

James J.P. McShane Oral History Interview – JFK#1, 3/29/1966
Administrative Information

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Biographical Note

James J.P. McShane (1909-1968) was the Chief of Security for John F. Kennedy's presidential campaign, a U.S. Marshal from 1961 to 1962, and Chief U.S. Marshal for the Department of Justice from 1962 to 1968. This interview focuses on McShane working as John F. Kennedy's security during the 1960 Democratic National Convention, among other topics.

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with Theresa E. McShane

James P. McShane

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James J.P. McShane– JFK #1
Table of Contents

<u>Page</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1	Meeting Robert F. Kennedy [RFK] while working as the Shakels' chauffeur
2	Meeting John F. Kennedy [JFK]
3	Being hired by RFK as an investigator for the Rackets Committee hearings
4	JFK and RFK working together
5	Accusations that the Kennedys were anti-labor
6	Working for Estes Kefauver
7	Meeting with RFK about JFK's campaign security
8	Being hired as security by the campaign
10	Travelling to Los Angeles with the campaign
12	JFK's reluctance to have uniformed police with him
13	JFK greeting a crowd of people
14	Visiting various delegations
15	JFK's demeanor during the trip
16	Police detail's complaints about the campaign
17	Press discovering JFK's hideaway
19	Avoiding the press
21	Nominations starting at the 1960 Democratic National Convention
24	Arrival at the convention
25	An usher hitting a reporter at the convention
27	JFK speaking to Lady Bird Johnson on the phone
28	Vice presidential candidates meeting with JFK
30	Nomination of Lyndon B. Johnson as vice president
31	JFK sneaking out for the Kennedy-Johnson debate
33	Keeping people out of JFK's suite
34	Return from Los Angeles

Oral History Interview

with

JAMES J.P. McSHANE

March 29, 1966
Washington, D.C.

By Charles T. Morrissey

For the John F. Kennedy Library

MORRISSEY: How did you come to know the Kennedys?

McSHANE: Well, it's a story that's never been told before. The truth of the matter was this: I was a detective in the New York City Police Department back in '52 or '53. And in those days (I guess even now) they didn't pay them too much of a salary, with the result that we had had some bills that had to be paid--doctor's bills, hospital bills--and we had several loans, and we had to do something about it to augment my income. Through a friend of mine by the name of Ray O'Connell, who was very friendly with the Shakels, who would be [Robert F.] Bob Kennedy's wife, Ethel, he got me a part-time job during my vacation--I believe it was about 1953--driving Mr. Shakel. The regular chauffeur was on his vacation so I got the job. That's how I got to know the Shakels.

I believe it was 1954, again, they asked me to go to work for them in the summertime, which I was more than happy to do. And I recall one day--this was during, or the ending rather of the [Joseph R.] McCarthy hearings--a girl got out of the car, and obviously she was one of the Shakels. We shook hands, and then a fellow came over with his hair parted on the side and hanging down. I instantly recognized him as assistant counsel of the McCarthy hearings, and he walked over and he said, "I'm Bob Kennedy." I said, "I'm glad to know you. I'm Jim McShane."

I didn't have any chauffeur's uniform on or anything. As far as I guess he knew, I was just one of the guests around the place. But he subsequently found it out, and obviously, it didn't make any difference for him. And when he'd be coming up to Westchester Airport to spend the night at the Shakels--both he and Ethel--I would go to the airport, meet them, and drive them back. The Shakels were a wonderful family. I was the chauffeur, an employee, yet I sat at the table with them, broke their bread, drank their wine, and developed quite an intimate associationship with the whole family.

The years went by, and I would see Bob most every year. Then, I think it was about the end of December--we had been invited up there for some sort of a Christmas festivity or something like that--I told him I was all set to retire from the Police Department. My twenty years were up. I had gone in in 1936; this was '56. He was then starting the Senate Rackets Committee, and I understood they were looking for investigators. I went to him and told him my problem. He said he would be in touch, and the months went by.

I just forget. . . . It was in early '57. I was in someplace--my memory fails me for the moment--but I was with Ray O'Connell, and Ray was with a very fine, distinguished-looking young man. And he says, "Jim, have you met Senator Kennedy?" And that was the first time that I had met the Senator. As I say, Ray O'Connell and I were very good friends, and of course he was a very, very close, intimate friend of the President.

Well, the months went by. I was getting a little impatient. One day, on Triborough Bridge, I'm driving towards Manhattan, and I hear a car in back of me blow the horn. I turn around, and it's Ray. We pulled off on the East River Drive there and talked. He wanted some sort of a favor for a friend of his, and I said I'd be very happy to do it. I said, "By the way, I spoke to Bob last Christmas about that Senate Rackets thing. Now it's going full bloom, they're having the hearings, and [David S.] Dave Beck. . . . I understand they really need investigators." He said, "I'll let you know in a couple of days." I found out later he wrote to Bob.

Bob subsequently got in touch with me. And the way he got in touch with me was rather funny. I like to walk. We were living in the Bronx, up in Van Courtland Park section, and I went out this morning and took a long walk and came back. My wife, Tess, very excitedly says, "Bob Kennedy called. He wants to get in touch with you right away." I says, "Well, did he leave a number?" And she said, "Yes. He's at a dentist's office." And I called the number, and he came off, and I could hardly recognize him. He must have had a mouth full of cotton. And in his real typical Kennedy way, he said, "Jim, is there any chance of seeing you today?" And I said, "Sure, name the time." He said, "How about 1 o'clock?" I said, "Where?" He said, "In the lobby of the Waldorf." I said, "That's great."

So I was there. We went across the street to Howard Johnson's and had a sandwich and a soda. And he said, "We're ready to go if you are." And I said, "This is fine." I believe this was about the end of that he was interested in--that he wanted to get the background of the particular witness and find out all about him--and suggested what questions to be asked and what questions shouldn't be asked. And this went on until September 1959, when the Senate Rackets Committee was dissolved. And this was my first indication of the greatness of the Kennedys.

It's the usual thing here in Washington, when a Senate committee is having a prolonged investigation, to hire a number of investigators. And at the conclusion of it, the counsel for the particular committee says, "The chairman will want to see you this afternoon (this is Tuesday) and he wants to thank you for the great job you have done here. Without you the hearings could not have been a success. And we're really thrilled with the work you have done." And usually there would be the long pause. "However, Friday afternoon you're finished." But we'd be very happy to give you a recommendation." The result is that, usually with investigations of that type, an investigator can go months and months without catching on to another committee. But Robert Kennedy--we had thirty-four investigators and there were several clerks--put every one of those investigators and clerks to work either in private industry or with other committees or sub-committees or House committees. And he did not resign until

the last investigator left the committee. I know that because I was the last investigator to leave. He spoke to Senator [Estes] Kefauver about me, who at that time was about to start an investigation into professional boxing. Senator Kefauver interviewed me, accepted me. I went to work for him. The following day, Robert Kennedy submitted his resignation as counsel for the RacKets Committee and went to work over in the Esso Building where they were opening up offices to get the campaign going.

MORRISSEY: I'd like to hear your impressions of how these two brothers could work so well together. Many people say they could even communicate together with one another without speaking.

MC SHANE: One would just look the other in the eye, and there was the message. They had a great habit with the thumb, just a signal with the thumb. The Senator would look at Bob and thumb, and the message would be in, and Bob would come across and ask the question of the particular committee. Or when Bob was through interrogating somebody, he'd look at the Senator; the Senator would look at him; Bob would nod; and the Senator would ask a very pointed question that Robert apparently had overlooked. I've seen this happen numerous times. There were times when I was with Bob the night before going over a particular case for the next day and staying out at his home in McLean and then coming to work the following morning together, and that afternoon we would have another hearing. And at no time--and I was always close to him--would Bob speak with the Senator. So again, as you say, they just had that. . . . Some brothers have it and others don't. And of course, as we know now, the two of them had it. There was an extremely close association, not only between the two of them but among the three of them. As I say, I've seen that happen so many times.

