

**Paul B. Fay, Jr. Oral History Interview – JFK #1, 11/9/1970**  
Administrative Information

**Creator:** Paul B. Fay, Jr.

**Interviewer:** James A. Oesterle

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**Biographical Note**

Fay was a personal friend of President Kennedy; Under Secretary of the Navy (1961-1963). In this interview, he discusses personal interactions with John F. Kennedy (JFK), JFK's views of foreign policy, his relationship with staff, the Bay of Pigs invasion, the Cuban Missile Crisis, Robert F. Kennedy's presidential campaign, as well as Fay's book, *The Pleasure of His Company*, among other issues.

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Paul B. Fay

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Paul B. Fay, Jr. – JFK#1

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Oral History Interview

with

Paul B. Fay, Jr.

November 9, 1970  
San Francisco

By James A. Oesterle

For the John F. Kennedy Library

OESTERLE: Mr. Fay, would you take a look at this list of White House appointments and just see what it brings back to mind?

FAY: Well, I can particularly remember the first appointment here, on February the third, a Friday. I can remember early in the week I went over and had dinner with the President [John F. Kennedy] – I believe it was on a Monday night – and he mentioned the movie “Spartacus” was going to be showing in Washington, D.C. And since my

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wife [Anita Fay] at this time was still in Europe with our children, he said, “How would you like to go to the movies?” So I said, “Great,” and he said, “I don’t want to have any fanfare or worries about effect. You take care of getting the tickets.” So I got the tickets, and I did it in such a way that nobody would know who they were for. Since it was early in the week and it was a reserved seat theater, we got good seats. And I guess we were about three-quarters of the way back in the center of the theater.

Well, then in the middle of the week – I guess it was on a Wednesday or Thursday – I got a call from a Secret Service man wanting to know where our seats were. I said, “Where did you get the information as to where the seats were?” because I knew the President didn’t

want the word out and have a mob out there to greet him. The Secret Service man said, “Well, we have to find out what the President’s actions are. We have to take the necessary

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precautions.” So I gave him our seats. Well then, when I went over for dinner at the White House that night with the President, why, the question arose. I said, “Now listen, I just want you to know the Secret Service knows about this.” I said, “They didn’t get it from me, and they didn’t get it from anybody on my staff. I don’t know where they got it, but they know that we’re going to the movies tonight.” It didn’t seem to be a problem to him.

He wanted to be at the theater just a hair after the movie started because he didn’t want any disturbance for the people who came there to view the movie. He wanted really just the two of us to slip in and watch the movie and then leave. Well, I guess he found out in short order there’s no such thing as the President of the United States slipping in, because – and once again,

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I was very conscious of the fact that I wanted to make sure that nobody knew we were going. When we arrived in front of the theater, of course nobody was in front of the theater. They were all in because the movie had started. They were all in except for the manager, who was out there to greet us. And the President, with that wry look, took one look at me as if I had some way tipped off the manager that we were going to go to the movies, which I’m sure he knew I hadn’t. But he still wanted to keep me a little off balance.

Then we got in the theater and went to our seats, and when we sat down in our seats, there wasn’t a soul seated behind us from our seats back to the last seat in the whole theater. And there was nothing showing on the film; the theater was actually darkened with nothing showing. Pretty soon the crowd – you could sense a certain impatience in

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the crowd – started to clap. Well, then the film started. What actually had happened – which we didn’t realize until the intermission – was that the minute the President arrived at the front entrance, why, the manager of the theater had stopped the film which was in process and rolled it all the way back so the President would see the film from the very beginning.

During the period while we were waiting for the film to start, the President noticed – it wasn’t Stewart Udall, it was the.... Who was the member of his Cabinet, I think he was the Secretary of Agriculture? He had been a very...

OESTERLE: Orville Freeman.

FAY: Orville Freeman. Orville Freeman was sitting in front of the President with his wife. And I can remember the President leaning forward to him and saying, “Is this all the members of my Cabinet have to do, just go to the movies?”

Don’t



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they have enough work?” And I can remember Orville Freeman coming right back in the same tone – or I should say in the same sense of humor – and saying, “Oh, Mr. President, I wanted to be close at hand if you needed me.” So then the film went ahead and rolled ahead.

At the intermission we went in to the manager’s office. And, of course, there was – you’ve never seen anything that looked so unappetizing. It was something that was set up by the manager, who in his way wanted to be just as nice as he could. So here are all these cold hors d’oeuvres, which had obviously been ordered from a catering establishment. And you know, the typical cold hors d’oeuvres laid out on a platter or several platters in the manager’s office underneath the stairs that go right upstairs, just, you know, they lacked.... There was something about them that did not make them very appetizing.

There were a series of

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liquor bottles. It looked as if we were going to have a party at the intermission, I mean, scotch, bourbon, gin, vodka, whatever we might want, with all the necessary mixers. Well, neither the President or myself wanted a cocktail, so the manager didn’t know whether he should have a cocktail. So he passed one down and he said, no, he would not have one, and then the President said, “Well, why don’t you have one, even though we’re not going to have one.”

So then the President really – unless he knew people well or knew their background, he never really was quite at ease with them. If he was working with somebody, that was something else. But the manager and he had really very little in common, and so therefore he was certainly ill at ease, and there wasn’t really an awful lot they could say together. And here you are, the manager of the theater, the Secret

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Service man, and the President, and myself.

The manager was trying his best to keep the ball rolling. I can remember the President seeking just to get something going where he didn’t have to be involved in trying to carry on a conversation with the manager. He said to the manager, “Mr. So-and-so, don’t you think the Under Secretary has a lot of theatrical talent?” Well, there was no way in the world of anybody evaluating whether I had theatrical talent.

The manager just jumped on it. He wanted to say something he thought the President would like. He said, “Oh, yes, I think he does have lots of theatrical talent.” And here the three of us are sitting there. I’m trying to say, “Well now, why do you think I have theatrical talent?” based on this exchange. The manager was trying to respond to the President and saying, “Well, I think there’s something about the way that the Secretary

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moves.”

The whole thing was so ludicrous. The President, of course, thoroughly enjoyed something where somebody, particularly a good friend, found himself caught in a situation which was rather embarrassing, where he was the center of attraction. So he really got a tremendous laugh out of it. I mean really, he didn't want it to die. He kept saying, “Well now, have you looked at the Secretary's profile?” you know, to have me the center of all this attention. I'm saying to the manager, “Well now, I mean, aren't there other – what's your background, you know, to be able to evaluate?” Well, a manager of a theater obviously doesn't have the background to come in and start evaluating somebody for a future movie career. But at least it created a few chuckles while we were in there.

Then we went back in the theater and saw the film, and the President thoroughly enjoyed it, as I did. I mean,

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it was really an excellent movie. Then we came back that night to the White House. As I mentioned earlier, my wife and children were still in Europe, where we had been when I got the call from Bob Kennedy [Robert F. Kennedy] as to that...

OESTERLE: In Switzerland.

FAY: That's right. Whether I was interested in the position. And I can remember that night, since I was staying in the Army [and] Navy Club... It was a cool February night. I think maybe there had been snow on the ground earlier, but there was none on the ground at that time, and it looked like it could have possibly rained. It was just kind of a damp evening, but not raining. So the President said, “I'll walk you back to the Army-Navy Club.” So the two of us took off with about four Secret Service men, who kept somewhat at a distance. They were kind of walking ahead and behind on either

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side. When we got to the Army-Navy Club, obviously you don't leave the President of the United States to walk home alone, so I turned around and started to walk back with him, back to the White House.

When we came back into, I guess it's Lafayette Park or Square, [Lafayette Park] there's a men's room, I believe, in the park, and there was some man standing over there. One of the Secret Service men went right over and stood between the man and the President. In fact, the Secret Service man lit his lighter, and he was close enough to the man who was standing there to look at his face and to get an idea if that man had any ulterior motives. He was in a position to evaluate, and also he was in a position – not only did he have the lighter, but he also had his hand in his pocket, just to take all the precautions.

That time was the first time that I was conscious of the threat on the President's life. The President was very conscious of this too, and he said

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to me something to the effect that, “What would you do now if that man over there pulled a gun? What would you do to help your old pal?” There was recently turned over plot of ground there, and I said, “I’d dive into that ground so deep there’d be room for you on top of me.”

Then we started to discuss this question of assassination. He said – and he was very philosophical about this – “You know, this really isn’t my job, to worry about my life. That’s the job of the Secret Service.” He said, “If I worry about that, I’m not going to be able to do my own job. So I have just really removed that from my mind. That’s theirs to take care of. That’s one of the unpleasant parts about the job, but that’s part of the job.”

I don’t really think that he ever – I mean, he was concerned about it, but I think he really dismissed it from his mind. It was something that he had no control over. He would do what they told him to do, and he’d

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stay within the confines of what was considered safe conduct. He evaluated every situation. He knew when he was exposing himself, but he just made a calculated gamble, that this was his responsibility, that he had to come to the people, and so therefore he was going to have to expose himself. That was it. There were times later, I know, down in Florida when somebody tried to get in their place down there and almost got into the house, but that was as far as it went at that time.

There was something else that I was going to say relative to.... Well, it might come back to me. It was something about this philosophy of – oh, I know what I was going to say. He had an unbelievable capability to block things out of his mind if necessary; I mean, really a quality which I’d give my right arm to have. That is that when he wanted to sleep, he could sleep. Now here, during the campaign and when he was

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President of the United States, maybe during the campaign when he had smaller hops to make and he’d get on the *Caroline* and then fly maybe for an hour or an hour and a half between spots, he had the ability to get in that airplane, lie down in that bunk, and go sound asleep.

Here he was the minute he got landed, he knew he was going to have to get up and make a speech, an important speech, or whatever the occasion was. But he had the ability to block that out of his mind and lie down and go to sleep. He was able to do this when he was President. The same thing was where he would have something of importance to do, and then he would have to fly. He’d want to have the rest, so he would lie down and he would take a nap.

It’s an unusual capability. I think it shows his ability to be able to concentrate, both to remove things from his mind and get the sleep he needed. For this reason,

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under the hard, arduous demands of campaigning, he could survive it a lot better than all those people around him, because when he was not speaking or when he was not actually involved in discussing things with people, or was traveling, he would take that opportunity and he would completely relax or totally sleep.

