

K. Dun Gifford Oral History Interview – RFK#2, 1/5/1973
Administrative Information

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Biographical Note

Gifford, (1938 - 2010), legislative assistant to Senator Edward M. Kennedy, 1967-1970; national Presidential campaign assistant to Robert F. Kennedy, 1968; staff member, Secretary's office, Department of Housing and Urban Development, discusses the 1968 campaign strategy for the South, raising and distributing money, and the press operation and strategy after the California primary, among other issues.

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K. Dun Gifford – RFK #2

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Second Oral History Interview

with

K. Dun Gifford

January 5, 1973
Boston, Massachusetts

By Larry J. Hackman

For the Robert F. Kennedy Oral History Program
of the John F. Kennedy Library

HACKMAN: Tell me how Fraser Barron came into the campaign and how that operation got organized and whether it worked.

CLIFFORD: Fraser Barron was brought into the campaign by Dave Hackett [David L. Hackett]. None of us had known of him before except in the way that he worked for OEO, the Office of Economic Opportunity, and was a liaison at some point for some of the projects with members of Capitol Hill staffs. He was brought into the campaign, though, by Dave Hackett. One of his functions, and the function which he ended up doing exclusively, was one we called, "grass roots development," for lack of a better name. It was basically encouraging neighborhood or other more broadly based community groups of poor people, in effect, to continue their organizing efforts, which had been done previously around the OEO-funded community action projects, in the political process as opposed exclusively to the community betterment process. Fraser had worked for OEO and did have a number of contacts with community organizers, as did Dave Hackett.

It really was a poor people's effort, directed at the people who for the first time in their lives were beginning to feel some of the strength that comes from an organized effort. As to whether it was a success is almost impossible to tell. Fraser reported to Dave Hackett almost exclusively. I was there all

the time; David was only there part of the time, so a lot of it fell to me also. There were a number of meetings with representatives of the poor people's groups. There was one with Senator Kennedy [Robert F. Kennedy] at his home in April, I guess.

HACKMAN: Right. April 9 I think is the day.

GIFFORD: That was the result of Hackett and Fraser and the rest of us pushing for that. I think it can be said to have been a success in the sense that it would not have happened but for the grass roots effort and it probably had never happened before or since that poor people - or representatives of poor people's groups - had actually met with a presidential candidate in a serious working way.

HACKMAN: What do you remember was decided at that meeting, particularly in terms of commitments to either making any kind of formal announcements of participation by these leaders or these groups in the campaign, or in terms of commitments of funds for it?

GIFFORD: There never was at issue Senator Kennedy's commitment to the poor people as a group that needed help, or as a group to which he intended to devote a considerable amount of attention should he win the election. What was at issue was how these groups fitted formally into the campaign, number one; and number two, how would they get the money they said they needed to organize registration, get-out-the-vote and other kinds of drives. As to the first, how they fitted into the campaign, it was decided that there would be no rigid structure of reporting or anything else, that it was best left amorphous and flexible and with the opportunity to change on a day-to-day basis if it needed so.

As to the money, like any group which offers support to any candidate for any office, it expects some financial help. They wanted considerably more money than we had for the entire operation to be devoted to organizing in the poor people's communities, registering them to vote and so on and so forth. I think we struck a middle ground. We did offer some financial assistance, but not nearly of the magnitude that was sought. But I think the seed money that we put out did evidence the good faith and evidenced an awful lot of... It had a very decided impact in terms of generating activity and so on. So I think that the real benefit of it was simply that at no time previously - and I don't think any time since - has there been a real commitment at the very high, very top of a campaign, that is the candidate, to involving large numbers of disadvantaged poor people who have no voice in the system. And we did it and it worked well.

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HACKMAN: Any resistance within the campaign, serious resistance at that point to setting something like that up?

GIFFORD: Yes. It was decidedly nontraditional and there was a decided danger, a potential danger to it if, for example, somebody were to claim that all of the OEO organizations, of which Sargent Shriver [R. Sargent Shriver, Jr] used to be the head, had been turned over to the Robert Kennedy campaign. And we knew that was potentially a political bad sign - not sign, but it would have been a bad event. On the other hand, the candidate made a commitment and so we carried it out. We argued about it endlessly. There's also the potential damage if the only people that appeared to be enthusiastically for Senator Kennedy were a lot of poor people.

HACKMAN: My question was really intended to get at whether there are people at the top of the Robert Kennedy campaign or around the leadership in the campaign who thought that this complicated things in terms of working with old-line leaders or something in the states and then shouldn't be done for that reason.

GIFFORD: Yes, very much so. We tried to keep Fraser very quiet, out of the way, and behind the scenes. We worked through an ever larger number of community organizers themselves in the various communities, the Black, Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, or whatever White Appalachian groups. Every time it turned out that Senator Kennedy's campaign was talking with an insurgent poor people's group in a New Jersey or an Illinois or Chicago or Newark, the leaders of the established groups with whom Kenny O'Donnell [Kenneth P. O'Donnell] was working closely, and Larry O'Brien [Lawrence F. O'Brien] from time to time, were mad as hell. So we had to mediate between that. It was the beginning of the new politics, in a real operational sense, versus the old politics.

HACKMAN: Any places where you really got burnt that you can remember, with either individual leaders or just states and things?

GIFFORD: No, it was a steady, steady slow burn all the time. There was an angry phone call from an O'Donnell - I don't mean to say that Kenny did because he's an early civil rights and poor people's advocate - but it might have been an angry call from one of his associates saying, "Would you

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get those poor people out of the mayor's office because we're going to lose every fucking delegate vote in the state if you don't." And we'd be trying to say, "No, you can't get them out. They're there on their own thing," and so on.

HACKMAN: New Jersey probably being a good example with George Richardson.

GIFFORD: New Jersey was a good example, Chicago was a good example, Ohio. I can remember some incidents in Ohio with some of the labor leaders, the traditional old-line labor leaders there who were very resisting of

any community groups having any voice in it. Chicago was its own special case. Mayor Daley [Richard J. Daley] was really left to the personal attentions of Senator Edward [Edward M. Kennedy] and Senator Robert Kennedy, and so everybody was panicked that whatever you did there it was going to be wrong. But, you know, we just plowed ahead. There were a lot of Kennedy groups organizing who felt strongly. Kenny O'Donnell had a lot of contacts with the mayor himself and with a lot of his associates. So we just coped with it.

Jesse Jackson [Jesse L. Jackson] came into the office in Washington. I remember very, very well Operation Breadbasket. He was to meet with Senator Kennedy, Edward, but Edward wasn't there and Robert was off somewhere else. So I met with him, and I've forgotten who else was there. I think we got Sorensen [Theodore C. Sorensen] in for a while - and he wanted to, through his Black groups, take over the city political machinery and he wanted Senator Kennedy's help to do it. You know, there's really no positive, good way out of those kinds of situations except the good faith of candor and honesty, and say, "Hey, you know, let's be realistic." And above all, those fellows are realistic. They may try and get a lot of things, but they're... It was a successful meeting, I think.

HACKMAN: Speaking of this problem of having support but in some cases not making it open because of the problems it would create, not announcing it, can you think of other instances where there was either information or help coming in from sources that to this day no one is aware of? Any real surprise that...

GIFFORD: I think we mentioned one, but - Larry, that goes to the point of delegates really, in my own particular information. It also goes to the point, I suppose, of endorsements or support at a convention

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which could be announced dramatically and swing a group. I don't recall. I thought we might have discussed, you and I before - just to take a delegation early in the alphabet, Alaska, where the Humphrey [Hubert H. Humphrey] camp had announced, I think, if my memory serves me right, there are twenty-one and one-half delegate votes from that state, in that order of magnitude. The Humphrey camp had put out their own claims by way of charts and other information saying that they had nineteen and one-half votes in that state. We'd never put out claims as to what our strength was.