MORRISSEY: Some people interpreted those investigations as meaning the Kennedys were anti-labor. Did you ever hear them comment on this charge, that they were anti-labor?

McSHANE: Oh yes. Sure. I heard them comment quite frequently, and it was just not so, because everybody knew in 1959 that Senator Kennedy was going to seek the nomination in 1960, and that he could not possibly get the nomination--or if he did get the nomination, he could not possibly win--without the support of labor. That goes for any Democratic candidate. So, for them--for certain people--to say that the Kennedys, and particularly Bob Kennedy, were anti-labor is just not true. And I think those stories emanated mostly from the Teamsters, and particularly from Mr. [James R.] Hoffa who was trying to throw up this cloud of smoke to hide behind. Of course, the greatest gimmick is to--my background, now, as a policeman--if you have somebody in custody and you question him for a crime and you say, "Well, so-and-so said that you did this," they can say, "Well, he's a thief. He's a crook." This then creates in your mind a doubt as to whether the complainant is telling the truth. This, in effect, is what Hoffa did with the Kennedys. And particularly with Senator Kennedy. Of course, as subsequent events proved, he was anything but anti-labor.

MORRISSEY: I imagine you logged some pretty long days of work.

McSHANE: With the Kennedys you always did. You always did. I recall one time in particular. We were having a very extensive hearing, and I had come in out of town with Walter Sheridan and Pierre Salinger and Sherman Woolsey. We got in about 7 o'clock at night, and he was waiting for us. In those days they had stenos and clerks who worked around the clock. And we stayed till about 1:30 in the morning briefing, getting witness sheets ready and the like of that. He said, "I think we ought to pack it in. I'm tired, and you fellows must be tired, too. Why don't you go to bed? We'll meet back here tomorrow morning at 7:30." This was 1:30, quarter of 2. We had to go across the street to the Carroll Arms, which is less than half a block away.

We checked in; in fifteen minutes all of us were in bed and asleep. He had to drive all the way out to McLean and drive out himself. The next morning we figured we'd fool him. If he wanted us there at 7:30, we'd come in a little early. We got in about ten to 7, five to 7. We were talking to one of the girls out in the hall when suddenly we heard a very familiar voice with a Boston accent. And I said to one of the girls, I said, "Is the Chief Counsel in?" She said, "Oh, yes. He's been in since 6:30." And we really fell apart. This was just an indication of how he worked. He worked hard; they both worked hard. But they wanted you to work hard.

There's two things that always impressed me with the Kennedys. I'm sure it goes too for Teddy [Edward M. Kennedy] now, too, though I don't know Teddy as well as I knew Bob and the Senator, the President. Two things they demand: You work hard, and they'll work just as hard or maybe they'll work even a little harder than you; and they demand intense loyalty. You have to be loyal to them. If, in effect, they ask you to walk across the street and be hit by a truck, you have to do it. But by the same token, if you ask them to do it, they will--and more. They'll be as loyal as you are and more so. And I've seen instances of this where, despite what people said--public acclaim against a certain individual--the President would stand by him, or Bob, when he was the Attorney General, would stand by him regardless of the pressure.

MORRISSEY: Let's go on. You were working for Senator Kefauver?

McSHANE: Well, I was working for Senator Kefauver. Of course, this happens to anybody who works for the Kennedys and then leaves them. I've asked a dozen people who have worked with them--both the President and Bob--and have now since left and either gone into private industry or gone with other governmental agencies. There's that letdown. There's that feeling that there is something missing. This, in effect, is not really fair to people whom you work for. Now, there was no finer man that I ever worked for than Senator Kefauver. He was a gentleman; he was a tireless worker; he had a great understanding of human nature. As I say, he was just a wonderful man to work for. Yet it wasn't working for Bob Kennedy, and it wasn't working for Senator Kennedy. It was just that missing.

Well, then in January of 1960, to the surprise of no one, Senator Kennedy announced his candidacy for the nomination. And it got to be February and March and April; the primaries are piling up. I'm having hearings on the professional boxing for which I could care less. And the thought kept coming back in my mind that there has to be a place for me in the campaign. But how? Then I got an idea. I thought about it. The more I thought, the more I thought that I could fill a certain position, a certain capacity, and make a contribution to the campaign because I was convinced then that the way things were going, he was going to get the nomination, thought I had no inside information. Just what I read in the papers and general talk.

I knew that Bob was coming to town, and this, if I recall, was about the beginning of April, 1960. So I called him at home, and I said I wanted to see him, I had a problem, I wanted to discuss it with him. That's another thing I always liked about him; regardless of the hour I called, if I said I had a problem, he'd say, "Do you want to come down now?" I'd say, "No. Leave it till the morning." And that was it. He said, "Do you want to come down now?" And I said, "No. It's not necessary. But how about tomorrow?" He said, "Well, I'm having breakfast at 8:30 tomorrow morning at Schrafft's on 51st and Madison Avenue. I'm having breakfast with two people. Why don't you get there at a quarter to 9, ten to 9?"

So I did, and they were just about finishing up. I waited on the side. They got up and left. Bob beckoned to me. I came over and sat down. I had a cup of coffee. And he said, "What's on your mind?" I said, "I might as well come right to the point. Your brother's going to win the nomination. There's going to be a long intensive campaign. He's going to have a lot of people around him whom he should have; there's going to be some people whom he shouldn't. He's going to have a tremendous amount of visitors wherever he goes. And some of those visitors should get in to see him; others should not get in to see him. But the ones who do not get in to see him should be sent away without a bad taste in their mouth. They should be sent away happy, knowing that they tried to and couldn't. Then," I said, "there's also the question of security. Your brother is going to have to have somebody around him who has had some background in police work." And I really went overboard to try to sell myself. I always remember at the end of this dissertation of about fifteen

minutes I paused, I stopped, and then I said to him, "Bob, there is nobody better qualified than I to do this." There was a long pause, and I said, "Here it comes. I'm finished." There was a long pause. He sipped on his glass of milk and put it down and looked me in the eye and says, "I agree with you." And that was it. So I said, "When can I start?" He said, "Well, we have the primary coming up." I think it was West Virginia, and I believe there was one coming up in Nebraska, and there was one coming up in Oregon. As I recall--and this is strictly from memory now--the one in Nebraska was going to be on the same day as the one in West Virginia. So he said, "I see no point, at this time, in you coming with us. Why don't you wait until it's Convention time and then resign from the Committee and come with us." So we waited and waited. And April came and then May and then into June. Then about the twentieth of June, I went over and saw him, and he said, "My brother is going out to the Convention in the beginning of July. Why don't you make arrangements with [Stephen E.] Steve Smith. You quit a couple of days before." So I said, "Fine."

The Convention opened up I believe, on the tenth--oh, no, I think the twelfth of July. And he was going out there on the tenth of July, which was a Saturday. I went to Senator Kefauver about July fifth, and I told him my plans, and also [Paul] Rand Dixon, who is now Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission. I told them both my problem, what I intended to do. They both said, "That's fine." But, in effect, "They're going to do to Jack what they did to me in '52." Senator Kefauver said. He said, "I don't think Jack's got a chance. I went in with almost as many votes as he's going in with, and they just tore me to pieces. And," he said, "I think they're going to end up tearing the guts out of Jack. So, if you feel that you want to go, fine, but we'll try to get you back here if we can." And I said, "I'll take the calculated risk, Senator." Rand Dixon, in effect, too said this. I said, "Well, you know, the die is cast. I've committed myself to Senator Kennedy, and I'm going with him."