OESTERLE: Do you recall how he went about organizing the administration, especially in terms of being able to black one thing out and concentrate on another at any given point?

FAY: You mean the total organization of his administration?

OESTERLE: Yes. He received the task force reports that had been prepared prior to the Inauguration, and these reports were in his hands with certain recommendations. I wonder if he discussed this at all with you?

FAY: Well, he really didn't discuss that, except the

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fact that in talking about preparing himself for the Presidency, why, to him these task forces were so important. In other words, it really had put him in a position of being knowledgeable on what he could expect or what he would want his administration to set as goals.

I think typical of the President, I can remember one time when we went out to Middleburg, Jim, where you're living now. We went out and the President brought his reading along, or at least had Taz Shepard [Tazewell T. Shepard, Jr.], his naval aide, or whoever it might be out there with him, bring his reading material. He generally gave me some of his reading material to read. I can remember it always impressed me how clearly he saw the issues at hand, and how he acknowledged and recognized the people in his administration for their ability to be able to write.

This one particular issues, I can remember very clearly, had to do with the Indians – not the

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American Indians, but India and the Indians. The question was – there's a letter by John Kenneth Galbraith, then the Ambassador, writing the President, talking about the millions and millions and millions of dollars that had been put into Formosa to fortify it, to arm it so that maybe possibly someday the Generalissimo might be able to get back on the mainland and the Republic of China would live again. And he said, "Here we are, appearing to do the same thing. We're turning our back on India when they need us the most with giving them aid." And he said, "We could do the same thing again. We could let India slip away from us for a very small amount of money as compared to what we would have to deal with if we had to, say, go to Ceylon or someplace like that and build up a tremendous.... After the deposed

government came in and the Communists overran the country, then maybe we would pour millions and possibly billions of dollars into

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fortifying – I don't know whether you'd use Ceylon – some area so that we would eventually go back and try to recapture what we had now. For a very, very small percentage of that amount we could maintain the quality of the government in there and also maintain the Indian nation as a free nation." I think that the reason that he wanted me to read it more than anything else was to show the logic, the clear logic, that Ken Galbraith had used as an argument why we should fund this operation. Now, this is not really responsive to your question.

OESTERLE: Well, it brings out an interesting point, though, which I might question you on. How would you interpret the President's views in regard to the role of the United States in the sixties toward other countries, especially in terms of foreign aid? The United States, many people think it's been overextended for some time, and that you can't buy your friends. And indeed, much of our foreign aid seems to go to those countries that are sort of on the fence rather than to our friends. At least this is what much of the criticism has been. I wonder if you just might address...

FAY: Well think that he felt.... As you know, he had a great interest in foreign policy. I mean, this was really his strong suit. I can remember the pride he had that.... Evidently Senator Taft [Robert A. Taft] had one time said – I forget who he had mentioned it to – that John Kennedy, in his opinion, was the best informed and was the most capable of the young men coming in on the scene, as far as their knowledge of foreign policy and how to deal with other nations. This was, I believe, when he was a very junior Senator. Then, of course, he was only a Senator really for one.... Let's see, he was elected –

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well, he was elected the second time around too.

Now, this is rather a daring answer for me to give, to try to sum up what the President's position was. As well as I could sum it up would be to say that he felt very strongly in foreign aid. He felt equally strongly that the foreign aid had to be one where the nation participated in the – in other words, it wasn't something where we moved in with an awful lot of people and really ran the foreign aid. He expected the country itself to – maybe we'd come in initially, but then they would have to take over. They would have to start matching it or our foreign aid would decrease. I think that he realized the necessity of armament and ships and armor and munitions and things like that. But he also felt very strongly that it wasn't our role to go in there and settle the differences of other people.

I can remember one particular case – and

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this is stepping ahead a little bit but on the question of the marines and the army in Vietnam. We were out I believe it was off of Newport. I think the Blue Angels had just flown over, and we were out on the *Honey Fitz*. The President was sitting in his swivel chair in the back of the *Honey Fitz*, and the phone rang next to him. He picked it up, and it was evidently a message being relayed to him that there were some marines that wanted to lead their unit into combat. The situation, they thought, was ideal for an attack, and so, therefore, they wanted to lead it. And evidently the standing orders of the President at that time were that our advisors over there are not there to lead Vietnam troops into battle. They were there to defend themselves and to teach the Vietnam troops how to lead themselves into battle.

It would have been, it could have

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been a minor thing if he'd said, "Well, no, don't let them do it." But instead of treating it as a minor thing, it really disturbed him. He said, "Wait a minute. I'll take this on the forward." There were other people seated there. He said, "I'll take this up in the cabin forward," where the skipper – you know, up where the communications setup was on the yacht.

Then he told me to come along with him. I went along with him. He got on the phone. I don't know who he was speaking to on the other end, but he said, "For every adviser that I hear initiates an attack on the enemy, I'm not going to remove that adviser, but I will remove a like number." And I thought – you know, this to me was so basic about his philosophy of what would happen in Vietnam.

People many times have asked me whether I thought John Kennedy would have escalated, because the numbers were

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escalated from the time he came on board in 1961 until the time of his death. I think there were about sixteen thousand some odd military people in Vietnam at the time of his death. There were, what, half that I think, when he started. I'm not sure; I really don't know what the numbers were. But at least I knew that his philosophy....

He was a great student of history and he read vociferously – if that's the proper word. He read an awful lot. His reason for reading was he said that you really have to understand history in order to understand how the other nationalities or other races are going to react under certain situations.

I know that when he was talking about the qualities of a President, he really wasn't.... I never heard John Kennedy ever brag, but he was such an honest man when it had to do with what was expected of people and of himself. He was describing the qualities

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that were necessary to be a President. "To be a good President," he said, "number one, you've got to be of well above average mentality. Number two, you have to be well read – in

other words, know history – so you’ll be able to deal with the different nations that you have to deal with, because history repeats itself, and particularly a certain race will be redundant in what it does and its reaction to different situations.” I don’t know whether he said the third thing was you have to be lucky. But I mean, this was his – you know, this was some of the thing. I know that this came up in his discussion.

So in Vietnam I always felt that since the Bay of Pigs and then the missile crisis, where he.... He never thought the military had the solution. He thought the military were there as a threat, but he thought the political, diplomatic axis was where the issues were going to be solved, and not through military force.

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The military was really the threat, but he never.... To use it, then he felt you’d really lost everything, that they really hadn’t accomplished.... You never solved anything by fighting.

OESTERLE: Yet he went back and forth on the degree that he relied on his military advisers during the different points in the administration.

FAY: Well, it change though. Let me say that in the time of the Bay of Pigs, I didn’t know about the Bay of Pigs, what was happening, until I was over at a cookout at Bobby Kennedy’s. That’s what Bob used to call barbecuing. What we know in California as a barbecue he used to call a cookout. And I must say we had an awful lot of cookouts over there during the course of our stay in Washington. Bob would maybe have about twenty people for dinner. The children would all eat first, and then the adults would eat right after, and Bob would actually do the barbecuing

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of the steaks. Just before dinner, before everything came on, I remember we were standing by the tree there, and Bob said to me, “I don’t know whether you know or not, but we’re going into Cuba tonight.” I said, “What do you mean we’re going into Cuba tonight?” He said whatever this Cuban group was – I don’t know what they were titled, but these...

OESTERLE: Cuban Liberation.

FAY: Yes, that they were going to make a landing and that we were – he didn’t mention the support, but at least he said we were going to make a landing. This came as a tremendous surprise to me. And then, of course, it’s history what happened. There’s a lot been written on it. But I can remember when it all caved in – it was such an abortive attempt to get it going, and the United States being behind it – that the President felt

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very badly about it. There was no question about it. I can remember we were driving out to Middleburg, and we were leaving on a Saturday afternoon. It was a gray, foggy, rainy Saturday, very much like the day we have here. When we left to go out the west gate there were very few people there. Generally there's always a pretty good crowd, but the weather actually kept them away. I can remember the President waved to the few people that were there, and then he made the comment to me, he said, "If they think they're going to get me to run for this job again, they're out of their mind."

Then we started talking about what influenced him on getting involved in the Bay of Pigs. He started talking about the military, and he had some pretty strong feelings about the fact that he had been misled by the military. But he blamed himself for doing it. He said, "Because when

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I sat there and I looked at fat ass Arleigh Burke and fat ass George Decker," you know, which both had fat asses, and so the President was expressing his feelings. He said, "I looked at those four stars and that wide gold braid and those other three braids next to the wide one. I figured the selection process that they had to go through in order to achieve that pinnacle in the military – you know, having been in the military myself, I just figured these fellows have got to know what they're doing." And he said, "I realize that they really don't know what they're doing when it comes to bringing in the diplomatic and the political side of the house. They're trained to fight, and it was my job to know that. I abdicated my responsibility when I left the decision up to them as to what we should do."

It wasn't, in my opinion, until the missile crisis when he really came of age as far as the Presidency was concerned,

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because then he could look at the military in an entirely different way. He used the military during the missile crisis for the benefit of the country, and he used them the way he thought they should be used. In other words, he maintained his control as the Commander in Chief.

I don't know how well it's known, but I can remember that George Anderson [George W. Anderson, Jr.] was just livid; the CNO [Chief of Naval Operations] of the Navy was just livid when the decision was made there was going to be a quarantine. The President said, "Any communication with any skipper of our ship when coming in contact with a Russian ship, I will make the decision as to exactly what he is to say, and when he's to say it, and how he's to say it." Admiral Anderson was, you know, livid because he thought it was the President who made the decision on the quarantine, and now any decision on how to handle the ships and the skippers in

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dealing with the other ships that was a decision of the navy and not the President.

The President said, "Doesn't that silly ass realize what I'm doing? I couldn't give a damn for that Russian ship or what happens to it. But that's not what my concern is. I've got



a guy over there in Moscow who's in a corner, and I don't want to get him in a corner." He said, "I want to give him the opinion he can get out. Everything I'm saying, I'm speaking to Khrushchev [Nikita S. Khrushchev] and nobody else. I want to be able to get this thing solved and get the missiles out of Cuba. I've got to do it in such a way that this fellow can save his face. If Anderson doesn't realize that, it just shows he isn't as bright as I thought he was." This was his....

