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Biographical Note

Doyle, executive director of the 1960 National Stevenson for President Committee, discusses the 1960 Adlai E. Stevenson campaign and the 1960 presidential primary, among other issues.

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James E. Doyle

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Oral History Interview

With

Judge James E. Doyle

January 15, 1966
Madison, Wisconsin

By Charles T. Morrissey

For the John F. Kennedy Library

MORRISSEY: Let's start by my asking you what you were doing and how you viewed the political situation in the late 1950's when the Kennedy [John F. Kennedy] – Humphrey [Hubert H. Humphrey] primary campaign began to shape up in Wisconsin?

DOYLE: Yes. I had been a very firm supporter of Governor Stevenson's [Adlai E. Stevenson] through the '52 and '56 campaigns. I was the Democratic State Chairman in 1952, and then in 1956 I was, of course, still enthusiastic about him and anxious that he be nominated. When he had been defeated for the second time though, I shared the almost universal view, I believe, that that was the end of his possibilities as a President. And so it wasn't until I'd say about late 1958, or early 1959, that I began to think that the possibility at least of a third nomination, and then maybe ultimate election for Stevenson was in the cards. It seemed to me that what might have been expected in the wake of his two defeats just hadn't occurred – that is, some very natural powerful successor had not emerged. I'm talking now about, let's say, around the first of the year in 1959 – my feelings about at that time. I was inclined to think that Humphrey could not be nominated; I was inclined to think that Kennedy could not be nominated; and that probably Johnson [Lyndon Baines Johnson] could not be nominated, for different reasons.

But in each case it seemed to me that there were limits on their potential strength that might well make it impossible for any of them to gain a majority in the convention. And so, my feeling that Stevenson should be the President was as strong then as it ever had been, and the only question was, was there any practical possibility that it might occur? So that was pretty much my appraisal of the situation about the nomination as of about the beginning of 1959.

MORRISSEY: Did you ever discuss this appraisal with Governor Stevenson?

DOYLE: Yes, I began to think, as I reached these attitudes and conclusions by early 1959, that others might be thinking along those same lines. I assumed that somewhere or other in the whole political universe there were really powerful and influential people within the Democratic Party who might be thinking along these lines, and that perhaps they were busy doing something about it for Stevenson. So I began to inquire some of Stevenson and of Bill Blair [William McCormack Blair, Jr.], particularly, about all that. It seemed to me as I would talk to them, particularly to Bill Blair with whom I was more direct and detailed about all this, that they were either being evasive about plans that might be in the process of formulation, and support they might be gathering, or it was not in fact being done. And I really felt that I was not in a position of sufficient influence and power to be extremely useful in initiating the thing. But I began to say things publicly and to write some letters and to make some phone to just test out whether there was any feeling around through the country, with my friends from earlier days, about the possibility of Stevenson's nomination. I guess you asked me whether I talked to Stevenson about it, and perhaps you mean to inquire then what his reaction would be. His reaction certainly in those early days was that it was hardly worth talking about; that he had had the nomination twice and had been defeated twice; that he thought it was pointless to talk about the possibility of a third nomination.

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So to move on then toward the circumstances here in the primary as it eventually developed. It's difficult, in fact it's impossible, to express any kind of a point of view that represents the point of view of the Stevenson supporters in Wisconsin in relation to that primary because we were not organized in relation to the primary. There was no, or very little cohesion among Wisconsin Stevenson people during that time. And in fact, I would say that there was a deliberate effort to avoid developing any cohesion, or to develop some kind of a Stevenson bloc which would participate and attempt consciously to affect the outcome of the primary. That absence of an effort to achieve cohesion among the Stevenson people in any kind of usual way, through campaign organization or otherwise, reflected a point of view that I had formed more and more during that time--and a point of view which I would say characterized most of the Stevenson people, political people nationally. And that was something like this: that Stevenson had had the nomination twice; that even if it could be obtained for him the third time as the result of aggressive efforts to get it away from Johnson or Kennedy or Humphrey or Symington [(William) Stuart Symington]--which was very doubtful--but even if that could have been achieved--for him to win the nomination as a

result of some aggressive effort leaving these other forces embittered and disappointed and angry would have meant that his third nomination would have come to him from under very unfavorable circumstances; that defeat in November under those circumstances would have been quite possible. For those of us who really admired him, it was better that it not happen that way than that he have the third chance under those circumstances.