The chairman of that delegation was a senator, now dead, Bartlett [Edward Lewis Bartlett]. Right after the first time the Humphrey camp said they had nineteen and one-half votes, we had a personal, private letter from Senator Bartlett to Senator Kennedy saying that he was aware of what the Humphrey group was saying, but he wanted Senator Kennedy to know that it was not so, and that he personally knew that seventeen and one-half of the twenty-one and one-half would go to Senator Robert Kennedy. We also had communications from, at that point in time, a number of the Eskimos, a grass roots group, some of whom were represented in the state legislature, who said that that Humphrey claim was an awful lot of crap. There were some young legislators, one of whom knew Ted Kennedy well, another one who knew - I don't know, somebody - Pierre [Pierre E.G. Salinger] or somebody like that.

My point is that we reacted to that immediately by writing all the delegates in a different way over Senator Kennedy's signature than we would have had we believed the Humphrey count. We did not challenge the Humphrey count publicly, however, it being the part of the strategy to let the 'Happy Warrior' and his team get very overconfident; and then when the time came, have the Alaska delegation announce that, you know, nineteen and one-half.... So you begin to get the psychological groundswell going the other way. I took one state at the top of the alphabet. Those kinds of things happened in every state that we were in.

HACKMAN: Let me ask you just from the point of view of future historians who might be studying that campaign and using the Boiler Room Black Books* to do so, what kinds of material were not put in the Black Books, what kinds of information? I haven't looked at the Alaska Black Book, but from what I've seen of the other ones, the letter from Bartlett is likely in there; I don't know.

*Black Book: a loose-leaf notebook of correspondence compiled for an individual state during a political campaign.

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GIFFORD: The letter from Bartlett would have been put in after Senator Kennedy was killed and when we were cleaning up the office. It was a decision that Hackett and I made that out of the bottom drawer in my desk where there was another Black Book in which were kept things like Senator Bartlett's letter, the letter itself, that those would go into the Black Books on a state-by-state basis. The girl who had Alaska knew of the letter, but she did not write it down. That may have broken down in some cases, but that was....

Basically, we'd made a judgment, Hackett and I, about the kinds of things that we wanted to write down and have available and the kinds of things we didn't. Now he picked up things directly from Senator Kennedy. I did. I picked up things directly from Senator Edward Kennedy and his people, from Dutton [Frederick G. Dutton], from, you know, whoever it was, Sorensen, O'Donnell. Basically, you picked it up at the meetings that we had. Some of it we wrote down and recorded, we recorded in the Big Black Books, and some of it we just plain didn't. I was with Senator Kennedy a couple of times when he called governors or state chairmen. The information that came out of those calls, it just doesn't do any good to write it down. "I will be with you when you need me, but remember to ask me," kind of thing.

HACKMAN: While you're on it, do some of those come to mind?

GIFFORD: Oh, boy. Why don't we just leave it at Alaska. I would be glad to go back and review the books on a state-by-state basis with you or separately and do it that way, but I don't want to trust an imperfect memory. I remember the Alaska one because it was early on and we used it as an example both with Senator Kennedy himself and with Steve Smith [Stephen E. Smith] as the kind of things that we had. But I do remember a number of times when he called John Burns [John A. Burns]. I was with him when he called John - that's Senator Robert Kennedy - John Burns

and Governor Hearnese [Warren E. Hearnese] of Missouri, Joe Crangle [Joseph F. Crangle] in New York, you name it. This was all over the place. Governor McKeithen [John Julian McKeithen].

HACKMAN: A lot of the memos, I think mostly in Fraser Barron's memos, there are a lot of references to "our friends across town" or "Mass. Ave." Who is Mass. Ave.? Even Mass. Ave. #1 and Mass Ave. #2.

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GIFFORD: Labor unions, people inside labor unions who publicly were committed to Humphrey because their leadership was, but who were not. Other groups, perhaps nonprofit groups.

HACKMAN: Okay, let me make a guess. Citizens Crusade Against Poverty, is that still around? Dick Boone [Richard W. Boone].

GIFFORD: That was one.

HACKMAN: Would that be Mass. Ave.?

GIFFORD: Yeah. Sure.

HACKMAN: Just because most references are Mass. Ave.

GIFFORD: I don't think it's still around so its tax exempt status cannot be prejudiced.

HACKMAN: Many people within OEO and in the Johnson [Lyndon B. Johnson] administration that are helpful either directly to Fraser Barron or otherwise?

GIFFORD: On a regular sustaining steady basis, the flow of information was astonishing from people within the government, in OEO or in [Department of] Agriculture or any other place. It was almost too much to cope with at most times. They all knew that they.... Simply, the volume of it was almost too much to cope with. It also gets after a while to be very redundant. You know, somebody will call up doing a great favor and saying, "The key person to talk to in Peoria is Adam Wilson." Well, it'd be the fourteenth time you hear that. You really begin to pay attention to who Adam Wilson is when you finally hear it, but.... You know, calls: "I'd like to meet you on the street corner and take a walk around the block. I have some stuff." You see, you run out there, you never know what the hell it is. Sometimes it's new and good, and sometimes it's redundant, and sometimes you know it's deliberately distorted just for the sake of trying to screw things up. We ran into a few of those. You know, you do it. You just plain pick it up and then you try and work it all out. That's the point of the boiler room, to be the

focus, the filter for all this stuff.

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HACKMAN: Ever remember any cases where you really got burned in taking someone on board either on the staff or really letting them get involved, who then turned out to either be a supporter of one of the other candidates, or could really tell that you had serious leaks at any significant level?

GIFFORD: No, we never had any serious leaks at high levels. At the lower levels, you just accept it. I mean, we knew people - it didn't matter who they were - but we never spent a lot of time worrying about it. I was panicked about it at first, and I've forgotten who it was, Larry or somebody, Steve had, maybe Ted had said, "It happens, don't worry about it. You'll lose sleep and get gray hairs. There's nothing you can do about it. Just accept it and just be careful about keeping your mouth shut."

HACKMAN: What do you remember about working with the MAPA people, Mexican-American Political Association or whatever it is. Jack Ortega, Bert Corona.

GIFFORD: Henry Santiestevan, Polly Baca.

HACKMAN: Right. Were they very helpful, or were they just kind of a thorn?

GIFFORD: Very helpful. Very helpful, energetic.

HACKMAN: Outside California or primarily in California?

GIFFORD: California, Texas, Arizona. Dave Hackett had a particular interest in the Mexican-Americans, I think because they were not an organized political force at that time. And so, as I say, those names are all.... We, in fact, employed Polly Baca. Henry Santiestevan was around a lot, and Ortega. You spent a lot of time with them, and they were fine, fine people - men of their words and women of their words. I liked them.

HACKMAN: What about the Citizens for Kennedy in '68, that Martin Shepard group? I just ran across a little correspondence. You seem to be the guy that Shepard wrote to when he had something to say.

GIFFORD: Right.

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HACKMAN: Was there any serious consideration to using them in any kind of useful way? Was there a potentially useful way they could be used?

