

**Bart Lytton Oral History Interview – JFK#1, 06/08/1966**  
Administrative Information

**Creator:** Bart Lytton

**Interviewer:** Ronald J. Grele

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**Biographical Note**

Bart Lytton (1912-1969) was the finance chairman of the California Democratic State Committee from 1958 to 1960. This interview focuses on Lytton's friendship with John F. Kennedy, the importance of campaign finances, and the 1960 presidential campaign, among other topics.

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Beth Lytton

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Bart Lytton– JFK #1  
Table of Contents

<u>Page</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1	Meeting John F. Kennedy [JFK]
2	1956 Democratic National Convention
3	JFK’s visit to California
5	Dinner with JFK and Governor Pat Brown
7	Meeting with JFK at the Sands Hotel
8	Telling JFK not to rely on buying the election
10	Dinner for Democratic candidates
12	Half vote for Chester Bowles
14	Formation of California delegation
15	Replacement of Paul Ziffren as national committeeman
17	Selection of Stanley Mosk as national committeeman
19	Donation to JFK’s campaign
20	Campaign expenses
22	Changes in political finance
23	Getting around campaign finance limitations
25	Discussing campaign money with JFK
28	Advising JFK not to appoint Robert F. Kennedy as attorney general
29	Inaugural week party at Statler Hotel
30	Appearing as a witness before the Un-American Activities Committee
32	Effect of hearing on political career
33	Being banned from campaign train by Lyndon B. Johnson
35	Issues with crowd control at party
36	Conflict with Jesse Unruh
37	Sabotaging Unruh’s appointment as Postmaster General
40	Aldai Stevenson encouraging JFK to cancel his trip to Texas
42	JFK’s legacy
Addendum	“A Man to Be Considered”
Addendum	“Bart Lytton Found Dead; Build \$500 Million Empire”



Oral History Interview

with

BART LYTTON

June 8, 1966  
Los Angeles, California

By Ronald J. Grele

Also present: Michael S. Bank  
Ralph Rivet

For the John F. Kennedy Library

GRELE: Mr. Lytton, do you recall when you first met John F. Kennedy?

LYTTON: Well, I think it was sometime in either late 1958 or early '59. I do not recall the time of the first meeting.

GRELE: Do you recall the circumstances?

LYTTON: Yes, I had met him to shake hands with him, of course, prior to that, say in 1956, for example, at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, but I don't consider that a meeting. That's shaker and shakee as Adlai Stevenson said. But I actually met him to talk to him I think in late '58. It was on one of his swings through the West, one of his earliest if not the earliest, where he was preparing his invasion and sizing up the local troops, shall we say. As I recall--and I do not recall the date--he came out as the guest of the Democratic State Central Committee of California.

GRELE: You were finance chairman?

LYTTON: I was state finance chairman at that time. That plaque comes from the period, the one right over there. In any event, I was state finance chairman so, quite naturally, I was one of the small group who got together with him

following a public, oh, small party, but a party nonetheless, where he spoke--I think at the Ambassador Hotel. I don't think it was at somebody's home on this particular occasion.

GRELE: If we can go back for a moment, did you attend the '56 Convention as a member of the California delegation?

LYTTON: I attended the '56 delegation as the. . . . My wife was the distaff side of the only "bi-stateual" couple to attend the Convention. I was an alternate delegate from Nevada, and she was a delegate from California to that Convention by a form of sorcery, shall I say. She actually was the delegate from California, and I had friends in Nevada at the time who thought it would be quite amusing if I were part of their delegation. They had a few spare positions open so they made me. . . . Since residence in Nevada is a very easy thing and since I then traveled to Nevada a great deal [noise in background] for financial institutions and things . . . . That can be heard, every crack of that, I assure you.

GRELE: That's all right.

LYTTON: I'll have to change the text.

GRELE: Do you recall why Nevada and the California delegations voted as they did on the vice presidential nomination in '56?

LYTTON: No, I wouldn't be your best source for that. I don't think that I would be your best source for that. You've heard people who would be more knowing in regard to the '56 Convention. I was there. I attended, but I don't have anything in particular to offer you in that regard.

GRELE: Going back now to 1958 or coming up to 1958, did John Kennedy at that time ask you for your support for the presidency?

LYTTON: Not for the presidency, not in '58. That was in '59. I recall the specifics of that request. In 1958 he appeared to be a young senator out to meet the people. It was evident that he was preparing to run, but I don't think that great weight was given at that time to his chances. My own recall is that we looked at him with interest, some degree of fascination even perhaps, were personally attracted to him. When I say we, I'm not using any royal prerogative here, I don't have one. I simply mean that the attitude of

most California Democrats I think at that time, of great numbers, was that here was a very fascinating, in fact, some ways a delightful young man who might be good vice presidential material. We were pleased to look him over, and he was looking us over. We chatted quite a bit about issues of the day and about the likelihood of the Democratic party recapturing in 1960, but he wasn't saying-- I don't think he said it to anybody at that time; if he did, it certainly wasn't within my ken--"May I count on you for support?" It was six months to a year later that he began to actively enlist support. I think he was doing his readings at the time, but I don't think he was yet attempting to line up the support so much as to read what chance he had in the area.

GRELE: Do you recall who he spoke to about the line-ups in California?

LYTTON: Well, if we go back to first meetings, I can only do reconstruction by presumption. That is, I would presume and assume that he spoke to Paul Ziffren, that he spoke to. . . . He didn't speak to the governor, not at that time. Now, remember, the governor was elected in '58, and Clair Engle was elected senator in '58, in the fall, and we're talking about the period probably around the election. He probably came out--I wouldn't depend upon this but--he probably came out in support of the Democratic ticket which would be Engle and [Edmund G.] Brown primarily, neither of whom were then holding the office. Neither were incumbents. He probably came out on one of the many forages of senators and others from Washington and the East who presumably could help us in our fight for the reelection, or for the election. It wasn't even the reelection at the time. I'm going to pause here for a moment while this. . . . [tape recorder off--resumes] As I was saying before I interrupted myself--that great line of [Eamon] DeValera's, as you recall. In any event, he was reading the tempo. Mainly, he was presenting himself to us, you see. He was saying, "Here I am. Take a look at me. Am I attractive to you? What about me?" without asking the questions overtly and directly.

Well, he was making his presence felt. Now at that time he would have talked, quite naturally, as I started to say, to Paul Ziffren who was our national committeeman; he didn't talk to Brown to the best of my knowledge; I think he might have talked to Clair Engle because Clair Engle was running for the Senate, and I think it probably was on behalf of Engle that he came out here; he talked to me. I was the state finance chairman and one of the wheelhorses of the party. The party is a mystique in California. It's not a machine, never has been, for either party. It's a mystique. It's the mystique of membership, the mystique of being part of the establishment. You for a short time

hold a position in the party, and then you don't need that position any longer to be one of those consulted--like [Edwin W.] Ed Pauley, or Dan Kimball down south, or me, or up north George Killion, or [Mrs. Edward H.] Ellie Heller. There are a certain number of people who establish themselves as party savantes and the people you must talk to (incidentally, you should give them that Jed Baker thing) the people who are the checklist people. Of course, I was one of them at the time and we talked.