After that was all over, why, I remember that speech on the radio, on television, that Monday night. I can remember when I saw it. When I got to my office the next morning, I wrote a note to

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the President and I put it in my out box. The minute it hit the out box, the girl took it from my office into the outer office. She must have sent it over by my chauffeur immediately, because a half hour hadn't passed until the phone rang.

They said the President of the United States was calling. He called up to thank me for writing the note. But he wanted to emphasize how really outstanding the military had been through all the events, that they knew all this information ahead of time, that it was so important that the information not be leaked so that the Russians could say we're mounting a propaganda campaign and that they didn't have any missiles in Cuba. This had to be kept quite. So then when he finally came on television, nobody in the world knew, except those that needed to know. He had nothing but the highest respect for the military

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at that time, but really in my opinion it was his growth as a man, as a President, because now he was using the military in the manner in which a President should use it.

OESTERLE: Were there any other examples along this line that you can think of in the course of the administration, either in regard to the military, or other examples perhaps of the President's identification – further identification – with his role, maturing?

FAY: Well, I can remember one night when we were – this was just before the Berlin blockade, or maybe it was the time of the Berlin blockade. This was in, I think, July of '61, if I'm not mistaken, somewhere in that period. My wife and I – and I think there were Eunice Shriver [Eunice Kennedy Shriver] and Bob and Ethel Kennedy [Ethel Skakel Kennedy] – were over at the White House for dinner. Jackie [Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy] was there. We were told to be there at

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7:30, and we were there at 7:30. Then at about quarter of nine, the President still hadn't come over from the oval office. So then Jackie said, "We'd better go in to dinner."

Well, then I guess it was about 9:30 when the President finally arrived. Jackie had placed me so that when the President came in, I'd be sitting on his left. He came in, and he was flushed, and you could see he was harassed. He was really worn from the whole experience. Everybody sensed that he was very tense. His hands shook. I think both Bob and the President's hands for some reason – maybe it was something hereditary – whatever it was, their hands had a tendency to shake when they were under great tension. It wasn't a case, you know, that they didn't have the strength; it was just one of the things that reflected in them. The President's hands were – you could see they were shaking in the way he was

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doing things.

Everybody else, because of his tension, all started to talk among themselves. He directed his conversation to me and he said, "God, I hope you've been enjoying yourself over here, because I've been over there in that office, not knowing whether the decision I made...." He was going to send the first nuclear warheaded missile into the atmosphere. He was just really tremendously concerned. And after that night, I thought, "I don't care who's President of the United States. Under situations like this I have nothing but sympathy for the men that carry that tremendous load on their back, to be able to bring into focus all the things that bear on a particular issue and not to miss a one."

It also brought up the factor, so clear in my mind, that when you're going to choose a President – and I'm editorializing a little bit now – the party really isn't as important

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as the man when you choose the President. When you really get down to the short strokes, boy, you'd better have somebody that has such a broad mind and can see all the different alternatives that are available to you and understand all the different conditions under which you're operating so that you don't overlook a thing, and that you're broad enough to bring them together and then make a judgment on it and not be impulsive or move in a rash manner because you think this is what history is going to respect, or what your image in history is going to be, or any of the other things which are unimportant as to what is the issue right there at hand.

OESTERLE: I imagine part of this, too, is knowing how to protect one's time and schedule and what details one should concern oneself with. A lot's been written recently about when President

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Nixon [Richard M. Nixon] protects himself, and how his aides screen the kinds of things that are going to go over the President's desk. Do you have any observations about...

FAY: Well, you know, that was something that disturbed me during John Kennedy's time as President, because he had Kenny O'Donnell [Kenneth P. O'Donnell]

on one door, and he had Evelyn Lincoln [Evelyn N. Lincoln] on the other door. Both of them served the President with total commitment to the President, with total love for the President, doing what they thought was in the best interests of the President and the country. There's no doubt about this in my mind, but they took upon themselves as to what was the best for the President and what was the best for the country.

I know of a case with Kenny O'Donnell where I thought he overdid it. In other words, Kenny O'Donnell was very protective to the President. Major people in government, who at least in my

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opinion – and I think in the President's opinion too, knowing him as well as I did.... He really deprived these people access to the President when they should have had access to the President. I'm talking about Cabinet officers; I'm talking about the leader in the Senate or the leader in the House, all these different people that had to have access to the President on issues of great importance. Time and time again, different members of the Cabinet, different Senatorial leaders and things like that – the frustration, how mad they were, because they couldn't get to the President because Kenny O'Donnell blocked the way to the President.

Now, Kenny knew my relationship with the President. The President asked me to get some information for him, and I really forget what it was, something to do with the Pentagon. It wasn't really that important but to him; he wanted to get it. I think it had to do with the shipyards out here in San Francisco,

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and Boston, and Philadelphia, and New York. I went on this because it really wasn't of that much importance – I mean the timing wasn't so important, but it was important to the President to get it. I thought I'd just run it through Kenny O'Donnell to see if I could get Kenny O'Donnell to have me see the President. So I called over there, had my girl try to reach him. She said she couldn't get a hold of him, I said, "You call Mr. O'Donnell every half hour until we get him, just religiously. Just keep calling every half hour. Just say, 'Under Secretary Paul Fay is calling on a matter for the President, and he'd like to have a chance to speak to him'." So this went on literally for.... In other words, I initiated the call at ten in the morning on one day, and I finally got Kenny O'Donnell at two in the afternoon on the next day.

Now, I knew he was in the office, and

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I knew because the girl said, "Mr. O'Donnell is here. He's busy," or something like that. "He'll call right back." Then when I finally did get Kenny I said, "Kenny, I want to get this message to the President." So Kenny at that time said, "Well, the President's very busy. Can I take it?" I said, "Well, I really think I'd better take it, get it through to him. It's important because he might, you know, want to ask me some questions about it, and then it will be clumsy." He said, "Well, he's very busy now. I don't know if I can get through to him, but

I'll try to get you a time to get through to him." Well, then I picked up the phone and rang Evelyn Lincoln. I said, "Evelyn, I want to get this to the President." She said, "Wait one minute." I spoke to the President, got the whole thing done, and it was all completed and gone.

To me, Kenny, I think, should have known that my interests.... I was very sensitive about in any way

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encroaching upon the President's time, and Kenny knew that. There was no question about it. You can tell if there's certain people that are constantly coming in with something really of no importance or not. So I think in that way that the President.... Maybe President Nixon is having some of the same problem, because there are certain people within his staff who were taking upon themselves to set the policy as to what the President sees or doesn't see.

I can remember going in to the President one day. I came in to give something to Evelyn Lincoln, and she said, "Why don't you go in and say hello to the boss?" I said, "Oh God, I know he's so busy. I don't want to go in there and bother him." She said, "No, he's not busy. Why don't you go in? His door is open." And so Evelyn said, "Mr. President, Red Fay is here." So he said, "Well, come on in." So I came in, and I said, "God, I didn't – I told her I didn't

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want to disturb you." He said, "Disturb me? I've got nothing to do." He said, "I don't know. I'm sitting here in the office. Everybody thinks I'm working my bloody head off. I'm thinking. I'm wondering where I can get the next thing to do."

He was something, that fellow. I forget; there was some other issue I was in to see him on. It was on something he had asked to be done, and it hadn't been done. I came back in to tell him, you know, it hadn't been done. It was something that he wanted done. I can remember him saying, "Goddamnit. You know, I give an order around here, and then that order hits that outer desk and just dies. It doesn't go anyplace at all. You know, everybody thinks that I am the Commander in Chief. There must be fifty guys outside around me that are filling everything. They're running the show, and I can't get through those fifty fellows." Of course he was being facetious about

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it, but he got so frustrated when he.... And that's why he went over.... Remember, you know, when he spoke at the State Department?

OESTERLE: Yes.

FAY: I went over there at that time. He asked me to come over at that time, so I went over and heard him speak over there. He really wanted to get the

message to those people. I'm sure that somebody has got the context of what he said over there. I remember that it was really to tell them that he wanted them to become involved. He wanted to be able to make sure that the policies that he initiated in the White House were carried out, because he felt that they had built a certain image of what the State Department did in this country. There were certain policies, and to get those policies changed after they'd kind of marched down one road was very, very difficult – which I'm sure it is.

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OESTERLE: Do you recall any conversations that you had with him in regard to some of the staff members that were very close to him?

FAY: You know, one thing.... I've hesitated, but knowing that this will not be public record until such time as I would want it to be public record – and I certainly wouldn't want it to ever be public record until after Evelyn Lincoln's death. There was one time when he was so irritated with Evelyn Lincoln because he really didn't think she was a competent secretary.

I forget what the occasion was, but I was in his office, and we were talking about secretaries. He said, "I'm going to have to get rid of Evelyn Lincoln. She just doesn't get the job done." I said, "I just can't believe that [Interruption]... taking dictation, or maybe she's not the best person for maybe doing the stenographic skills that are necessary.

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The thing that she's got which you're not going to get from somebody else is you've got somebody who has total loyalty to you; who knows you well; who knows your friends well; who knows who to let in to see you, who is going to relax you and take a little edge off the day; and who to keep out, who she knows irritates you." And I said, "You can't buy that quality. If you get rid of Evelyn Lincoln, you're going to destroy a tremendous asset that you have." Now, I don't know whether that was moving enough on him at that time, but at least history shows he never really got rid of Evelyn Lincoln.

She was fantastic to him. That whole side of the office was kind of happy and gay. We loved to go out there because that was where all the life as an individual was, rather than the life of people President of the United States.

OESTERLE: What was his relationship with Pierre Salinger?

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FAY: I think he really loved Pierre Salinger. He got a real kick out of Pierre. He thought he was quick and humorous, and he loved to see him – he loved the growth that Pierre sustained under his position as press secretary. He got a big charge out of Pierre when he tried to get him to take off weight, and then when he tried to get him to run, you know, to go on the hikes, go on the thirty-five-mile hike. He just thoroughly enjoyed Pierre. Their relationship was really one of employer and employee. It was never on

a social basis, but the President really had a – you knew just how far you could go with the President. [Interruption]

OESTERLE: What's your observation about the President's feeling about Mr. O'Donnell?