GIFFORD: Well, you know the history of them. They started out as the genuine "draft Kennedy" movement. Kennedy had nothing to do with it, nor any of his people, and no encouragement was given to him, Martin Shepard. He had a group of people in all the states theoretically, mailing lists, people who sent in money to buy bumper stickers. When Senator Kennedy did announce, I think Martin Shepard expected, quite honestly, to be campaign manager, and it took.... I don't know as we ever did dissuade him that he wasn't going to be campaign manager. You were right that I was left to handle that particular situation. I liked the guy. You know, he's a little bit.... No, I like him; you know, he's not a little bit anything. I like him. He's enthusiastic and aggressive and politically naive, but what the hell, you wouldn't expect anything else. He'd never been in a campaign before of any size. He didn't know any of the Kennedys well and he didn't know any of their particular favorite ways or techniques of campaigning. There was one of those early decisions about, Do you go with the bomb throwers and the citizen grass root activists, or do you go with the old line pols, or do you try and strike some middle ground and put everybody together? Clearly Senator Kennedy made the choice, You try and put everybody together, and so there was no way to give Martin Shepard and his people primacy in any particular city. So it was just a question of dealing with it on a daily basis almost.

HACKMAN: Any funds that go directly to them for any organization?

GIFFORD: No, no, we sent him no money.

HACKMAN: You just mentioned something in talking about Shepard. You said that he had no knowledge of the favorite ways of campaigning of the Kennedys. What do you mean by that?

GIFFORD: Oh, I mean that I think that any particular campaign organization - I use that word loosely in terms of the Kennedys - there are ways that certain groups, certain campaigners do it as opposed to certain other campaigners. The Kennedy campaign is always run loosely

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at the top by a group of people. There is, however, almost always directly beneath the candidate himself one person who speaks for the candidate on any given issue and when he speaks nobody argues with him. In 1960 it was John Kennedy [John F. Kennedy] the candidate and Robert Kennedy the number one man, in effect. In 1968 it was Robert Kennedy and Steve Smith. It was difficult because the campaign organization really sprung from nowhere on March 17, and there wasn't a history of it, and there were all of those personalities - O'Brien, Sorenson, O'Donnell, Salinger - and then there was Ted. So it was just slowly moving in the direction that it always had. In 1970 when Senator Edward Kennedy ran here [in Massachusetts, for re-election as senator], it was Steve Smith. When he

spoke, it was speaking for the candidate on anything, whatever it was - personnel, TV, fund raising. That is a particular mark of the Kennedy campaigns, that it's a member of the family. There are also a lot of members of the family who are running around doing everything. Martin Shepard never understood that Steve Smith was going to be put in over him or that whenever any member of the Kennedy family spoke that he, Shepard, had to understand.

HACKMAN: Are there other things?

GIFFORD: Oh, you know, you could.... I don't know. There's a million things. It's fun. You know, a lot of campaigns aren't. Kennedy campaigns are fun.

HACKMAN: If it's apparent to you that Steve Smith is the guy who's acting in that capacity in '68, is it equally apparent to most of the other people at your level or slightly below or above it in the campaign?

GIFFORD: It would have been on June 7.

HACKMAN: Okay. I guess it's something we'll talk about later then. Okay.

GIFFORD: And that was a conscious decision not to rock the boat during the primaries because we needed every last ounce of everyone's manpower and energy, and it did no good to put people in boxes and get them mad and start worrying about that.

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HACKMAN: Maybe we can talk a second about the South. The major meeting that I know about was the April 19 meeting at Hickory Hill where Troutman [Robert Troutman, Jr.] and Ted McLaughlin [Edward D. McLaughlin] and yourself and Tom Johnston [Thomas M.C. Johnston]...

GIFFORD: Tom Johnston.

HACKMAN: ...Seigenthaler [John Seigenthaler], Sorensen, whoever else was involved. Was it something beyond just a discussion of what the situation was in various states? Was it a meeting at which any kind of fundamental decision was going to be made about what kind of direction to go in the South? Or what really were the choices?

GIFFORD: The choice was the one that almost it has been in recent years for any Democratic candidate, because any Democratic candidate has to be for civil rights, has been. So the issue is one of, "Is it worth spending any manpower and financial resources in the South against the likelihood of our gaining any votes out of there, delegate or otherwise?" That meeting was set up to answer that question

which had been nagging....

There had been a lot of courageous people who had come out early all over the South for Senator Kennedy. Oh, we had McLaughlin, and Seigenthaler felt strongly that there was an opportunity. Troutman felt strongly, McLaughlin felt strongly, Tom Johnston felt strongly. Most of Sorensen and O'Donnell and some of the others had always put a big zero by any delegate votes, any significant delegate votes - you always get a handful - out of those states. But there was, previous to that meeting, and as a result of it also, a very serious effort to get a group of lawyers in Washington who would prepare for challenging every single delegation in the place. Whether their challenges would have ever been approved by the candidate, who knows?

But the upshot of the meeting was that we would in fact make a serious effort in the South. As a result of that, Tom Johnston was taken out of the headquarters and put in charge of it. It was not a decision he wanted and it wasn't an easy one. It was not a happy one - simply because he didn't want to leave the headquarters. But, anyway, he did a superb job and he's the only one that could have done it, pulled it all together. And we would have done damn well down there.

HACKMAN: The lawyers' effort was primarily Jack Miller [Herbert J. Miller, Jr.], or who?

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GIFFORD: Oh, it was Jack Miller. Jack was clearly at the very top three or four or five lawyers from the Justice Department whom Bobby trusted, and he knew that Bobby would take his judgment on it. But the work was to be done by, you know, the twenty-five-year-old, thirty-year-old, twenty-year-old lawyers who were associates in law firms and who were turned on by the thing. You know, Jack is a superbly organized man. He had it all broken down into states and everything else. There was a guy named - Warren Reis [sic]? [Harold F. Reis]

HACKMAN: Who used to be in the Justice Department?

GIFFORD: Yeah, shortly...

HACKMAN: Reis, but it's not...

GIFFORD: It's not Warren Reis, but anyway he was...

HACKMAN: John, or something.

GIFFORD: He was a wonderful behind-the-scenes fellow in terms of getting the research done. He was involved and he was always running around in and out.... He was one of the few people that had access to the Boiler room. You know, doing legal work on it, he would never have been the front man. Miller's a superb front man, you know. He could do both, but he can be out there talking to people.

Reis was - he just did a hell of a lot of legwork. And there were a lot of other ones around. It was just a place full of Justice Department lawyers.

HACKMAN: Would the Black Books probably reflect what the possibilities were in the South?

GIFFORD: I think that final tabulation will. The Black Books will have it in there.

HACKMAN: From one explanation I've heard of that meeting, I've heard that Sorensen in sort of closing the meeting put very much a damper on people's enthusiasm for doing much in the South because I remember from the notes I've seen - I think either there is a set of them in your files - he's saying, "Well, we can win without the South. We can win with zero votes. Robert Kennedy can have the nomination with zero votes in the South." Does he then not take any further interest in the South as an area and Johnston picks the whole thing up?

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GIFFORD: Yeah, I mean, as I say, Sorensen and O'Donnell - I remember Sorensen, but I don't think...

HACKMAN: I don't think O'Donnell was at the meeting.

GIFFORD: No, but we'd talked to him and Larry, talked to everybody before we went there. O'Donnell, his approach wasn't that we can win it outside the South, it was, Don't waste a dollar because we'd do a lot better if we would spend our dollars in New Jersey. That's his focus, you know. Sorensen was saying: "We don't need it." I didn't believe either one of them. I also thought it would be lousy, which is maybe my own focus, if it came out that Kennedy had written off the South and said he didn't need it. You know, it's exactly the opposite of what his campaign was all about, that he wanted help from everybody. So I know what Sorensen said.... You know, it was one of those things, Who do you respond to, Sorensen, O'Brien, or the candidate? So Johnston went down. That was the signal from the top that it was a serious effort because Tom was close to the senator.