But I don't have out of that any sharp memories because he hadn't come into focus yet for me. He was a devilishly attractive Back Bay Irish aristocrat. He was of a different mold and time than me. I told him that I had gone to the University of Virginia which I serve as a member on the Board of Managers, the alumni now. And that's where his two brothers went. We talked about things like that and about issues. But he made no specific impact at the time save that of being enormously attractive. There was no doubt in my mind that in time. . . . Now in 1958 I did not envision him as President of the United States by 1961, elected in '60. In 1958 I envisioned him as a young man with a tremendous future but in a pretty big hurry.

GRELE: Did he present himself to you ideologically as a liberal or a conservative or a moderate?

LYTTON: He picked my brain and then reflected to some extent. He was being political, or politic, as the case may be. Primarily, it was a sense of challenge and youth and new thought. I think I'm five years older. I'm fifty-three and I think I'm five years older than he was, and so we were close enough from the point of view of generation to have a certain empathy of approach. He did talk California politics. He was interested in California politics. I recall that now. He talked California politics and what was going to happen. I'm quite sure this was before the election in '58--it was the first time--and that he talked California politics. This was intermittent conversation. It was not alone; I was not alone with him. There were other people present. I think he picked our brains on politics and demonstrated some political skill and insights of his own. He was trying to understand very hard California politics. That's my recollection of that particular event.

GRELE: When was the next time you met him or came into contact with someone in his organization?

LYTTON: Well, I probably met him once again in Washington following that--at some event in Washington. Maybe around the National Democratic Club, I don't recall.



But I believe there was another meeting. And the very next time was in my own home. He came out in--no, no, no, there were another meeting or two in '59, but I don't recall. . . . Somehow the vivid impressions . . . . The film had not yet begun to unroll or unfold for me. He was another United States senator, a very interesting one, a likeable guy. There was no process going on within me. I wasn't printing that in my memory. I think it went on to my tabula rasa instead as to what was said and what wasn't said. And he was interesting. It was in 1959 that now I had met him on a sufficient number of occasions--three or four, that's all--that he now knew me by name, or at least [P. Kenneth] Kenny O'Donnell or [Lawrence F.] Larry O'Brien or somebody was standing close enough by to whisper the name . . . .

GRELE: When did you first meet them?

LYTTON: About that time. My first real significant contact or association with the president occurred in '59, in November of 1959, when he was a guest at my home in what became a story of sufficient import to have a worldwide press. There is a picture of President Kennedy, then Senator Kennedy, Pat Brown, our governor, and my wife at dinner in our home--I am just outside the picture and not in it--and it said "Leading Catholics Confer" because this was his first confrontation with Pat Brown--occurred in my home, on his first confrontation with Pat Brown on whether Brown would support him. Now, by now he had asked for my support, as far as that goes.

GRELE: He had already asked for your support.

LYTTON: I think so.

GRELE: Had you already given it?

LYTTON: No. He hadn't been presumptuous. His manner was not one of demanding an answer. I think at that time he was expressing it as a hope--"I hope you'll be able to support me. I don't know what I'm going to do, but I hope you'll be able to support me if I see fit to enter head-on" and so on. Now by November '59, there was no question about it. By November '59, the dinner at my home was a small dinner party for leading "fat cats" primarily and ideological leaders in the upper reaches of the community, of course, in this instance at my home. It was at this dinner that he and Pat Brown had their first direct confrontation of intention. Now at that point the governor still believed that he had a good chance to be nominated vice president--now I'm stating this as a fact.

GRELE: He told you?

LYTTON: No, I'm stating this as a fact. He might choose to say something different in regard to it, but I'm telling you that all of us bore the impression and he made it evident to us. The governor made it evident to us that he did not want to

release us to Jack Kennedy. That was the issue. He didn't want us to be released to Kennedy at this point. He saw a good chance, and he and I did talk on the matter aboard his plane--not the Caroline, that's the Kennedy plane, but aboard the Grizzly Bear, the Governor's plane. We talked about it on one occasion and on one other occasion. The governor felt that he had a chance for the nomination of vice president with anyone but Kennedy, so actually he was not enthusiastic about a Kennedy ticket at this point. He positively did not want Kennedy to run in the California primary. The governor was attempting to show Kennedy why he should not run in the California primary at that dinner, and Kennedy was asking curious and more curious questions. It was at that particular time that he and I seemed to strike up, very quickly--the way those things occur--some kind of a rapport took place there with very little conversation. So that on leaving, thanking me for hosting this event on his behalf--and he realized it took some guts on my part because the governor's position was pretty clear; the governor wasn't going to like anybody who supported Jack Kennedy at that particular time, at that juncture; it was '59, November--and he commended me to the group in a very humorous way because that very same week we had entertained Shostakovich, the great Russian composer, and a group of Russian composers at the request of the State Department on this tour. We had entertained them the same week. And he said that he wanted to commend Bart and Beth Lytton for giving equal time to the Communists and the Democrats which got a huge laugh from the crowd there. In any event, leaving, he told me that he wanted to be able to pick my brain, and he hoped I'd come and see him if I could or if we could get together. Very . . .

GRELE: At that dinner, do you recall the governor's reasons for not wanting John Kennedy to enter the primary?

LYTTON: Well, he didn't give his reasons in full. He gave self serving reasons at the particular time.

GRELE: To . . .

LYTTON: To Kennedy, as I recall, those that . . . I wasn't privy to the total conversation because I was up and down. I was the host, and I was up and down and not always seated there. For what I recall, the governor was intensely urging upon Kennedy, the senator, the fact that California politics were strange indeed and almost impossible to understand for Californians and absolutely impossible for outlanders, and, of course, he was an outlander, and that anyone looking at California politics has had a lot to learn and so on. Then they talked about positions, this and that. They sparred pleasantly enough on positions. The governor did say to me at the end of that evening--he put his arm around me

and he said, "Damned attractive fellow, isn't he." I said, "He sure as hell is." This is ripe dialogue, as you can see. It was not being written by Tennessee Williams. Pat was taken aback with the total personality. He didn't expect Jack Kennedy to be as supple, as viable, as articulate--because he was. He got up without. . . . He made his own notes while other people gave some toasts and so on, and then he got up and he was responsive to each and every person. This kind of took Pat Brown by surprise. He found him more formidable than he assumed he was going to, and that was evident. That's why he said to me "Damned attractive fellow, isn't he." He wanted me to say, "Well. . . ." or something, but I agreed that he sure as hell was.

Also, on the way out, Jack Kennedy cornered me for a moment to thank me for being host and so on and to tell me, as I said, that he wanted to be able to pick my brain and so forth. He was picking people. He met several people at that particular dinner, several people whom he subsequently brought into the campaign.

GRELE: Who?

LYTTON: [Clarence P., Jr.] Dan Martin for one, for example, who finally ended up serving as Under Secretary of Commerce, I believe. Oh gosh, I'd have to think back as to who he enlisted at that particular dinner. I remember Dan meeting him at that time because I introduced them. That was my baptism in becoming a parader for Kennedy. I still, however, made no commitment to him, had no intention of making a commitment to him at that time.