FAY: Well, as I stated earlier, the President, in giving him the position that he had, really being the man who was responsible

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for his appointments and the people who saw him, had great confidence in him. I particularly can remember one incident that happened aboard the carrier out in California. This was off the California coast during the naval maneuvers. And it really was an unbelievably funny incident.

Pat Brown [Edmund G. Brown] was seated next to the President. That's when Pat was Governor of the State of California. Everybody was kind of lined up on deck in chairs, with the President in the center. I believe, there was George Anderson on one side, and then somebody else on the other side – I mean the Secretary of the Navy. And then on the side that I was on, I forget exactly the chronological order, but I think it was Pat Brown, and then it could have been the Secretary of the Navy and then myself and then the Commandant of the Marine Corps. We were all seated there and waiting for this air show to take place out in front of

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us as the carrier went along slowly.

One of the stewards came up and served coffee, and then another steward came up with cream and sugar. When they got to Pat Brown, why, the President said something to Pat Brown just as he was reaching out to get the cream. Pat wanted to be so responsive to the President that he put his finger in the cream bowl and just pulled it over on top of himself, and so all the cream landed in his lap. Pat immediately jumped up with this look of horror on his face and tried to hurry to get the cream off his lap, and then sat down again. Of course the cream all had gone in the bowl of the seat, so then he flew up again. Well, the President was just in hysterics, you know, when this all happened.

There was a picture taken, and one of the newsmen brought the picture over and showed it to the President. The President wanted to have the picture blown up about three-by-four. That night there was a thousand-

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dollar-a-plate dinner at the top of the Beverly Hilton, and the President wanted to present the picture to Pat up there at the dinner. I can remember Kenny O'Donnell saying, "Listen, that guy has had a tough enough day as it is all day long without you bringing this thing up to him at that night. I just don't think it's the right thing to do." And the President didn't do it. But

Pat Brown still has the picture, because he showed it to me. The President wrote on it, "For Pat Brown. It only hurts when you laugh," signed, "John F. Kennedy."

Pat had two other things happen that day. He came aboard the Presidential plane, and then he wanted to come back in where the President's quarters were on the plane. He got back there and there was no place to sit, so it was really kind of embarrassing for him. He had to turn around and walk out, because everybody there had been given a seat to sit, and he thought he came.... That was one.

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And then there was some other thing. So by the time that he got to this cream on the lap, why, this was the third of three things that had happened during the day.

I can remember that Kenny O'Donnell and Larry O'Brien [Lawrence F. O'Brien] were saying, "It's unbelievable. Here's a guy that just has the ability to constantly get himself in situations which are going to be discrediting to him. For some reason or other, he always comes out. There must be a sympathy vote in California that constantly keeps re-electing this man."

OESTERLE: How about Dave Powers [David F. Powers]?

FAY: Well, the President really loved Dave Powers; I mean, he loved having him around. You know, ironically enough, and I don't know whether this was because of maybe his wife and Jackie had nothing in common, or else the President wasn't particularly at ease with his wife. I think Dave's wife had some problems; I think emotional problems. So the

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President and the First Lady never saw the Powers socially together as a couple, but I don't know that the President ever went anyplace that Dave Powers wasn't a part of the entourage. I mean, he liked the relaxed – Dave really was so open and so friendly and so happy with the President. I think the President loved him. And, of course, Dave had a series of jokes that he told, which the President....

I'm going to tell you one story that had happened with me and with the President (I think it's in my book) about when I was sitting over in the Secretary of the Navy's – oh, I'm trying to think of the title of that room. We'll call it for practical purposes the Secretary of the Navy's war room, where it had all the charts and all the proposed budgets, you know, that they were working on at that time. This was about 1:30. A meeting had just been convened in that room, and, of course, every head man in the navy was there, and

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every head in the Marine Corps. There must have been fifty men in the room, including the Secretary of the Navy, myself, the assistant secretaries, the CNO of the Navy, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and the admirals and the heads of all the different

divisions. My marine aide came in, and he said in a stage whisper which echoed through the whole room, “Mr. Fay, the President of the United States is on the phone and wants to speak to you.” Well, I was very embarrassed because, you know, when the President wants to speak, why, he really ought to be speaking to the Secretary of the Navy. And so I told the Secretary of the Navy after this happened a couple of times, I said, “I want you to know that any time I speak to the President of the United States, or if he asks me to do anything, I’m going to come to you and tell you.

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If it has to deal with a military matter, I’m going to tell you what the President has asked me to do, and if you would like to respond to him back with whatever it is, that’s up to you. If you want me to do it, I’ll be happy to do it.” But anyway, you know, it’s embarrassing for the Secretary of the Navy, and so therefore it was embarrassing for me.

I went out, and the President was with Dave Powers. I got on the phone, and he said, “Tell Dave Powers the story about the onion soup.” I said, “Do you realize where I just left, and where that message came?” And he said, “No, what do you mean?” I said – I was excited – “I was in the board room and, God, out comes this. When I go back to that meeting the Secretary of the Navy is going to want to know what you wanted to speak to me so urgently about, and then I have to give him that you wanted Dave Powers to hear the story about the onion soup.” So obviously I never told him.

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I told the Secretary of the Navy that it was nothing of importance, it was just on a personal matter. But this was the.... He thought that this was a joke that Dave Powers ought to have in his retinue of stories, and so he wanted me to tell Dave Powers.

And I’ll tell you, when he got a kick out of a story, he really got a kick out of a story. He knew every dirty story, because, you know, he was told everything, but he didn’t really get a kick out of the dirty stories. They weren’t fun to him, unless there was some real twist of humor that obviously was so comical that you just couldn’t help but get a laugh out of it. But the humor had to be there. I very seldom heard him tell any dirty stories, except maybe he got a kick out of Speedy Gonzales stories, only because he loved to be able to tell it with the Spanish accent about Speedy Gonzales. When he

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went to Mexico, he never referred to going to Mexico; he always was going to “Mehico.”

There’s a funny story – and this is getting a little of the story. He went down to Mexico. And a fellow named Ted Macauley [Edward Macauley], who had been in motor torpedo boats with us out in the Pacific but had not distinguished himself in motor torpedo boats, but he had been somebody that I’d known in Burlingame when I was growing up; Ted’s older than I am, and he actually went through the same class that I went through at Melville, Rhode Island. These were fellows who were given their commissions in grade and reported in and had two weeks or three weeks of training, where we had to go through as



apprentice seamen, the younger fellows who were more draft age or volunteer age, just out of college.

We went through the apprentice seaman first at Notre Dame for five weeks, and then

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we went for three months at Abbott Hall in Chicago, and then for two months at Melville. These other fellows went through really I think it was two months at Tower Hall, and that was the only military training they had. But they got their commissions right away. And all that group, almost all that group, did very poorly when they got out in the Pacific. They had really too many responsibilities at home, and they just – almost every one of them were married, almost every one of them had two or three children. So when they arrived out in the combat area, they were so concerned about what they'd left home that they really didn't do a good job. They didn't have that kind of "do or die" attitude that was so necessary. So, as a result, within a matter of two months or so they were all gone, and the younger people, who were my contemporaries, really moved in and took over the squadron and

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ran the squadron.

But anyway, Ted Macauley was down, and he was working with the State Department. He was the number two man down in Mexico. It seems that the ambassador from the United States to Mexico, I think was ill at the time, or was someplace, and so therefore he wasn't there when the President came through. So when the President came by and he saw Ted Maccauley – and he'd known from earlier days, never well, he just made the comment to Ted Macauley and said, "Ted, you've done such a good job here. You ought to be the ambassador." And then, you know, the President went right on.

No sooner had the President come back to Washington when I get a phone call from Ted Maccauley who'd like to have lunch with me over at the Pentagon. And he said, "I don't know how to deal with this situation. The President felt that I ought to be the ambassador. I don't know whether

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he really meant that he was going to make me the ambassador, or whether he had some other ambassadorial position in mind." I guess the President said, "You ought to be an ambassador." "So I wonder if you could find out for me, Red, whether this is really – am I about to be appointed an ambassador?"

So the next time I saw the President I said, "God, you've got Ted Macauley all – you know, he figures he's about to get an ambassadorial post. He said, you went by him down in Mexico and you said, 'God, Ted, the way you're doing this job you ought to be an ambassador.' And he really took it as if he got a spot commission right there." An the President said, "God, I was just trying to make the fellow feel good for doing a good job. I don't have any ambassadorial post for Ted Macauley."

He did the same thing with a navy third class musician coming up in the Army-Navy game. He came to my

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car. We really lived it up very well during the times of the Army-Navy game. The Secretary of the Navy had a car, the Under Secretary had a car, the CNO had a car, and so on; so that when you went to the Army-Navy game, you pulled out and you had about thirty-three guests in each car. Then you'd turn around and come back in the car, and when you came back – you know, the Navy won almost all the time I was there – there was always a lot of singing in the Navy part of the train.

So the President came through, because his car was on the end; he came through each car. When he got to our car we were all singing songs, and here was this third-class navy musician. And so, you know, the President sang for about fifteen or twenty minutes, just trying to be nice, and he said to the navy musician, “You’ve done such a good job, you ought to be a chief.” And then

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the President, you know, went right on and left. And God, the little old musician came up to me and said, “Mr. Secretary, does that mean that now I’m a chief?” You know, it was almost as if the wand had been waved, and you now changed your clothes.

OESTERLE: I guess all relationships chance in one way or another when a man does become the President.

FAY: It’s interesting the way the relationships did change. I think that when the President became President, his relationship with Torbie MacDonald [Torbert H. MacDonald] changed remarkably. The President looked up to Torbie. You know, he was a great athlete at Harvard, and he was a big, good looking guy and had a good war record. I think the President admired these qualities in people. I think Torbie was also bright, and he ended up marrying a pretty spectacular looking movie actress right after the war. And then as time went on, Torbie really

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didn’t grow and develop. I think his marriage was rather unhappy. I think they kind of struggled that through – in fact, I don’t even know whether he’s still married to her.