HACKMAN: One of the notes on the meeting is that if there are calls needed - I guess if there were in other areas around the country - people should let you know and you'd try to see that calls are made. Do you remember many calls that Robert Kennedy made to the South?

GIFFORD: Yeah.

HACKMAN: Who was he particularly focusing on?

GIFFORD: Oh, he called Governor McKeithen in Louisiana. There was Terry Sanford [J. Terry Sanford]. I've forgotten who it was in Kentucky. You see, we tried to set up that thing: When someone wanted Senator Kennedy to make a call, that someone called the assigned person in the boiler room and we would make.... So twice a day, you know, like clockwork I'd talk to Dutton or someone else on the road show, and I'd give him a list. We'd make a judgment about which ones were important. We'd try and rank them, either these are five 'musts' and these are five 'shoulds', and the rest of them are wanted but not necessary and you should know about it. Sometimes he had the time and was very good about it. Other times he didn't feel like telephoning and he'd go out and have a drink with reporters. But, you know, it began to work, and he did make the phone calls. He understood the importance of it.

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HACKMAN: Any plans for any kind of significant announcements about the South after the California primary? Anything in the works that really would have been startling that you recall, similar to the Alaska thing?

GIFFORD: Oh, it's a question more of the timing of it all, Larry, what you have to announce, and when you do it. The word had gotten around that we were going to challenge all the delegations unless they were fairly split up among the people, sort of a pre-McGovern [George S. McGovern] reform arrangement. And I think that's what would have been announced. It would have been called something like you know, some wonderful name - the southern make-sure-your-vote-is-counted group. A project of serious people, nonpartisan and all of the rest of it. It would have scared the crap out of the politicians down there. They knew it anyway, that it was coming. But that was probably what would have been announced, going on the whole issue of vote stealing.

HACKMAN: Okay, why don't we try talking about money. I'm not exactly sure how to talk about it. Any general guidelines that come to your mind on how you make decisions on commitments of money in the campaign, who makes them, and how they get made?

GIFFORD: Well, Steve Smith was the focus of it all. He was probably the only individual who knew where all of the money came from and at least generally where it all went. I don't think that there's anybody else in the whole operation including the candidate himself who had a clue. Ted knew a lot about it because there were a lot of things that required his particular attention and signature, I suspect. Without getting too detailed about it, which is unnecessary to do, major financial decisions were made basically by Steve Smith. He was always petitioned by everybody who said, "I've got to have another forty grand for my state," and so on. He, generally speaking, deferred those until we had a regularized approach at it. In other words, put all the states together and see how much everybody wants. Then you'd come up with forty-eight million dollars or something that's wanted. Hackett was always trying to get them money for grass roots. To media people, we were always trying to get them money for that. We were trying to

get money for some more phones. You know, it was just, ah....

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He ended up putting Helen Keyes [Helen M. Keyes], as you undoubtedly know, in charge of the money in the headquarters. That meant that up to a certain point she could approve it. If it was - I don't know what it was, a thousand or ten or a hundred thousand dollars - above that she had to get his clearance. That's a pretty good way to do it. She did not have the media budget, however; he kept that himself. The fund raising was a different operation than the fund spending. Helen as treasurer came in and got that latter under control after a while. It was hopeless at the beginning because we got so many thousands of dollars in \$1 and \$2 bills in the mail. It was money orders and people saying yes. It was hopeless. But she got it under control fast when she got down there. It was a big help.

The decisions really were made by Steve having in his head an idea of what was available in the way of resources. He properly felt no need to communicate to all of the rest of us what that number was. Then whenever we had these regularized sessions or I'm sure his special sessions, private ones, deciding how much he could release at a given time against what the potential for coming in was. He spent an awful lot of time trying to get those big money men around. He did well at that. I think in my files there are some records of the money.

HACKMAN: How aware...

GIFFORD: Maybe that's the thing that - well, I don't give a....

HACKMAN: How aware were you or were other people in the campaign when he would make a decision about how much money went into a certain state or to a certain individual in a certain state? Would that usually be known so that you would have that in mind?

GIFFORD: No. Yeah, I think we'd generally know it because we had to. We had to be able to tell the people that.... We said, "Wait. We're going to have a meeting next week." "No, you're not going to get forty; you're going to get four hundred dollars instead of forty thousand dollars." However, the media budget was not a concern of the boiler room. It was just not done out of there, and there was no need to do it out of there. We finally did the bumper sticker thing a different way, bought a whole lot of them, and then bumper stickers were sent instead of money to buy bumper stickers. You know, that kind of a thing happened. In the first few weeks, it was just, you know hopeless.

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HACKMAN: Did trying to get a look at the whole fifty-state situation really prevent a lot of things from getting off the ground early? Let's say...

GIFFORD: I don't understand.

HACKMAN: I think what you were telling me was that in some cases money wasn't committed very early in the campaign because he wanted to get a look at the whole situation. Okay, does that in retrospect really create a lot of problems in getting Oregon or California off the ground because there's simply no money going until very late in the game?

GIFFORD: No, no.

HACKMAN: No.

GIFFORD: Because in a state which was decided as a principal focus of the primary - Oregon or... - the money was not the problem. It was always a problem, but nobody ever said, "Here's ten dollars. We'll see you in two weeks." If in Oregon somebody, the call was made, and said, "We need forty thousand dollars because otherwise we can't get any phones and no headquarters," that money was there. If somebody said it in New Mexico, they were told, "Wait a while." I suppose there's another way, which is if the campaign opens and it's got ten million dollars in the bank and you divide it up among the states and then you dribble it out, but you know the money's there. We never knew the money was going to be there. Sure, you know, it's an easy thing to send a guy into a state with a hundred grand and say, "Open five storefronts." It's different to send him in there with a plane ticket and ten dollars a day, and say, "Get five free storefronts, and find five people to buy the phones for you," which is what we did.

HACKMAN: How much did spending decisions have to wait on the raising of money during the campaign? Is that a clear question?

GIFFORD: No, it's a state-by-state thing. I mean, in primary states it was different than it was in Colorado.

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HACKMAN: Whereas in the primary state you mean where you had to get going you simply had to make some kind of commitment.

GIFFORD: Had to make commitments in advance of the fund raisers picking up behind it. You also assume that if you win the nomination that you're going to do pretty well in fund raising. It's one of the reasons you'll host deficit dinners. You know, you're willing to go in the hole on the primaries on the assumption that you're going to win.

HACKMAN: What do you remember particularly about money in California to the Unruh [Jesse M. Unruh] organization? I've heard both ways, that money went into the Unruh organization very early or secondly that

there was a commitment but that either none got in or it got in only very late.

GIFFORD: It's somewhere in between that. Money did go into it. It was not as much as the people in the Unruh organization thought they were going to get, and it didn't come as soon as they thought they were going to get it. But they did get some. And what they wanted, I think, was unrealistic because it would have made them the primary Kennedy campaign organization. You just plain couldn't do that.

HACKMAN: How was that decision made? I just noticed in something I was reading last night that you had written - oh, you were talking about using John Harlee's 1960 Citizens for Kennedy-Johnson files as a source of information for 1968 - and you said, "Since the decision has been made that the citizens' operation in California will be an important part of the Kennedy primary effort in California, these might be useful," I think was your point. At what point was that decision made? Was that an obvious decision early in the campaign, or was it only made when the Unruh...

