Jacqueline Kennedy Oral History Interview – JFK#2, 3/3/1964
Administrative Information

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Biographical Note
Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy was the wife of President Kennedy; First Lady (1961-1963). In this interview Kennedy discusses John F. Kennedy's [JFK] reading habits, interest in historic figures, opinions of his political opponents, controversy over the authorship of *Profiles in Courage* and the 1960 Presidential campaign, among other topics.

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Jacqueline B. Kennedy – JFK #2

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Second Oral History Interview

with

JACQUELINE B. KENNEDY

March 3, 1964

By Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.

For the John F. Kennedy Library

SCHLESINGER: We ended up I think the last time talking about the Senate in which the President was reelected by this great majority and which for the first time made him so nationally spoken of as a possible contender for 1960. Did that -- was it already -- was it apt to coming the kind of, do you think, preoccupation in his own life and was everything directed more and more for that?

KENNEDY: Well, it was never -- do you mean being President?

SCHLESINGER: Yes.

KENNEDY: Well, it was never spoken about loud but well, after election night in Boston -- I think we went somewhere -- in the sun or or sometime -- but then he started speaking all the time. Again, all those years before the White House -- every weekend he was always traveling. You know, invitations from all over this country -- and then we led up to the primaries, which was what? Just 1960?

SCHLESINGER: 1960.

KENNEDY: The thing went on forever.

SCHLESINGER: During these times when he was out like the 1958 campaign, he kept

up reading and so on. How and when did he do that?

KENNEDY: Well, he read in the strangest way. I mean I could never read unless it was a rainy afternoon or long evening in bed, or something. He'd read walking, he'd read at the table, at meals, he'd read after dinner, he'd read in the bathtub, he'd read -- prop open a book on his desk, I mean, bureau, while he was doing his tie. He'd just read a little -- I mean, open some book I'd be reading, you know, just devour it. He really read all the times you don't think you have time to read.

SCHLESINGER: He'd read in short takes, and then remember it and come back and pick up the threads.

KENNEDY: Anything he wanted to remember he could always remember. He'd see things he'd use in his speeches. You'd be sitting next to him on some platform and suddenly out would come a sentence that two weeks ago in Georgetown he would have read out loud to you one night just because it interested him.

SCHLESINGER: It was a fantastic and maddening memory for quotes because he remembered quotes but he couldn't always remember where they were from.

KENNEDY: I remember the winter he was sick. His father had a whole shelf of books, *The World's Great Orations*, or something, which his father had given him and he read every single one of those books and then I asked his father to give them to him for Christmas, which of course he was delighted to do, but he'd been through every one of those and he used to read me Edmund Burke's *To The* -- what is it?

SCHLESINGER: *Address To* --

KENNEDY: *To The People Of* --

SCHLESINGER: *Bristol.*

KENNEDY: That's it, and were all things through there, you know, he just -- of course, that was a different winter, he'd just have days and days in bed to go through all that.

SCHLESINGER: You gather he'd done this as a child -- been a great reader?

KENNEDY: Yes, I know he'd read *Marlborough* when he was about ten or eleven, because in his room at the Cape which he'd had since he was a boy,

these books were in a little bookshelf by his bed, all old, no backs. And he was always sick and in bed. He had scarlet fever, then one year he had some -- either asthma or blood trouble -- anemia or something -- he went out to Arizona --

SCHLESINGER: That was when he left Princeton.

KENNEDY: Yeah. Then there was another summer -- you know, he'd always been reading -- all these things -- and he used to give me books when we were going out before we were married. I remember the first one he gave me was *Sam Houston* by Marquis Jones, *The Raven*? Then he'd give me John Buchan -- *Pilgrim's Way* -- Dr. John Buchan. He was always reading -- practically while driving a car.

SCHLESINGER: Would he ever read novels besides thrillers?

KENNEDY: Listen, the only thrillers he ever read were about three Ian Fleming books -- No, I never saw him read a novel.

SCHLESINGER: Did he really like Ian Fleming much or was that sort of a press --

KENNEDY: It was sort of a press thing because when they asked him his ten favorite books he sort of made up a list and he put in one sort of novel. He liked Ian Fleming -- if you were in a plane or in a hotel room and there are three books on your bedside table -- you know, he'd sometimes grab something that way. There was one book he gave me to read -- something about "time" -- it was a novel where someone goes back in the 18th Century and uncovers a mystery -- it was just a paperback book he found in some plane or -- The last two books he told me to read this Fall -- he was reading *The Fall of the Dynasties* and --

SCHLESINGER: Edmund Taylor --

KENNEDY: And *Patriotic Core* he kept telling me to read -- neither of which I've gotten around to.

