

H.W. “Bill” Brawley, Oral History Interview – 12/29/1964
Administrative Information

Creator: H.W. “Bill” Brawley
Interviewer: Samuel C. Brightman
Date of Interview: December 29, 1964
Location: Washington, D.C.
Length: 47 pages

Biographical Note

Brawley was National Coordinator for Lyndon Baines Johnson’s vice presidential campaign in 1960, Deputy Postmaster General from 1961 to 1962), and executive assistant to the chairman of the Democratic National Committee from 1962 to 1966. In this interview, Brawley discusses the 1960 presidential campaign, the postal rate increase during the Kennedy administration, and the process of raising wages for government employees, among other issues.

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Suggested Citation

H.W. Brawley, recorded interview by Samuel C. Brightman, December 29, 1964, (page number), John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

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H.W. "Bill" Brawley

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Oral History Interview

with

H.W. "Bill" Brawley

December 29, 1964

Democratic National Committee Offices
Washington, D. C.

By Samuel C. Brightman

For the John F. Kennedy Library

BRIGHTMAN: This is Samuel C. Brightman, Deputy Chairman of the Democratic National Committee. I am interviewing H.W. Brawley, whom everyone in Washington calls Bill. He is now the Executive Assistant to the Chairman of the Democratic National Committee and has had a long career in government in Washington. I am going to start out by asking Bill to say a little bit

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about his personal background, where he was born, where he went to school, how he first came to Washington, and how he got into government. Bill?

BRAWLEY: Yes, Sam. I was born in Chester, South Carolina in 1917. I attended the public schools in South Carolina and the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee. Shortly after college, I spent about a year in Chester in private industry and then came to Washington to join the staff of the Office of Price Administration. After serving there for about a year and a half, I joined the Air Force as a cadet, went through the Air Force Cadet program and graduated a lieutenant. I served mostly in this country. At the end of the

war I came back to Washington, spent a few months with the Office of Price Administration, and then went to the Federal Trade Commission

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for about two years. In 1949, Senator Olin Johnston [Olin D. Johnston] became Chairman of the Senate Post Office and Civil Service Committee and asked me to join the staff. I served this Committee through 1961, and for about the last six years as staff director.

BRIGHTMAN: This has given you an intimate knowledge of the workings of the government, and I want to get back to that later in our interview. One way or the other you have been active in every presidential political campaign in my memory. I wonder if you could tell me about the first presidential campaign you were in, what you did, and what you did in subsequent ones, stopping short of 1960, which I would like to come to a little later.

BRAWLEY: Well, my first presidential campaign, Sam, was in 1948. I served as an advance man in that campaign on a few occasions.

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One of the important things to remember here is that I went through Chicago on a trip and met Modie Spiegel [Joseph Spiegel, Jr.]. Modie Spiegel at that time was a rather strong Republican. Our association over the years since 1948, however, has made him a most ardent Democrat, and in the last two campaigns he was one of our heaviest contributors. In 1952, I went to the Convention as a supporter of Adlai Stevenson [Adlai E. Stevenson], helped him win the nomination, and then served in his campaign in various capacities. In 1956, I was again an ardent supporter of Adlai Stevenson, and, in that campaign served as executive assistant to Jim Finnegan [James Finnegan], campaign manager for Adlai Stevenson. That was quite an experience!

BRIGHTMAN: Jim was a wonderful man. How much of your work in these campaigns was oriented towards the South?

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BRAWLEY: Oh, I would say quite a bit. Probably sixty percent. For instance, in 1956, although I was *the* executive assistant to Finnegan, I spent most of my time concentrating on activities in the South. As I think you will get to later, however, 1960 was a different story.

BRIGHTMAN: Bill, when did you first meet John F. Kennedy?

BRAWLEY: Well, I met John F. Kennedy when he first came to the Senate. I didn't know him while he was a member of the House, but I did come to

know him quite intimately in the Senate. I was never connected with any of his Committee work, but as a committee staff man handling legislation for the Chairman on the floor, I certainly had to get support wherever I could. Many, many times I recall talking to John F. Kennedy about federal employee legislation of various sorts.