GIFFORD: It wasn't an obvious decision made early. It was a decision that became very obvious once we started getting the information coming back to us. You find out that the Unruh organization is a pretty good one and Unruh's a good guy and he's early for Bobby, but he has a hundred rivals. Every one of them is going to be pissed off if you go all the way with Unruh so you've got to.... You

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know, then do you go with Unruh and somebody else, and Unruh says, "Hell, I'm not going to do that." So we went all the way and went with the "citizens" and with the Unruhs and a lot of other groups, too, throughout the state. California was always a mess up until the end - the two ends of the state, the impossible size of it compared to the resources we had available. You know, I think the senator was lucky to do as well as he did out there. It was really him up and down the state himself, on TV.

HACKMAN: But finally the decision is made that Steve Smith simply has to go out there himself and spend some time to try to keep it from...

GIFFORD: From falling apart.

HACKMAN: To try to kind of coordinate the thing.

GIFFORD: There'd be people in the headquarters, the outside guy and the inside guy, equal, and they weren't speaking, kind of thing. Steve finally went out there. He hated to go.

I'll tell you a funny story about that. It was getting worse and worse and worse. People were calling the headquarters in Washington, saying, "I've got to speak to Steve Smith. I've spent sixty grand of my own money and the bank is going to take my house."

My general response was "Okay, Mr. Smith will be out there the week of so-and-so. You may not see him, but at the end of it at least things are going to be all smoothed out. Don't worry about it." On a Saturday - he was due to arrive on a Sunday - on a Saturday, I was in the office, and a call, you know, the steady string of calls came in - angered, saying, "I want a private two-hour session with Steve to tell him how to run the California campaign." After about the tenth one - you know, it was Saturday night and I was tired - I finally said to some guy who was even more insistent than most of the others, "Look, he's landing tomorrow in Los Angeles. Why don't you just go there? If it's absolutely sure you're going to kill yourself if you can't see him, if it's that bad, go to the airport. He's coming in on the so-and-so plane." So then I went back to the office on Sunday morning and I was just trying to clean up, get ready for Monday. I was in there all alone and the phone rang. I picked it up and it was Steve from California. I have never been chewed out in my life the way I was chewed out for that. He was so pissed. The guy had met him at the airport and said, "Dun Gifford said for me to meet you, and we're going

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to have an hour here," which, of course, I didn't say any of that. But anyway, that's the way it was translated. Steve said, "Just a minute," and he went to a phone booth and called me. He just kicked my ass from one end of everything to the other. It was a terrible thing. I hung up and I was just shaking because he is a tough man. I realized he hadn't fired me so I was all right. I asked him afterwards what he did to the guy, and he said, "Well, I went in and told him I'd called you and unloaded on you; then I went out and told the guy that you were going to straighten him out." I never heard from him again.

HACKMAN: Some people have said - I guess particularly people who have been around since the fifties or the '60 campaign at least with the Kennedys - that, in comparison, spending by individuals in the campaign, on the campaign staff or whatever, was extremely loose in the '68 campaign. Does that strike you... I mean you weren't around in '60 in the campaign, but how does that settle with you?

GIFFORD: I've heard the same thing from people who were around in the '60 campaign. I was also around in the 1970 Senate campaign here of Senator Kennedy's. Part of the reason is advance organization. If you have your people picked and they know the rules you're operating under and there's sort of an organization and reporting systems and all the rest of it, that's one thing. But in '68, it just happened from zero. The key thing was to get some presence, for example, in a state like Nebraska. So that you get ten people and you send them and you say, "You've got ten bucks a day" - or twenty bucks a day, or whatever it is - "and that's it and your expenses, and no salary or whatever." They call up and say, "God damn it, Kennedy's coming in here, and there's going to be a four-hundred-dollar hotel bill for that God damn crowd. I can't pay that. You've got to approve it." "All right, send us a bill." Well, the bill's four thousand by the time you get it here. That was it. That was the reason.

Helen had done a superb job the longer she was involved. We were cutting in on it slowly, just telling people that we would not approve more than we had said we were going

to approve unless they got specific auth... That's the only way to do it. It really is nasty, and everybody hates to fight about

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money and would much rather talk about how many votes you're going to get. But slowly we were whacking away at it. So I would agree. There are a lot of people who got fantastic free rides for a while, but we caught up to them.

HACKMAN: Again, were there plans for post-California, for the post-California primary that really would have changed things in this regard, that just stand out to you?

GIFFORD: Oh, yes. There was going to be a much tighter organization in terms of decision making. It's funny. It was not because there was a complaint about the primary organization, the primary campaign organization. It was because after the primaries, the whole ball game changes. You don't have eight independent campaigns, one in each primary state or something like that; you've got one, and it's run from Washington. We were lucky because after California came New York, and then there were no more. If it had gone from California to zero, it would have been a real mess. But the way it worked out, it was California, New York. So we gave everybody a ticket who was in California or Oregon to go help in New York. Then they would never hear from us again, in fact. I mean that's untrue and unkind, but I mean that's.... You see, it would have been a nice phase down. Then we would have been left with what we wanted, which was a supportable, streamlined campaign. Now, it always happens that you need many more people in primaries than you do in a general campaign in headquarters. There would have been a difference.... I mean the credit card thing would have been organized. If you had a telephone credit card, we'd have known what your name was when you got the number, and with your air travel card and your Hertz card and your Ramada Inn card, et cetera. It would have been done all at once smoothly. We had the time from California to after the New York - which is ten days to two weeks - to set all that up. We were just going to do it.

HACKMAN: Why don't we talk just a little bit about the boiler room and the way it operated. Is it really almost exactly patterned on what happened in 1960, or what?

GIFFORD: Remember that 1960 really started in 1958. They had that office in the ESSO Building and so on. They began to develop, on a much more relaxed, leisurely way, information culled from the Senate files of Senator John Kennedy and every other damn place. By the time the campaign really started, they were superbly organized,

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and a rational system that the girls had been working on for a year. . . . They knew the people, the places. We tried to do all that in a day - set it up from zero in a day, I would say. We were scrambling. The operation in 1968 had a larger function than it did in 1960. In 1960, O'Donnell, O'Brien, Sorensen, they had it all in their heads because they had been doing it for years. John Kennedy had it in his head because he'd been doing it - specific travels. In '68 nobody had it in his head, nobody, not a soul. You know, in '60, Bobby, Sorensen, O'Brien, O'Donnell, and Hackett - whoever else it was - they all worked together well and over a period of time, and they all knew each other, and knew what each other's responsibilities and strengths were. In '68, there was none of that. So the boiler room, its original function of '68, which was tracking delegates and keeping track of their preferences, was enlarged to include a political intelligence ring, collection, dissemination, reporting. It was not a perfect instrument, but I think without it we'd have really been screwed up. At least there was one place where anybody in the campaign could call and get a phone number, a schedule, this or that or the other thing.

HACKMAN: Any major breakdowns in the system? What were the most common complaints about things that the boiler room couldn't handle that needed to be handled?

GIFFORD: Money. "I need twenty thousand dollars for New Mexico." The girls would say, "We'll do what we can," and then they would never get it, except rarely. I think a lot of times with phone calls, the girls would promise to try and get somebody to make a phone call, and the phone call might not have been made for one reason or another. Those were the principal complaints.

HACKMAN: How useful was any of the information that still survived in either one of the Senate offices or anywhere else from 1960?

GIFFORD: Almost useless. Addresses had changed, phone numbers had changed. They didn't have area codes then. They had operator phones in '60. The most useful thing that'd be left over from '60 was what was in people's minds that stayed on then, the contacts and stuff. For example, the citizens files from '60 were not useful, because the people who were involved in '60 and had turned out to be good were either employed or still friends or associates or something.