So the whole feeling was to try to keep alive the possibility of his nomination and the awareness of that possibility, and to find out who our ultimate allies might be in the situation at the convention, but not to attempt to obstruct or thwart any of these others when they were making their run at it. If one of the others was able to put it together, that was that, and we just would accept it. That has a good deal to do with the attitude of the Stevensonites about the Wisconsin primary, or let's say about my attitude

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and about the attitude of some of the more, I guess I can say, politically experienced Stevenson people in Wisconsin. We did not want to intrude in the Wisconsin primary for the purpose of accomplishing some result that might ultimately appear to be helpful to Stevenson. Now the most obvious thing would be--and it was suggested frequently during those times--that the Stevenson people in Wisconsin should get in and fight for Humphrey because Humphrey's ultimate chances to be nominated were probably less than those of Kennedy. If Kennedy were defeated in Wisconsin, or did poorly in Wisconsin, then the stronger of those two possibilities would have been undermined, and that would have made it more possible for Stevenson. I really didn't share that feeling and didn't think that the Stevenson people should conduct themselves that way for the general reason that I explained.

MORRISSEY: Did emissaries from the Johnson camp or Symington camp approach you along these lines?

DOYLE: No, they did not, and it surprised me some. I thought there might be such overtures, but there were not. In fact, as you may be aware, as time went by on up to and through the Democratic National Convention, kind of surprisingly but willy-nilly, I did come to be the person who was closest, I'd say, to the political manager of the effort for Stevenson's nomination as, I guess, anybody. Others of more influence and importance were participating at various points of time, and by the time of the convention, of course, some people far more influential than I, such as Mrs. Roosevelt [Eleanor R. Roosevelt] and Senator Monroney [Almer Stillwell Mike Monroney] and Senator Carroll [John A. Carroll] and all of them were busy, but in the months that preceded the convention I would have been quite a logical person for Johnson or Symington people to get in touch with, I'd say. And they didn't. I talked to Johnson only once during that whole time. That was in about February, 1960. I was out at a Southwest Regional Democratic meeting in Albuquerque

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scouting pretty much for the Stevenson people, Stevenson supporters. That particular meeting was a kind of a Johnson for President affair as it turned out. It wasn't billed that way. But it was I who sought him out to talk to him for a few minutes there, and he was very cordial and all that, but there was no indication on his part of any desire to collaborate in some way or other with the Stevenson people, so far as I was aware.

MORRISSEY: Do you think that some of the Stevensonians in Wisconsin were dubious about John Kennedy because of the relationship between his family and Senator Joseph McCarthy [Joseph R. McCarthy]?

DOYLE: Yes.

MORRISSEY: Was that a significant factor against Kennedy in this state among the Stevensonians?

DOYLE: Yes, I'd say it was. Stevensonians is a difficult term to apply in that situation in relation to that Wisconsin primary. There were a great many people here who admired Stevenson, not many who were at that time so conscious as I was of being involved in, or anxious to be involved in, a specific effort to have him be nominated, but just general supporters. And I'd say that there was a natural coincidence between the attitudes of many of those people as Stevenson admirers on the one hand, and as Humphrey admirers on the other, and less of a coincidence between their Stevensonianism on the one hand and Kennedyism on the other. The McCarthy aspect and so on of the Kennedy background were, of course highlighted particularly by some of the Humphrey people. Attention was called to them in the course of the primary campaign as might be expected. And I think that people whose true preference was Stevenson were the kind of people who probably were affected by that--affected in the direction of supporting Humphrey rather than Kennedy.