Once or twice more I crossed paths with [Hyman B.] Hy Raskin and with Larry O'Brien, I believe. You see, I had no long friendship with President Kennedy; it developed in this short fifteen months or so, we'll say. In February of 1960--I think my timing is correct here; I'd have to refer to other evidence, but I believe it was in February, 1960--I got a call from Kenny O'Donnell, I think--I don't think it was Larry--asking me if I would meet the president privately, the senator, if I would meet Jack Kennedy privately at the Sands Hotel. Either if I would come down to Albuquerque, New Mexico, where there was some conference of Democratic groups; if I couldn't come there, would I meet him at the Sands Hotel for a private conference with him. It sounded like an audience with the Pope, and I teased him about that. He wanted me to come down alone to meet with him. I didn't elect to come down alone because I didn't want to be boxed and committed at that juncture. I was very active in California politics, and I just didn't want to be. So I invited as my guest William Munnell who's now a judge, a Superior Court judge in Los Angeles, who was then the state chairman of the Democratic party. I called Bill and I said, "Bill, Jack Kennedy has asked me to meet him in Albuquerque or Las Vegas; I'm going to Las Vegas to meet him.

I don't want to go down alone. I don't think I should because, after all, I hold an official position as the state finance chairman and he's asking to see me. Now that's the pick-off method, and I don't think that. . . ." He said, "Well, I agree with you, Bart. I'll go along." So the two of us went down.

Now I knew instantly that Kennedy was not pleased by the fact that I brought Bill Munnell along. He wanted to talk to me privately, I was quite right. He was picking off specific people he wanted to enlist in his cause. So he finally asked if he might. . . . He said, "Do you mind if I talk to Bart a few minutes alone?" Well, I couldn't say no to that. As you know very well by now, Ron--I don't know how well you knew him or anything but--he could be a very persuasive, compelling young man indeed. So we were alone for a bit there, not very long, and we chatted about. . . . His question was whether he ought to enter the California primaries. He had not made his decision yet, and he felt that he should enter the California primaries. But he wasn't sure, and he wanted to pick the best brains he could that he thought had political intelligence and savvy, experience, whatever you call it, sensitivity. He wanted to pick a few and talk close with them about whether he ought to enter. Now the natural presumption is if you advise a man to enter, you're with him. Right off the bat. You can't be against the man you advised to enter. So I was not committal on that because I wasn't ready yet to make such a determination. Talked some politics on an election type of level, that is, practical politics. I said to him. . . .

I'm coming now to the moment that made the bridge, crossing the bridge we were able to meet each other. From there on out, from what I'm about to tell you, there was an instant change in his response to me--and in mine to him, incidentally. It was a mutual thing that occurred next as he reread the man and I reread the man and we read each other, well, with great respect. I am confident that he had it too from the way he acted. I said, "What's your financial situation? How about money?" He said, "Well, Bart (in that Bostonese) we're all right through the primary. We don't have any problem through the primary." I said, "The hell you say." And he looked at me. I said, "You aren't all right through the primary." He said, "Well, why not?" He looked taken aback because I was so sharp. I said, "Don't you ever say that again if you want to win an election." He said, "I don't understand." I said, "The very thing that stands in your way, if you want to make it, is the feeling that you can buy the election. You must never have enough money. You must never say to another person 'We have enough money to get through the primary.' You always need money. You need money for certain reasons. In the first place, if you get money from others, it's cheaper." He laughed and he said, "Granted." I said, "But that's not. . . . Assuming that you do have all the money necessary and you don't care, in the second place, more importantly, there are only two ways that people can approach a politician



who wants to become an elected official or to a new office. There are only two ways you can reach that man, money and votes. Nothing else you can bring them. You can bring them money; you can bring them votes. This is part of the Nottyl theory." And he asked me what the Nottyl theory was. I told him it was Lytton spelled backwards. I said, "I've observed over the years that these are the only two things that you can bring to a political figure. Ideas, he doesn't need your ideas. If he needed them he shouldn't be running. And his professional staff and his few friends around him should have enough ideas. Oh, it'll happen once in a great while, but he'll forget the fact that you brought the great idea--particularly if it backfires and all that, it won't work for you. So, therefore, what can you do for him. You can bring him money; you can bring him people.

Now labor unions are the only segment of the American socio-economic orbit which can bring both. Only labor unions really can bring you important money and important numbers of votes. And their hold on the votes is getting less and less all the time. But they still can bring you votes and they can bring you money. For the most part you'll find groups or individuals who can swing votes to you, and you'll find groups or individuals who'll give you money because you need money. Modern campaigning has become inordinately expensive. We're going to have to do something about it. Today's jet campaigning, television, radio, all the media requirements are such that the figures are astronomic and you're going to need money." He said, well, of course, in the general campaign he'd need money. I said, "No, no, no. But you must get in there. You can't win that nomination if the belief is you have enough money to win it by yourself because you have foreclosed a large part of the leadership from feeling they have any access to you. They must feel that they've at least bought your ear. They don't have to feel that you're going to do something directly for them, but at least you're going to give them a hearing. And money is one of the means. As state finance chairman I've come to well understand the meaning of political money and the subtleties of the relationships that come around funds. So you must never again say that you don't need money." He took out a little black book that he had in his inner pocket and a pencil and he started to write and I stopped talking. He wrote, he wrote about half a page in there, or maybe a page. I don't know. He wrote. Then he turned to me and he said, "You know, [Franklin D.] Roosevelt had a little black book, Bart, and those who were in the early little black book he never forgot." What he had written in there apparently was "Must ask for money, must claim I need money."

Now that night--because there was no one moved faster than Jack Kennedy once he grasped an idea, once he responded to an idea he moved with thermonuclear speed and explosive power. You know that. That night I went back to Los Angeles, I had to, but Bill Munnell remained to talk to him. He was trying to line Munnell up to be with him, too. He said to Bill Munnell that night--so Bill reported to me, and then so he and I discussed on another occasion--"Do you suppose Bart Lytton would give me ten thousand dollars?" Bill came back the next day and

called me and told me this. He said, "Jack Kennedy said (Munnell had just met him from me that day) he wanted to know if you'd give him ten thousand dollars." I said, "Gee, he learns fast. He really learns fast."

GRELE: Did you?

LYTTON: In time, in time I gave him five thousand through Chester Bowles who he said was his representative at the time. I had a problem. Giving him money and my relationship with Pat Brown on a privileged business was not a very easy thing to handle. So that that particular meeting I felt was the one that established-- and it was in February of 1959--a very special rapport. Following that there were any number of occasions. Most particularly I am mindful of one that I chaired a dinner at the Beverly Hilton Hotel which we attempted to bring all of the leading candidates for president out. That is, we were attempting to bring Kennedy, of course, [Stuart] Symington, [Lyndon B.] Johnson, [Hubert H.] Humphrey and Stevenson. All but Humphrey appeared. I had a hell of a time getting Johnson to come out. I had to go see him in Washington. He wouldn't come out because of Paul Ziffren, he claimed, and the CDC [California Democratic Clubs] whom he loathed, and he made a lot of conditions as to whether he would come out, including Brown (which is a whole other story I don't want to take time on now) recanting his statement that Johnson couldn't win. We wanted them all there. All came but Humphrey. Humphrey just before the dinner was defeated in West Virginia, and he was out and he knew it so he didn't come to the dinner.