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HACKMAN: How are you doing for time?

GIFFORD: Good.

HACKMAN: You've talked about your role as a liaison between Sorensen, O'Brien, Smith, Dutton, whoever. What are the major problems in handling those relationships? Either keeping the assignments clear or just getting the people to work together who need to work together or who operate among those

higher-ups in the campaign.

GIFFORD: Just the very obvious problem of each one of those individuals having his own contacts in almost any state in the union left over from their associations from the White House. Somebody with whom Sorensen might have worked, for example, to take a state at random, in Pennsylvania, would call up Sorensen and say, "You've got to get Bobby to do this," or, "You've got to get Teddy to do this." Somebody who had worked with Kenny would call up and say, "You've got to get him to do this" - it might have been just the opposite thing. The same thing with O'Brien, Salinger. They each, at the pinnacles of their service, had contacts in all states. They were different contacts because they all had different responsibilities. In '68, those contacts were renewed and there was an inevitable collision. There had to be some referee. Well, Steve wasn't around much, and he didn't want to referee on a daily basis. So the issue was, Does he appoint one of them referee? Answer: no; because the others wouldn't have stood for it. Or do you try and have somebody just like me run around and do what you can with it through the boiler room? That was Hackett's innovation, as I recall it, of working through the girls. And so that's how it worked out. I mean, there were funny stories about offices and all the rest of it, office sizes, locations.

HACKMAN: Where does Edward Kennedy fit into that picture?

GIFFORD: He's outside it. He's got his own special thing going. Takes responsibility for certain activities and states. He's got his own staff: Dave Burke [David W. Burke], principally, who's with him all the time. He just does his own thing. He talks to whomever he wants to anywhere. He was in the headquarters a fair amount, making phone calls, just general morale, checking up, doing stuff. And he worked his ass off.

HACKMAN: How does that tie in with Steve Smith's role as the guy who can speak for the candidate?

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GIFFORD: I think as between them, Steve spoke for the campaign as an organization and Ted spoke as Ted, Bob's brother, on issues or things or people. They did not crunch at all.

HACKMAN: Any problems finding roles for O'Brien and Goodwin [Richard N. Goodwin] who come in fairly late? Is that a difficulty?

GIFFORD: Goodwin finds his own role in the media which is where he wants to be. He moves right into it. It causes some bitterness, but he does a superb job of pulling it all together. O'Brien was more difficult simply because by the time he came, everything had been sort of whacked up. But it worked out. He talked to a lot of people. His presence was important. We worked with his assistant who's

now dead, Ira....

HACKMAN: Ira Kapenstein.

GIFFORD: ...closely, regularly. Paul Kirk [Paul G. Kirk, Jr.] for O'Donnell; Ira for Larry; me; and there wasn't anybody for Sorensen, Sorensen worked for himself; and Dave Burke when we had to get Teddy. So there was a whole substratum. We were the age that those guys were in '60. It was funny. Larry just did his thing, you know. He talked to people.

HACKMAN: Any other big problems in finding places for people. I mean, I know that's a general problem in finding what to do for some people.

GIFFORD: Always a problem. Always a problem.

HACKMAN: Any of them stick out?

GIFFORD: No, none that stick out. It was just a day-to-day headache. Everybody wanted to run everything. There was an inevitable one: Salinger versus Mankiewicz [Frank F. Mankiewicz]. How do you fit the two of them together, both of them skilled and so on? You never really do it satisfactorily.

HACKMAN: What sticks out about the meeting, the western states meeting, at Salt Lake City?

GIFFORD: At Salt Lake City.

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HACKMAN: Again, is it just sort of a review or is it a...

GIFFORD: It's two things. It's a review, the purpose of which is to make a judgment about how we're going to do and in return what kind of resources can be committed. The state coordinators brought with them budgets, programs, and estimates, and then we tried to overlay-on top of that our own. Ted being there made all the difference. He knew everybody and knew everything, knew all the states, knew all the people. So that was really done through him. Afterwards, we'd have a review, and he'd say, "They're asking twice what they need or four times what they need, and they are ignoring the guy they've got to talk to. His name is so-and-so." That went very smoothly. We had better.... We were going to do better than we thought we were going to do in those states, largely because people had busted their asses in remembering Ted from 1960. He had a love affair with those states anyway. It just was nice.

It was a very good series of meetings. The Indians were the grass roots group out there, of course, reservation Indians and other ones. They were all turned on to Bobby

because of the hearings. It was going to be good. They would have been for the first time voting and feeling like it.

IIACKMAN: Okay. Why don't you just comment in general then about the aspects of the campaign I mentioned, starting maybe with just the advance operation, in talking about these things particularly in terms of changes that had to be made during the campaign because of problems that came up.

GIFFORD: Okay. To start with advance, there was at first no chief of advance, as it were.

BEGIN TAPE II

GIFFORD: There was no chief of advance designated right away. There was the inevitable Jerry Bruno [Gerald J. Bruno] and the just as inevitable Joey Gargan [Joseph F. Gargan]. It was unformed, and then there were a hell of a lot of advance men from all around the place who wanted to be involved. The job was to get the advance done in the first few weeks. So whoever was around was sent out and they did it. There were some enormous successes and some dismal failures in advance. One of the failures was West Virginia where, I think, it was

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Don Dell [Donald L. Dell] who was reported widely in the West Virginia newspapers as having insulted policemen, ordered mayors around, and so on. That's just the opposite of what a good advance man does. Don claims it was unfair and a plant by the opposition, but who knows? That was a failure. There were some of them like that Nebraska business where the students were in there which was, you know.... Some people who really did the work we never heard of before and they did a fantastic job.

After a while, it got organized, and it was divided that Joe Gargan would be the headquarters advance man, directing advance all around the country, and that Jerry Bruno would be either with the candidate or in the primary states. Now that, of course, got modified when the senator was going to make, say, an eight-day, a six-day, or a four-day swing away from a primary state. Joe would go to the primary state and Bruno would go with the candidate. Then they'd swap back again. Given the personalities of advance men and of those of Jerry Bruno, it worked out surprising well, surprisingly well. I mean that in the best sense. It was a good group of people to work with. They are notoriously sloppy at clean up. In other words, one of the rules we tried to enforce was that whoever the advance man was would stay a day late and call people and thank them and get names and addresses for letters and all the rest of it. Well, it almost never happened, unfortunately, but it worked out pretty damned well, and they did good advance work.

Scheduling: it ended up that Joe Dolan [Joseph F. Dolan] fell into it naturally. It's probably the worst job of all because it always changes at the last minute. If you haven't got a tough stomach and a tough constitution, you crack. A lot of girls cracked in scheduling groups; they just break down after a while. You work eighteen hours a day and you get

everything set up, and then they change it on you - this kind of thing. "I can't take it and I'm coming back to Washington," and blah, blah, blah. Joe has a unique temperament for it. He was able to handle vanden Heuvel [William J. vanden Heuvel] screaming from Oregon and John Seigenthaler from San Francisco and whoever was all around the place. He was able to deal with them on two phones. I watched him do it over and over again, and do it calmly. He popped every once in a while. I watched him put his hand through a wall once. He even did that gently, but it went through.

HACKMAN: The other ones are research and speechwriting. You might want to talk about those two together.

GIFFORD: For the research and speechwriting, the obvious ones are Peter Edelman [Peter B. Edelman] and Adam Walinsky; Milton Gwartzman [Milton S. Gwartzman], who came in; Mike Curzan [Michael Curzan]; oh, there's a whole gang of them.

