting informally with the group, addressing them from the floor. But it was the most disorganized mishmash I have ever seen in my life and the things that happened afterwards were really kind of funny too. And I suppose some day when politics are written, that story will go around. I think that that is all I did until I went with Rene Carpenter on a trip to. . . . We went to Southern California, San Diego, Oceanside, Escondido, beginning May 31 and we campaigned until June 3rd. And then I went to San Francisco on business and then to Phoenix on business and I was in Phoenix on June 5. I'd gotten up about 9 o'clock and turned on the TV and I'll never forget it. There were two men with a drawing of a head, kind of a physician's drawing of a head behind them. And one had a little pointer and he was saying, "Now if the bullet is here, it won't be too serious, but on the other hand if it's in this area, it's extremely serious." And I just froze because I had the feeling, even though the name hadn't been mentioned. And so then, of course, I immediately started to get dressed and by then they had mentioned the name. And I was on a 7:20 flight. I was right near the airport and I got over there and flew immediately to Los Angeles. I went out to the hospital. I got Frank Mankiewicz on the phone and asked him what he wanted me to do. And he said that he wanted me to go right back to Hickory Hill and help take care of the kids. So I got a 2 p.m. flight and I got out to the house around midnight. And the group there, John Nolan, John Glenn, Lou Oberdorfer, Joe Dolan and that group were out in back already really making funeral arrangements although Bob had not died. But the word that they had had was that, you know, things looked very bad and that we had to really move ahead. So we worked until, I guess, 2, 3, or 4 o'clock in the morning, I guess it was. And people began leaving during the night and then finally a little after 4 everybody had gone but John Glenn and myself. And he was incredibly tired, I never saw a man look so tired in my life. So he said he was going up on

the third floor and sack out, but that if we got any news he wanted to be wakened. So I lay on the couch in the TV room with the TV on just dimly, and I had just fallen asleep when the secret service agent came in from outside and woke me up and said he'd just gotten word--I guess this is around 5 o'clock-- he'd just gotten word over the car receiver that Bob had died. So I went up and woke up John Glenn and he came down and then somebody came over. Was it [Rowland, Jr.] Rowlie Evans' wife maybe? I forget, some girl.

[CLOSED, 2/24/92]

And I spent, I guess, all day there. Oh, and then late in the day, after we had some more meetings, I flew to New York and worked till late in the night there, and then the next day, June 7th, I was in St. Patrick's from 7:30 in the morning until 2 o'clock. I was in charge of getting people around the casket, to stand. And I was not only setting up schedules for his friends, but we were also taking people out of line who were coming through asking them if they wanted to stand. Then at around 2 o'clock on the 7th, 2 p.m., I flew back to Washington because I had some things to take care of down here in regard to the funeral arrangements. But they immediately called as soon as I got home and said they wanted me to be an usher, so I had to get on a plane and fly back again that night to New York. We worked out of Steve Smith's office up there again. And then on June 8th I acted as an usher at the funeral and then they asked if I would. . . . What happened at Arlington was that they knew they were going to have a lot of people who had lost their admission tickets or who were old friends and who should have gotten in, but didn't get any. And they wanted somebody to stand out at the back gate at Arlington, a specific gate out in the very back, and everybody who came up and wanted to get in, claimed to be a friend of the family, didn't have a ticket, they would send to that gate. And then I was to pass on them as to whether they got in or not. And working with me was a secret service man. He made the decision in terms of security. I made the decision in terms of whether they were friends of the family. And my wife came back on the funeral train, but I flew down from New York in order to get out there early. And I did that until midnight.

HACKMAN: I think that's enough for today.

PRETTYMAN: Yeah.