Then I kept calling Steve Smith--and here again is the working for the Kennedys--as to where my tickets were, where I would go, what time I should be there, the flight number. I called Steve's office in New York on numerous occasions. Nobody

could tell me anything. Could never get Steve. It gets to be Thursday afternoon. We're supposed to leave sometime Saturday I understood from reading the newspapers. Friday--then, I got a little panicky. I called Steve's office about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. And she said, "Why don't you stand there for a while and see if we can locate him." Which I did. I was at home. And finally, about a quarter to 6, the phone rang, and a young lady came on whose name I have forgotten, and she said, "Mr. McShane, could you be at Idlewild tomorrow morning, the American Airlines counter at Idlewild, flight so-and-so? You'll be going out with Senator Kennedy and some friends." Well, that was resolved. Then there was no problems. So the next morning, I was out there. Can I just stay there and go back to. . . .

After Bob said that I had the job. Great. Sometime, I believe in the middle of June--I hadn't seen the Senator in a couple of months, nor had I seen Mrs. [Jacqueline B.] Kennedy--President [Harry S.] Truman came out, was interviewed, and gave the statement, in effect, that he was too young to run, that he was too youthful, that he ought to step aside for a more experienced man, and a few years of experience never hurt anybody. Obviously, he was plugging for Senator [Stuart] Symington, or possibly Senator [Lyndon B.] Johnson. And I believe, if I recall correctly, there was a press conference held in the Biltmore Hotel in New York on a Saturday, which would be televised, and Senator Kennedy would give his answer to Truman. And I went down to the interview, just to meet him and talk about, you know, "When are we going?" and "Did Bobby say anything to you?"--just to make sure.

So, I got down there; we waited. And in came Senator Kennedy and Mrs. Kennedy and he's talking to [Chet] Huntley, the NBC [National Broadcasting Company] announcer. And he turned around. As he did, he faced me and saw me and came over and said, "We're all set. You're coming with us." Well, then I knew it was confirmed, which of course I knew anyway. I knew that Bob would not say. . . . You know how the Kennedys are; they just tell you what you want to know, and that's all. Then Mrs. Kennedy came over and said, "Bobby was telling us that you're coming with Jack, and we think it's wonderful. We want somebody around my husband because there's going to be an awful lot of cranks and the likes of that." So I left him, and we go on.

And Saturday morning we went out to the airport, had a crowd there. They had stayed at a motel, I believe, the night before out at Idlewild. They came over, got out of a car, and we got on the plane, which was filled. It was not a private plane. It was mostly taken up by newspapermen, but there were passengers on it, too. [Torbert H.] Torby Macdonald was with them. And that was the first time I met Torby, who was the congressman from Massachusetts and who was a close personal friend of the President's. And Mrs. Ben Bradlee, the wife of the associate editor of The Washington Post, was there. And she was about eight and a half months pregnant.

MORRISSEY: That's a heck of a time to go to Los Angeles.
[Laughter]

McSHANE: Yes, at a time like that. So, we sat up near the front of the plane. The President sat by the window, and Mrs. Bradlee sat alongside of him. I sat with Torby. This was the first time we met, and we chatted. He wanted to know my background and what I was going to do with the Senator out there. And I told him. That has lead since to a very, very strong relationship and a friendship of which I am very proud. And talking with most of the newspapermen whom I had known through my experiences in New York as a detective when they were police reporters, and had since gone on to political writing. . . .

We arrived in Los Angeles, and we looked out the window, and there was nothing but a sea of heads and faces. It was just murderous. And we waited. Oh, I recall Mennen Williams being on. But he wasn't on our party. He was sitting in the back. And Pierre Salinger came out and said that my men were waiting at the ramp--this being, of course, four detectives from the Los Angeles Police Department. Pierre said, "You better get down there and be ready to take care of him when he comes out." But I was apprehensive and concerned with Mrs. Bradlee because I knew that once we got out in this, you can have four detectives or forty storm troopers, or whatever you would have--army people--it's going to be a problem. So I went down and I told the four of them to get around him when he came out and get him into a car. He was going to speak at a place about fifty, sixty yards away. I went back, and I said

to Mrs. Bradlee, "I'm concerned about you. We'll let the crowd get out of the way." And she said, "I have a car waiting." I said, "Where?" She told me, "Over by the hangar." And that's what happened. The four detectives took care of him, got pushed around. The car was pulled apart; two of the detectives had their suits ripped. Anyway, the crowd got over to where he was to speak, and I took Mrs. Bradlee to the car. Of course, she has been eternally grateful, as Ben has. It wasn't because she was the wife of Ben Bradlee, but it was the fact that she was a woman and pregnant.

Then I went back and tried to get up near where the speaker was, which was impossible because the crowd was surrounded by uniformed police who refused to believe that I was with the Senator despite my New York accent. And I never did get through them until we started out on a motorcade, and then I caught on on the next car, a police car that was right behind him. We finally got to the Biltmore, which ordinarily would take--you'd pull up, and you'd be out in three to five minutes. It took us thirty-five minutes to get that one block on Pershing Square into the lobby, which took almost another twenty minutes. And then to get him into an elevator. . . .

We got up to the room and this, if my recollection serves me correctly, was the first time I ever met Mrs. Lincoln, Evelyn Lincoln. She was in there. And everybody was running around shouting orders, passing papers, giving statements. And the thing that impressed me with her is the fact that she was so calm and so quiet and just didn't seem to be excited about the whole thing. He held conferences, and I just made myself generally useful. I went down to the ninth floor. Now, if my recollection serves me correctly, I think we were on the tenth floor. We went down to the ninth floor where Bob had his offices and met [Angela M.] Angie Novello there, and I felt I was back home on the Committee--[James F.] Jim Kelly, who was doing some volunteer work, and quite a few of the old gang, you might say. That evening I went out with [David F.] Dave Powers, whom I had met for the first time, and [Charles] Chuck Roche. We went out and had dinner.

I'm getting a little ahead of myself. We took him from a place in the Biltmore--and again I have to rely on memory--to, oh, it was a place that subsequently got the name of the "hideaway." It was Jack Haley's apartment. And he stayed there. Then I drove back with the detectives. Then I went out with Powers and Roche for dinner. And then Sunday morning we picked him up about 7:30, stopped off; he and I went to Mass. He came into the suite, and all day long there was a series of conferences. I remember in late afternoon we went down to visit with a delegation. This was the beginning. . . . Of course there was never any publicity on this, but the police were getting slightly annoyed when I would tell them, "The candidate is going to leave his room at 4:05, and he is going to his personal elevator. He wants to go downstairs to the ground floor to meet people." At twenty to five the candidate would leave his room and go down on a freight elevator or walk down the stairs a couple of floors, with the result that they lost him. I know his background and know how he operated. I accepted this.

Sunday afternoon a captain of police came to me and said, "Now, what is the itinerary?" I said, "Captain, we're going to leave here about 3:15. We'll go to the passenger elevator and we'll go down to the ballroom floor." And he said, "The best way we ought to take him is along the side and then out around the end of the ballroom and then put him up on the platform and let him speak." I said, "That's fine." And we weren't too late. We got out about 3:30, quarter of 4, and they were waiting for us. They had the elevator on. We got on the elevator; the police got on with us, which is another thing that annoyed him. He didn't want the police on. As a matter of fact, he used to raise the devil with me on occasions that even I got on. Which I learned the best way is if there's with a full elevator, either walk down. . . . This was all through the campaign. It's a lesson I learned early--like less than twelve hours after you're there. We went down, and we went along the route that they had prescribed for us--and a group of uniformed police, which no candidate likes to have around. On his picture it doesn't look well. [Richard M.] Nixon was another one who insisted on no uniformed police around when possible. We went to the platform. We stayed up there for about an hour, and people came up. It was more or less a receiving line. [Kenneth P.]