HACKMAN: Peter Fishbein, Lew Kaden [Lewis Kaden].

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GIFFORD: Peter Fishbein. Lew Kaden, I was trying to think of. Then there were the people from Senator Ted's staff who wanted to help. Flug [James F. Flug] and Jim Guest [James A. Guest], just a whole lot of them. Then there were a lot of other folks involved. Bill Haddad [William F. Haddad] never did figure out what he wanted to do. We just had no time. Tried to organize groups of task forces, professors, to do stuff. That group, I didn't have much to do with. That group was always behind, but there was not anything they could do about it. The important speeches were always written - as all important speeches always are - by some guy sitting up all night with a typewriter, giving it to a secretary to mimeograph. That's the way that one in Nashville got past everybody before - that Adam wrote in the middle of the night: the darkest, Johnson representing the darkest impulses, you know; it was unhappy and a bad thing.

Beneath it all, there was always the rumble and discontent between the old boys and the new boys; the Dutton-Sorensen old-boy crowd on issues versus Edelman, Walinsky. You know about those from other interviews and stuff. I'm not going to rehash it because it's all hearsay from me. But that was a constant battle. We got it in the headquarters when, you know, a group of, a task force put together by a Kaden or a Curzan would come in with a fairly progressive program for something, and a Sorensen or a Dutton or whoever would say, "No, you can't do it that way. You've got to change it," and so on. That was a running battle. You've gotten undoubtedly hundreds and thousands of words about it from the various participants. Let's let that one go. It was going to turn out to be okay. It was going to be well done and well run.

HACKMAN: How about the Citizens for Kennedy operation, not just the California thing but the thing that Oberdorfer [Louis F. Oberdorfer] and Walter Sohler [Walter D. Sohler] or whoever...

GIFFORD: That was one of the best things we had going. They had a lot of those very bright women from Washington working long hours and hard, and it was.... There was never enough money to answer the letters that they wanted to have answered and get the machines working to type them up. But, by God, they had a network going, and they figured it all out, and they had their dentists and their doctors and their lawyers and they had their citizens groups and their umbrellas in each state. It would have been a super operation.

HACKMAN: Was setting that operation up any sort of major or much discussed decision, whether to do that in the primary period or whether to wait until after the convention as it was done in '60, I think, to really set up something that was called Citizens for Kennedy?

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GIFFORD: There was a conscious decision to do it early and fast as part of the whole thing of getting not only the campaign visibility but the people - thousands and thousands - who said, "I want to help. What can I do? Tell me. Where do I go to report?" Not only in Washington, but all around the place. So we set up Citizens.... It was part of Bobby's thing about inclusive instead of exclusive. "Everybody who wants to be involved, let's get him a way to be involved." The guts of it - I mean other than Lou and Walter who were good and important and solid people; you know they just had a feeling and a sense and some experience - were those women. They were superb. There's a whole long list of them. By God, they were in there every day at nine o'clock and stayed until nine at night, on the phones. That was the one thing we did. We had WATS [wide area telecommunications service] lines all around the country. They were able to do it. I think it was a terribly important part of the campaign because it wasn't hocus-pocus. It was a real winner. Lou and Walter concentrated more on getting the super stars on the lists.

HACKMAN: Now, we've talked some about what was going to happen after California, maybe you can just expand on what you've said so far about any specific changes that were going to be made in terms of...

GIFFORD: Before we get into that, there's another couple of parts. The youth groups, have you gotten involved in that in the campaign?

HACKMAN: I've seen a lot of information. Yeah, that's a good one. Why don't you talk about that.

GIFFORD: It was one of those ones that everybody had very high hopes for because the youth group - it wasn't the youth vote then, but it was the student workers, McCarthy [Eugene J. McCarthy] kids in New Hampshire, that drill. And so we invested a lot of time and quite a bit of money in buses, you

know, from the campuses and stuff like that. It always cost us about eight times more than we had programmed. The results according to our people out in the precincts were always dismal, never what they were promised to be. So after a while, we got thinking it was overrated and started to phase it down. It's an interesting thing. You ought to talk to, I think, Doris Kearns [Doris H. Kearns] was in it at that point. Flug was in it for a while, not a long time, because he was a committee staff.... That was always a difficult thing, whoever on the [Capitol] Hill was getting committee payrolls and stuff. But it was a fascinating study of the evolution of the way he handled.... Okay. The other thing of the kinds of changes...

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HACKMAN: There's one I've forgotten - that's the press operation. You might want to talk about the media and the press operation together, I don't know. What comes to mind on those two things?

GIFFORD: The one thing that comes to mind is that we were blessed to have both Mankiewicz and Salinger, as difficult as it was. Salinger was superb. He knew what to do and when to do it. He always had a press release already run off before the thing happened. I never figured it out. He did it sort of just by waving his hand around. I don't know. He was a magic man. That's one of the reasons we got very good press after a while. Mankiewicz, we were lucky to have because he'd ride around in those buses and ad lib anything and keep the thing going even though he never knew, when he was on a bus, where we were going to stop. I mean sometimes the advance, the scheduling was that close. Then they had Tom Mathews [Thomas Mathews], who was good, in New York. There were some other people - I've forgotten who - who were around a lot. Was Pat Reilly Frank's secretary?

HACKMAN: Pat Reilly was and Barbara Coleman [Barbara J. Coleman] were working.... That's one of the reasons, I suspect, Salinger found things easy because she seemed to be really...

GIFFORD: Barbara.

HACKMAN: Yeah.

GIFFORD: And Pat. But Pat was Mankiewicz; Barbara was Pierre. That's very understandable; it was very much understood. Yeah, that was good. Maybe Barbara was the reason for Pierre, but it was nice and it worked smoothly. You know, people fought like.... You know, who was going to go on the.... Who was going to be press secretary, who was going to be press spokesman, and that shit. But that always happens.

I mean, there are some people in a campaign that are always unsung. There were guys who run the mail room, for example. There was Joe Baldasaro and John Carlin who worked with him. Those poor guys never did anything but work. And everybody's always complaining about the mail. You know, "I sent a letter to Senator Kennedy, and I didn't get

an answer." "Well, you were on of the hundred thousand that week, sweetheart." But, you know, the good humor, they did the work as best as they could. The transportation people Bill Hartigan [William J. Hartigan]. How he puts up with that I can not imagine, how he did it. It's an impossible job. Ed Cubberley who ended up being a sort of disbursements clerk. The poor guy. I mean I can't imagine a worse job. Those people, they made it all worth it. Anyway, after California, the thing was - this as I said a little bit earlier - going to be done in two steps really. The general

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theory was to have everybody go from the primary states to New York, not have them to go to Washington. Not only did we, on the merits, need them badly in New York - we needed everybody that we could get - but it also gave us a little bit of time to set stuff up in Washington in anticipation of the end of the New York primary.

After the New York primary, the headquarters operation would be, you know, like your basic ideal campaign structure book shows you what a headquarters looks like. There were going to be in it, obviously, Salinger, Sorensen, O'Brien, O'Donnell, Ted Kennedy, and that's some crowd, let me tell you, right there. If you've seen the floor plans and layout of the office, you know, they were all ranked on one side of the building in equal size offices except for Steve and Ted.

The advance operation, scheduling operation was.... Somehow Joe Gargan and Jerry Bruno were going to have to sit in one room together. Somehow. And it was not a very big room, but that's where their operation was going to be run from. There was enough room in scheduling because Joe kept that very much under control all the time. Hartigan, transportation. Boiler-room was okay. The Citizens for Kennedy, they were down on another floor, and they had a lot of space. That was going to absorb some number of people, but not very many because they were already filled with the people living in Washington.