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MORRISSEY: As I recall, in that primary Hubert Humphrey carried the congressional district in which Madison is located?

DOYLE: Yes.

MORRISSEY: Why?

DOYLE: Well, I'd say it was to be expected pretty much in this district and I don't think it had very much to do with Stevensonism, very little to do with Stevensonism, I would say. I would say it was explainable more in the terms of what I was just saying, that the kind of people here who were for Stevenson in the previous two campaigns are just a little more likely to be for Humphrey. The whole phenomenon, as I'm sure everybody is aware now, was that Kennedy was kind of a stranger

to the liberal Democratic people in this part of the country, at least. And Humphrey, on the other hand, was by no means a stranger. He's been a very close ally.

MORRISSEY: I asked that question because I read that some people attribute Humphrey's victory in this district to the presence of so many supporters of Stevenson.

DOYLE: Yes, I know that's been said, and it was said at the time, and I don't know how anybody would ever be able to appraise that situation very accurately. But to the extent that it implies some conscious effort to go for Humphrey because of wanting Stevenson ultimately to be nominated, I'd say that was not a very accurate description of what occurred.

MORRISSEY: After the West Virginia primary there was some talk in the national press about a gangup on John Kennedy. But it never happened.
Did you have any intimations that something might be in the wind?

DOYLE: Yes. I was aware of all the talk. I can say that it did not happen as far as the active Stevensonites at the time were concerned. But

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I think it was inevitable that that kind of talk would develop, and that kind of theorizing would occur because of course, by the time Kennedy had won in West Virginia and Humphrey was obviously out for good, it then. . . . By that time, there then was a thesis so to speak, namely, that Kennedy would be nominated. The question was whether that proposition would stand up. So I will not say that from the point of view of the Stevensonites we were not interested to determine that in some particular states such as Kansas or North Dakota or Indiana, or some place else that there was Symington sentiment or Johnson sentiment, because as we moved into those three months or so before the convention--two months before the Convention--it was a matter of continually attempting to assess how those delegations would go when it came to the voting. And I suppose that from the point of view of the Kennedy people, who were the people making the primary run at the nomination, I suppose that even the exchange of information among people who were supporting some other possible nominee begins to look like some kind of a collaborative effort. There was very little of it.

MORRISSEY: Do you have any additional comments about that Wisconsin primary?

DOYLE: There were some feelings about presidential primaries in general and they were certainly sharpened by that primary. I'm not an enthusiast for the Wisconsin presidential primary. I think that in many ways it's a distortion of the political process, and in many ways I think it--it, the presidential primary in a state like Wisconsin--emphasizes some of the less attractive features of politics. To be

specific, the presidential primary is a phenomenon in which people with an interest that far transcends the State of Wisconsin, or any state that has a primary, enter it for a purpose and to achieve a certain purpose, and they use the state, and they use the people in the state, and they shape relationships within the state among people who have up till that time been engaged in some kind of a common enterprise--they shape those relationships

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in very unfortunate ways. Then the morning after the primary the tent is taken down, and the bleachers are taken down, and they sweep up the popcorn and they're gone, and the intense affection that appeared to exist is no more. The political people in the state in which the event has occurred are left to live for a long time thereafter with some of the consequences. That's a politician's reaction to it, and maybe not the broadest reaction. But on broader reactions I'm not much for them either for all kinds of reasons that are very well known and much discussed, about how accidental and fortuitous it may be that a couple of people will come to clash in some primary in the spring of the year and perhaps have a profound affect on the outcome of the nomination and the election in a contest which is local in character and in which the issues and attitudes are perhaps entirely inappropriate to the nation's ultimate choice of a president.