GRELE: Prior to this time had you been approached by anybody else for their support?

LYTTON: Oh, yes.

GRELE: Who?

LYTTON: Well, all but Stevenson had made direct approach, and Stevenson people did. But all but Stevenson. Oh, yes. I was, after all, the largest fund raiser in the state at the time. My support was of some--they thought my support was of some consequence.

GRELE: What were the arguments they used arguing for your support against John Kennedy?

LYTTON: The standard argument in such a situation is "I am going to be the winner. You want to be with me." If you don't buy that, then they say, "Don't you want to hedge your bet? Suppose that you think that this other man is going to win, well, don't you want to hedge your bet? Because it won't bother me that you're

supporting him. If you'll also help me, I won't forget you." And things like that. Now they're much freer in such commitments prior to the Convention than they are after.

Once the Convention is over, then you're dealing with a whole new phenomena. You're dealing with a presidential candidate. The whole ball game changes once the Convention is over because from there on out it isn't seemly for him to make direct commitments which he can make in the primary period. That is, it isn't the primary precisely, although there are many primaries, but prior to the nomination. So before there's a great freedom of. . . . And often the approaches--since we had four senators and an ex-presidential candidate running, the four senators' AA's [administrative assistants] were the ones who were likely to approach you.

GRELE: At the dinner where you hosted all of the candidates did you get an opportunity to talk to John Kennedy alone?

LYTTON: Yes. I did not host all the candidates. I was the chairman of a large fund-raising dinner at which we raised perhaps a hundred and fifty thousand dollars, a hundred-dollar-a-plate dinner, at the Beverly Hilton. I certainly got an opportunity to talk to the different ones there. As a matter of fact, my wife and I were invited up to Kennedy's room after that dinner, to his suite upstairs in the hotel, rooms I should say. I remember we went up because Stuart Symington was going down the hall at the time. He didn't look very happy seeing us go into Kennedy's suite. I like Stu Symington. You see his picture is right over there. We went into his room at the hotel. I might be mixing this up with another occasion at the hotel. I want to be certain. I think I am. Yes, I'm mixing that up with another occasion. I don't recall anything . . . . I recall vividly the conversations in Las Vegas. Another conversation that took place at the Beverly Hilton in his rooms which I am reminded of now but I think was during the campaign itself, the 1960 campaign, somewhere in September perhaps or October. No, it was earlier. It was August or September 1960 when he invited my wife, invited me up to the suite and we were the only ones there. He was still a senator; he didn't have Secret Service. He didn't have anybody around. We were alone with him then. He was very tired; the only time I ever saw him so tired that he was like cataleptic almost. His eyes would close. I would say to him. . . . Now we were calling him senator. It was during the campaign. No longer was it Jack, most of us. I'd say, "senator, you're dead tired. Why don't you just go to sleep?" He'd say, "No, I want to talk to you. I wanted to see you. It's the first chance I've had to talk to Beth in a while. No, no, you stay." Then his eyes would start to close again. I'd feel very bad about it. And Beth'd say, "Well, honey, don't you think we ought to. . . ." Finally, he opened them up and he said to Beth, "I wanted you to know that you husband's help to me has been among the biggest and most important help of different kinds I've had. I want you to know that

it was early and that I will never forget it. If I make it in this election, I'll always remember him." Beth was very moved and touched.

GRELE: When had you made your commitment to John Kennedy?

LYTTON: I never made one. It grew. It was like Topsy. I never made a direct one. As a matter of fact, you know, on a television poll, not the true poll, I said I was going to give my half--we were half votes in California--my half vote to Chester Bowles.

GRELE: I was going to ask you about that.

LYTTON: It was immediately following that, actually. That's a funny story. It would take too long to tell you all of the things that went into it. It had to do with Pat Brown, not with Jack Kennedy. When Pat Brown swung over to Jack Kennedy, and it was very late, but when he did, I refused to be part of his swing over. My way of saying it was that I was going to vote differently which I wasn't going to do at all. I was setting up Chester Bowles, after talking to some people, that in the event that Kennedy didn't make it he was a potential vice presidential--not presidential, but vice presidential, candidate, a very good one. I was very fond of him, and I was setting--and he himself was so close to the Kennedy camp--setting that up. Just before that poll went on the air, Hy Raskin came to me and he said, "Bart, now look, it's time to quit games. Don't name Chester Bowles. Now just don't do this, Bart. It's been very amusing, the editorial in your paper, a lot of fun. You've had your laughs, and it's served its purpose, there's no doubt about it. But it's enough. Now when you get up there in front of these television cameras and you're going to commit yourself, don't say Chet Bowles." So I looked at Hy levelly.

Hy and I have become very, very close friends. We have been good friends since, oh, 1956. You see, I traveled with Stevenson--I never mentioned that--in the '56 campaign writing speeches on money and finance with [Henry Hamill] "Joe" Fowler, the present Secretary of the Treasury. I was asked as a confidential banker who used to be a writer to go on back and write speeches on money and finance for him. In any event, Hy said, "Come on, don't do this." I said, "Well, Hy," I looked at him very level, straight face, "I'll have to be released by my candidate." He said, "Aw, come on." [laughter] I said, "No, no, no, I'm committed to Chester Bowles. If he'll release me (he was there, see) if Chet'll release me, I'll vote for Jack Kennedy." So Chet Bowles came down to make a speech on behalf on Jack Kennedy. He came down to make a speech on television. It was an amphitheater, down at CBS I believe, or NBC. I think it was CBS amphitheater. He made his speech and he came back up, and I planted myself where he had to go past me. I said, "Chet,



Hy Raskin and Kenny O'Donnell and the boys are getting very worried about this half vote for Chester Bowles, so they want me to not do it now, want me to go for Kennedy. But I told them I had to be released by my candidate. What about it?" He said, "See you, Bart." And he went off. [laughter]

He was playing for his fun, you see. He was going to get his name on television. He wouldn't. . . . So now I expressed it that way, said "Oh, hell with it." I knew I was going to vote for Kennedy the next day so on television I said, "One half vote for Chester Bowles." That was the half vote that was heard around the country. It was strictly a kid's thing. But the next morning I want you to know that the Kennedys worked fast and furiously when I arrived at the Convention. I had just changed to an unlisted number--they couldn't get me by phone--just happened to. The next morning at the Convention I was virtually seized bodily, marched back to the little house behind the sports arena there that they had, and put to the test, put to the rack and things like that, you know.

GRELE: By who?