Up in the research and issues, in the floor above where the main operation was, they were going to be getting some number of additional people. Probably as good a way to talk about it is who was going to be making what kinds of decisions. I mean we had to have a place for Goodwin. We had to have a place for.... What did Seigenthaler want to do? What did vanden Heuvel want to do? What did Chuck Spalding [Charles Spalding] want to do? It was a panicky feeling when we first went out there to California. Let me describe the process.

Steve called us up and said, "Look at it." We said: "We're coming to California the day of the primary because we won't have anything to do. We're coming the night before or the night before that." I've forgotten what it was. But anyway, we went out there. He said, "Bring all of the information you've got and bring a plan for how you think the thing ought to be done afterwards and we'll talk about it the day of the primary." So we went out there whatever night it was. The day of the primary itself we sat in Steve's office - Hackett, him, and me - and there was a secretary of his, I think, somebody who kept running in and out. I don't remember who. I tried

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to think of it last night in thinking about coming in today. But basically it was.... And we went over the thing. We went over the books state by state, person by person, what the prospects were, what we thought might be the opportunities, then we went over an organization which I'll talk about in a minute.

So then Steve said, "Okay, do a memo to each one of these guys. We're going to see them in my cottage or cabin or whatever it is at the hotel. I want you and Hackett there. I may want to see them privately. But here's when I want them." He did a schedule out in his handwriting: 9:30, Pierre, or whatever it was. And he was just going to go bang, bang, bang, bang, bang. We had it right through, 9:30 to 1:30 or something. Then everybody was going to get together for late lunch. So I ran around. I did those things up from him to them. I put them in their mailboxes or under their doors in the hotels where they were staying late that afternoon. Of course, there was the final celebration when he got shot. If those guys had not gotten the letter that night, they would have gotten it in the morning when they got up. I think I was going to call a couple of them, but I don't remember why or which ones because I was afraid they wouldn't get back or something.

Basically, the campaign was to have the traditional parts: scheduling, Joe Dolan with Fred Dutton. We knew it wasn't a happy situation, but there was no other way. Bobby was not going to be traveling all the time; he was going to be resting for at least a week. That week after the New York primary was going to be tough for everybody crowding into the headquarters. It's a funny thing. It's like trying to put all of the stands of a football field, all the people in the stands into the locker room after the game. You can't do it. Advance was Bruno and Gargan. What Steve was going to tell them all was, "Look it, you guys are going to do advance and you work your thing out. I don't want to hear any shit from you. You work it out yourselves. You know what advance means and you know what the job is. You work it out between you." That was the basic thing.

The press was Salinger and Mankiewicz and Mathews and the rest of them. The media was Goodwin, Guggenheim [Charles Eli Guggenheim]. That's it. We didn't have an office for that.

That's the thing, we had to make the conference room into two offices. Goodwin had said that he planned to spend most of his time over with Guggenheim - in Guggenheim's office - but we didn't believe that. Then, transportation, Hartigan. Finance was... We were going to get somebody else in there. I didn't know who it was - it wasn't Carmine Bellino [Carmine S. Bellino] - to help Helen.

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HACKMAN: That's a question I had. Had Bellino worked much during the campaign helping Helen Keyes, or is he around a lot or what?

GIFFORD: No. There wasn't much to do. Ed Cubberley had been involved in it. He would have stayed probably, the chief of bookkeepers or something. He was a trained lawyer, thank God for that. We were lucky there. But I've forgotten who it was. There was somebody. Anyway... We didn't have much for vanden Heuvel to do. We didn't have much for Seigenthaler to do. We thought that Bill probably would stay up in New York and do his number. Steve was prepared to give him

a big job for the campaign up there. Seigenthaler was to go back to Tennessee - I mean he was on leave from the paper - to sort of get things straightened out. Then we knew that he'd be back.

The reason I haven't talked about O'Donnell and O'Brien is because the whole question of the Democratic National Committee [DNC] was up, assuming we won the whole schtick. Steve frankly hadn't decided at that point because he hadn't talked to Bobby about it, I guess. It had obviously to do later on with the vice presidential thing. You know, who do you get to be the DNC? I don't recall Steve ever saying specifically what he was going to tell - I know what his plan was. His plan was to hold that whole question of O'Donnell-Sorensen-O'Brien in abeyance pending the convention and pending the choice of a new chairman. There was the convention to be run by somebody, so O'Brien was the obvious choice for that by the Kennedy group. Kenny was going to be liaison with labor, and Sorensen was going to be - although we were going to resist it - he was going to be sort of a super issues....

Steve was going to be... There wasn't going to be a campaign manager unless it was Ted. Ted didn't want to take it so that was to be resolved by Bobby and Teddy and Steve. They never talked about it. There was another funny one. It was going to be very plain that Steve was the campaign manager. He wasn't going to have a title, he wasn't going to have anything, but he was going to be the guy. If they could have gotten Ted to agree to take manager or director or chairman, it would have been perfect because Ted and Steve worked.... I mean that was the whole structure of it, you see, and then how the hell can O'Donnell and them complain. I think that's it. I mean I don't think we've left anything out.

The technical problems of how do you deal with, you've got eighty-eight advance men and now you need six, was going to be handled on the basis of a recommendation from Gargan and Bruno.

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Steve would say, "we're going to keep six on the payroll. Tell me what six, and you tell the rest of them no." Same thing with scheduling. You had all these schedulers in all these primary states. It was the same kind of thing. From my own point of view, the boiler room, after the convention, loses what its principal focus was, that is, delegates. I asked the question. Steve said, "We don't have to decide it until the convention." So that was his typical directness.

HACKMAN: Walinsky would have continued to write speeches?

GIFFORD: He would have continued to write speeches. He would probably not have traveled as extensively. The traveling party was to be cut down to Dutton, a couple of secretaries, you know, security, advance, and scheduling and stuff like that. Way, way back. Adam would have kicked and screamed. Peter would have accepted it. You see, Peter did not push to travel so much, which made.... In the perversity of politicians, it made it so that Peter was then going to travel maybe, you know. That's sort of the traveling issues. Sorensen was to be put in charge of Walinsky, Edelman, Gwartzman, and all those. He didn't want it and they didn't want it, but it was going to happen.

HACKMAN: Johnston would have stayed in the South basically, at least until, I guess...

GIFFORD: I think he probably would have gone.... Yeah, I mean, he had to stay in the South until after the convention. After that, I would suspect he would have been put in the DNC. I don't know if I suspect that or whether it was discussed. It just was obvious to all of us. See, it might have been just Hackett and me figuring it out on the plane or whatever. But it was a perfect choice to have a southerner over there.

HACKMAN: How about Hackett himself?

GIFFORD: Hackett was going to float. He didn't want anything. He'd always been a floater. It was his personal relationship with Bobby and Steve and Ted that did it. He had a job he had to keep to feed his family. It was going to keep that way. He came over at lunch - I told you that. He came over at lunch time and he came over after work every day. We had lunch together.

HACKMAN: That's all I've got. I mentioned one time when I talked to you the first time that if I go to finish Peter Edelman someday on the legislation in '67, I might come back with a few things on legislation.

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GIFFORD: Yeah. I'd like to talk about that on the basis of Peter's. I always felt a little funny about talking to.... My recollections of Bobby's legislative activity, other than just seeing him operate on the floor and stuff, without having the base of Peter's to respond to or Adam's or something like that.... There's so many stories, of him standing in the Senate that Peter would remember well and probably has notes on.

HACKMAN: We've done up through '66: It's the year that you're there that we've got left. Okay.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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