I remember that during that primary--the Wisconsin primary of 1960--then Senator Ribicoff [Abraham Alexander Ribicoff] was out here to help the Kennedys, and he spoke at a luncheon that Democrats had here. They had a regular weekly luncheon affair and Senator Ribicoff spoke at it--and did very well, by the way. He was very helpful and sure effective in that situation, but much of the talk was devoted to complimenting us all on this splendid primary law that we had. I recall afterwards in that question time I asked him if Connecticut had such a law--I said he was then Senator, I should have said Governor. He said no, that Connecticut didn't have such a law. And I asked whether he would support the enactment of such a law in Connecticut. He hemmed and hawed for a little while and finally he said, "Well," he said, "I wouldn't break my lance in the effort to get what I would want." So I think that the compliments that are showered on the state that has one are not all together genuine.

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MORRISSEY: Could you elaborate somewhat on the statewide consequences of the Kennedy-Humphrey campaign, and also the impact that campaign had on the organization and structure of the Democratic Party in the state?

DOYLE: That is pretty much what I had in mind in my comments a few minutes ago. I think that that campaign exacerbated and sharpened and crystallized some fissures that might already have been present. I think it created some new ones, and I think the fact that ultimately one of those two contenders was successful in becoming president in many ways accentuated it all. I think if you had that kind of rivalry occur, and the natural consequences of wounded feelings and division and so in the party, but then neither of the contenders in that Wisconsin primary would ultimately have gone on to be the President, I think perhaps that some of these difficulties might have been

diminished or might never have developed. But there were definite problems of that kind. I think I'd rather just not be specific about the people involved, but it's been a source of regret to me that some of those things did happen and that a group which--I don't mean to idealize, it wasn't that there was one altogether happy Democratic family until April 1960 and then there was trouble in paradise, no such a thing. Divisions and all that are the order of the day here, as everywhere else. But there was, I would say, a greater sense of cohesion and joint participation in an effort here before that primary occurred than there was afterwards. And that phenomenon might have occurred, no doubt would have occurred anyhow, and I can't attribute it to the presidential primary. I can't say that had it not been for the presidential primary some of these things would not have developed. It's a new party and the spirit that I'm talking about--a kind of a wholesome spirit that I'm talking about--I think, is an attribute of a new party building from the ground up, and on its way, and during defeats and adversity along the way. And I think that probably with prosperity for the party in the state some of these unhappy divisions were probably inevitable. They were certainly accelerated and accentuated by the occurrence of that primary though.

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MORRISSEY: Did you attend the convention in Los Angeles?

DOYLE: Yes, I did, yes. What I meant to say a little earlier--maybe for purposes of this project of yours, I guess undue reticence is not particularly helpful so maybe I'd better be explicit about some things you are not aware of. I did from early '59 become more and more active in this whole effort for Stevenson. I found as time went by that what I supposed was going on in other circles for Stevenson just didn't seem to be going on, and so I became more and more assertive about my own role in the thing. And then for a period from about the fall of 1959 until about May of 1960, I was the person who, with some financial gifts from some people who were friendly to Stevenson, I was the person who was out and around and trying to size up the situation for Stevenson's nomination. In about May of 1960 those of us who were most involved in that decided that the time had come to organize a little more directly and formally and so there was a sequence then in which Senator Monroney came forward in a public way with his endorsements, and he and Mrs. Roosevelt and Tom Finletter [Thomas K. Finletter] and Senator Carroll and Senator Lehman [Herbert Henry Lehman] and Mrs. Agnes Meyer [Agnes E. Meyer], and I can't think who else--but some of these people joined in a statement on about May of '60 urging Stevenson's nomination, and inviting me to be the director of a committee to support Stevenson's nomination. So I went down to Washington and there was a news conference down there in Senator Monroney's office. I was introduced in this role, and then, from then on, I was the director-manager of this effort. Out at Los Angeles at the convention, you recall we had that Paramount Theatre building across from the Biltmore, across from Pershing Square, was the Stevenson Headquarters, an old abandoned building. And that's where my offices were. That was the physical location from which that whole thing was conducted.