But then when he became President.... I always thought Torbie was a little guy, in the respect that he didn’t grow with the President. I think that he felt uncomfortable in the presence of the President when the President was with people who were important, in his Cabinet and things like that. As a result, I don’t think the President saw very much of him. At least he didn’t see very much of him when he was mingling with other people. Maybe he saw him privately, but he didn’t see him with .... I didn’t....

Well, I had a run in with Torbie at the President's bachelor dinner. Evidently Torbie had a great jealousy for me, which I was not even conscious of. It erupted when the President asked me to be the master of ceremonies

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and to run the bachelor dinner. So I was seated next to him, and Torbie was at the entire other end of the table. I had nothing to do with the seating of the people at the table. The President just kind of indicated where everybody ought to sit – and, of course, this was when he was a Senator.

During one phase of this bachelor dinner....

[BEGIN SIDE II TAPE I]

But anyway, I forget what prompted – I was standing up and either I was telling a joke or I was introducing somebody. Torbie MacDonald stood up at the other end of the table, took his water glass and hurled it the length of the table; and it hit me on the chest. Then it fell to the table and shattered. If it hit me in the face, it could have been very serious. I had had a few drinks, so the natural thing was to

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start down the table after Torbie MacDonald. Luckily for me, because I'm sure Torbie MacDonald would have taken me apart, Jim Reed [James A. Reed] and the President – then Senator – grabbed me, and the thing was averted. We kind of got back on even keel, but there was a kind of heated exchanged there for a second.

I just never knew what had disturbed Torbie, or why it built, but I just can't help but feel that maybe his position with the President – then Senator – had slowly eroded over the years. Maybe he felt that my position had moved into a position that maybe he had enjoyed earlier, and as a result, on that occasion when everybody had been drinking quite a bit, it surfaced.

I know that when we went up to Johns Island – we flew from the White House up to an Air Force base in northern Maine, and then from there we took a helicopter over to Johns Island. Going up, though, into the Maine area – because, I guess, Torbie MacDonald's

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district was very close to there and so he flew up with us, and then there was a.... The governor of Maine came out, and Margaret Chase Smith. They all came, and they spoke at some sort of a program that was conducted after the President's plane pulled up and landed.

When we left to go to Johns Island, Torbie MacDonald did not come with us. Ed Muskie [Edmund S. Muskie], and Chuck Spalding [Charles Spalding], and Jim Reed, and Charlie Bartlett [Charles L. Bartlett], and myself, and the President all went over to Johns Island. I really felt that the reason Torbie wasn't asked was that, number one, the President didn't think he fitted in with the group that was going to Johns Island; and maybe he just

figured that, as I say, there could have been friction between Torbie and myself, so he made the decision that Torbie wouldn't go along. But I know, from speaking with Dave Powers and to Jim Reed and Chuck Spalding, that Torbie very seldom was part of a group where the other

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friends of the President got – you know, whether they were with him or not.

I know another friend of the President who I never got along with – and maybe this is my personality hang up – was Lem Billings [Kirk LeMoyne Bilings]. I know the President thought the world of Lem. And I'm sure he thought very highly of Torbie, because I think he saw quite a bit of Torbie, but I think he saw him strictly on a man-to-man basis with maybe Chuck Spalding or somebody like that, but never with Torbie's wife.

The President has a – he knew where his friends all fitted in. I think this has gone to the question earlier, about the President had this ability; you knew just exactly how far you could go with the President. He had a reserve to him. He enjoyed an awful lot of fun, but when he was, say, in his role as the President of the United States among other people, why, his friends knew exactly what their role was.

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In other words, they weren't to be front row center when he was dealing with the Cabinet, or when he was dealing with other people. And I think this is one thing that all his friends certainly observed – which is natural that they would – that this was a time for government business and not a time for camaraderie.

OESTERLE: Do you recall anything about the relationship between the President and Godfrey McHugh?

FAY: The President just got a big kick out of Godfrey McHugh. You know, he'd always say, "God, that Godfrey's got more good-looking women on the string than anybody I know." In fact, Godfrey had some great-looking girl that he invited to the White House to some sort of reception; and of course the President, like any red-blooded American, didn't miss an attractive woman when she walked by, you know, when she was part of the same scene. So when they had a White

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House dance – which were great parties. I'll tell you, when they gave those dancing parties, you know, I've never been to any greater parties, and I don't ever expect to go to anything quite like them again, because, number one, the music played all night long with Lester Lanin. They started at 10 p.m., and generally Jackie would ask people to give dinner parties at their house. Invariably you got the so-called "starts" who went to different outlying homes so that people would feel complimented if they got the better people – if you can call better people, but I mean maybe the more...

OESTERLE: Glamorous people.

FAY: ...glamorous people, right. But on this one particular occasion Godfrey had brought this really spectacular-looking girl over. One of the members of the administration was pretty well taken with her that night, and evidently expressed his real

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enthusiasm for her feminine charms. Boy, she had – everybody in the party knew about it before the evening was over, practically, at least the people what were close to the President. The President told Godfrey McHugh in no uncertain terms that if he was going to – you know, there were two things, they could be attractive looking, but if somebody in his administration was to maybe express a real desire for the young girl, that was between that individual and the girl and nobody else. So Godfrey was awfully funny about it. But he had a lot of bounce, joie de vivre, and he's a wonderful fellow. The President was very fond, got a real kick out of him. I remember the fellow who we're talking – Ted Clifton [Chester V. Clifton] was the President's army aide.

OESTERLE: And they enjoyed each other?

FAY: Yes, they did. They got along exceptionally well. You asked about Tazewell Shepard. When Taz first was appointed naval aide, why, he came to me, and

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he said, "Mr. Secretary, I don't know exactly how well I'm doing with the President. I've tried to catch him at times when he doesn't have too many things on his mind or he doesn't have a lot of people around him, but I've got to get that navy story through to him. I've got to let him know what the navy's doing because the admirals over in the Pentagon are anxious that I'm telling him everything the navy's doing so that the navy's interests will be well protected in the White House, and the President will understand, so if there's a budget hearing, and you know, the obvious things, the navy's story will have been told."

This was Taz's job, and he had to do the job and do it well. So he had on his own planned that he would – he knew when the President came down from his quarters, and so he would wait at the bottom of the elevator for the President. Then he'd walk over with the President to the oval office and tell him all the

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things he was doing. So Taz said to me, "I'm not sure whether I'm really, you know, whether this is the best thing to do. I'd really appreciate it if we could find out about it."

So I spoke to the President about it. He said, “God, will you tell that Shepard not to wait for me down at the bottom of the elevator? It’s the only moment I have of peace all day long. I’m upstairs reading and dealing with things up at the breakfast table. I just like that little walk from the bottom of the elevator over to my office without having to discuss all the things about the navy every day with Tazewell Shepard. I know exactly what he’s going to do. He’s taking everything that I tell him. He’s going right back to the Pentagon to tell them, ‘Well, we look like we’re good on this program or we look like we’re good on that program.’” So I told Taz, and this was a great shock to Taz. He was hurt,

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only because he didn’t want to be a bore to the President or to impose upon the President. He felt, “How could I have done it, encroaching upon those few moments of peace and quiet that the President might want to have each day?” So they eventually worked out an excellent relationship. The President was very fond of him. The President was really very fond of all three of his military aids, and they all stayed with him all the way through. I mean they could have switched them after two years, but he wanted them there, and so they stayed there. And they all got along well. They were all of different types. Godfrey was the more socially oriented, Ted Clifton was the more public relations oriented, and Tazewell was the more military oriented – I mean in their manners, in the way they operated. But the President had a high regard for all three of them.

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OESTERLE: Did you get to know Senator Smathers [George A. Smathers]?

FAY: I did. I got to know George Smathers because we were both ushers in the President’s wedding. There was quite a period of time before the wedding in which – I mean, actually, when my wife and I came back, and we were back for ten days. Well, actually, I went up with the President... then Senator – and Bobby to meet Jackie. No, just the Senator and myself went up to Hammersmith Farm. This was in 1952, just before the wedding. That was the first night I met Jackie. We were waiting downstairs. When we came in it was late because there had been kind of a county chairmen’s bachelor dinner at the Parker House. I had a joke to tell at the party, and then Bobby spoke. After it was all over, then the Senator and I drove with a couple of his party chairmen out past the areas that they had

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lived in. Actually there were three or four of them. So the six of us drove out, and then we dropped them off, each one by one as we headed up towards Newport. Then the Senator and I drove the rest of the way.

I remember when we went in to Hammersmith Farm and we were downstairs, there was a great big cake, one of those flat cakes, I forget what they call them, a pan cake, a great big flat chocolate pan cake. When Jackie came down, why I’d never met her before, so he

introduced me to Jackie, obviously. Then we had some of this chocolate pan cake and a glass of milk and chatted there for a while.

I really got a kick out of him, because we were up on the top floor, in the attic, I guess you could call it, and he could hardly wait to get up there and ask me. He said, “What do you think of her?” And I said, “God, I think

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she’s really an unbelievably beautiful woman.” And he said, “No, no, what do you really think of her?” I said, “I said she’s a beautiful woman. She certainly does speak softly though, doesn’t she?” And he got the biggest kick out of it. He really got tickled. He laughed his head off. He really wanted to know from a friend what an old friend thought of the girl he was going to marry. And I think he, probably like we all, you know, liked to get a confirmation, because he’d seen a lot of people. And it was a great compliment to me, really, because he really was anxious to find out what – in other words, if my reaction wasn’t what he expected, why, I think he would have been a little disturbed.

OESTERLE: He wouldn’t necessarily call the whole thing off?

FAY: Oh no, no way in the world.

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OESTERLE: I guess we all have that way.

FAY: That’s right. You know, he was such a human person. Some people – let’s face it, even as United States Senator he was one of the better known. Particularly you might say among the socially oriented and the wealth oriented people in this country, John Kennedy was a very, very well known figure.

OESTERLE: And a very eligible bachelor.

FAY: Oh, very eligible. I mean, every woman who was a contemporary of his in the back of their mind had a thought about Jack Kennedy. Actually my wife met Jack Kennedy before I met her, here in San Francisco. I was with Jack at the time – not on the particular evening when she met him. It was one of the U.N. [United Nations] receptions out here in 1945. I’d gotten leave from my duty station in Florida to come out here to assist Jack in so-called monitoring

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or actually covering, for a Boston Hearst [William Randolph Hearst] paper, the U.N. One evening I went down to the country to my family’s, and he went to this U.N. reception at the Legion of Honor. My wife was there with a now very prominent lawyer in San Francisco, John Vernon Bates, who, incidentally, Bobby Kennedy offered a job in the Justice

Department. I feel quite confident if he had taken this job he would have ended up Attorney General of the United States, but he turned the job down.