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BRIGHTMAN: I think your description of yourself was overly modest. I don't think that it has come through clearly how important a staff director on an important committee is, and how much your relations with senators and key people who work for senators contributed to your knowledge of all of the political figures during this era we are talking about. At the working level machinery of the Senate you have had close relations over the years on important legislation—not only with the leadership but with senators of all persuasions from far liberal to far conservative in both parties. I think the record should show this for the benefit of future historians who can then evaluate what you've said. I want to ask you now about your reaction to John F. Kennedy when you first met him.

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BRAWLEY: Well, Sam, it's hard to say. He, of course, was very handsome and easy to talk to. He was not the kind who makes you a friend immediately. He had to gradually grow to know you. It was not until after he was elected president that I really came to love him as a man. As you know, I was at the Los Angeles Convention as Southern campaign manager for Lyndon Johnson [Lyndon Baines Johnson].

BRIGHTMAN: That was going to be my next question, and I would like you to expand it a little bit. What was your pre-Convention role in 1960?

BRAWLEY: Well, of course, I had worked very closely with Lyndon Johnson on the floor of the Senate when he was majority leader because we needed his help to gain passage of the important legislation coming from the Committee. I worked very closely with him for eight years and we were almost on

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a first-name basis. Lyndon Johnson was very helpful on all aspects of federal employee legislation: pay, retirement, health insurance, etc. One of the most important efforts he made was early in 1960, after President Eisenhower [Dwight D. Eisenhower] had vetoed for the fourth time a piece of federal employee pay legislation that the Democratic Congress had approved. Without the Majority Leader's help we could not have overridden the veto, which I think finally gave us some 95 percent of the federal employee vote in the 1960 election. As a result of the closer association I had with Senator Johnson rather than Senator Kennedy, he

asked me to become his Southern campaign manager for the Convention nomination. I served in that capacity at Los Angeles.

Although Jack Kennedy lost the South

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to Lyndon Johnson at the convention, Mr. Kennedy had some tremendous support there, and many of the state delegations were pretty close.

Terry Sanford [J. Terry Sanford] had been nominated and elected Governor of North Carolina but would not take office until the following January. Senator Jordan [B. Everett Jordan] informed me early at the convention that Sanford would arrive in Los Angeles at 2 one morning and would hold a press conference the next morning to announce his support and a majority of the North Carolina delegation for Kennedy.

Senator Jordan's assistant, William Cochrane [William McWhorter Cochrane], met Sanford at the airport and brought him to my suite at the Statler. We talked until early daybreak but I could not change his mind completely. He did announce for Kennedy, although only six North Carolina votes went with him.

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South Carolina had a strong minority led by Governor Fritz Hollings [Ernest F. Hollings] that made a strong effort to switch that delegation to Kennedy. Once this was discovered by the newspapers and published, the South Carolina delegation was flooded with telegrams, and the delegation stayed with Lyndon Johnson.

BRIGHTMAN: Did you travel in the South before the Los Angeles Convention?

BRAWLEY: Yes.

BRIGHTMAN: Now, in 1960 after the Convention, would you tell me a little bit about your campaign role?

BRAWLEY: Well, of course I was surprised, as most other people were, when Senator Johnson accepted the nomination for vice president. About two weeks after the Convention—I had gone immediately after the Convention to Hawaii for vacation with the family—

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the vice presidential nominee called me there and asked me to come back and take a position in the campaign as national coordinator for the vice presidential campaign. I served in this capacity with Larry O'Brien [Lawrence F. O'Brien], the executive director of the combined campaign.

BRIGHTMAN: How were relations between the top Johnson staff people and the top

Kennedy staff people during the 1960 campaign?

BRAWLEY: In some respects they were good; in some respects bad. I recall that at first it was awfully difficult to even get office space for the vice presidential staff. But, working with Larry and the rest of the Kennedy people, we worked these things out and as the campaign progressed we became, I think, a very closely knit one campaign group rather than separate groups.

BRIGHTMAN: How much did you have to do with the

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Southern effort in 1960? As a border state native and resident, I personally feel that the effort by the vice presidential nominee in 1960 in the South was essential to the Democratic victory. How much did you have to do with that—the whistle-stop tour and the other appearances, scheduling, et cetera?