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In preparing for this conversation with you I was looking back over a few things. You know, whenever the Stevenson people talk about that effort for Stevenson in 1960 and suggest that there was indeed a practical possibility of his nomination at Los Angeles, others who were not involved, I think, begin to look a little glassy-eyed and think that the Stevensonites are crazy. But the fact is--I don't have these figures exactly in mind--that Kennedy, on that first ballot I think, received forty-two more votes than the seven hundred and sixty-one which he needed; I think he got eight hundred and three. He reached seven hundred and sixty-one with Wyoming, and Wyoming was not going to deliver fifteen votes to him. And in any event this has been written up and analyzed. But out of the extra forty-two votes that he had on the first ballot, at least thirty-one or two were votes which went to him in the last minutes of the balloting after he had the seven hundred and sixty-one, which he would not have got had he not already achieved a majority. I think it's one way of illustrating that it was not unrealistic to think that despite the all-out effort that was being made to get the nomination for Kennedy on the first ballot, it might have failed. Then the speculation is what would have happened in the wake of that. I continue to believe very firmly, as I did at the time, that if Kennedy was not nominated on that first ballot he would not have been nominated at all. And I also believe that in that situation the other person upon whom it would have been easiest for the Convention ultimately to agree was Stevenson.

MORRISSEY: Did you discuss that with Stevenson?

DOYLE: Oh yes.

MORRISSEY: And what was his attitude towards it?

DOYLE: Do you mean at the time of the convention?

MORRISSEY: Yes.

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DOYLE: He continued throughout to be extremely skeptical, and when those of us who were most active in that effort--and on this particular subject of analyzing the vote probably the key person there was a fellow named Tom Finney [Thomas D. Finney, Jr.], who was Monroney's assistant at the time--when we would discuss the delegation-by-delegation situation, Stevenson would listen--he didn't consider it too foolish to listen to--but he was always extremely skeptical. On each estimate where there was any doubt at all he'd be inclined to think that we were being too hopeful. And he did not budge from his stated position through that whole period of time which was that he would not cooperate in this effort. But I don't know whether that statement is altogether accurate.

Theodore White [Theodore H. White] and other people writing about that convention have said, and said accurately I think, that two or three things that Stevenson did at Los Angeles might have been a little inconsistent with his completely passive attitude up to that

time. I'm afraid we're off on Stevenson quite a bit here, but people thought at the time that those of us who were busy in a real active management effort to try to win the nomination for him must be awfully put out by the fact that our quote, "candidate" wouldn't help us. I guess some of the Stevensonites did feel that. I know some of them felt that from time to time. And at Los Angeles, when we were right on the battle line, it began to be troublesome to some of them. I must say for myself, or about myself, that I never shared that feeling. I thought he handled himself correctly and wisely, and with good practical sense throughout that whole thing. I think it would have been a mistake for him ever to actively seek the nomination or even to conduct himself in a way that would reflect a strong desire to have it.

MORRISSEY: Did you make any specific efforts to persuade Governor Lawrence [David Leo Lawrence] of Pennsylvania to swing his state to Stevenson?

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DOYLE: Yes. I wrote to him way back in 1959, during the period I described to you when I thought that somebody upstairs must be doing something about Stevenson. I wrote to him and I had known him just slightly so I had to pretty much introduce myself in the letter, or at least refresh his recollection about me and so on, and really there was very little reason for him to respond very frankly or candidly to that kind of a communication. But I urged him in that letter to help some of us to set up a kind of an intelligence operation, and a kind of a restrained command post to keep in touch with the situation. He was very uncommunicative. He did respond, but was not at all revealing in his response. At Los Angeles a number of efforts were made by people in our camp to persuade him--I should say just before Los Angeles, just before he arrived. And then at Los Angeles he came to see Stevenson on, I think it was the Sunday night before the Monday of the Convention, and told Stevenson at that time that he had decided he had to go for Kennedy. That was one of the critical points for the Stevenson supporters to decide whether to go on with the effort for Stevenson or to drop it. And I'd say it was very nip and tuck among us whether we should continue with the effort after that Sunday night. But then each hour of the twenty-four hours on Monday, and on Tuesday, and on Wednesday brought new developments, and the California delegation was really cracking away from Kennedy, and there were various things that kept us from calling off the effort.