LYTTON: Oh, by Hy and by, let me see, whoever passed by. Let's see, who was involved? It was Larry, I think just for a brief moment--Larry O'Brien. Oh, let me think. It was a small back room seance and all that. "You've got to stop this, Bart. Now you're not going to go up there and vote a half vote for Chester Bowles" and everything. I said, "The son of a so-and-so wouldn't release me." "Now come on. That's a great gag, but it's over now." This is the time that counts." I said, "Well, look. Come on. Let me have my fun. It's good for Chet. Why don't I vote for him on the first ballot?" Like everybody else I thought there was going to be two ballots. At least, here's one man on tape who isn't claiming he was a savant at all times and omniscient, because he wasn't. So I said, "On the second ballot, of course." "Bart, there isn't going to be a second ballot. If you want to be down as a Kennedy man--now you're in from the beginning and if you want to stay in, you're going to vote for Jack Kennedy, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, on the first ballot" because they weren't taking any chances. They didn't want one half a vote to spoil. . . . No matter what, they were after every possible vote. So I went out there, and I did like all good sensible, clean cut American boys, you know, who were registered delegates. I gave my half vote to John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

I'll tell you another amusing sidelight of that particular one--the magic that was applied, or the assumptive magic that was applied to their name, the Kennedy myth that was beginning to grow. When I arrived at the Convention after having come out on this Chester Bowles kick and writing a great editorial for him in my little newspaper which I bought at that time. . . . See if it's the time. Oh, I've got it right here. I'm all right, Mike [Michael S. Bank]. I'm fine. Let's see--oh yes. I arrive at the Convention--I have written this thing--and I go to sit down and I find right away that my seat mate is Pat Lawford, Jack Kennedy's

sister--[Edward] Ed Lasker on one side of me and Pat Lawford on the other side of me. I said, "These sons of guns don't miss anything, do they? They put Pat Lawford beside me." I really believed that at the moment, and I have very little paranoia; not enough for safety my wife tells me. She sometimes suggests that maybe I ought to go to a professional paranoid, say occasionally, just to pick some up because she says I'm not suspicious enough. But here I suddenly thought that I was placed next to Pat Lawford so they could control me because I'd promised them the vote. Now look how they were. . . . Of course, the fact of the matter is that we were placed alphabetically. It took me several minutes to realize that we were all there alphabetically. I honestly thought. Lasker, Lawford, Lytton it went, right. We were the last three of the L's. It was quite natural that I would be beside her. But it was part of the myth that they. . . . That, incidentally, is always a large part of success. There is a certain mythology, a certain mystique, that goes with success. There's no doubt about it. Part of it was that people didn't want to march in the Stevenson parade because they believed that there were cameras there shooting pictures of everybody in the Stevenson parade and that the Kennedys would be damned sore if you marched in the Stevenson parade, even if you were for them. But you, just as an emotional thing. . . . Which my wife and daughter did. They said it was their final tribute to Adlai Stevenson, and yet there were people in that march who believed pictures were being taken and you were going to be in deep trouble if you did it. It was part of the Kennedy mystique at the time.

GRELE: How was the California delegation formed?

LYTTON: How was it formed?

GRELE: Yes.

LYTTON: How was it chosen, do you mean?

GRELE: Yes.

LYTTON: Well, in the first place the governor, being the governor, he's the titular and real head of the party at that time. That is, it doesn't make any difference if he is or not. Under California law, to say the least, a delegation runs in support of somebody. It doesn't run uncommitted. Well, it may, but it runs in support of somebody. Now this was the Pat Brown delegation. You were voting as a voter in the Democratic primary you would vote for the Brown delegation or some other delegation, the Brown delegation overwhelmingly being the winner. That means that the head, whom you vote for, gets to pick the whole delegation. The governor could name every member of that delegation in advance, in advance of the election. Your name was on the ballot in your district. He named according to the geographic distribution, and he picked his delegation.

GRELE: Did he also pick it in terms of their commitments to the various candidates?

LYTTON: Yes, yes, of course, he did. There were so many Symington people, so many Johnson people--preponderantly Kennedy people because by now Pat had made his deal with Jack Kennedy. He realized that he couldn't make it and that Kennedy would make it and that was the way to go. It was preponderantly Kennedy people, then Symington, Johnson, and there were a few, not Humphrey, but Stevenson people. Even though Stevenson had no prayer, there were a number of his people in order to keep the masses of party, CDC people and so forth, happy. That's how it split.

GRELE: Then did he know that the delegation would break as it did when they were finally released?

LYTTON: He had reasonably to assume it, but it sometimes is very difficult to persuade the non-initiate of the vast naivete of which our governor is capable. People don't quite believe this. I think that Pat thought that he could control that delegation a lot better than as it turned out he could. Remember he had never been governor before, so he had things to learn in that regard.

RIVET: Bart, it's getting to be that time.

or  
BANK:

LYTTON: I'm all right. I'm all right. I'm all right. I'll be a little bit late. It's okay. I don't mind another ten minutes or so.

GRELE: Could you relate to us the circumstances at the meeting of the delegation where you argued against commitment to Stevenson--the story you had related to me earlier?

LYTTON: Well, actually only the uninitiated believe that anything really happens at a party convention in which the delegates play any real role. In most cases the delegates claim no real role whatsoever. They go through dummy exercises at best. The determinations are made by a small handful, the coterie, the establishment of power, power center, whatever it may be for that state's delegation. So the arguments can be in one form or another, but they aren't necessarily meaningful.

GRELE: At the same time there was a movement to replace Paul Ziffren as the national committeeman?

LYTTON: Yes, yes. As a matter of fact, Paul had already been replaced by the time of the Convention.

GRELE: Did this have anything to do with the Kennedy . . .

LYTTON: Paul served through the Convention but he was serving as a lame duck.

GRELE: Did this have anything to do with the Kennedy organization drive in California?

LYTTON: Oh, no question about it, no question about it that Paul Ziffren's role. . . . He was assumed to be for Adlai Stevenson or, to say the least, I don't think that that's a correct reading of what Paul was attempting to do. My own reading, one with which I'm sure he would have some degree of disagreement, but my own reading was that Paul Ziffren was not so much committed to Stevenson as he was trying to make for himself a bargaining position, a point of departure whereupon he could offer and trade with the Kennedy or any other forces. He was trying to remain loose, as the saying goes, so that he could make a trade. He waited too long. He was loose too long. He was loose so long he was loose outside the corral and, therefore, in the wild horse pack. Had he made a commitment earlier, even to somebody else, this may not have happened to him. You see, it didn't have to be necessarily to Kennedy. He had to make a commitment. Now the California delegation was pretty damned important to that first squeak-through because there were many people who believed--and we'll never know--that if Kennedy couldn't make it on the second ballot, he couldn't make it at all. And that's probably true.

So, therefore, Ziffren might have played it down the line differently. Say he played with Johnson, which wasn't likely. . . . He and Johnson couldn't play together. In fact, that's just undialectic because it couldn't happen. Ziffren did a great deal to bring the Convention to Los Angeles. In order to do so he enlisted certain people--I was among them--to make commitments that he could positively deliver in order to get the Convention here. And I was one of those two or three people he used to make these commitments of guarantees. We would guarantee that they could raise a certain amount of money. We would guarantee it. I did individually. He went through several people and then dumped them when the Convention was finally assembled. Once he had his Convention, for whatever reason, he chose to ignore these people, at least me, in Convention arrangements. It was evident that he was going to control all the tickets. He and Paul Butler had apparently some kind of a compact worked out between them, some relationship, and they were going to control the Convention by the tickets. They could pack the galleries, which in the [Wendell L.] Willkie thing, you know, was so important, for example, in Philadelphia. The best laid plans of national committeemen oft go a-gley, and he did because he failed to reckon with some reckonable people. He failed to reckon with Ed Pauley and he failed to reckon with me. Pauley he had taken the control away from--Pauley had it--and me he had dumped after



using me. He used my commitments so he could make these guarantees, not the money, just the commitment, and then he let other people move in. He also had outfoxed at that time Jesse Unruh and his then shadow Gene Wyman.