BRAWLEY: There is absolutely no doubt that the whistle-stop appearances and the activities of the vice presidential nominee in the South gained many states for the ticket. But keep this in mind: Bobby Kennedy [Robert F. Kennedy] and the Kennedy people had worked awfully hard in the South with the large groups of young, tremendously vital Southern governors. I think there were four—one in Alabama, South Carolina, Georgia, and one in North Carolina—who were already Kennedy people and for the ticket. These

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people were in power. So, the combination of the Johnson activity and the Kennedy pre-Convention activity aided in this effort. It was not solely, I think, the effort of the vice presidential candidate, but the tremendous pre-Convention work that had been done which made these governors get out and work for the ticket and helped us take these states.

BRIGHTMAN: This leads me to another question. My impression is that the Kennedy attraction to youth brought a new wave, shall we say, into the South and the border states—off the top of my head I think of Joe Tydings [Joseph D. Tydings] in Maryland, Battle [William Cullen Battle] in Virginia—and that we did get a young group working for the national ticket in the South that we did not have in 1956. I would like your reaction to that.

BRAWLEY: We most certainly did. We had people like

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Terry Sanford, who is a bright young governor and has made a

tremendous record in North Carolina. We also had Fritz Hollings, the young governor of South Carolina.

BRIGHTMAN: And I would interject that some of these people believed strongly enough in the national platform and the national ticket that they were willing to lay their own political future in their states on the line to stand up for it. Is that a fair statement?

BRAWLEY: They very definitely did. That is a fair statement. Of course, you are talking about one area, and not to get ahead of ourselves, this is the one major contribution, I think, that Jack Kennedy has made to the government of the United States, to give it vitality, to give it interest, to get bright young people interested in government. And this reflected itself

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after the campaign was over when we were deluged with requests from bright young people for the first time in many, many years; people who wanted to come in and be a part of this Kennedy Administration.

BRIGHTMAN: I think the Peace Corps is the most dramatic demonstration of that, but there are many other examples if we had the time to go into them. I'm going to go along in kind of chronological fashion. I would like to cover the inaugural period; what you did then, what relations you had with the President and Vice President elect during that period.

BRAWLEY: Well, of course, shortly after.... There are many things in this inaugural period, I think if you want to take it in chronological order, we ought to go back to the period immediately after the election, the Inauguration, when the Kennedy Administration was building its team.

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BRIGHTMAN: My question was badly phrased. That's what I was getting at, and not what relation you had to the festivities but to that period.

BRAWLEY: Some of the groundwork in this effort took place while the campaign was going on. I had observed the transition of the Eisenhower Administration and saw them bungle the job badly when they were accused many times of raiding the Civil Service system. Some of this happened in the Truman Administration [Harry S. Truman], but there had never been a listing of the jobs available to a new administration without the charge of raiding the Civil Service. So I had my staff in the Senate Civil Service Committee, early in the game, begin to prepare such a listing of available jobs. This was the first complete listing ever available to a presidential nominee

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in the history of this country. I think the value of this document was shown in the very smooth transition, the way in which the Kennedy Administration chose its top team completely, without being accused one time by any Republican critic or anybody else of having raided the Civil Service system or destroyed the Civil Service system in any way. This book was ready the day after the election. I am told that the presidential nominee at one time was on the floor flipping the pages and having a lot of fun with it. It is one of the things that I pride myself in, and one of the things that Robert Kennedy asked me to do during the campaign period. But shortly after...

BRIGHTMAN: The book sometimes was called the “mail order catalogue,” “the wish book,” and the “dream book”—to interject a frivolous

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note into this thing. Bill, as you and I know, there was a very aggressive recruitment operation during that transition period and people were brought in who had had no affiliation with the Democratic Party, and in some instances no experience in the government. But I am under the impression that they also relied on you and other people who had had experience with the government agencies to find bright people already within the agencies who were ready to take on added responsibility.

BRAWLEY: That is entirely true. After the campaign was over, there were actually two teams working to recruit people. One was headed by Larry O’Brien and the other was headed by Sargent Shriver [R. Sargent Shriver, Jr.]. They were working sometimes in similar areas, many times in different areas. The last post to be filled, if you recall, was that of Postmaster General.