SCHLESINGER: *Patriotic Core* particularly is a marvelous book.

KENNEDY: I still haven't read it. You know he was reading all that in the White House and I was growing illiterate there.

SCHLESINGER: It is a matter of constant mystery because he was surrounded always -- academics -- and I suppose he read books all the time. None of us ever get time to read books. He would say in a slightly accusatory way -- asked us about books that had recently come out, and I would sit there.

KENNEDY: Every Sunday he'd rip three pages out of the *Times* book section with

an "x" around what I was to get. You know, it'd be rather interesting to look over my bills from the Saville Book Shop because all those things I'd order that Jack would say to get. On weekends all the time, he'd be reading --

SCHLESINGER: It would be fascinating. Are the bills somewhere?

KENNEDY: I have all the bills, I suppose they're -- yeah, they are, and Saville Book Shop has a list. For instance, at Camp David sometimes if it was a rainy day we'd stay in bed in the afternoon, he'd go through two books.

SCHLESINGER: He read very fast.

KENNEDY: Yeah.

SCHLESINGER: He did at one time take a fast-reading course. Did that make any difference?

KENNEDY: Well, that was so funny because it's about like this tape recording. Bobby came down -- Bobby had been over to Baltimore and gotten all this equipment with a little card you put in and the line runs down it. Well, we did it about once and you know, you're meant to speed up and answer questions about three crows -- how many crows in the cabbage patch, or something. I think we did it twice on Christmas vacation in Florida and then stopped. So he never really took that.

SCHLESINGER: It was mostly history and biography.

KENNEDY: Yeah.

SCHLESINGER: Why not novels do you suppose?

KENNEDY: I think he was always looking for something in books -- he was looking for something about history, or something for a quote or what. Oh, at Glen Ora he was reading Mao Tse-tung and he was quoting that to me --

SCHLESINGER: On guerrilla warfare?

KENNEDY: Yeah. Then we started to make up all these little parables like 'When an Army drinks, not it is thirsty,' or something. He got terribly funny about it. But you know he was always -- I think he was looking for something in his reading, he wasn't just reading for diversion. He didn't want to waste a single second.

SCHLESINGER: Poetry the same -- therefore wasn't -- wouldn't read much. Would he read things you liked a lot?

KENNEDY: Yes, this summer I was reading *The Marechal de Saxe*. I remember General Taylor came out on the *Honey Fitz* and I was asking him all about -- you know, Saxe's battles -- he was in Blenheim -- and everything -- and I told Jack what General Taylor said about him. I was halfway through that book and Jack took it away from me and read the whole thing. You know, if I'd ever say anything in a book I was reading he'd take it away and read it.

SCHLESINGER: How about the theater?

KENNEDY: Reading plays or going to them?

SCHLESINGER: Going to them.

KENNEDY: Well, we never had much time. When we were in New York we'd go to a play once in a while but he always liked light plays. You know, he wanted to sort of relax -- he didn't want to go to anything -- you know. He would rather go to a musical comedy or something then -- But he used to play -- when you say poetry -- he didn't really read poetry -- we'd love to read sometimes Byron, you know, whatever was around he'd pick and read or Shakespeare. But we had a John Gielgud record that we used to play over and over -- *The Ages of Man,* or something. And then we had one this Fall -- what was it? Maybe it was Richard Burton, I don't know. He liked to play them sometimes at night -- you know when you'd be in bed you'd play records sometimes.

SCHLESINGER: Most of it was rather British history than American history, I have the impression -- European history, is that right?

KENNEDY: Yes, there was a lot of Civil War or -- was what interested him in American history. But it wasn't so much American history, really. Then I took a course in it one year by a fascinating man who I got to do some research for later, Dr. Jules Davids. You know, I'd come home all excited what I'd learned about the trust busters, or something, and he didn't seem interested in too much. He really was -- it was British really. He was sort of a Whig, wasn't he?

SCHLESINGER: He was, and was this the result of the time that he spent there when his father was Ambassador, did that sort of give him a -- or was it -- was it before that?

KENNEDY: No, because he really spent very little time there when you think he was finishing at Harvard and he spent -- what, maybe a summer, or a term or so in the London School of Economics. It was all his childhood what he picked to read. I keep saying *Marlborough* but there were others which --

well, I have all his books. And he always had so, when I get them out of crates. You know, his mother can tell you some things about him -- reading when he was six, asking some question -- or seven, I guess. You know, some grownup book that he'd found -- it was just -- I think it's childhood reading.