Kenny O'Donnell was there, and Ethel Kennedy and a couple of the Kennedy girls were there. Then they now asked, "Shall we take him back the same way?" I said, "I would think that's the best, but you have to understand, he may change his mind." He said, "Well, there's no changing of the mind. He's already late for a 'Meet the Press' interview, and he's going to come back this way with us." I didn't say anything.

So it's over, and I said, "They want you to go back this way: outside the crowd and through a vacant door, up another side stairway and then right to the studio." And he said, "That's terrific." And with that, he belted off the platform and right into the middle of the crowd, shaking hands right and left, leaving the police and everybody else just standing on the side with nothing to do. He kept looking at me, saying, "Get me out of here; get me out of here." And he was the one that started it. We finally got over near a swinging door and got through that, and we had about two minutes to go to get to the studio that they had set up there in the basement of the Biltmore and got out there. We had about a minute to go when he stepped in and brushed his hair, adjusted himself, fixed his tie, and got in. Just about the time the announcer was saying, "Ladies and Gentlemen, 'Meet the Press' is on the air," he sat down absolutely composed. [Sander] Sandy Vanocur was on the program and Rowland Evans; I remember those two. About twenty minutes later, this captain and four of the most disgruntled detectives come over, and they said, "He shouldn't have done that to us." So I said, "Well, you'll have to understand, Captain, this is the way he operates. However, I'll speak to him and see." He said, "Well, you better speak to him." I said, "I will." I wanted to placate them; I wanted to keep them happy. But I knew at the same time that this man was running his own show, and no police department was going to tell him how to run a campaign.

Then Sunday night we went out to, I think, the Wilshire Hotel where the Democratic party was having a special dinner, which was so large that they had to divide it into two rooms. Most of the leading candidates were on the dais, and I recall Mrs. [A. Eleanor] Roosevelt being there. There was Senator Symington and Senator [Henry M.] Jackson, and all the leading candidates. I remember distinctly Adlai Stevenson being there. After it was over, he went upstairs for a few minutes with Peter Lawford. We waited downstairs, these two detectives and I.

And we took him back out to the hideaway. Monday started a series of going to different caucuses. The delegates were holding various caucuses in the different hotels around the city. One thing stands out in my mind: Wednesday morning Steve Smith and I were walking from the hotel--we were going somewhere; I forget exactly--and there was this headline in the New York Daily News which was out there, and the headline said, "It looks like Kennedy on the first." I very quietly said to Steve, "Steve, this looks like D-day." And in a very strong, determined voice, Steve Smith said, "It is D-day."

That day, we also made a couple of rounds to last-minute delegations. I recall the Mississippi delegation, which was controlled by Governor [Ross] Barnett, and some fellow coming up to me and saying, that if Senator Kennedy appeared before the caucus, he could swing Mississippi to vote for Kennedy, and on the first ballot; that they were sick and tired of the way Barnett was controlling, handling that thing. I didn't know as much about the Mississippi situation then as I know now, and I was tempted to speak to him and to speak to Kenny. But there was so much confusion that I just didn't, and now, looking back on it, I'm very happy that I didn't because apparently whoever was saying that to me didn't know what he was talking about. As it turned out, Barnett really controlled that whole delegation down right almost the last man--the last man, I guess, being the fellow who spoke to me.

So now, we go back to the hideaway, which had been kept, incidentally, a very, very top secret. There was speculation as to where it would be. We would have cars of reporters following us. And of course, these fellows who were driving the cars were detectives out of Los Angeles. They knew back streets and side ways and off--and we always lost them. We never had any problem. Newspapermen who were friends of mine would come and say, "Please, tell us where he is." And I said, "I can't." And I wouldn't. Now, it was Chuck Roche and the candidate and myself and Jim Bishop, who had just latched on, who was going to do a story on what it is to be with the candidate the last day and so forth. Chuck, who was handling press relations out there with the President, was a little perturbed about it. So . . .

MORRISSEY: How was the candidate? Nervous? Relaxed?

McSHANE: Completely composed, relaxed, except every once in a while, stopping a car and dashing out across the street--narrowly missed being hit on several occasions by cars whizzing by--plunging into a bunch of people, "How are you. I'm Jack Kennedy. Nice to see you."

MORRISSEY: Did you ever speak to him about this sort of thing?

McSHANE: About what he should do?

MORRISSEY: No, about dashing between cars?

McSHANE: Oh, yes. I said, "You ought to be a little more careful." And he said, "Yes, I shall." You know. And ten minutes later, he's out of the car. I recall one time, in the beginning, being concerned about this sort of thing, and I discussed it with--the name will come to me--who was a very close friend of his, and who was his administrative assistant when he was a Senator, and who went to the White House with him and was from Boston.

MORRISSEY: [Timothy J., Jr.] Ted Reardon.

McSHANE: Ted Reardon. That's it. And Ted said, I'm concerned about it myself. Why don't you speak to him and see what you can do?" He said, "We've tried it for years, and it works no good." Very casually one day--we were in the room there having a sandwich and a glass of milk--and I mentioned it. He said, "You may have a point there." And that was all of it. He turned around and answered the phone and talked. Well, by Wednesday, I knew that this was going to be. . . . This was his way of operating.

Now, I'm just getting a little ahead of myself, and I would like to go back to that morning, about 7:30, we visited the Pennsylvania delegation. We had these two detectives with us, who by this time were not being exactly friendly to me. And I would go overboard. They would be up in the room and I would say, "What do you want to eat? Eat the best and drink the best. I know you're putting in long hours. One of you had your suit ruined. I'll see that you're compensated for it. I hope this doesn't keep you away from your families." But I wasn't too concerned about that because I knew, as a detective myself in New York, there were certain details where you would go for days without seeing your family. I wasn't too worried about that. But at the Pennsylvania delegation, I'm standing off to the side, and one of the detectives comes over. Can I mention the name?

MORRISSEY: Sure.

MCSHANE: He said, "Captain Hamilton, James Hamilton wants to see you," who has and had at that time particularly. . . . He's now the Chief Investigator for the National Football League. At that time he was considered one of the outstanding police officers in America and was second only to Chief [William] Parker in the Los Angeles Police Department. So they ushered me over into the presence of this great man, and I wanted to be affable and really didn't suspect anything at all, walked over, said, "Captain, it's nice to see you again." I had met him about '58, '59 when he came to Washington to testify about Los Angeles and California hoodlums for us, and I was very much impressed with his testimony, and I was also very impressed with the man himself. So this was now the first time I had seen him since then, and he had several of the high brass around him and, of course, several uniformed policemen and detectives. I walked over, shook hands, said, "Captain, how are you? Nice to see you again." And I got a very limp, sort of a fishy handshake, and he said, "I'm sick and tired of this." And he said, "We are going to do something about it, or I'm going to call off the detail of my men." I said, "What's wrong?" He said, "The Senator and you are constantly telling us and giving us your itinerary: the time you will leave; where you're going; what elevator you're going to take; how you are going to go, through the lobby; that he's not going to stop a motorcade; that he's not going to run out across the street and

shake hands with people--and he does this constantly. And we are sick and tired of it. I'm thinking right now of calling off the whole police detail and letting you handle it yourself." "Well, my Irish got a little the better of me." He said, "And I just might call Bobby Kennedy and tell him how we feel." I said, "Captain, there's a phone over there on the wall. If you want Bobby's number, I'll give it to you. As far as taking off this detail, you can, but remember this: It is you who accept the responsibility if anything happens." That seemed to throw him a bit. And he kept throwing this "Bobby, Bobby" at me like he had known Robert for years, which I knew was not true, that he had just met him at the Senate Rackets hearings back in '58. Needless to say, they stayed with us, but again very perturbed.