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I think one of the points that ought to be brought out here was that Larry O’Brien very much wanted to be Postmaster General. I was working with Larry furnishing names to the President, who was either in Georgetown or in Palm Beach, Florida. I think the last job was filled while he was in Palm Beach. Larry could not get the President to agree that he ought to be Postmaster General and kept feeding names of possibilities—I think the third list of three had been turned down. Finally, I remember we were sitting in Larry’s office talking about the next list that the President wanted immediately in order to complete his Cabinet. Larry came up with two names and couldn’t find a third one. During this time someone had been putting forward a young senator from California by the name of Hugo Fisher [Hugo M. Fisher]. Fisher’s

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nomination had actually been announced by Pat Brown [Edmund G. Brown] in California. Jesse Unruh [Jesse M. Unruh], who was the Speaker of the House and aspired to the governorship, did not want Fisher to be Postmaster General because he reasoned that Fisher would then become an opponent in his race for the governorship at some future date. Fisher's chances would certainly be enhanced if he were named Postmaster General. It was resolved in this way. After Pat Brown had made his announcement and said that there would be a man in there from California, Larry said one afternoon, "You know, I met the name of J. Edward Day out there. He is the vice president of the Prudential Life Insurance Company. I don't think he will take the job, but at least he fellow by is a possibility from California so I'm

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going to put him on the list." He was put on the list and the three names were sent down to Palm Beach. Of the three last submitted, the President liked the qualifications of Ed Day. He called Day on the phone, Day accepted and took the next plane to Palm Beach. I'm talking now about the 20th of November or the 1st of December, which was very early and long before the inauguration.

BRIGHTMAN: You had already been announced as the number two man in the Post Office Department, or did that come later?

BRAWLEY: No, no, I'm getting to that. Ed Day went to Palm Beach and had a conference with the President. The President agreed to appoint him and agreed to make the announcement, but he called me and introduced me to Ed Day on the phone and said to us both, "I'm making the announcement of Ed Day in

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twenty minutes at a press conference as Postmaster General, but I'm also announcing that you are going to be the Deputy." He told me over the phone that he more or less expected me to run the show. That was my first encounter with Ed Day. After that, beginning about January 1, Ed Day came to Washington and moved into my offices in the Senate Post Office and Civil Service Committee and we began to staff the Post Office Department from there. So most of my activity from January 1 through Inauguration was actually in staffing the Post Office Department and not working on the Inauguration itself, having been designated as Deputy Postmaster General.

BRIGHTMAN: As part of the transition period.

BRAWLEY: That's right, yes.

BRIGHTMAN: Bill, how would you measure the President's interest in what you might call an adminis-

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trative department such as the Post Office as against his interest in foreign affairs?

BRAWLEY: I think the President knew he had a man with fifteen years experience in this field. Keeping in mind that he chose me even though I had opposed him for the nomination at Los Angeles—I had worked for the Vice President—I think he felt he had someone who knew something about the Post Office Department. As a result of that, he did not pay too much attention to the actual administration of the Post Office Department itself. In fact, he gave Day and me almost a free hand in selecting the Assistant Postmaster Generals and the top staff in the agency.

Most of the top staff of the Post Office Department was selected by me with a view toward that person's influence with certain people who could help us gain passage of a postal rate bill.

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Fred Belen [Frederick C. Belen] was selected an Assistant Postmaster General because of his influence with members of the House Post Office Committee. He had been its Chief of Staff for a number of years and I felt sure he could help steer the legislation through that body.

Mike Monroney, Jr. was selected for what influence he might have on his father [Almer Stillwell "Mike" Monroney] who was a member of the Senate Post Office Committee.

Having had a part in writing Civil Service legislation for so many years, I had come to know a great many of the people in government and was able to draw on this source for help in staffing the agency. We were able to gain a good balance by bringing in people from other agencies and from industry.

I adopted a policy which paid great

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dividends. I found several top flight young men and brought them in as my special assistants. After several months of training I moved them into the various divisions to key positions of trust and responsibility.

BRIGHTMAN: I want to get in to your Cabinet experience now, and if there is anything that needs to be said that I don't ask questions about, I think you should just volunteer it. You had a unique experience in working in the legislative and executive branch, and I would like to start out by asking a general question. What do you think about the Kennedy Administration's relations with the Congress?

BRAWLEY: Of course, I think the Kennedy Administration's relations with the Congress were excellent considering the fact that the ticket was elected

by such a small majority. I

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think the President felt he did not have a complete mandate, and as a result of that, the relations he had were quite different than those of Eisenhower or the new President-elect Lyndon Johnson, who really has—if we call it that—a mandate from the people.