SCHLESINGER: Reading *Marlborough* at the age of ten -- Churchill was always -- at the end I'd figure a meaning --

KENNEDY: I think *Marlborough* was more than Churchill. I think he found his heroes more in the past. I really don't think he admired -- well, of course he admired Churchill and he wanted to meet him. We did meet him one summer in the south of France after the poor man was rather, you know, a little bit gone by then. But he never had a hero worship of any contemporary -- it was more in the past because I think -- what did he say once about the Presidency? 'These things have always been done by men and they can be done now,' when his father said, 'Why do you want to run for President?' I'm not saying that he thought he was as great as Churchill but he could see that he was up to coping with things and the failures of so many men who were alive now and their shortcomings. So he was really looking for lessons in the past and history but he did -- no, you're right, he did admire Churchill's press and he read all those memoirs that came out.

SCHLESINGER: I think that's right. I think he really saw -- it was Churchill as a writer -- more than -- I mean, he admired Churchill as a statesman, but it was Churchill as a writer that really excited him and piqued his curiosity.

KENNEDY: And I can remember his reading me out loud two things from that -- the part where he describes the court of Charles II which is wonderful, sort of seraglia prose and everything and then how he describes the Civil War. He'd be reading and he'd read aloud a lot.

SCHLESINGER: Anyone in the American past whom he was interested in? Hamilton, Jefferson, Jackson?

KENNEDY: Uh, Jefferson, I guess, and oh, yes, the one letter he wanted to buy so badly but it was too expensive and I was going to try and find it and give it to him last Christmas. It was a letter that came up of Jefferson's where he'd asked for four more gardeners for Monticello that he wanted to be sure that they knew how to play the violin so that he could have chamber music concerts in the evening. That letter had come up at Parke-Bernet and it was $6,000 or something so we hadn't bid on it. You know, Webster -- he read all their things. I suppose Jefferson, really.

SCHLESINGER: What about -- did he ever -- Theodore Roosevelt, Wilson, FDR --

KENNEDY: Oh, then he was reading a book about Theodore Roosevelt this

summer or winter.

SCHLESINGER: An old book -- Alice Longworth gave it to him.

KENNEDY: Yeah. And he, saying to me, 'Listen to how fatuous Teddy Roosevelt was,' and he'd 'Look how --' and then he'd describe several -- read me several things that Roosevelt describes that he does. Always in a sort of throw-away way and then I marched up San Juan Hill and killed five natives and rather apologetic about it. I think he saw through a lot of Theodore Roosevelt. Oh, he admired him, too. But he read everything that came out by everyone.

SCHLESINGER: What did he think of FDR? Had he ever known him at all?

KENNEDY: Oh, they all met him because I remember Mrs. Kennedy telling me that I should think of all the children in the Cabinet because how nice President Roosevelt and Mrs. Roosevelt had been -- that all the Kennedy children met the Roosevelts -- But I don't think he thought he was any -- you know, he often thought he was rather a -- charlatan is an unfair word -- you know what I mean -- a bit of poseur -- rather cleverly. You know he did an awful lot for effect and then he used to get furious -- not furious but irritated -- people would tell him he should have fireside chats and things and he found out how many Roosevelts had which was something like -- you know, very --

SCHLESINGER: Thirteen or fourteen the whole time. I got the figures up for him.

KENNEDY: Of course, he was interested in Roosevelt -- he wasn't patterning himself on him or anything.

SCHLESINGER: He didn't pattern himself --

KENNEDY: On anyone. I remember him telling me the time -- you know, where Wilson had been wrong or what the mistakes were or how -- you know, all with hindsight, he was never arrogant. He just seemed to devour all of them and then I suppose it sifted around and came out -- he used them all, that's what he did.

SCHLESINGER: Now this seems to be quite extraordinary. Here are three men who lived about the same time -- Winston Churchill, Franklin Roosevelt and Joseph P. Kennedy, whom the first was a very successful man, a very talented man but not a great man, and yet, the children of Churchill and the children of Roosevelt, have all been talented -- in many cases, bright and talented, but somehow it all missed fire. And the Kennedy children have this extraordinary discipline --