MORRISSEY: What was causing the cracks in the California delegation?

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DOYLE: I think genuine Stevensonian sentiment to some extent, just plain honest feeling among many of those delegates--many of whom were good, kind of idealistic people--that Stevenson should be nominated. I think that was one factor. I think the efforts of the Stevenson people, generally, in this state that blew up a storm of public demonstration for him was definitely a factor, and affected the more harder-headed political guys in California who thought that maybe this was in fact the

wave of the future. I think that anti-Brownism [Edmund G. Brown] figured in it. And then I had the feeling that once the Stevenson thing began to take hold in that California delegation, that every little crack in the California organization was widened, and that all kinds of these historical and local antagonisms within the party, which as you know are so extreme and so various, all those things were accentuated. So I guess as for what caused it, I think kind of a wave of Stevenson sentiment that was most prominent in California set it off, and then all of these local factors that perhaps were not so idealistic and high-minded took hold. Of course, I've omitted the efforts of Johnson and Symington people in that whole situation. And they were very busy. And while I know that while Governor Brown was wobbling and equivocating in those critical days, his office in Sacramento apparently was just a target for the most massive pressures from all these forces, including the Kennedy forces obviously-- they were busy in that direction.

MORRISSEY: How about yourself?

DOYLE: I devoted a great deal of effort to that California delegation. We had it well-organized. I think we had our effort with respect to California as well-organized as the Kennedys, which is saying quite a bit. The effort for Stevenson in national terms of all the delegations was just pitiful as compared with the Kennedy organization, and it was because of all these circumstances I've explained that just prevented or at least argued for not going about the Stevenson effort in the way you normally would for an active candidate for over a period of a year or two.

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MORRISSEY: Did you devote special effort to getting additional support for Stevenson out of the Minnesota delegation?

DOYLE: Yes, although there I'd say that it wasn't particularly necessary to bring external pressures and people to bear on that situation. There were people within Minnesota who were every bit as hep and as devoted to Stevenson as anybody from any place else, and they did their own work in there. That was just about as complex as it could get, as you well know.

MORRISSEY: So complex I don't think I understand it even today. Would that statement you just made about Minnesota apply generally to almost all the states in which there was some Stevenson sentiment?

DOYLE: No. It applied to California to a degree. I don't know, I guess there's a little inconsistency in what I just said. There were in California, within the delegation, some real good, able, and devoted Stevensonites. But I guess that the California delegation and the direction that it would take at the Convention was just so important to all of us that we did try to move in from the outside and affect it through the efforts of outsiders. But we've talked about Minnesota and California, now I'll try to answer your question. There were many, many states, many states, I'd say a very

discouraging number of states in which the Stevensonites were people who were just not in a position to affect what the delegation did. Take New York State, or Illinois, or Indiana, I guess perhaps places in which the Party organization is closer to the traditional metropolitan, urban well-organized affair with rather powerful leadership from somebody like Mayor Daley [Richard J. Daley], let's say, in Illinois. In situations like that, there was very little anybody could do. Either somebody from within the delegation who was for Stevenson or Stevensonites on the outside, non-Illinois people, we tried. Senator Monroney and I went to see Mayor Daley about, oh I don't know, two weeks before the Convention, and had breakfast with him. He was very cordial and

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absolutely inscrutable. He did not tell us no, by any means; he certainly did not tell us yes, that he'd help Stevenson. And I know that when we left the place, Senator Monroney and I looked at one another and decided that we better cross that off the list.