On many, many occasions I think the President went out of his way to make sure that the members of Congress and the Chairmen of Committees, and so forth, knew and realized that he had complete confidence in the people who were going to the Congress to represent him in trying to gain passage of legislation. I remember one time, for instance, shortly after the Inauguration when we were appearing before the House Post Office Committee, the staff clerk of the Committee, in the middle of the testimony and activity of

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the meeting of the members, came to me bug-eyed with a note which said, “The President is on the phone and wants to talk to you.” Well, I went to the phone and the President asked a very simple question or two about postal rate legislation—when we were going to get it introduced in the Senate and so forth. It was obvious to me that he was making an effort to do two things: to get a little bit of information, but also to demonstrate to the people who were representing him in Congress that he had complete confidence in them. I think this advanced a lot of his legislation that otherwise would have been awfully hard to get passed.

BRIGHTMAN: I want to ask you if you think congressional relations have been changing. I date back to the day when there were certain states where one phone call would take care of the

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congressional vote. A Frank Hague or Tom Pendergast [Thomas J. Pendergast] could tell all of the Democrats in his state, “You vote right for the President on this bill or I will see about you in the primary.” In those days they could deliver. My feeling is that those days are gone, and that makes a whole new approach to the problem of congressional relations for the executive branch.

BRAWLEY: Of course, frankly speaking, Sam, those days went out with Lyndon Johnson in the Senate and Sam Rayburn in the House. I think that was the big change. These two men were the last of the real forceful leaders on both sides. I think the approach since then has been a soft approach and it remains to be seen how effective this is going to be. I feel that we must admit it was not too effective in the first two

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or three years of the Kennedy Administration. Now, whether this is the reason for it, or the close vote between Kennedy and Nixon [Richard Milhous Nixon], history will have to say.

[END SIDE 1, TAPE 1]

BRAWLEY: Very early the Kennedy Administration decided that it would seek a postal rate increase; this was decided before the Inauguration. There were many conferences with the Bureau of the Budget, with the President, and with Ted Sorensen [Theodore C. Sorensen] and his staff about the approach to this thing. There were many arguments pro and con as to how deep the postal rate increase requests should go. The Kennedy Administration well knew the tremendous fight it would encounter in gaining passage of this bill. There were three postal rate increases during the period 1949 to 1961, and the average elapsed time

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between the initial request and the final passage was some three and a half years in almost every case. This will give you some idea of how tough it was, because the magazines and the newspapers, the direct mail advertisers, spend lots of money and time with lots of people fighting this legislation before the Committees. This may be one of the reasons why President Kennedy chose me to be Deputy Postmaster General. He wanted this increase, and I think he thought I knew how best to gain passage of it as quickly as possible. If you will remember, the fiscal situation of the government at that time was one in which cash dollars were needed flowing into the Treasury every day, and this is one of the things that a postal rate increase will provide. So with that in

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mind we chose certain people in the second echelon of the Post Office Department administration, people we knew had influence with the Congress who could best help us get passage of this postal rate legislation. The bill was introduced very early in the Kennedy Administration, hearings were finally held by both sides, and in August of that very same year we came up with a good compromise and thought we had passage in the House, but the lobbyists beat us. Early in January in the second year of the Administration, after laying a lot of groundwork, this bill was passed and became effective before July. This means that the Kennedy Administration gained passage of a six hundred million dollar postal rate increase in about twelve short months from the time it was

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introduced to the time of final passage and signature by the President. The important thing to remember here in my situation was this: that the bill that came out of the House was one that I directed almost solely and called for an increase of seven hundred and fifty million dollars. It was then, I think, that my troubles began because—I'm being very frank—I think the mailers thought that I knew where the bodies were buried, and they began to plant rumors

with the Postmaster General about certain activities of mine to create differences between the two of us. Very shortly thereafter, Ed Day submitted his resignation to the President—a three-page blast at both me and the White House staff because he felt, as he said in his letter, he

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had been brought into the Post Office Department to take politics out of the Department, and he couldn't do it because of me and the White House staff. Bobby Kennedy came over and talked with him, couldn't talk him out of it, and asked him what his price was. He said, "Brawley has to go." So as a result of that, Bobby, in order to keep peace in the family, asked me to come to the Democratic National Committee. After this happened, the bill went to the Senate for consideration. Two hundred million dollars of rate increases to the second class, which is newspapers and magazines, and third class, which is direct-mail advertising, were compromised out on the Senate side. I personally feel that this was one of the objectives and one of the things that caused the rift between Ed Day and

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me—caused me to leave the Post Office Department and come to the Democratic National Committee—because, if you consider that up to the point of his resignation there had been no conversations between Ed Day and me about any personality differences or conflicts or anything else connected, you can see this blew up all of a sudden. But regardless of that fact, the postal rate increase was passed—two hundred million dollars shy of the House figure.