I got together with Pauley who had been very badly treated in that particular instance, I thought, and I also got together with Jesse Unruh, and we determined that Paul Ziffren had overplayed his hand, that he had foreclosed us from being active and significant in any role in the Convention. He and Paul Butler had closed us out. I was the liaison between Pauley and his forces and Unruh and his. We determined that Ziffren had it. Now the question was how could we knock Ziffren off, what did we have to do. This is the first credit I'm going to take now--though I took one other piece of credit, yes, that I told Jack Kennedy he needed money. I'll never forget his eyes. Now this is the second one I will take. It's a very simple one. It has no greath depth to it. It sounds rather superficial and it was. But it was important. I said, "We will never knock Paul Ziffren off . . . ." We wanted to knock him off so he would not be effective at the Convention. Now you know Jesse Unruh was part of the Kennedy forces. Pauley was Johnson, but we needed that. "We will never knock him off unless we replace him in kind." "What do you mean?" I said, "Paul Ziffren is Jewish. Paul Ziffren is Southern California. Paul Ziffren is a liberal. Paul Ziffren is articulate, attractive politically. And we have to get a like figure." "Well, who in the hell will that be?" I said, "Very simple. Stanley Mosk. He's Jewish, Southern California, liberal. If we can talk Stanley Mosk into doing this, then we have the one man we can knock Ziffren off with because we'll turn back the ire of the ultra-liberals, they also love Mosk; it isn't going to be a race issue, we're not knocking him off because he's Jewish, you see; and it isn't going to be Southern California versus Northern California. He's our man. So how are we going to get Stanley Mosk?"

Actually, Pat saw to it that he lent his plane to Stanley and his wife Edna to fly down and have dinner with me because they decided I was the guy who could persuade Stanley. Stanley was the attorney general at the time and he said, "Now what the hell do I want to be national committeeman for? I can't think of one good reason for it." His wife wanted him to be national committeeman, Edna, she's very ambitious. She wanted him to be national committeeman. She liked the idea, but Stanley said, "Look, Paul and I are friends. Why would I take out after him, A, and B, what would I want to be national committeeman for anyway? I'm the attorney general now." I said, "Stanley, insofar as your being friends is concerned, you're supporting Kennedy and Paul is supporting Stevenson." He said, "Yes, I'm committed to Kennedy." Stanley was the first in California of the public officials to become committed to Kennedy, you know. I said, "All right. So, therefore, you're doing it on the basis of a presidential election; it's not a personal thing. And Paul wouldn't

hesitate, as you know from the past." He said, no, he knew that. I said, "All right, now, secondly, why would you want to be national committeeman?" This was at a dinner at Chasen's restaurant in late May, 1960. Pat had sent him down by his own plane and to get back-- from Sacramento, that is--just to have this dinner with me. He thought maybe I could persuade him because Stanley respected me and we were very fond of each other. I said, "In the second place, you need a national forum. You're very well known in California, but you're not well known at all outside of California. You've got to get a national forum like a (Herbert) Lehman, you know, or a [Jacob K.] Javits or what have you"--not Javits it wasn't so much then, it was somebody else--a Lehman or a . . . . From Connecticut.

GRELE: [Abraham A.] Ribicoff.

LYTTON: "Ribicoff and so on. You have to get this. Now national committeeman will give it to you. You don't have to do a damn thing as national committeeman, nothing. You hire a professional and a girl and you run an office, and you'll have enough funds to do that. That's no problem. For the winner this is no problem. You're in on that. Actually, you don't have to do a damn thing as national committeeman but attend two meetings in four years. But you have a forum. Anytime you want to pop off, anytime you want to get in the papers, there you've got . . ." He said, "I've got it as attorney general." I said, "But you don't have it in New Hampshire, and you don't have it in South Carolina. When you want a national forum, you're the national committeeman and you say something and you're in the national press. You'll be on 'Meet the People.' You'll be on this and that." He said, "Maybe I don't want to be" and this and that. So anyhow, however, his wife said he did want to be, and so he decided he would go with us. Then we proceeded then to mount a campaign for Stanley Mosk for national committeeman.

This severed, I believe, permanently a relationship between Mosk and Ziffren, not an unheard of thing in politics as you know. But Mosk then became our man. It was very easy to mount a campaign. It wasn't hard. Ziffren was supposed to be absolutely untouchable. He was among the unknockables, the untouchables, and immovables, and it was felt that it couldn't be done at all, but it was done and it was done very, very simply.

GRELE: Was he a delegate to the Convention?

LYTTON: Who?

GRELE: Ziffren.

LYTTON: Oh yes, yes, and he was national committeeman through the Convention. It's at the end of the Convention, the last day, that the new national committee takes over.

GRELE: Did this cause problems within the delegation? In terms of the governor's control of the delegation?

LYTTON: Oh yes, of course. It was a split delegation. There's no doubt about it. Pat could never get 100 percent. . . . Pat was trying to show that he controlled the delegation and controlled California in order to have muscle with Kennedy, and he wanted everybody to vote for Kennedy. Of course, everybody didn't, as you know. He never was able to get a full vote for Kennedy.

GRELE: Did his inability to control the delegation harm him with the party professionals like Jess Unruh?

LYTTON: It didn't help. It wasn't a plus. Can you stop that a moment?

BEGIN SIDE II, TAPE I

GRELE: Mr. Lytton, you were aboard the Caroline with the President when he traveled to Youngstown, Ohio?

LYTTON: Yes, that was approximately October 3, or 4, 5--somewhere in that time in 1960. I was invited aboard the Caroline to discuss with the president the handling of his positions in regard to tight money and easy money and what positions he should take. I had requested, incidentally, I had requested. . . . Is this important? Do you want to kill that for just a moment? (tape recorder off. . . .resumes) We were discussing, you and I, we were discussing just before we had the tape recorder on, on the way to setting up, some of the things you'd like to know, and if I may arrogate unto myself the editorial capacity here for a moment, I think that your question in terms of the Youngstown trip ties in so closely to the question I believe you want to ask about the financing of the campaign that it might be well if you'll allow me to tell it in the order that I think will to some extent answer both questions.

GRELE: Sure.

LYTTON: To begin with, it's a matter of congressional record that my wife and I were the largest single contributors to the Kennedy campaign in 1960. Whether that is certain or not, I don't know. I only know that it is in the Congressional Record. I also know that the Congressional Record doesn't begin to report the size of the contribution and that I was never asked. I never made those reports. So the congressional report shows that thirty-six thousand, one hundred dollars was contributed by my wife and me to the Kennedy campaign. Now the fact is that it was a great, great deal more than that but that the reason probably that the Congressional Record shows this. . . . I find amusement in the fact that it's one hundred dollars higher than the

top Republican report of gift. The top Republican gift shown--which has been published, these things have been published and they're available--is thirty-six thousand dollars by whomever. I don't remember. It's in Harper's. We have a copy.

GRELE: Yes, Fortune.