KENNEDY: I really think you have to give a lot of that credit to Mr. Kennedy

because Jack used to talk about that a lot. He bent over backwards -- when his children were doing something -- he wrote them letters endlessly -- whenever they were doing anything important at school he'd be there for it -- the way he talked at the table. If you just go on being a great man and your children are sort of shunted aside, you know, he watched -- I always thought he was the tiger mother, and Mrs. Kennedy, poor little thing, was running around trying to keep up with this demon of energy, seeing that she had enough place mats in Palm Beach, or should she send the ones from Bronxville or had she put the London ones in storage -- you know, that's what -- her little mind went to pieces and it's Mr. Kennedy who -- and she loves to say now how she sat around the table, talked to them about Plymouth Rock and molded their minds but she was really saying, 'Children, don't disturb your father.' He did all -- he made the conscious effort about the family and I don't think those other two men did. Oh, one other thing Jack told me about Roosevelt was how his foreign policy had been wrong and how he hadn't been good there -- the mistakes he'd made there.

SCHLESINGER: In relation to the Soviet Union, I suppose.

KENNEDY: I guess so, yeah. And how he underestimated -- or miss-estimated -- whatever the word is -- you know, the men he was dealing with. But perfectly, you know, just looking at it.

SCHLESINGER: He had a great detachment about things because he had the great capacity of putting himself in other people's positions and see what the problems were there.

KENNEDY: I always thought that, you know, maybe that's what makes some people -- like Jim Burns who never knew him had said he was detached and wondered if he had a heart. Well, of course, he had the greatest heart and really cared. But he had this detachment -- I always thought he would have been the greatest judge. He could take any case, it could involve himself, me or something where you with anyone else your emotions would be so involved and look at it from all sides? I remember him speaking that way about General de Gaulle one time and everyone was so mad at General de Gaulle last year, I was so steamed up and he was saying, 'No, no, you must see his side.' You know, he was nonetheless irritated.

SCHLESINGER: Well, that's the extraordinary thing -- there are those who always see other people's sides to such an extent that it severs the nerve action for themselves. He never did it in his case. He could see the point -- he understood the political urgencies that drove other people to doing mischievous things but that -- it never prevented him from reacting to it.

KENNEDY: Yeah, I wish I'd given him a wristwatch with a tape recorder in it or something because you could hear him explaining de Gaulle to me,

what de Gaulle's objectives were, why he was so bitter. I mean, his analysis of that man -- de Gaulle wasn't a hero to him -- you know, sort of mad at Jack -- because I think he was so full of spite and that's what Jack never was and he always would say -- I suppose women are terribly emotional and you want to never speak to anyone again who said something mean against your husband -- but Jack would always say you must always lead the way up for conciliation -- you know, everything changes so in politics -- friends or your enemies next week or vice versa.

SCHLESINGER: How was de Gaulle your hero?

KENNEDY: He wasn't really my hero but I sort of loved all that prose -- some of his memoirs -- and thought this man who stayed away in the gloomy forest and came marching back, you know, being rather Francophile -- you know, just a vague sort of --

SCHLESINGER: I agree. I thought -- you know -- at the funeral that he was -- in spite of all the mistakes he has made -- will make --an immensely touching, charming figure.

KENNEDY: Of course, he has two sides to him, that's what Jack would always say. Nobody's all black or all white. He did realize what Jack was. I think he just felt guilty -- I don't know -- such a fine -- you know, he realized what Jack was and that's why he came to the funeral. I think it was an effort. He didn't need to do that.

SCHLESIGNER: He had a certain -- the thing about de Gaulle and Churchill and the President and a few other people, that they had a sense of history which produced a sort of magnanimity of judgment. Although de Gaulle can be spiteful, he also can be very magnanimous and he recognized that in the President -- he saw him in the great stream of history and that -- of course, his memoirs are so marvelous in that respect -- the sense of flow, the necessities which people have to respond to -- and the wonderful prose --

KENNEDY: When Jack opened -- made his announcement that he was going to run at the Senate -- no, run for President -- I'd been reading him the beginning things of de Gaulle's memoirs of how I'd always had a certain image of France and he used part of that -- paraphrased it for his own. You should look at that speech -- 'I have a vision of America,' or something. Another person he used to tell me a lot about was Randolph Churchill, Winston Churchill's father. 'And I forgot about Goshen,' I remember he'd say that a lot of times. Someone resigned and they found someone else to replace him. Do you know that story?

SCHLESINGER: No, I don't --

KENNEDY: There was some minister who resigned when Randolph Churchill was in the government, because he thought he was -- you know -- it was on some point. Who was the one who resigned -- of the Exchequer a couple of years ago? On some little point -- some little thing -- budget?