Now we're back. There was something else there that Wednesday morning that stood out in my mind, which will probably come to me.

Well, now we pull up in the car in front of the hide-away, and Chuck Roche lets out several words which, of course, cannot be repeated, for there, stretched across the lawn, was miles of cable, big NBC cameras, CBS [Columbia Broadcasting System] cameras, pointed up to the window of the third floor or the fourth floor, that I recall, and electricians running all over the place. I took a look at the candidate, and he just grithhis teeth. Chuck Roche said, "I'm going to tell them they got to get out of here." He said, "You can't do that." So they came over, and they started speaking to him. And he said, "I have no comment now, boys. I want to get upstairs and change. I have a speech to write and all that." So he got upstairs. He was mad as hell, obviously. He went in and took a shower, came out. This was the greatness of him. He was so relaxed, walking around--of course, there was nothing but men in the room--and just a towel around him. That was the first time I saw that ugly scar that he had at the base of his spine. He went in and threw himself on the bed; he called Mrs. Kennedy up in Hyannis Port. He said, "Close that door. I'm going to get some sleep for a couple of hours." He came out about five minutes later. He said, "These damn air conditioners don't work. Get me some air conditioners." So everybody's on the phone calling every air conditioning place in town. We finally get them, and they come up with these two huge gigantic air conditioners. They're pushing their

way through. . . . Now the press is there. Everybody. And they're asking the repairmen their names, and what sort of an air conditioner is that, the voltage and all the details. Well, they finally get them up. And he goes into another room, and he gets dressed. Now they come in, and they say, "Where do you want this put?" "Put one in one window here, and one in one window there." And he said. . . . I forget the chauffeur's name, which we can subsequently get.

MORRISSEY: [John J.] Muggsy O'Leary?

McSHANE: No, it wasn't Muggsy. It was a fellow from out there. Evelyn would know his name. We can get that. He said, "Get me out of here some way or other, but not out the front." We looked the surrounding area over in the back, and one of the back bedrooms had a fire escape. He could just go down the fire escape and then there was a wall. Oh, I'd say the wall was about five and a half, six feet. We told the chauffeur to get the car and drive around the back of the block and stay there. We waited about five minutes, and I come back and he said, "He's over there." And he went out and went down the fire escape. Then he took that wall, and I held my breath because of his back. He leaped over it and ran through the bushes and everything else and got into the car. I asked him did he want me to go with him. And he said, "No." He went out to Marion Davies' and spent the afternoon out there swimming. He said, "I'll call you when I want somebody to come for me."

Now Chuck Roche and I are there. And we got the door closed, supposedly where the candidate is sleeping. Every once in a while one of them would let out a curse that the machine wouldn't be working properly, and Chuck would run in and say, "Shh. Quiet. The Senator's asleep. You're going to wake him up." They were there about an hour, and they finally got the thing working beautifully. Just beautifully. It would cool in no time. I recall one time coming in, they were packing their bags, and one of them dropped a hammer on the parquet floor, and I told him, "Whatever you do, please keep quiet. And when you're walking out. . . ." This was a very thick rug on the bedroom floor adjacent to where the door was closed, and I couldn't help but say it, and I said, "When you're walking out, please tiptoe on that rug. We don't want to wake him up." Well, it was the greatest sight

to see these two workmen, laden down with their tools, tip-toeing over the rug which you could have walked an elephant across, and you wouldn't have gotten a sound out of it.

[Laughter] Then out they went. And of course, no sooner were they downstairs when they were collared by the newspapermen, and you could apparently see them trying to tell where in the room the candidate was sleeping. They shook their heads, which apparently meant no, they didn't see him, but the air conditioners were in, and who was up there, and so forth. Mrs. Lincoln was there, and Dave Powers, Chuck Roche, and myself. And I think Chuck went downstairs a couple of times to give out statements, as I recall, that he was sleeping and was very quiet and relaxed and so forth.

MORRISSEY: Was Kenny or Torby up there?

McSHANE: Now, they could have been, but my recollection is that they weren't. I think, if I recall, Kenny was over in that studio that they had set up on the lot. Because I recall Kenny calling a couple of times and asking to speak with Chuck.

MORRISSEY: Was Evelyn taking the calls?

McSHANE: Evelyn was taking most of the calls, but it would be one of those things, if she was in another room, whoever walked by--Chuck would pick it up or I would pick it up. Again my recollection is that about 8 or 9 o'clock that night the phone rang. Kennedy said he was coming back and make sure the back was clear. Well, the Kennedy luck. After he left that afternoon, several of the electricians came in the back. They're hooking lines up, and they got it over the fire escape, and they got it on the fire ladder, and they got some over the wall, and there's nothing but a maze of telephone and cables, wires. Now in the evening they put the flood lights on. How are you going

to get him back? You just can't. And you can't go and tell the electricians to go around the front because then they're going to go around the front, and the newspapermen are all out there, and you know, it's only a matter of time before they sense something. So, again, my recollection is that he came there about 9:30, and I went over the wall. There were three or four electricians working there. I went over the wall and went out to meet him because it was dark, and it wasn't a level sort of ground. There were holes here and there, and my one concern was that he would fall and hurt his back. So we're walking along--I've often thought of this since then--and I said, "Come over here. Don't go over there now." He walked over very quietly. I said, "Stand behind the tree," in a very firm voice. And sort of boyishly he says, "Why?" I said, "Because there are some electricians there and I want to make sure there's no newspapermen." He said, "Go ahead." So I went over, looked over the wall, and they were working, but their backs were turned. So I gave him the signal, and over he came. He leaped over and walked very casually, got up to the fire escape and got up the stairs, and they never saw him. I waited a few minutes, and I leaped over, and everyone of them saw me and looked at me. But of course, they didn't recognize me. But I'm sure they would have recognized him, and I'm sure one of them would have gone around to say, "You know, I just saw Senator Kennedy jumping over the wall."

MORRISSEY: Let me stop there. I think we're running out of tape on this side.

McSHANE: Now, of course, you have to realize this is all from memory, and I'm just trying to. . . . We got upstairs. At least, he went up first, and then I followed. I think, as I recall, the nominations were about to start at 10 o'clock our time out there in the Pacific.

MORRISSEY: Right.

McSHANE: Evelyn was there and Dave, and at this point, Torby was there. Now I don't recall Torby being there in the afternoon, but I do recall--that's right--Torby was there because there was a little room off to the side with a large TV. And I recall very, very distinctly Torby Macdonald was sitting on the left, and the candidate was sitting in the middle, and I was sitting on the right. We turned the TV on, and the announcer says in a very hushed voice, "And now the nominations are about to start. We now take you to the floor where they'll ask the first state for. . . ." And some very distinguished gentleman stood up and says, "Alabama! Alabama votes twenty-six votes for the next President of the United States, the honorable" Out went the TV. And he jumped up. No, the lights stayed on, the lights stayed on in the room but he sent me out to the kitchen to get a fuse. And I am, without a question of doubt, a real mechanical moron. I knew that if I ever put that up and something happened again, I would get the blame, so I said to Chuck, "You're taller than I. Get up there and put. . . ." So Chuck put it in. That took a couple of minutes, and he was quite impatient, quite excited.