MORRISSEY: How did the news of Lyndon Johnson's selection as the vice presidential candidate strike yourself and other Stevensonians?

DOYLE: A curious thing about myself. For some years before 1960, I think it would be accurate to say that I was just about the only person among, let's just say the fifty most active Democrats in Wisconsin, who was rather friendly to Johnson, and Johnson's function and performance as the Majority Leader, and so forth. It was, in fact, a point of some argument and debate and when it would be a question of having Johnson, inviting Johnson, to come in to speak at a Jackson Day dinner or something like that, the sentiment within the party here was just instinctively negative. My argument was not so much that he was the greatest person that ever lived, but that he was a pretty important person in the National Democratic Party and that we shouldn't be so provincial and so forth. Well, my own attitude about the choice of Johnson as vice presidential candidate was not antagonistic, unfavorable. I did feel a little bit, oh I don't know, I indulged in a few wry reflections at the time because, you see, in the presidential primary in Wisconsin, one of the most frequently repeated themes of the Kennedy effort here, at least among political people and among liberals was this: Humphrey can't get the nomination even if he wins in Wisconsin; only Kennedy, of these two people in this primary, can get the nomination; the only way to stop a reactionary like Johnson is to go for Kennedy. That was the appeal to the liberals. That was one of the appeals, and a very, very frequent refrain. That argument was made to Stevensonites. So when it all shook down, it seemed to me that from the point of view of a Stevensonite who had had that appeal made to him in Wisconsin, the end result was, one might have been persuaded to vote for Kennedy because Humphrey, whom one might have preferred, couldn't get anywhere,

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and because that was the only way to stop the Johnson nomination. And the end result was that that particular Stevensonite who had accepted that argument got neither Humphrey nor Stevenson and did get Johnson.

But I guess you're not so curious about my attitudes as the attitudes of other people who felt more or less as I did about Stevenson. I would say that the choice of Johnson was extremely unpopular among Wisconsin Democrats, extremely unpopular. And that went for Stevensonites, Humphreyites, and even for many, many of the Kennedy people who felt terribly let down by that.

MORRISSEY: Did you meet John Kennedy at all when he was President?

DOYLE: No.

MORRISSEY: Is there anything about the Kennedy-Nixon [Richard Milhous Nixon] campaign in Wisconsin that we should put on the record?

DOYLE: I don't think I have anything very useful or new to say about that. I recall there was a feeling that Kennedy should run very strongly in Wisconsin in November because of that immense effort that had been made just a few months earlier in the spring in the primary. And no one ever knows, just no one absolutely ever knows about those things. Perhaps had he not made that spring primary campaign, his vote in Wisconsin in November would have been far less than it was. But I think most people felt, just on hunch, that the spring effort probably was not a very big factor in the vote in November. As for the Stevensonites, and I guess that's the subject matter about which I could contribute most, I think they came around in good shape for Kennedy in Wisconsin by November. But it was not very prompt, and that goes for the Humphreyites, too. There was disappointment that definitely outlasted the month of July, and into August, and so forth. In just about the end of August, Bobby Kennedy [Robert F. Kennedy] called me and asked me to go with

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Arthur Schlesinger [Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.] to some of the key Stevenson spots and try to persuade the Stevensonites that they should get going for Kennedy. And we did. We went to California together and made that effort. That was in about early September, and we were still encountering some resistance. Arthur talks about this in his book. I guess I started off to say that that pattern that we observed in California was also observable in other parts of the country including Wisconsin, which had been kind of a center of Stevensonism. But I'd say that certainly by mid-September and beginning of October, I don't think it was any longer a significant factor. I suppose you might speculate that had all of the Stevensonites and Humphreyites in Wisconsin and elsewhere not been suffering under these attitudes, and had they been right on their starting blocks by about the fifteenth of July, perhaps that would have contributed to the organizational effort for Kennedy, and maybe he would have won by a bigger margin nationally.