SCHLESINGER: He'd given information --

KENNEDY: Not the one you -- Anyway, some one resigned and was immediately replaced and this man thought that he couldn't be replaced and they'd have to come around to do what he wanted and right away they appointed someone named Goshen. And the man, maybe it was even Randolph Churchill, said, 'Oh my God, I forgot about Goshen.' Which, you know, is the thing to show that anyone can be replaced.

SCHLESINGER: What did the President think, in 1959, about his contenders -- Hubert and Lyndon and Stevenson in the wings?

KENNEDY: I don't know exactly. He liked Hubert before but he always said when you get into a fight it gets so bitter that you're just bound to hate them at the end it got very bitter. And he liked Hubert again afterwards. Lyndon sort of amused him. Well, Lyndon was so tricky and he'd come home and tell me things -- Lyndon made an announcement up at the Senate that he was fit to run -- to all his supporters -- so he could, I don't know -- play squash and have sexual intercourse once a week. Lyndon -- he knew what he was dealing with there.

SCHLESINGER: He liked Lyndon. Lyndon was sort of --

KENNEDY: He didn't particularly like him but he could trade with him and not come off -- it was sort of -- when you saw them together it was really like fencing -- in political things. I always thought Lyndon was arguing with him or being rude and Jack would sort of parry him with such amusement and he always sort of bested him and he would give a big elephant-like grunt. But you know, he didn't really -- it wasn't anything personal --

SCHLESINGER: I think he has always felt -- that he was amused, rather delighted, by Johnson as a kind of American phenomena -- and at the same time, often quite irritated by a particular thing he would do at any point.

KENNEDY: You know, I mean the ordinary things of Lyndon -- Lyndon was the Majority Leader and he did get the position he wanted in the Senate, but I know he had to trade and really pester hard for that with Foreign Relations and Labor, that's what he wanted so much. But you know, in the primaries it was more what you could do in Wisconsin, who you could get to see and whether Hubert would go into West Virginia or not -- more than the people. I told you last night how it irritates me

with Stevenson -- but it wasn't so much -- he thought he was -- he never thought any of them were better than him but he was never conceited, I mean, if he could just get it -- get over this Catholic hurdle and this youth hurdle and the rich, or whatever it was, you know, then everything would be fine. So, it was really overcoming those hurdles more than his opponents.

SCHLESINGER: Did one of them worry him more than another or were they all sort of equal?

KENNEDY: I think it was Catholic and youth. And I remember before we went out to California I went with him to New York to see him off and he made a speech -- was it in Grand Central Station or the Biltmore? -- about answering Truman's charges that he was too young. But he did it without any bitterness.

SCHLESINGER: And terrifically effective. At the end of '59 there is a -- across around Thanksgiving at Hyannis Port there was sort of a meeting to plan stretchy --

KENNEDY: Oh, I remember that. It was everybody -- we had one house there and everybody was closeted for two days at Ethel's and Bobby's and all these men came up -- I mean, Kenny, Larry, Bobby, everyone, and huddled away and planned. But you know, when Jack would come home from something like that, I wouldn't ask him 'What did you plan here and there.' He'd come home and it would be fish chowder or what did he like for dinner or records or then someone there to laugh. I mean, I would have been a terrible wife if I tried to pick his brains about that.

SCHLESINGER: The last thing you would have wanted. He wanted other things. I think the great difference between -- it was also true between Roosevelt and Truman, being -- Kennedy and Johnson -- is that both Roosevelt and Kennedy were master politicians but politics was one part of their lives -- it was something they enjoyed doing -- it was the instrumentality they used to do other things. But then there are a lot of other things involved with that. I think the Truman-Johnson politics is their whole world.

KENNEDY: I know. When you talk to either of them it's all they can talk about. Every little metaphor, my daddy down at the well, Truman's fascinating about American history -- just ask him anything -- but you never can hear anything different from him, I think a woman always adapts and especially if you're very young when you get married and you know, unformed, you really become the wife you can see that your husband wants. So if he'd wanted -- for instance, my sister's husband loved to bring his problems home and they were all business and Lee doesn't understand that. But if Jack wanted to do that, talk about things at home, then I'd be asking questions. He didn't want to talk about the things that were bothering him. But other things he would like -- it was always you'd have to read the papers and everything. He could be

rather irritated if he said, 'Did you see Reston today?' and if you hadn't you made sure you saw Reston the next day. Because if you'd say, 'What did he say?' he'd say, 'You should find that out yourself.'