Anyway, she was with him that evening, and he was very oriented towards who was who, and where were they, and he wanted to meet them. She decided – she had been doing something for the U.N. that afternoon – she was a little bit tired, so she sat down on a couch. And who comes up and sits next to her but John Kennedy. This was 1945,

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and of course even then he was well known as the most eligible man in the area. Jack Bates came up. He'd been looking to meet young John Kennedy, and there he was seated down with his date of the evening. So my wife Anita introduced Jack Kennedy to Jack Bates, and then they drove Jack Kennedy home to the – he was staying at the Palace Hotel. They drove him over to the Palace Hotel that evening after the Legion of Honor reception. She came home that night to her mother and she said, "I met the man that I'm sure I could marry." You know, he really had that charisma. He was really something.

OESTERLE: Did he recall this later on?

FAY: Oh, yes, he kind of gave me an awful bad time about it. About a year later, when he decided he was going to run for Congress, I went back and I

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shared a room with him at the Belleview Hotel. Actually there were a suite of rooms. One room was kind of an office, then there was a passageway between, and off the passageway there was a big bathroom, and then the other room where we slept. He was a very light sleeper, and I used to like to have air, so this created somewhat of a problem, because I wanted more air than he wanted. And God, if I moved in the bed he'd say, "God, what are you doing bouncing all over the bed?" So I got my bed close to the window and opened up the window a little bit, and then I just tried to be as quiet as I could, because he slept so lightly.

But then when I was madly in love and wanted to get back – I was getting these letters – I said, "I can't stay any longer. I've just got to get back." He wanted me to stay till the primary in June. I said, "I can't do it. I've got to get back to

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California." And he said, "Did Anita ever tell you about that air force flyer?" I said, "What do you mean, air force flyer?" He said, "Oh, if she hasn't told you, I don't want to be the one to tell you yet." Of course there was no air force flyer at all, but it was just that he wanted to leave some kind of question in my mind. God, he was a funny man.

OESTERLE: What do you recall about the President's relationship with Ben Smith [Benjamin A. Smith]?



FAY: I just think he liked big old Ben. You know, Ben is a salt of the earth type person. He and his wife, you know, they're kind of old Maine, and old Massachusetts, old New England, and rather not try to be anything else but just the salt of the earth and the backbone of the country type people. Ben was really a lot different than Jack in so many ways, because let's face it, the President loved the life and

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the glamour. He just loved all the excitement which comes with success and the people that are involved in it. Well then, this wasn't really Ben's bag, and so Ben was just a good solid jolly fellow.

I know that Ben.... The President once said, "You know, now that Ben's come to the end of the road as far as being Senator, and he know...." The deal was that after Ben served out the President's term, then it was Teddy's [Edward M. Kennedy] turn to step in. And he said, "You know, it's awful tough for old Ben to have to live up to that agreement, but he's going to step aside. He really has enjoyed being United States Senator." But Ben was true to his word. Ben evidently went to the President and tried to get a commitment that Teddy could wait, or something like that, but the agreement was adhered to. I don't

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know how. I don't know what form the agreement was, but evidently that's the way it was set up.

OESTERLE: You got to know Ed Muskie quite well.

FAY: Not really that well. I mean....

OESTERLE: You sailed with them one time.

FAY: Yes, we sailed with them, and we kept in touch. I really haven't even corresponded to Ed in.... Really since '66, I don't think I've really been in touch with him. I didn't get involved at all in the campaign when he was running as Vice President because I really wasn't that enthusiastic about Hubert Humphrey. I certainly wasn't enthusiastic about President Nixon, but I wasn't that opposed because I really felt that change was a good idea. I didn't vote for Nixon; I voted for Humphrey. I really felt at that time in our country that people were disenchanted with Lyndon Johnson, and I

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thought they were disenchanted with the Democratic administration as a result of that. And I thought they really needed to, you know, clear the decks and start anew, so the Democrats can come in later on with a whole new image and a new aggressive approach to government the way John Kennedy had done.

OESTERLE: While we're on this, what did you think of Robert Kennedy's bid for the nomination?

FAY: Well, Bob Kennedy grew more in the time that I knew him. I saw really more of Bob Kennedy between '52 and '60 than I did of the late President, because Bob and wife and my wife and myself used to go on vacations together. So I saw a lot of Bob, and really an amazing.... Bob when I first met him was really a very hard person to communicate with, was very, I felt, introverted and, not insecure, but well, as I mentioned, difficult to

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communicate with. I didn't see how he could ever do anything in public life, because to speak, for him, in front of people was such a – it would just wrench his insides. You'd see him; he'd be ashen white, his hands would be shaking, his voice would be quaking, just to have to get up in front of a group of people to speak.

And then to see this man grow and grow! I never knew any man that lived up as close to the total extent of his potential as Bob Kennedy. I mean he utilized his time better than any man I knew. He was educating himself on a continuous basis, and his ability to speak. And then he went through that whole phase of the death of the President.

I had an awful fight with him over my book, I mean just a donnybrook, and he didn't even speak to me there for a long while. And it wasn't till just before he

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decided to run for – well, even staying here with Bill Orrick [William H. Orrick, Jr.] in San Francisco. You know, whenever he came to San Francisco before, he stayed with us, but when he came out.... This was before he even had declared, maybe two months or so before he declared he was going to run for the Democratic nomination, why, he came into town, and he rang me up. We just chatted for a brief time. That was the first time he spoke to me, I guess, in two years.

Then when he decided to run for the nomination, why then I wanted to help him, really. You know, his child is my godchild and I had really a lot of respect for him. So I told Chuck Spalding, when Chuck asked me if I was going to work for him, I said, "I really can't work for him until Bobby tells me he wants me to work for him," because he was so vehemently against me on

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the book. So then Bobby rang me up and asked me if I would help. And then I saw him briefly one night, during the heat of the campaign, after a dinner at the Palace Hotel, in which he was very friendly. I was so pleased that I saw him before he was killed, because it would have left an awful feeling with me and with Ethel, you know, that we'd never gotten back

together again. But he came down on Montgomery Street, and I waved at him. He yelled, "Hi, Redhead."

And then I happened by chance to be up at City Hall, and he was driving to go to the airport. I was standing on the corner of McAllister and Polk Street, and saw him coming down in his convertible. None of them were going very fast, and there was no parade or anything, and I just yelled, "Hey, Bob." And he stopped the whole caravan, said, "Pull over to the side," and we chatted for about five minutes about how things were, as

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if nothing had happened in our past, as if all the problems had all been forgotten. That meant an awful lot to me, because he was quite a guy.

Another very flattering thing as far as our relationship.... When he came into town, there was a dinner at the Fairmont Hotel – I'm not sure whether it was a dinner at the Fairmont, but there was some occasion at the Fairmont for raising money. Prior to the affair, why, he'd gotten John Seigenthaler upstairs in a hotel room. John told me afterwards – and this was really before Bob's death – "I don't know why he was so concerned about what you were doing for him. He wanted to know, 'What is Red Ray doing? Is he really entering into it? I mean, is he really trying to work for me?'" I had, you know, been out speaking for him and raising money for him. And John Seigenthaler said, "You know, he seemed to be more pleased about that than almost

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anything that happened," which meant that he really was awfully pleased that we'd kind of closed the gap and it hadn't been just lip service.

I can remember the night after his funeral, or the night of his funeral, when we were in Washington, D.C., and I was going to get out of a car, out of the Hertz, and to Fred Dutton [Frederick G. Dutton] – I had to meet him there at the Hertz place – I said, "Fred, you know, it's so hard to evaluate whether Bob would have made it or not." I said, "Do you think he ever would have made it?" Fred said, "Well, I'll tell you. Having gone through the campaign with the President before him, the way this campaign was rolling there was the in-depth knowledge that the Kennedy organization, headed by Bob, knew of the pressures that could be brought to bear and the knowledge that they had of who were the people that they had to influence, how to approach them." He said, "I'm

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convinced that we would have gotten the nomination." He was giving, I thought, a very kind of honest, analytical approach to how he thought it was going to be. I mean, there was no way now that anything could be done to preserve it, so what he was saying I thought came from his heart.

OESTERLE: Did you get to know either Walinsky [Adam Walinsky] or Edelman [Peter B. Edelman]?

FAY: Just to meet them. I never knew them.

OESTERLE: So you don't know anything about their possible influence on....

FAY: No, I don't. One of the – oh, I think Bob went through an awful lot of tough struggles within himself. When we were in Washington and the question came as to whether he should try to run for the Vice Presidency, and then all that, you know, he was questioning all the people that were close to him. He questioned me. Then the question came whether he should. Lyndon Johnson wanted to put

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anyone who was.... You know, there was a lot of bitterness about that whole question of Bob, whether he was going to be a possible nominee for the Presidency under Lyndon Johnson in '64, you know, real bitterness. This was not half way; they had sharp words, and I'm sure you know what the sharp words were. Bob really took issue with the President, Lyndon Johnson, on his integrity, because Bob knew where he was standing, and he just really let him have it straight on. But then the President, Lyndon Johnson, wanted to have Bob put him into nomination at the Convention [Democratic National Convention]. He thought this would be one way of kind of pulling the...

OESTERLE: Closing the ranks.

FAY: Right. Bob came to me among, I'm sure, a lot of people – and asked me about whether I thought he ought to put him in nomination. I said I thought he definitely should not, because I thought

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that his role was one – I mean his image, and the people that believed in him didn't believe in Lyndon Johnson. I said, "You've got a responsibility to a whole segment of this country that believes in the things that you stand for, and that they're not politics. They're really what your brother started, and what someday maybe you'll finish. But if you align yourself with Lyndon Johnson for the sake of the party, in my opinion you're giving up; you know, you're compromising yourself. You definitely should not do it." And Bob said, "You know, you and Jackie are the only two people who advise me not to put in the nomination." And of course he did not make the nominating speech.