Then I recall some other state came up--it could have been Connecticut--and got half way through and the TV went out again. This time he was really angry. Then we all decided it must be the bulb in the big stand-up light in the living room. So we take that, which was lit--this just gives you an idea how much we knew about electricity. We could have used one of those fellows who had been there that afternoon. We took it out, and we put another one in. I went to put my hand on it, and he slapped my hand and said, "Don't touch it. Don't touch it." And we watched it for about a minute like scientists who are watching to see if the Titan is going to take off, and literally the three of us tiptoed back into the room.

Now we'll come to Delaware. I think we just got as far, and he said, "Delaware will. . . ." And out it went. Well, that did it. Now I don't recall how we got downstairs, or who knew. . . . Oh, he knew that Bill Gargan was down there, because Bill Gargan used to leave notes for us every day. You know, "Don't forget to eat meat on Friday. You want to get the Protestant vote." And things like that. We got down there, and Gargan. . . . Of course, Gargan wasn't sick at the time. I know Bill was there, and I don't recall if Mrs. Gargan was there, but I think she was. And there was Torby and the candidate and myself. The rest of the mechanics stayed upstairs to fix the TV, to find out what was wrong. We went along for several states. Of course, in the meantime, he was keeping score, on each state.

I forget now, I think we must have gotten up to about Florida when the word came down, "Come on back. We found out what the trouble was." The trouble apparently was these two ^{NEW} air conditioners that they had put in had such a high voltage that when you put the TV on, it was too much. Now, why the air conditioners didn't blow out, and why the lights in the apartment didn't blow out, I don't know, again, not being an electrician.

Another thing I recall prior to the starting of the Convention. By this time there was a pretty good crowd gathering outside of the house. I asked him in the bedroom, "Now, do you have any intentions of going to the Convention tonight, if by chance," with a smile, "you should be nominated on the first ballot?" And he very brusquely said, "No. Under no circumstances am I going." So, knowing him, I let him go in and sit down and talk with Torby, and I very quietly went to the phone and called Chief Parker. Parker was a very brusque man, but I must say, at that time out there, he was extremely cooperative with us, as opposed to Captain Hamilton.

(Oh, incidentally, I later found out that he never did get through to Bbb Kennedy, but he did get through to Jim Kelly and raised the holy devil with me, and said it wasn't really the candidate that was responsible for this, it was I who was directing him around--which I thought was the most asinine thing I ever heard of. You can just picture one of the employees, which is all I was, telling the candidate, "You got to go here. You got to go there." It didn't look very well for Captain Hamilton's intelligence).

So, I said to Chief Parker, "There is a possibility, Chief, that Senator Kennedy may be nominated tonight on the first ballot." I didn't want to say he was going to be nominated, which we were almost certain, but knowing how the chief was. . . . He said, "Well, do you think there's a chance?" I said, "There's a pretty good chance." And he said, "Is he going?" And I said, "If he's nominated, of course, he's going out. There's going to be no question about that." So he said, "How many motorcycles do you want? Now, you know I only have X number of motorcycles. Suppose Johnson gets it, or Symington." And I felt like saying, "That's just a waste of men and material." But I couldn't. I said, "Well, if we can get by with about ten or twelve," which he was more than happy with. He had an idea I was going to ask for about twenty-five or thirty motorcycles. I said, "As soon as it's over, I shall call you back, and let you know."

Of course, Wyoming came through, and he threw his score sheet in the air. And I remember Evelyn Lincoln walking over with tears in her eyes and saying, "Congratulations, Senator." And then Torby congratulated him, and I congratulated him. Then Chuck and Dave came in from the outside. At this point, I don't know if Chuck Roche was there, but I'm almost certain he was. I could hear the motorcycles outside, which I thought was damn good time. The nomination had only been minutes before. As I found out later, even Parker was almost certain himself that it was going to be Kennedy, and he went ahead and put them up. I think he had two or three motorcycles for the other outstanding candidates, just in case, which never came about. So very casually I asked him, "Are you going to the Convention?" And he looked me straight in the eye, and he said, "Of course, I am. What made you think I wasn't?" But this I knew--you know, the Kennedys. So I picked up the phone and called Parker, and he said, "They're on their way." So I thanked him. We waited awhile, and he got dressed. Are we near the end? Do you want me to talk a little more?

MORRISSEY: Well, let me stop here. I have to turn it over.

BEGIN SIDE II, TAPE I

McSHANE: So, the two detectives, Torby, and myself got in the elevator, went to the ground floor, and there was just an absolute mob there. I saw Sandy Vanocur and a few more. And one of the rules that had been laid down by Chief Parker was that nobody was to get into that police car except authorized police and myself. He emphatically laid it down--no staff, nobody. So, we walked out with him. I waited for the two detectives to come over. We stood in back of him a way. He went out and spoke to the crowd and then gave the signal for us to follow him, which we did. He was going to turn to the right and follow us around, and then we were going to put him in the car. And he did as he usually did. He burrowed right into the crowd and started shaking hands all over the place. It took us about five minutes to get to him. He was in the second car, and we were in the first car with the motorcycles stretched out in a V-shaped sort of thing. Now we're in there, and Sandy Vanocur came over to me, and he pleaded. He said, "Every car is filled." He says, "I can't be left here. This is the most important moment in my life, this night. I'll never be able to get to the Convention." I immediately deputized him as a New York City detective. I took him over to our car, opened up the thing, and the detective put his arm up and said, "No good." I said, "This is a New York City detective who is now out here with me. His name is Vanocur." Which he should have gotten right away, but he didn't. "Well, all right. As long as he's a detective." Well, I don't know if Sandy remembers this. . . .

MORRISSEY: His career as a detective. [Laughter]

McSHANE: But he sat in the back. And he said, "How long are you going to be with him?" And I recall him saying, "You got to keep notes. You got to write a book. This is going to be the greatest thing." And I'm trying to keep him quiet because, you know, if he's a detective, he shouldn't be talking about things like this--about books and TV. He should be talking about security and the like of that. We finally got to the studio and got out with the candidate with us. Here is one of the things that impressed me: here was a man who had been working for this for four long years, and his family had worked four long years--no one worked harder for it than Bob. Then

there was Kenny there, and Salinger was there, and a few more. And the heavyweights; the heavyweights of the Democratic Party were there: [Richard J.] Daley of Chicago and John Bailey and the chairman of the committee at that time, who since died, from Indiana.

MORRISSEY: Paul Butler.

McSHANE: Paul Butler was there. He shook hands with all of those fellows and then left them--we had a rope set up--and got behind the rope and went over. They both folded their arms, and they had a secret confab. What they talked about, nobody knows, and the only one who knows it now would be Bob. And talked for several minutes and then came out. He never shook hands with Kenny; he never shook hands with Pierre; he never shook hands with Bob. This, apparently, was going to happen, there could be no other way, and why get excited about it? And they finally got him upstairs. In the meantime, Phil Regan is getting a hold of him to see if I could get the head of the labor committee--McDonald.

MORRISSEY: David McDonald.

McSHANE: David McDonald upstairs. Once we got him up, and we got him in a room, I went down because I've known Phil over the years. . . . And the only reason I was able to do this was that that afternoon there had been a story on me in the Los Angeles Examiner with a picture, so most of the policemen there knew me. And with great persuasion and everything, I was able to get David McDonald up into the room. Another thing stands out in my mind. Now, these were not the police that did this. This was ushers who were not ordinarily ushers. They were just people who were hired for the night and given five, ten dollars and put in a uniform. Charlie von Fremd of CBS, who just recently died and whom I had developed a great friendship with out of this, was trying to push through the crowd. This was just about the most sadistic bunch of men that I had ever seen. And you wouldn't want to meet a nicer man than Charlie von Fremd. He's trying to get up the stairs, they're pushing through, and this fellow walked over and just hit him in the

back of the neck, sort of a karate move, which was absolutely uncalled for. And in my twenty years in the police department, I should have been used to this, but this I thought was just absolutely nothing but sadistic. Charlie von Fremd often told the story later how he and I got together. He was stunned for a minute, fell against the rail, and turned around to look at his assailant. And the assailant looked like he was going to come after him again. He said, "When I recall this fellow with his big fat nose and tough looking face come along and with the most beautiful left hook I've ever seen, throw it at the usher, and the usher went down in a heap." And he said, "This fellow continued going on. I had to find out later that this fellow was Jim McShane." I had to do it. I had to do it because if anybody ever really needed something like that, it was that usher. As I say, Charlie told this story over the years. Well, I used to say, "They can't do that to my boy, Charlie."