BRIGHTMAN: I know a little bit about the second class lobby, and it is one of the most effective things that I know of because it reaches down into the individual postmaster level of the government and they are able to bring their big national publications to bear, and they are also able to bring the smallest little weekly

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newspaper with a second class permit to bear on his individual congressman. It is a very difficult problem to deal with.

BRAWLEY: Sam, they don't miss a bet. The Postmasters' Association has an annual convention—just small things, like spending twenty-five or thirty thousand dollars on the part of *Time-Life* magazine to entertain these postmaster delegates at the Convention.

BRIGHTMAN: That's what I had in mind, yes. And, of course, some of the mailers, I might add on the other side, are cooperative in helping the Post Office, not for altruistic reasons, but because they want to get their magazines delivered as promptly as possible.

BRAWLEY: That is exactly right.

BRIGHTMAN: Well, let's see. I think there are a couple more things about your Cabinet experience that I would like to have you comment on. For years you have

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been working with the problems of big government and keeping up morale and giving fair treatment to the government employees, and I would like to have you comment on the Kennedy Administration's record in that area.

BRAWLEY: Of course, it is a very great record. This is one of the things that, I think, the Kennedy Administration will be remembered for. As I told you earlier in our conversation, the Eisenhower Administration had vetoed four pay raises for employees. Very early in the Kennedy Administration it was decided that we should have comparable pay in the government to attract and keep the young aggressive people that they were ordinarily recruiting and attracting to the government. So, instead of Congress pushing for a pay raise because of the activities of the Federal Employee Unions, the Kennedy

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Administration took the initiative and submitted the pay increase bill to Congress. If I recall correctly, they had three pay raises approved under the Kennedy Administration.

BRIGHTMAN: This worked, as I recall, at two levels: what you might call the administrative and at the executive levels. Is that correct?

BRAWLEY: That's right. But another very important point to remember here is—and I think this is where the team in the White House probably made an error—they asked Arthur Goldberg [Arthur J. Goldberg], Secretary of Labor, to develop the legislation for federal employee pay raises. Now keep in mind that the Post Office has about six hundred thousand people of the two million plus in our government and is a very important part of the whole federal employee pay picture because the Post Office unions are

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the most forceful with Congress. Goldberg began to talk with one of the postal union leaders, Bill Doherty [William C. Doherty], to develop this legislation without any representation from the Post Office Department hierarchy at all! Very early in these discussions it became apparent to Goldberg and also to the White House member Dick Donahue [Richard K. Donahue], and to Bill Doherty, a friend of mine, that they needed some Post Office

representation. As a result of that, the White House asked me to sit in on these conferences as an advisor. We had many conferences that lasted over a period of months. I tried to keep the Postmaster General apprised of what was going on, but it was never impressed on me that Arthur Goldberg had been given *carte blanche* authority by the President to make the final decision in

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this area because he never indicated it to me, and he never indicated it to Doherty. He seemed just a coordinator or a mediator to present something to the President. The final conference just before the break up between Day and me occurred on one Friday afternoon when, after a period of six weeks, Goldberg called and asked me to come over and sit in on another conference and see if we could come to an agreement. Doherty made a proposal which was a fair proposal, and Goldberg said, "Well, it sounds all right to me. Let me check it out and see what we can do with it." The next day—and this was late in the afternoon, probably six or seven o'clock—there was a Cabinet meeting. The President said at the Cabinet meeting to Mr. Goldberg, "How are we coming on the federal employee

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pay bill?" Mr. Goldberg replied, "This is all settled," and turned to Mr. Day. Mr. Day said, "Well, what do you mean all settled?" Mr. Goldberg said, "Haven't you heard?" Of course, Day became very incensed because in front of the President he had been told that a decision had been reached and hadn't been advised by me. This is one of the things that added to the differences between the two of us.