SCHLESINGER: His staff were victims of the same. At this meeting, as I recall it in Hyannis Port, was the real thing in which kind of changed it quite in the sense that Ted had up to that time been handling both -- had been working both on the speeches and the political side, was taken out of the political side and Bobby and Kenny and so on came in and really took the whole question of political --

KENNEDY: Oh yes, and I remember there was a rather bitter feeling for awhile, at least in Wisconsin, I think, Ted was bitter at Bobby. Ted didn't like whatever slot he'd been put into and there was a bit of friction there. But Jack could always trust Bobby and I suppose he planned his campaign that way. He couldn't always trust Ted. You know Ted had shown before that wasn't --

SCHLESINGER: Any question of his judgment --

KENNEDY: No question -- well, yes. But I mean that think of *Profiles in Courage*, that was a real -- Jack behaved like a great gentleman to Ted then because Ted didn't behave very well that year. I'm sure that's not why he gave Ted the speeches or something -- but I -- that's why I couldn't look at Ted Sorensen for about two years after that --

SCHLESINGER: Did Ted give the impression he had written the book?

KENNEDY: Written the book -- of course, the poor boy he was just starting, he was new in Washington, but he used to really make a conscious effort to go around and take Jack pages, and things that he'd crossed out and added, you know, really to go out of his way to show them to people. And then when Drew Pearson said it and then there was the lawsuit where Clark Clifford came and defended him and luckily, Jack had saved all these pages of yellow legal pad that he'd written himself. And I guess Jack loved Clark Clifford then because when he asked Clark to defend him I think Clark might have been under the impression that Ted really had written most of the book. He never asked that question but then Jack got all the yellow pages and showed them to Clark and Clark was just amazed and said, 'These are the most valuable things you have -- lock them up -- everything.' You know, I saw Jack writing that book. You know, Ted would send down 50 books on Lucious LaMarr and everyone else from the Library of Congress and Jack would sketch it through, and Thaddeus Stevens and all that -- it was back and forth in the mail. You know, I really saw Jack writing that book. I never liked the way Ted behaved then. But now -- then he got -- his life was all around himself and I think just in the White House he got to love one other person beside himself which was Jack because in the White House he was fine.

SCHLESINGER: As late as that? Of course, by the time -- certainly Ted seemed to be the most devoted and selfless to the point of --

KENNEDY: Let's see, *Profiles in Courage* would have been '55 or '56? I'd say all through '56 and beginning in '57. You know, Jack -- Jack forgave so quickly but I never forgave Ted Sorensen. I watched him like a hawk for a year or so. But then as he had more to do he didn't need to prove his little things. And when Jack gave him -- again, don't you think this is a nice thing -- Jack gave him all the money from *Profiles in Courage* because he felt Ted worked so hard and he would work and stay up at night. As I said, he worked slowly -- he always seemed to have to stay up until 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning to get something done. Don't you think with everyone saying that Ted wrote the book that Jack wanted to give him the money from it -- which has made over $100,000.

SCHLESINGER: Did Ted get all the royalties from *Profiles in Courage*?

KENNEDY: Yes. 'Cause then you see -- when it was published Jack thought it would just be -- you know, just a little book -- that wouldn't make, I don't know -- sell 25,000 copies or something? But then it was zooming on to be best seller, best seller, best seller. Ted's gotten every bit of money from that book until the memorial edition with Bobby's preface came out and then from now on it'll go to the Library.

SCHLESINGER: That's extraordinary -- I never -- Ted must have made hundreds of thousands of dollars.

KENNEDY: I know he made at least a hundred. You know, Jack wanted to give him something extra besides his salary because the boy did just live -- you know, and worked hard all night and everything, but -- Jack was such a gentleman and that was such a nice thing to do.

SCHLESINGER: Bobby was in Washington during this period -- all the time -- but really wasn't until '59, sort of day-to-day involved --

KENNEDY: Always when we were in Washington we'd see Bobby. It was just in the White House that we stopped seeing them in the evenings. When we were out we saw Bobby -- you know, before we were married -- when we always lived in Georgetown we'd have dinner with him once or twice a week. And then Bobby -- they'd talk about the McClellan Committee and the McCarthy Committee -- you know, all the things that Bobby was in but I guess, when Bobby ran the Senate campaign, didn't he in --

SCHLESINGER: Yes, he did --

KENNEDY: In ‘52?

SCHLESINGER: In ‘52, and Teddy supposedly in ‘58.

KENNEDY: But you know, Bobby was always sort of -- well, they were both so caring of what the other was doing, but then I guess -- I suppose at that Thanksgiving meeting Bobby just gave everything up and did everything for Jack. I don’t remember what Bobby was doing in ‘58 but he couldn’t run the campaign. Are you sure he didn’t run it?