Now we're in the room. As I recall, the room upstairs was a rather large room. Then there was a private room off on the side. The girls are in there, and Bob kept going in and out, and Mrs. [Joseph P.] Kennedy was there. I never saw her look lovelier--this is the mother--or absolutely more composed. This is another thing that, for the first time, impressed me with the Kennedys: that this was to happen, and why get excited about it? It's inevitable, and there's no use throwing yourself into each other's arms and kissing and crying with joy and cheer. Subsequently, Frank Sinatra came in the room. He was the only one outside the family that I saw in the room. He was in there talking for a few minutes. Then he left, and Paul Butler came in and said, "I think we better go." And I recall--well, I've seen the shots in TV since--Paul Butler walking out and the candidate behind him, and then I was there. I stood right behind him, and then I stood off to the side. You never heard such a thunderous ovation as he got that night. And I remember him saying that the rules forbid him making a speech, but he would have one to make Friday night at the Coliseum. The speech only lasted, as I recall, a minute or two. Then we got in the car and pushed through the crowd. Fortunately, we had the motorcycle escort still with us.

We went back out to Haley's place, the hideaway. I recall having a conversation in the kitchen with Dave Powers, who was making him something to eat. My recollection--and I could be wrong--but I think Dave was scrambling some eggs for him and a glass of milk and an ice cream. And I'm sure there was some ice cream there. This was now about 4 in the morning. Well, 3 o'clock, 4 in the morning. You know, my God, even for breakfast you don't have eggs and ice cream, but he did. I put a call through--I'm sure I put the call through--to have him speak with Mrs. Kennedy up in Hyannis Port. Then the two detectives and I went back to the Biltmore Hotel.

The thing that stands out in my mind the next day was that we were there about 8 o'clock in the morning--I'm sure it was just about 8 o'clock. The New York Times has a pictorial book out about the Convention--his whole life, as a matter of fact. There is one picture in there on page 102--how well I know it. The candidate is speaking with Mrs. Johnson on the phone, and there is Chuck Roche and I in the bedroom. And it's my bedroom; it's the bedroom that I used at the hotel. We were there, and he turned around to me and said, "Get me Mrs. Johnson on the phone." And I went out and spoke to Mrs. Lincoln and. . . . No, he said, "Senator Johnson." I'm sorry. He said, "Get me Senator Johnson on the phone." I went out and told Mrs. Lincoln that the Senator wanted Senator Johnson. Then the phone rang, and as we found out later, it was Mrs. Johnson on the phone saying the Senator wasn't up, but she would get him up and call him back.

My next recollection is Senator Johnson coming up about 10 o'clock and their going into the private room. Now, I think [Lawrence F.] Larry O'Brien was there, and I think Bob was there. This is all a vague recollection because I started to sense that there was something doing there, but still had absolutely no idea. They put me on the door on the side leading out into the corridor. In order to get to the Senator's room then, you would have to open up this door, and I was screening everybody coming in. I remember one time [Robert F.] Bob Wagner, who is the mayor of New York--I thought this was very funny, I being an ex-policeman of the city of New York--was standing at the door and saying, "Jim, is there any chance . . . ?" Now it's Jim; (up until then, you know, I was just another one of 28,000 policemen. "Jim, is there any chance to get in and see the Senator?" I said, "Why don't you come in and sit down there with Mrs. Lincoln,

and as soon as they have a confab inside, I'll see if I can get you in." He said, "Well, who's in there with him?" And I said, "I have no idea." I just didn't want to. . . . I said, "I have no idea." So now, the thing that stands out in my mind is that all these candidates: Symington; Johnson; [Herschel] Loveless of Iowa; [Henry M.] "Scoop" Jackson, who from the very beginning was a candidate only for the vice presidency; Orville Freeman. . . . This unknown to me, somebody was sending for them, and they were arriving. And they had to go through this door. This is what stands out mostly in my mind about that.

MORRISSEY: Who was sending for them?

McSHANE: I don't know. I don't know. I would assume it must have been Mrs. Lincoln. I would be like at the door here, and she was over there. I don't know who; I never found out. Something started to dawn on me because I think the first one there was Senator Symington, who came in with a big smile on his face. And I was saying to myself, "It's Symington." Everybody wants to know. And I knew nothing. I never had any phase of that particular picture--really didn't want to know because if there was a slip and I had knowledge of it, then I could have been accused. This way, not knowing, if there were a slip, they couldn't accuse me. And he waited a few minutes; he went in and talked with the candidate about five minutes. And came out with a face so long and disgruntled and in a hurry. I tried to open up the door, and he just pulled the door back and out and stalked down the corridor.

About five minutes later--this is not necessarily in this order, but I got this recorded, and I can--there was a knock on the door. I opened it. It was Governor Loveless of Iowa, with a big smile. He said, "The Senator sent for me." I said, "Just a minute, Governor." I walked in, and I think I spoke to Kenny, I said, "Governor Loveless is outside." And Kenny says, "Send him in." He walked in. "Hello, Governor, how are you." You know, you could hear the candidate's voice. He was in there about three and a half minutes, and he came out with his chin down to his knees. Well, you can mark him off. It is not he.

A short while later Orville Freeman came in. I ushered him in. He was there about ten minutes. And he came out, and he almost walked through the door--obviously so damn mad.

And then a short while later, Jackson came in, and Jackson was all smiles. And you open up the door to the candidate, "Senator Jackson." "Send him in." Jackson was in there only a short while, but he was the only one of all the candidates that came out and still had a smile on. He stopped and chatted with Mrs. Lincoln, chatted and spoke with me, whom he did not know at that time, though since we have gotten to know each other. He went out very pleasantly and quietly. This just eliminated all the candidates.

At that time, I really didn't know it was Johnson but the thing that impressed me was every one of them apparently getting a telephone call at their respective hotels and sure that they were going to be the candidate. Now, I don't recall if [Adlai E.] Stevenson came. I would have to look it up. I don't know if he called Stevenson. But you could see the beam of--not hope--but expectation on their faces, as I opened the door and let them in, and the look on their faces a few moments or a few minutes later, when they came out, when apparently they had been told the news. Now, whether they were told it was to be Johnson at that time, I don't know. Or whether they were told "You are not going to be the vice presidential candidate." And I think Jackson, when he was sent for, really had an idea it was he because just the way. . . . But he was the only one that really just accepted it well inside. The others--I'm sure they accepted it well inside, but once they got out, they let their true feelings be shown. So. . . .

MORRISSEY: Did Lyndon Johnson come up to the hideaway?

McSHANE: That day? No, I don't think he did. I would have to say no. I don't think we ever left the Biltmore that day.

MORRISSEY: Did he come to the Biltmore?

McSHANE: Oh, yes. Yes. He came about 9:30, 10 o'clock that morning.

MORRISSEY: After these other people had come and gone?