LYTTON: Fortune and also the congressional report itself and it's in published books and so on--that we're shown to have given one hundred more, which I thought most convenient in the congressional report. How they arrive at these grab figures, I haven't the vaguest notion. In spite of the fact that I served as state finance chairman for the Democratic party in California for approximately five years, two and a half terms, and in spite of the fact that I served as so-called national finance committeeman, whatever that is, in the period of the campaign, and that I was involved in countless fund raising--oh, countless is a big word; let's say in any number of fund-raising--events which raised several million dollars, and that I have this plaque which was given to me the very night of the party in Washington which the president attended, the only private party that was of record that he had attended, I'll be damned if I know how they ever count up who gave what because in the first place modern campaigning is so inordinately expensive. The type of media that you have to use, it isn't like the old days when you advertised, when your total campaign expenses revolved around window cards for the most part which merchants put in, under pressure, some billboards--they came in later--newspaper ads, which were all relatively inexpensive. Now we talk about television where one single nationwide broadcast may cost from two hundred to six hundred thousand dollars. One broadcast costs that. If you're going to do eight, ten, or twelve during a campaign, that's going to be millions of dollars for a national campaign.

Now let's think about mailings, Ronald. See, I performed an analysis at that time of the cost of campaigning and proposed to the president --that's also aboard the Caroline which we'll come to in a few moments, I hope; I hope we'll get aboard then--that a commission be appointed to examine the cost of campaigning because let's take one mailing in the state of California. I'm familiar with that. If one were to mail to every registered Democrat one mailing, just one, sir, one mailing to every registered Democrat in this state of ours, I think that we would find that we cannot do it for less than six hundred thousand dollars. Now that'll probably flip you if you think about that. It should. Why? Because we're talking about millions of people, aren't we, several million people. Now it is impossible to use the cheapest form--and if you use the cheapest, you won't be effective--but to use the cheapest form of postcard mailing



with printing on it, you can't beat eight to ten cents. To do anything effective, it has to cost twelve to fifteen-eighteen cents, to do anything that will be effective in the campaign--a slate mailing as it's called with just who to vote for, not even for an individual but for a whole slate we'll say. Why, just a slate mailing just naming who you should vote for, we would allow twelve cents, we'll say, per voter. If you only use your own party, if you don't attempt to hit the other party, in the state of California twelve cents times four million--and we have something over four million registered Democrats--is five hundred thousand dollars. Now when you talk about several mailings and when you talk about mailings across the United States in as many areas as possible and you talk about billboards, you talk about radio, television--spot announcements and programs, both. . . . Spot announcements, one minute may cost on one big network station two-three thousand dollars. That's just in one area. And then you talk about jet airplanes, if you're not the President of the United States. And he wasn't. Of course, they weren't using jets then in the '60 campaign, but you talk about big airplanes. The Caroline only carried the Kennedy party, and the rest of us flew in DC-6's on most of the whistle stops. I was on four whistle stop tours, part of the time. On four whistle stop tours I was invited--one in California, which was a railroad, and three airplane tours. You talk about these costs; then you talk about a staff, and you come in and take half of all a hotel, depending on size, for one night; and an advance staff that sets up the meetings--that advance staff has to be many, many people to do its job--and then the staff traveling and all the accommodations for the press that they'll want and your publicity department, and your advertising department; and you add all these things together--your research and so on--you're talking now about tens of millions of dollars.

Now how those tens of millions of dollars are raised I am sure is a mystery even to those who raise it. This is hard to believe, but it's so. The reason is that, literally, the right collector knoweth not what the left collector doeth. The fact is that each of us takes on a portion of that responsibility. No one man can do it all. No one man at the head of it really knows exactly how all of this damn money was collected. It can be through advertising books which now have been voted out by Congress which theoretically corporations advertised and had a deductible item. It can be by dinners, anywhere from ten dollars a plate--a five dollar bean plate dinner was served in Minneapolis one night when I was there when Kennedy appeared during the campaign and we stayed at the Radisson Hotel, I believe; those campaign costs were paid by the campaign, they had to be, but the five dollar bean bag dinner raised a little bit of money--on to hundred-dollar-a-plate and even thousand-dollar-a-plate. Now the first thousand-dollar-a-plate dinner was put on by actually me and my personal aide who I wish were here to talk to you all, Glen Wilson, who's in that picture up there at the time we were in Georgetown. Glen Wilson and I actually put together the first thousand-dollar-a-plate. Now think of the arrogance

of a thousand-dollar-a-plate dinner. Yet we had one for sixty people, and later they got to be much bigger than that. Our first one was sixty paid people down at the Ambassador Hotel during the campaign where sixty people paid a thousand dollars a plate to be there. As a result, many of them didn't bring their wives because they were a thousand dollars, too. We organized the first one. Now the first hundred-dollar-a-plate dinner was quite a departure, but the first thousand dollar was fantastic. Yet, a few years later when he was president, we were able to sell and a hundred sixty people paid a thousand dollars to go to a dinner at the Beverly Hilton.

Actually, what had happened in political finance--and the transformation took place during the Kennedy campaign--is that the small contribution ceased to be the method because, talking about big expenditures, you looked for big contributions. Various things induced people to give. Now the president, that is, the presidential candidate is, insofar as possible, insulated by those around him so that he doesn't have to accept the money. He can accept the money while he is running for the nomination and does. They all did. That is, personally they did, to my knowledge. Johnson and Symington, Humphrey and so on, they personally solicited and accepted money during the period of the nomination. But once he becomes the candidate, then a whole new quantity and quality takes place. He must be insulated from directly accepting contributions of any size because there must be no implication that he sold anything. He must also be protected, not just because of the implication, so that the giver, the donor, doesn't think that he has had a direct deal with the president should he be elected because that would be very difficult indeed. Now, of course, all big givers try to figure ways to mount this. They try to figure, "How in the hell am I going to get over this wall so that the candidate knows personally that I have given this for sure?" Because otherwise a so-called bag man, spelled b-a-g--and it's a good name for him, a bag man, because it's a play on words in my mind as well. He has to be a bag as well as carry one. In any event, a so-called bag man does the collecting. Now, actually, there is a vast fight goes on between those who collect money as to who carries the check to the candidate, that in itself--not for the honor, mind you, Ron, but for the recognition you see. When the Republican party--**[Thomas C.]** Tom Clark always told this story. I know what happened in ours, too, but I can tell it on them easier. When they collected the hundred thousand dollars for Dick Nixon--the Republican Central Committee of Los Angeles County--our former counsel was the vice chairman, and he told about the enormous inside fight that went on as to who carried that check to Washington to give it to the Nixon headquarters there, you see, to get the credit for bringing the money in. Now so many means are used to bring this money in legitimately. By legitimately, sir, I mean within the law because you don't want to give over three thousand dollars, or a husband and wife may jointly give six thousand dollars, because you don't want to be subject to gift tax. You can give three

thousand dollars to anyone in one year without paying gift tax. So that's why the three thousand. Many people don't know why three thousand dollars is the standard political gift for an individual--top. You'll see that any smart person never gave over three thousand dollars to a candidate through one means. Now I'll tell you another means whereby you give more. [laughter]

GRELE: That's a clarification. [laughter]