MORRISSEY: Did you see much of Governor Stevenson when he was the Ambassador to the United Nations?

DOYLE: Yes, occasionally, it's hard to say just how many times, but probably six or seven times when I was in New York.

MORRISSEY: Did you discuss with him his relationship with the White House?

DOYLE: Yes, I did.

MORRISSEY: Would you like to tell me about it?

DOYLE: I guess not.

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MORRISSEY: Let me go back to the 1956 Convention in Chicago. Did you have any forewarning that Governor Stevenson might throw open the vice presidential race?

DOYLE: Yes, some but not much. I was not in the inner counsels of strategy at that time. But, oh, I was kind of on the periphery of it, I guess. I was aware that he was thinking along those lines.

MORRISSEY: Do you recall before he made that decision, if he was thinking about John Kennedy as a vice presidential candidate?

DOYLE: Yes, he was. He was thinking about that, and that was one of the considerations in asking Kennedy to nominate him. He was very friendly to Kennedy at the time. By friendly I mean in the sense of friendly in his estimate of Kennedy and his estimate of Kennedy's abilities and capacities. I'd say that was rather discerning on his part in 1956 because I don't think that Kennedy, as of that time, had demonstrated very clearly the qualities that later won admiration for him as a President.

MORRISSEY: From Stevenson's viewpoint in 1956, was Kennedy's religion a factor in his favor, or a liability?

DOYLE: I never heard it discussed in any direct way. I never discussed it with Stevenson, period, and I never heard it discussed in any direct way among the people closest to that effort. But my guess is that it was regarded as an asset.

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MORRISSEY: I was wondering if the so-called Daley report had an affirmative impact?

DOYLE: It did. I'm inclined to think so. And in any event I think probably the judgment of people like Finnegan [James Finnegan] and the others would have been that a Catholic as a vice presidential candidate, particularly in Stevenson's case, would have been helpful.

MORRISSEY: Do you recall that night and day when the race was open and Kennedy and Estes Kefauver were contesting one another?

DOYLE: Yes, but I have very little to contribute about it, I was rather indifferent to it. I guess I was for Kennedy. I just never was a Kefauver enthusiast.

But Wisconsin had a Kefauver delegation in both '52 and '56. By the way, I was not a delegate either time because I wasn't a Kefauverite and you know the peculiarities of the law. And so I just took a powder in that whole situation because my name would have been absolute mud in Wisconsin if I had supported Kennedy in any way against Kefauver. Besides there was very little I could do under those circumstances.

MORRISSEY: Had Kefauver won a primary in Wisconsin in 1956?

DOYLE: Yes. Unopposed, I think. If he was opposed, there was only a token opposition. He had done it in '52 also.

MORRISSEY: Have we overlooked anything?

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DOYLE: Oh, I don't think so. There's so much to say once I get recalling all these things. But, particularly with respect to the 1960 primary, I guess there's not much more to say. It was a time when, as I say, Humphrey and Kennedy themselves and all their national supporters and people, and staff, were really wooing the Wisconsin Democrats very actively, and in some ways it's almost ludicrous to think back about it. But Sargent Shriver [Robert Sargent Shriver, Jr.], I recall, came to see me at least once, and I think perhaps more than once to persuade me that I should go for Kennedy, and that I should urge the other Stevensonites to do it, and I declined. Then I suppose maybe the most difficult thing--one of the most difficult things I ever encountered in politics was when Hubert Humphrey came around to my law office, to ask for my support. In the first place I just thought it was grotesque that he should have to engage in that kind of hand to hand combat to personally attempt to persuade somebody like me to be for him, and besides, I had such long and such warm associations with him and all the Minnesota people over the years, that it was just terribly hard for me to decline, but I did. I think there isn't much more I can tell you that would be helpful.

MORRISSEY:
transcript.

Well, if anything comes to mind, we can always add it to the

Thank you very much.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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