McSHANE: I would say prior to their coming. I feel prior to their coming because this was, apparently, a little later in the day. Now, whether they were told--and this somebody in the room would have to tell you-- that "You were not going to be the candidate for the vice presidency" or "I have chosen the candidate and he is Senator X," this I don't know. I recall one time we going down to Senator Johnson's room, which I think was two floors below. Now whether it was that day or another, I don't know, but my recollection is that it was that day. And then the scuttlebutt started. Then I think the announcement was made. I recall Judge Lawson, [Marjorie McK.] Margie Lawson--she was a judge for a short while here in Washington. She was in the room and very upset about it. And the candidate went over and said, "This is the only way we can do it." or words to that effect, that everything was going to be all right. Then the parade of labor leaders started to come. I recall Walter Reuther with an extremely long face. And if I recall correctly, George Meany came up.

MORRISSEY: How about David McDonald again?

McSHANE: I don't recall that David McDonald was up there that afternoon. No. He could have been. I just don't know. I just can't remember. Again, I'm just relying on memory. Oh, another humorous anecdote which you may want to include. It was, I believe, Tuesday afternoon, that was the famous Johnson-Kennedy debate. They were going to debate at 3 o'clock, I believe. So, about a quarter to three I went in and spoke to him. I said, "Now, how are we going to leave so we can set this thing up? Do you want to go down the freight elevator or do you want to go down on the passenger elevator?" He said, "The passenger. It's nearest. You can just go out and down the hall." So I went out, just about ten to 3. I got a hold of the manager and asked him could he hold an elevator aside. And he said, "Why can't you people use the freight elevator? You're trying up the people in this wing. They got to go around." I said, "Well, you should have known this when you were willing to have these candidates in here." Well anyway, reluctantly, he consented. So now I get the two detectives, and I said, "Stay by here. As he gets ready to leave, we'll come out the bedroom door, and I'll come down the hall with him and right

into the elevator. And nobody gets on that elevator but you and the candidate and myself. You got that clear." This is what I think led to, the following morning, the confrontation with Captain Hamilton.

So now I go back into the room. Instead of bothering him and opening the door and going through his bedroom where he was constantly having people in, I figured I would go into the room. And he told me, "When I'm ready, I'll call you." So, I went into the outer room where Evelyn had her office, which was sort of a dining room of the suite, and I looked at the clock. It was about 3 o'clock. But knowing him as he was, I figured he would be along in a few minutes. So Evelyn--it's now about five after three, and Evelyn says to me, "Turn on the TV so we can watch the debate." I said, "That's fine because he should be leaving any minute." I turned it on, and I sat down. And here's the basement of the Biltmore because I had been down there, and I recognized it immediately. There's Bob sitting on one side of the microphone, and Lyndon Johnson is over on the side. There is Senator Jack Kennedy of Massachusetts, sitting down on the other side. I said, to Evelyn, "This must be a replay on some--because it couldn't be he. He's in the bedroom." And now, I forget, somebody got up and started to speak, and I said, "I better tell him this is on so we can get going, and I open up the door, walk into the big suite of rooms and it's bare. Empty. Nothing there. The candidate is gone.

MORRISSEY: How did he get out?

McSHANE: He just decided he was ready to leave and just opened up the door, and instead of going down on the passenger elevator, he walked around the corner and took the freight elevator with Kenny. I think they made a stop at the ninth floor and picked Bob up. I don't know, maybe Kenny or Larry or somebody even operated the elevator. I just don't know. But if we hadn't turned the TV on, the chances are we'd probably still be there waiting for the candidate to come out and say, "I'm ready to leave." [Laughter]

Of course, needless to say, the two Los Angeles detectives were just beside themselves. I think this is what later led to that morning. Now where were we?

MORRISSEY: The word had just gotten out that Lyndon Johnson was to be the vice presidential candidate.

McSHANE: Oh, yes. And then Walter Reuther came up. Now, I have no recollection of Dave McDonald. Now he well could be. I remember distinctly Reuther. And I remember the vice presidential candidate saying how he was happy to be on the ticket; the President saying he was happy to have him, and this would mean a great Democratic victory in November; Walter Reuther giving some sort of an endorsement--as my recollection, it was, you know, "This is as good a ticket as you can get," meaning in effect, "We could have gotten a better one." That's the gist of what I got out of it. And then, Thursday. . . . I have no recollection of what we did the balance of that night. I can fill that out later.

MORRISSEY: Do you remember seeing either Mrs. Johnson or Sam Rayburn that afternoon?

McSHANE: I may have a recollection of Sam Rayburn, but I don't have one of Mrs. Johnson.

MORRISSEY: I think Senator Kennedy went down to Senator Johnson's suite.

McSHANE: Was it that morning?

MORRISSEY: I can't remember the time. But rather than have them come to his suite, he chose to go down to theirs.

McSHANE: Was it that Friday? It must have been. I remember he made one trip to the apartment. I was with him, and I think we waited outside--because my recollection of that is coming upstairs, and the crowd was just massive. We were trying to push it aside, and it was on the air that night in New York, and my family saw it. You know how families are when they see their father on TV. That always stands out in my mind. "Dad, we saw you coming up the stairs with Senator Kennedy." And then. . . .

MORRISSEY: It must have been hard to keep the newspapermen out of the suite of the Biltmore that day.

McSHANE: Yes.

MORRISSEY: Because the speculation was intense.

McSHANE: Yes.

MORRISSEY: Did you have much help keeping these people out?

McSHANE: Oh, no. They would try to say, you know, "Can I get in to see the Senator? Would you give him the card?" I showed him somebody's card once, and he just tore it up. I got the message there. From then on I'd say, "Fine, I'll get it to him. Jesus, Joe, he's busy as all get-out." I never bothered him after that because I knew what the situation was. My recollection is that we left for the Coliseum about 6 o'clock or so. I finally prevailed upon them to let [R. Sargent] Sarge Shriver come with us. Now, of course, he's the candidate, so you can get anything you want. I recall Shriver sat alongside of the chauffeur, and I sat in the back. We had an open convertible car. We drove to the Coliseum. Then after the speech. . . . Oh, the thing that stood out in my mind that night is that there was some sort of a helicopter flying around and taking pictures and annoying him. Stevenson would speak, and he'd look up at it; Symington would speak and he'd look up at it; and somebody else would speak. The candidate never looked up once. Went right on with the speech. Never in. . . . It was obvious to everybody that it was there. And I sat with some of Bob's children. Bob was sitting in the back of us.

Then after we went to Romanoff's to eat. Of course, I know the candidate was there and I'm sure that Mrs. Kennedy was there--his mother. I know several of the sisters were there. Steve was there, Steve Smith. The two detectives and I sat in another room and ate. Then we drove back. Now whether we drove back to the hideaway or not, I don't know.

Saturday was a fairly quiet day. I answered phone calls and just spent the best part of the day around the suite. I got to bed very early that night because I was just about catching up with the sleep. Then Sunday morning, we met him, I believe at the Hideaway, and we drove--and he was in the car just by himself. I can't remember the name of the church which he went to. I think it was the 7 o'clock Mass we made. He walked in and took the last seat in the church. It was in the back. And I had to stand in the back. Then after Mass we got out, and we drove to the airport, and most everybody was there. And then the long trip back. He sat most of the time with Torby. He sat most of the time with Torby talking. And I recall getting a couple of pictures and interrupting for a moment while he was talking with Torby and asking him to sign pictures for my daughter and my son. They still have them today, and they value them most highly. The trip was very uneventful. It was most of the newspapermen aboard. Most all of the staff were on board. I think we made it in something like four hours and fifty-nine minutes from Los Angeles until we put down in Logan Airport. Then they went on to Hyannis Port, and I didn't. I came on back to New York and spent the next couple of days with my family.