SCHLESINGER: My impression is that Teddy was nominally the campaign manager but maybe not. The labor hearings were running on at that time.

KENNEDY: That’s a major thing I remember in Jack’s life but I can’t remember what year it was. But I can remember every morning for breakfast Arthur Goldberg would appear. George Meany and everyone -- when we first moved in -- that was the year 1957 when we moved in our house -- the first breakfast, I had these -- I bought these kooky old dining room chairs and one of the first breakfasts Jack and George Meany and someone else all went crashing to the floor. But all that year we were seeing people for the labor bill. Seymour Harris that Spring --

SCHLESINGER: Much more labor than foreign policy, therefore --

KENNEDY: Well, it was to get through the labor bill -- was it against the Landrum-Griffin Bill?

SCHLESINGER: The Landrum-Griffin Bill came along as a -- alternative which was actually passed as a result of Eisenhower’s throwing himself into it.

KENNEDY: Well, anyway, Jack had one whole Spring working on that.

SCHLESINGER: Spring of ‘59 I think. But at the same time he would do things like give the speech on Algeria.

KENNEDY: Oh, yes. And then I did that -- gosh, I had to be married for my contribution to that because that summer -- that was the summer before we were married -- he gave me all these French books and asked me to translate them -- and I was working for the Times Herald and living alone at my mother’s house in Virginia. And I’d stay up all of these hot nights translating these books and as I couldn’t tell what was important and what was not --

SCHLESINGER: What sort of --

KENNEDY: You know, all these -- they were all in French on Algeria -- no, no, this

is Indo-China. Sorry, Indo-China. That's right. That's what I did before I got married.

SCHLESINGER: That was '51-'52.

KENNEDY: Yeah -- translate all on Admiral d'Argenlieu and Ho-Ching and the Anemites and Minemites. I think I translated about ten books.

SCHLESINGER: Ten whole books?

KENNEDY: No, really skimming through the page but --

SCHLESINGER: Summarizing. Could he not read French?

KENNEDY: Yeah, he could read French but not enough to trust himself for a lot of facts and things. And then he would see -- we were seeing a lot of French people then and then they'd give some books. And the same -- well, I did some for Algeria. And the St. Lawrence Seaway, again -- I can remember that. You know, all those things were so grave.

SCHLESINGER: The Algerian situation particularly so because it concerned the whole consul and foreign relations crowd -- were all outraged about it. I happened to be in Paris when the speech came out and an old friend of mine, Jean Jacques Servan Shriver of the Express, was absolutely delighted by the speech and had the full text and claims to be the first magazine in the world which put the President on the cover. I remember writing to him from Paris, 'Pay no attention to these editorials from the New York Times, and how you shouldn't rock the boat, you have to be right. The people from France who care about it welcomed the speech.'

KENNEDY: I remember when he went to Poland he wouldn't take me because he said it wasn't serious to travel with your wife. He was always more interested, well, so interested in foreign things. And then the minimum wage, I remember whenever that was. You know, all the things he cared about -- I don't know what year. Just as an example of him having a heart. I can remember him being so disgusted because once we had dinner with my mother and stepfather and there sat my stepfather putting a great slab of pate de foie gras on his toast and saying it was simply appalling that the minimum wage should be a dollar twenty-five. And Jack saying to me when we went home, 'Do you realize those laundry women in this house get sixty cents an hour or sixty cents a day,' whatever it was. And how horrified he was when he saw General Eisenhower -- President Eisenhower -- I guess at the Camp David meeting before Inauguration -- and Eisenhower had said to him -- they were talking about the Cuban refugees -- and Eisenhower said, 'Of course, they'd be so great if you could just ship a lot of them up in trucks from Miami and use them as servants for $20 a month but I suppose somebody'd raise a fuss if you tried to do that.' Again, so appalled at all these rich people

just thinking -- not thinking on how you can live on $20 a month but just to use these people like slaves. He was just so hurt for them. He'd say it in his sentence. The awful -- the public can sort of -- Oh, and then another time when he was trying to raise money for the Cultural Center and a Republican friend of my stepfather said, 'Why don't you get labor to do it. If you took a dollar a week out of all of labor's wages you could have the money raised in no time at all.' And he was just sickened by that and said, 'Can you think what a dollar a week of their wages would mean to all those people.' So, all those things show that he did have heart. He was really shocked by those things.