But in any event, the total pay increase over the three years of the Kennedy Administration amounted to somewhat less than ten percent, which is a good compromise because the pay bills under the Eisenhower Administration usually amounted to ten, twelve, and fifteen percent. The whole approach of the Kennedy Administration was to do it in bits and pieces of two or three percent

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a year rather than being faced with a staggering ten, fifteen, or twenty percent every four years. Actually it comes out better. This is one of the great advances, I think, and eventually it is going to attract a lot of good, competent people to the government. I think it has to.

BRIGHTMAN: I'm going to shift gears a little bit and ask you some more personal and subjective questions. Where were you on the day of the assassination? How did you hear about it? What was your feeling?

BRAWLEY: A very strange thing.... I had a luncheon date with Marty Friedman at the National Capital Democratic Club's dining room in the Congressional Hotel. I walked into the room and sat down with Marty and hadn't been there more than half a minute when Julia Olsen came over to me

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and said, "Something has happened to the President." I immediately got up and looked around. Walter Jenkins [Walter W. Jenkins] came over, and we stood there and looked at the TV and listened. They finally announced that he had been shot, and both Walter and I looked at each other in stunned silence. Walter, of course, left immediately for the White House. I sat there for twenty or thirty minutes. I just could not believe what I had heard.

BRIGHTMAN: Now that you have had a chance to think about it, I would like to ask you your personal evaluation of the President; what you think were his good traits, his strong traits, any weaknesses you think he had.

BRAWLEY: Well, of course, I think his greatest trait was his public relations. I think this was both natural and somewhat manufactured,

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but I think the largest part of it was natural because he and his family were just plainly attractive to the American people. I think this manifested itself in the recruitment of some darn good, competent people into the government, which is what we need so badly. I think his image was the same in all countries, and I think it certainly helped us in our relations with foreign countries. One of his weaknesses was—I think of an example in my bailiwick at the Post Office—that he and his staff dealt with me and not with Ed Day. I feel, looking back over it now, that he should have dealt with Ed Day. This would have made a more pleasant team. I am not aware of whether this happened in other agencies, but it is certainly something that happened there.

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BRIGHTMAN: Do you feel that there was any weakness, or do you feel he did this, that he really placed most of his key reliance on pre-Los Angeles people, people who had been for him before he was nominated?

BRAWLEY: No! I was not for him before he was nominated, and he certainly placed his reliance on me in the Post Office Department because I think he thought that I knew more about it. I think this is natural, but it is also natural that the top man will resent it. I think this is exactly what happened. Another thing he did—maybe this is a fault of our system in having the Postmaster General actually a member of the Cabinet—was not consult with Ed Day as a member of the Cabinet on matters other than Post Office matters. I think Day resented this; he thought that as a member of the

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Cabinet he should be consulted on Vietnam and a few other things, but he never was.

BRIGHTMAN: You have been traveling a lot since the tragedy. You were extremely active in the 1964 campaign. What is your feeling about how both Democratic politicians and the general public feel about him in retrospect? Do they see him as life size, bigger than life, or smaller than life?

BRAWLEY: Well, Sam, let me ask you to answer that question yourself. How many Conventions have you been to?

BRIGHTMAN: My first one was 1948.

BRAWLEY: Have you ever seen the kind of demonstration that we saw in 1964 when Bobby Kennedy appeared before that Convention?

BRIGHTMAN: No, I have not.

BRAWLEY: It was the most spontaneous outburst of

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sympathy and love and respect that I have ever seen anywhere, anytime, at any kind of convention or any kind of gathering. I think this reflects the feeling of the American people.

BRIGHTMAN: Let me ask you one specific thing. Do you think this is across the board, or do you think there is still some bitterness in the South?

BRAWLEY: I don't think there is any bitterness in the South, as such, for Kennedy. Of course, everybody recognizes the bitterness for Bobby Kennedy because he had such a major part in the civil rights bill. I think there is much more bitterness in the states that went against us, against the Democrats and President Johnson, than there was against Jack Kennedy. I don't think the people who dislike the Kennedys, as such, tend to dislike Jack Kennedy.

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BRIGHTMAN: He had a grace.... Is there anything else you want to say, Bill?

BRAWLEY: No, I think that is all.

BRIGHTMAN: Thank you.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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