Now, as you know, there was a lot of struggle as to when that Kennedy film was to be shown.

OESTERLE: The one that was shown at the Convention?

FAY: Yes. But the thing was, initially the Kennedy

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film was to be shown in the early part of the Convention. Lyndon Johnson killed that, because Lyndon Johnson, according to Bob, felt that if the film was shown in the beginning, the thing might have been, you know, building up momentum, and so finally there might have been a ground-swell support for Bob Kennedy. It would be very possible the thing could get out of hand and Bob Kennedy would get the nomination. Or else even, if that was beyond the pale, then at least Lyndon, I guess, no, Bob would get the Vice Presidential nomination against the wishes of Lyndon Johnson. And that was the reason why they – at least that was the reason that Bob figured that the film was changed in the time, so that it would come at the end of the Convention rather than the beginning of the Convention. And I must admit, from Lyndon Johnson's point of view you have to

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agree with him. Why overshadow your Convention with a film on John Kennedy?

OESTERLE: Would you go into the falling out you had over the book, between Mrs. Kennedy and....

FAY: Well, this was.... It's interesting how Bob looked at it, because when I first started to write the book – and I started to write the book, really, in either August or September of 1963. No, it was September, after Lyndon Johnson came by when we were up at Squaw Island. I was there for this meeting between the Vice President and the President. To me, it was one of the momentous times in my life because I was alone with the President, the Vice President, George Reedy, and my wife. Those were the only people there; the five of us were the only people at the meeting.

I expected kind of a more, just kind of a give and take. But Lyndon Johnson was really a

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little bit ill at ease with the President, and I think basically because Lyndon was trying to get permission to go to Poland. This was kind of a surprise, last-minute decision that he was trying to put over. At least, he was trying to change it at the last minute and maybe catch the President unawares and at the same time get permission to do it. Well, as it worked out, the President didn't fall for it. So, watching this whole relationship and this discussion back and forth between them was really, to me, an unbelievable opportunity.

After it was all over I said to the President, "I never realized the relationship between you two." And then he said, "You know, Redhead, you had an exposure of the Presidency that few people have ever had. You have the obligation to write it." So then I started writing it, and, of course, I started back in the Pacific when we were in the war together. So most of my

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discussions really were about when we were out in the Pacific together, in PT boats. It really never came up to modern times, so then when the President was killed I just dropped it. I really had no stomach for it then.

And then it was the next Fourth of July, 1964, when I was – I mentioned this – over at David Brinkley's with Ben Bradlee [Benjamin Bradlee] and some other couple, both of who wrote and had published. So I started talking to the woman, and she said, "You've got to do it. You've got an obligation to do it." So then I spoke to Bob about it. Bob Kennedy said, "Yes, you really should write it. You're the only friend, the only war-time friend of my brother's, who had a social and war-time relationship with him who ended up in a position of importance in his administration." But he said, "You ought to write it about the major issues affecting the navy and the President, involving

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the President's decision and how the navy responded and everything, from this point of view." I said, "I don't agree that that's my role. That's a role for a historian. I'm not a historian, and what's more, as Under Secretary of the Navy, the things that I discussed with the President were more in relationships of people, and how people were responding to the decisions that were made, or what was the background, how far along are the studies, or things like that, so that he was privy to what was going on in the Pentagon. You might say that I was his eyes and ears in the Pentagon. But as to a lot of the decision that took place, I didn't really know the background. I wasn't privy to them as Under Secretary."

I said that I felt that mine was kind of the human side of it. So then that was deemed the way, and so Bob didn't... In fact I had written the – one little episode from that had been when we were

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down in Palm Beach. It just shows you the President's humor. It's in my book, and at the request of Jackie I took the names out of it. We were down there for dinner – this was in 1959 – and there was Anita and myself, Bob and Ethel, Jack and Jackie, and Mr. Kennedy, Sr. [Joseph P. Kennedy, Sr.].

OESTERLE: Not Mrs. Kennedy [Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy]?

FAY: Not Mrs. Kennedy; she wasn't there. And during the course of the dinner – I don't know how we got on the subject of finances – Mr. Kennedy really got into the question of finance. He said, "I don't know what's going to come of all of you after I die. You're spending money as though it's going out of phase or out of fashion." He said, "You're all operating – except for Teddy; he's the only one that's operating in the black. You're all spending more than you have coming in. You're going to eat through your capital. You're not going to have anything left. There's just

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so much money a person can have in life, and you've got more than anybody else. And Ethel, you're the worst." He said, "Bills come in from all over the nation, every major store in every major city, practically, in the United States. Bills come in to the office to be paid." He just really harped on her, and she got up and ran out of the room in tears. Bob said, "All right, Dad, I think you've made your point." And then Bob went out and got Ethel. When they came back in, you know, it was very tense. The whole atmosphere around the table was just one where you could feel the tension and the lightening going back between these strong personalities. I loved the then-Senator. The minute Ethel came back in, he said, "Ethel, you don't have to worry about a thing. We've decided how we're going to solve the whole thing. Dad's going to have to work harder." You know, Mr. Kennedy

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threw his head back and just roared. The whole thing was behind them, and we went on to something else.

I can even remember this touch of this great sense of humor. This is when John Kennedy was President and we were down there for Easter. This was after Mr. Kennedy had his first stroke, and this was the last Easter that the President was alive. We went over for dinner on Sunday night, Easter Sunday night. Mr. Kennedy wanted to have things on time, and we maybe had a cocktail too many. I mean, we were too long during the cocktail party. It wasn't a matter of – none of us drank really more than one cocktail unless it might be myself, because Mr. Kennedy really liked things to move along fast. He liked a short cocktail period and move right in to dinner.

But anyways, we were maybe five minutes late, so the steaks were a little bit better done than he liked them, and it really irritated him. You

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know, he was easily irritated after his stroke. So in came the Dom Perignon champagne, and the champagne was flat. When it came on and Mr. Kennedy sipped it, he just got furious. Because he couldn't articulate, he just got mad as hell. And the President stood up and he said, "Dad, you've done it again. I'll be willing to challenge anybody that there's nobody else in Palm Beach tonight drinking Dom Perignon champagne that's flat." You know, once again that...

OESTERLE: It brought a smile to the senior Kennedy.

FAY: Yes, it brought a smile to the senior Kennedy and he forgot all his problems relative to the champagne.

OESTERLE: But you did share your manuscript with Mrs. Kennedy?

FAY: Well then, getting back to the book, as we went along, one of the – I wrote this episode up, and I showed this to Bob and Ethel. This was just

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before I went West, actually. This was just around Christmas in 1964. Bob and Ethel read it and really got a kick out of it. They really just enjoyed it.

Then Bob was the one that recommended that I go to Evan Thomas [Evan W. Thomas, II]. I'd had two people that had made offers – actually three publishers who made offers for the book. One was McGraw-Hill, and they offered me forty thousand dollars as an advance. Harper's [Harper & Row] offered me twenty-five thousand, but Bob wanted me to go with Evan Thomas at Harpers. So I told Evan, "I'm just telling you, Evan, if you want the book, give me an advance of forty-one thousand dollars and you've got it, and that's the end of it." So he said, "All right, we'll give you an advance of forty-one thousand dollars." And that was the way the thing worked.

So I went ahead and started to write the book and moved ahead. I never realized that.... Well, I'll

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tell you what happened. When I'd come back East – because I come back every so often – before the book came out, in other words, they wanted to look at copy. I guess it was in June of 1965 when they had enough copy and they wanted me to come back. So I came back, and I stayed with Bob and Ethel in Washington before I went up to New York.

We got in a discussion that night, about – Bob said that he wanted.... Oh I know. He said earlier to me that night when we said.... "Now listen, Redhead," he said, "I want to clear the manuscript." This was back in January of 1965, at a luncheon there, and Brinkley and – oh, there were, you know, Rolie Evans [Rowland Evans, Jr.] and a lot of other people there at this luncheon. It was, you know, a mixed girls and boys, and Bob said, "I want to have my own word on that book." I didn't say anything; I didn't respond yes or no. I didn't

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want to get in a big blow out there, because I knew that no only would Bob, but they'd all side with Bob, just because he was Bob. So I didn't want to pick that as a forum.

So the June of that year I brought the issue up. I said to Bob, "I'm getting along on the book. I want you to know that everything that you ask to be deleted from the book or changed in the book, I'm going to give full recognition and acknowledgement because of my admiration for you and my love for your family and your brother. But in the final analysis, I have to have the last word." And we really had a donnybrook there. Particularly Ethel really sailed into me and said, "How can you – how ungrateful can you be?" and all these things, and was very emotional.

OESTERLE: You mean without discussing specific parts of the book or anything, just the principle?

FAY: Well, nothing we were discussing was really –



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right, the principle, right. And Bob said, “You mean to tell me as the senior member of the family I don’t have the right to clear that book?” I said, “No, Bob, in the final analysis I have to be the one. But I want you to know that anything that’s reasonable that you ask, I will not leave in the book.” So he didn’t say anything more about it. He said, “Well, all right.” Ethel was then sailing into me, so then he said, “All right, that’s enough. We won’t talk about it anymore.”

He got a commitment from Evan Thomas that he would have the right to clear the book, which I never knew. And when it came time to – you know, when the manuscript was getting near the final end, I was very concerned at that time, and I had to lean on Evan. I said, “Evan, now you know how much I loved John Kennedy. He really was the greatest influence on my life, and I just don’t want to write anything that’s

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going to not be accurate. And more important, I don’t want anything that’s going to give an image of John Kennedy that wasn’t John Kennedy. Now, you’ve read the manuscript. What’s your opinion?” He said, “I think it’s a very warm account. I mean, it’s really an account, obviously, of somebody who loved another man as a great friend. I think it’s a very warm book and couldn’t in any way be construed as being anything else but John Kennedy and be flattering at the same time – and be honestly flattering.” Then Evan told me, “But we’ve got to clear the book through Bobby.”

I said, “What do you mean, ‘We have to clear the book through Bobby?’” He said, “Well, didn’t you know that Bobby said that it had to be cleared through him?” I said, “What do you mean? You didn’t tell me that.” He said, “Well, I thought you and Bobby were so close that he would have told you.” And you know,

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I thought, “What’s going on here? Then at that time Evan said, “Well, you know if you want to, you can break your agreement with us.”