SCHLESINGER: I think the most -- of course, he had heart and he had a -- in fact -- it wasn't on his sleeve. People have been so used to attaching a sentimental style of expression of that kind of thing. He was deeply affected, but he was cool also. The fact that he was, is why someone like Hubert whom I love -- is an admirable man, nonetheless can't connect with as many people as the President could because Hubert is still -- is an earlier phase of reaction to this kind of -- Did the President enjoy the primaries in 1960? In spite of the fact it was a bother and a great nuisance to go through all this, but campaigning and so on?

KENNEDY: You don't know the exhaustion of the primaries and he often said that the four days we took in Jamaica between Wisconsin and West Virginia were what made it possible for him to be President. Because he just worked himself into exhaustion and then the second wind and the third wind and when you get that tired you don't enjoy them. And sometimes, when we were in the White House, and he'd go on some long trip and he'd get tired -- sort of a campaigning trip? And he'd come home and say, 'Oh, my God, I just don't see how I got through those years.' You know -- 'I just don't see how I did it.' I suppose when you stay that tired for that long but then he'd lose his voice -- I don't think anyone enjoys working out of sheer exhaustion. And then in Wisconsin we'd go into a ten-cent store or something, three people in it. They'd back against the back wall -- they wouldn't want to shake your hand, you have to go up and just grab their hand and shake it. And then the rallies in the town where you'd have a band and everything there and nobody'd show up. You know, that was really hard. Wisconsin was the worst.

SCHLESINGER: Worse than West Virginia --

KENNEDY: In West Virginia, I was so amazed I thought everyone would be there staring at us like --

SCHLESINGER: Papists?

KENNEDY: Yeah, and all that literature they were passing out about nuns and priests and everything. The people were so friendly -- there would be a mother with three blackened teeth nursing a baby on a rotting front porch but she'd smile and say, 'Won't you come in?' In Wisconsin those people would stare

at you like sort of animals. Jack would say, 'All this talk about the rural life is really -- you know, overestimates it.' Because the people are alone all day long and cold and just with animals and they're so suspicious -- maybe it's because they're Nordic too, I don't know. But they're suspicious people there --

SCHLESINGER: You feel this because he was a Catholic or because he was an Easterner or were they equally suspicious of anyone -- Hubert -- anybody?

KENNEDY: I think that in Wisconsin they're just suspicious of anyone sort of gregarious. I mean, I don't think they like someone coming up or a band or anything. And I think they were suspicious of him for all those reasons. Whereas in West Virginia, you know, they're a bit gayer, even though they're so poor. But I loved -- I never met one person I didn't like except for the strange man running around with his handbills wherever we spoke. I never met one person in Wisconsin I did like except for the people who were working for Jack.

SCHELSINGER: When he was exhausted he snapped back quickly though, wouldn't he?

KENNEDY: Oh, yes, you'd stumble into some hotel bed and you get up at six in the morning. He could snap back -- he could have the day home and just sleep all through it, and he'd get all his laundry done or something in the daytime and packing at night and off he'd go or off we'd both go. And he could always sleep, he could sleep in the plane, almost like a soldier. I think that's -- so many people's troubles are when they can't sleep.

SCHLESINGER: Clem Norton -- I don't know if you've heard the tape of his -- said Teddy has a street personality, the President didn't have a street personality.

KENNEDY: That's true, he didn't. And at the end we had that incredible thing, but Teddy's more 19th Century, he can come down and tell stories, he was more like Clem Norton and more like Honey Fitz. But Jack never -- he never said, 'Hi, fella,' or put his fat palm under your armpit or -- you know, any of that sort of business. It was embarrassing to him.

SCHLESINGER: But he didn't actively dislike campaigning, he rather enjoyed it, didn't he?

KENNEDY: Yeah, he enjoyed it and you know if you asked him his three favorite things that you could do in a day I don't think he'd say campaigning

but when he got caught up in it -- and when it was going well, he really liked it and was fine. And the last -- as time went on he was doing better and better. And he loved the people who were really glad to see him -- the little old ladies, the children.

SCHLESINGER: I always felt that when he went out as President on a trip and saw crowds, he'd really come back very refreshed. Didn't you feel the energy and compliments --

KENNEDY: People were so good for him, he'd say how good it was to get out of Washington where it's this little group just writes in and in and in, you know, little correspondents hashing others. It's so good for him to get away and to see that he was adored and -- it was great whenever he did that. And when he went to Europe this June.

SCHLESINGER: How do you account for the misunderstanding of the President in 1960 -- especially with all the people who thought there was no difference between Kennedy and Nixon to such an extent that I had to write a book to try to show that there was a difference. Looking back now to set it right --

[END OF INTERVIEW]