Here I’d been working my bloody head off and gone down the road. I’d spent half the money, and it would have been difficult to pony up with twenty thousand dollars at that stage of the game if he decided to discontinue – and also all the labor and hours of work that had gone into it. So I didn’t say anything at that time, but I was very disturbed about it. But in the meantime I got a hold of McGraw-Hill and I said, “Now look, I’m having real problems on this thing. I’m interested to know whether you want it.” And they said, “What will it cost?” I said, “Well, it’s going to cost a good high five figures.” And they said, “Whatever it is, you’ve got it.” And with no clearance agreement I could have published the book just the way it was.

So then I went back to Evan, and I told Evan – because I couldn’t get through to Bob – “Evan, you tell Bob

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that if he doesn't accept the book the way it is, and if he wants to have a day in court with me on the book, if he wants to go over the things that should be..." Well, I'll put it this way. Before I went this far, the manuscript was submitted to Bob, and I guess he took a third of it out, you know, just right and left, just through the whole thing, just taking it out in pieces, comments written in his own hand in the margins. It really got to me. You know, he said I wouldn't have dared to have written anything like that if his Dad wasn't sick.

You know, it was really.... I must say that he really turned on me as a result of this. So I told Evan at that point, "Tell Bob that I looked at all his corrections and the ones that I will accept are such-and-such, and that's all." And Evan at that time told me that.... Then I told Evan, "If Bob doesn't accept them, tell him that I'm going to cancel my contract with you, which you said I

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could do. I've already got somebody who will take the book."

So then Evan went to Bob, and Bob said, "Jackie wants to get in the act." So then I told Evan that – I sat down and I now had two people playing me off – "Either Bob is going to be the one, or Jackie's going to be the one." So then Bob said, "All right, Jackie is the one." So then I went and Jackie said, "All right, you clear it through Ken Galbraith." Or maybe it was before I got involved.

That's right, it was before all this. Oh, that's it. When I got to the end of the manuscript I said, "Jackie, I want you to read it, because I want you to feel comfortable with the manuscript." She said, "I don't want to read it. Have Ken Galbraith read it. He's the official censor for the family." So I sent the manuscript to Ken Galbraith. And I can remember this was in June or May of 1966. Ken

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Galbraith had had the manuscript for about a month, a month and a half, and I hadn't heard from him. I was getting concerned about it.

Finally I was down at Father-Daughter Weekend, down at Santa Catalina School for Girls, where my youngest daughter goes now. My oldest daughter was down there then. I finally got Ken Galbraith on the phone at the University of Michigan, I believe it was, at the president's home. He was going to speak at the commencement down there, or at some – I'm almost sure it was commencement. I got him on the phone, and I said, "Ken, I've been waiting to get your response." "Oh," he said, "I think the thing was fine, no problems whatsoever. I don't think you ought to use that story.... If you're going to publish any of it in a magazine, I don't think you ought to have Jackie say, 'that bitch' – you know, calling some gal a bitch – in a magazine,

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but it's all right in the book." And then he said, "I think it kind of discredits you to go to the Catholic priest to ask him whether I am doing the right thing in turning against my father, so to speak, by leaving the family business. I think it sounds kind of ridiculous that you'd go to a priest on a decision like that. It discredits you."

And those were really the only two comments he had about the book. So I thought, "My God, I'm home free." And so then when all these things came up about the manuscript – I'd sent a copy to Jackie, and then Bob had got it, and all this furor came up – I rang Jackie up and I said, "Jackie, I don't understand it. You said that Ken Galbraith was the official censor for the family. Now he's given the stamp of approval, suddenly it doesn't apply." She said, "Oh, you know Ken, he was up in the clouds." And that was the only answer that I got to the

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ensorship. Well, then we went back and forth in this thing, and then it came to a deadline of the magazine. I'd sent the manuscript back to Bob, and I said that I had to have an answer by I think it was 12 noon on Saturday, Pacific Coast Standard Time – or it must have been Friday – so that I could communicate with the people back in New York that this could go in *McCall's* magazine, that it would go in toto, the way the thing had been selected.

And 12 noon, Pacific Coast Standard Time came by, and no response from Bob Kennedy, or from his office or anybody else. So then I sent a wire to Bob Kennedy saying that because I had not heard from him at such-and-such a time, that I had sent a wire, or rang up the magazine or the publisher, and told them to go ahead with the publishing of the manuscript as they want to in the magazine.

Boy, he just came unglued. I didn't hear from him until Monday evening. But somebody

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hadn't communicated to him, because I sent the wire ahead of time, so that he could have called back. In other words, I didn't act immediately, and I didn't actually act until Monday. Then he really put the balls in motion.

Then Jackie came in the act, and I spent an hour and a half or an hour and forty minutes with Jackie on the phone. She rang me up and gee, we went over step by step on this book. And her comments were fascinating, just fascinating, in the things that she wanted deleted. She didn't know why Angie Dickinson's name had to even be mentioned in the book. She didn't like the idea that she was mentioned, that Jack had said something about – well, this particular incident was right after the Inauguration, at the ball. I was with Angie Dickinson because my wife was in Europe. So I was following behind the Presidential entourage, going from the different balls.

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I guess they call them the Inaugural Balls. At the last one – it was at the Hilton [Statler Hilton] – the President had... I didn't know he'd even seen me; we were behind the

bandstand. I was there with Angie. The President came around, and of course as he came around, all the klieg lights and all the flashing bulbs were going on, and I'm standing there, you know, just smiling away, and "How are things going?" And he said, "Boy, I'll tell you, in about less than twenty-four hours this is going to be front page over in Switzerland for the little bride to read." And at that I just stepped away from Angie Dickinson, but it was too late, because it actually appeared in the Swiss papers.

OESTERLE: It actually appeared?

FAY: Oh, it did. It actually appeared. There I am standing with Angie, with her big mink coat, an the President and myself. So then after he left and he went out to his limousine, the Secret Service

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man came back and said, "The President wants you to come with him out to Joe Alsop's [Joseph W. Alsop]." So I came out and I said, "You know, I'm with Angie." He said, "Well, have her come along." So I went back to get Angie, and then we were with Kim Novak and Fernando Parra. I came back to the limousine again, and I said, "God, we're with Kim Novak and Fernando Parra. Do you want us all to come? I just feel bad leaving them high and dry." And he said, "Forget the whole thing. Wouldn't it look great on the first night, when the young President has accepted the mantle, that he is last seen speeding off into the night with Angie Dickinson and Kim Novak, after his poor wife, with child, is resting at home? And there'll be no mention of you and Fernando Parra being within two miles of the scene of action."

Jackie really got upset about the fact that Angie was mentioned,

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and that she was mentioned as being the pregnant wife at home.

Then there was a story about Arthur Schlesinger that she had me remove, in which one morning Jim Reed and I were over at the White House, a Saturday morning. It was right after the missile crisis. There was an article that appeared in, I think, the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*. It was an interview attributed to Arthur Schlesinger. He had implied that the President appeared to be moving in one direction but after the consultation with Arthur Schlesinger – or else the President was unsure that he was going to support a particular position, but after consulting with Arthur Schlesinger, why, the President's position had been solidified to support that particular position.

The paper was given to the President when we were in the swimming area. You know, he read awfully fast, and he said, "Look at this. That goddamn Artie.

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I'll tell you who he's going to advise. He's going to advise Jackie on the historical significance of the furniture that goes in the White House, period." So then I went on to say,

“I’m sure that as time passed, history will show that the President used the fine mind of Arthur Schlesinger, but I think if you...” What I really had it in there for was to say that if you checked history, you’ll find that the President did not ever bring Arthur Schlesinger in close to him again, as far as an adviser, that he was left out, as somebody with a buffer between him and the President. Jackie said, “How can you do that when you knew how close the President and Arthur were?” And I said, “Jackie, I was there. I knew how close they were. And they weren’t close.” So I took that story out of the book; and I was sorry I did it, because then

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after the President’s death.... Or even I guess after Bobby’s death; I guess that was it, after Bobby’s death then Arthur Schlesinger kind of set himself up as the oracle for the family, and he kind of started to speak for the family. I just didn’t think he ever had the right. And then in this particular incident, I had Jim Reed right with me, so that this wasn’t just my word. It was the word of Jim Reed and myself, both collaborating. When I rang Jim up and I said, “Am I accurate in this thing? Tell me what you remember the story being,” it was the same story.

OESTERLE: That’s very interesting. Were there any other little bits and pieces that you had to take out of the book?

FAY: Let’s see, because of Jackie, let’s see.... I remember when she wanted me to not refer to her as Jackie in the book, but always as Jacqueline. I didn’t mind, you know, but as if I had always

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addressed her as Jacqueline, when I never addressed her as Jacqueline. And then she took issue with the fact that I referred to John-John [John F. Kennedy, Jr.] as John-John. She said, “The President never called him John-John.” I said, “Jackie, you’ve got to be kidding. He called him John-John all the time.” She said, “He did not call him John-John. He called him John.” Well now, how do you argue with something like that? I mean, you could take any number of people around the President who knew that he called him John-John.

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

FAY: Yes, she did. She was the one who also said that she thought it would be much fairer for me

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to take the names of Ethel and Bobby out of that incident down in Florida about the money, which I did. One thing I didn't write was that there was a certain amount of jealousy between Ethel and Jackie. I mean, Jackie had jealousy; she was jealous of Ethel.

OESTERLE: In what ways?

FAY: Well, because Ethel was so outgoing, you know, and the President had so much fun when Ethel was around. It was so much fun for the President to go out to Hickory Hill. He had a ball out there, you know, with Ethel. God, Ethel is just one of the greatest women that ever came down the pike, and one of the – do you know Ethel?

OESTERLE: No.

FAY: One of the funniest, most enjoyable people to be with in the world. The President loved being with her, loved all her enthusiasm and all her jokes and her stories and the way Ethel took

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care of her children and all that. So I can never forget one time with Jackie I started to really rave about Ethel. You know, I wasn't conscious that Jackie was kind of bored with the fact that I was raving about Ethel or kind of trying to ignore it. And after it was all over the President took me aside and said....

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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