LYTTON: Now I'm going to tell you something here that I doubt has ever been recorded, shall we say. It's part of the oral history of anything. It's very quietly done and known. Because how do you get past the three thousand dollars? Now you'll see many contributions of five thousand also--five thousand because that's another limitation placed upon political giving. It shall not be over five thousand--and that's a husband and wife, typically, who will give the five thousand dollar contribution because it still avoids the gift tax and for a federal office that is the limit that you may give to a committee for that person. So while it's done, it's through many, many committees. Now let us suppose that I am inclined to give a great deal more--any amount more, but we'll speak of a great deal more--than the five thousand dollar limitation, we'll say, or the three gift tax for an individual or the five for a husband and wife to give to any committee for a federal office. Well, there are many devices, sir, but the simplest and the most efficient and the one that apparently escapes Congress with great regularity. . . . And, incidentally, remember that congressmen collect political money all the time and they are very loathe to have a full--they don't want a short-arm inspection. They don't mind getting down to their underwear, but they don't want a true short-arm inspection because they're the ones who would feel it most in raising their own funds. They don't want any skeletons disturbed so, therefore, Congress never really takes a hard look at political finance. And they'd better, incidentally. But they haven't taken any hard look at political finance. How do you escape, or how do you surmount, the five thousand dollar limitation? Well, one of the very simple devices that is in use and one that I used because I didn't do anything at any time--I'm able to talk because I'm persuaded that I've never done anything improper in political giving. I don't give cash; I give it by check, which I think is the right way. I give it under the rules of the game, openly under the rules of the game, and here's how. I was advised to give to--I was given a list. I said, "I am prepared to give a great deal more to this campaign." I was enthused. I was hypnotized, shall we say. I don't think drugs were used. I think the brainwashing was very simple; I think it was the standard method--ninety-six hours without sleep. If you take a man along with you on some whistle-stopping, you see, you give him ninety-six hours without sleep and you can break him down to do anything. Quite seriously, though, here's the way it would work. A list was made out for my benefit of state committees that I could give money to--the New Jersey state committee

we'll say or the Oregon, or whatever, state committees. You'd give money to that state committee, which they got the check and then saw that it was earmarked to come back to their campaign. It had to be spent by that state committee--or at least most of it. Typically, the state committee got a little bit of it. Sort of an arbitrage, as you know, sort of a brokerage commission they got out of it. But they agreed that they would spend that money on whatever the campaign needed. So since there are fifty state committees, you could give two hundred fifty thousand dollars with ease by giving to each state committee. Now I don't know if anybody ever did that. But then in addition to the state committees there are all these other organizations set up, like Citizens for Kennedy.

GRELE:                   Republicans.

LYTTON:                   Republicans for Kennedy or whatever. The big ones were like the Citizens for Kennedy, Businessmen for. . . .

                          These are separate organizations. They make no accounting to anyone. Actually, it's astonishing how loose we are with political funds. I have often wondered how much is skimmed off the top--not by candidates, usually. There's a very little dottering. (That's a nice word.) I don't think there's much dottering done and skimming off the top. I'm speaking when you get to presidential campaigns, I doubt there's any, and, heavens knows, in the case of Jack Kennedy we couldn't even begin to assume it. On the contrary his problem undoubtedly was--and I know that it was--his problem was to spend his own money without looking like he was spending his own money, as I told you in an earlier portion. His problem was the precise opposite of skimming. So we'll assume that there's very little skimming.

I think there's a great deal of skimming in American politics at lower levels. I think that candidates, even losers, often live off of their political contributions, and I think that we've barely scratched that. But there are many who run perennially, never hoping to win office but hoping to collect enough political campaign funds and spend only about a certain portion of them and keep the rest as gifts--the dottering I was talking about. The way this money is raised is, as I said, varied. I remember [Matthew H.] Matt McCloskey who was the campaign finance chairman telling me that the way we ought to do it in California was we make assessments, we decide that a certain class of employee in the state government it was twenty-five dollars, another class is fifty, another is a hundred. I said, "We don't do that. We have civil service." He said, "Well, you're crazy if you don't do it. Now look, Bart, in Pennsylvania I raised eight hundred thousand dollars, the most ever raised at a dinner--in Harrisburg. I raised eight hundred thousand dollars, and the way I raised the eight hundred thousand dollars was exactly that. Each state employee, each Democrat, was told what his assessment was and, by God, he ponied it up." We don't dare do this in California. We have a relatively clean state in these matters with



very little corruption. That's because we're so nice and rich anyway, I guess. [laughter] Corruption hasn't had time to set in. We're like young, strong teeth, you see, and they haven't gotten through the enamel with the corrosive things yet. And also we have better law on these matters. So I had to disappoint Matt and tell him that in California we couldn't raise money that way. And we made no attempt. We wouldn't dare make an attempt. Anyone who made an attempt would be out of office--any attempt if he were an officeholder--because only an officeholder could be effective in such a matter.

Now, all right. I told the powers that be--Hy Raskin, Larry O'Brien and so on--that I would give a certain amount of money, which was much more than the amount reported, but that I wanted to--I had been on these whistle-stop tours; it was not possible on any of them to sit down with Jack Kennedy and really talk to him--I wanted to talk to him about his handling of certain areas where I thought the campaign was missing. I wanted to be able to present my point of view and under that circumstance. I said, "I'm not asking any damn thing for me. Just, I want to advise him in terms of the campaign. I will then meet you and give you some money." And I had these checks ready for these various state committees and congressional, other races, and so on where the money would come over to the campaign. It's six years later, and I don't see any reason why I can't tell you this. I would have at that time if anybody asked me because I didn't see that there was anything except openness on it. Now I met [Stephen E.] Steve Smith in my hotel suite on this understanding, and I gave Steve Smith checks for more than twice--I won't tell you the figures--I'll just say it was more than twice the amount reported that I gave to the campaign, the thirty-six thousand dollars, that particular day. And that was not the only money that I gave for the campaign. I also gave thirty-five thousand dollars to pay for Lyndon Johnson's train through the South. That's another story. But through the Kennedy campaign I gave it through Steve Smith.

I then accompanied. . . . Steve and I went out to the National Airport in Washington, to the Butler Aviation entrance, and went aboard the Caroline to fly to Youngstown, Ohio, with the president. This was after his first debate but before the others. I was taken to the aft cabin alone to sit alone with Jack Kennedy. He started off asking me what I thought about the debate because that was the subject foremost in his mind--how had he made out in the debate. He was checking everybody. He was getting readings. I told him that I thought, as so many people must have, I thought he was infinitely superior, that he had it made as far as those debates were concerned. I was the first Californian he got to talk to. It was right after them, and he was very eager to hear about responses in California. I gave him those responses. I then got to the subject I wanted to talk about, and we spent over thirty minutes on the matter. I told him that he could no longer duck, as he was trying to duck, the issue of whether he was for easy money or tight money.

He said to me, "I wish to hell I understood the issue." I said, "Well, look, maybe I can explain it. Nobody understands money. Don't let these bastards up in the front of the plane tell you they understand money, Jack." No, now he was senator, pardon me. We all called him senator. Most of us called him senator by now, now that he was the nominee. I said, "Senator, don't let them tell you they understand money because no one man on the earth understands money any more than any one man on earth understands women." He said, "That I appreciate." I said, "Nobody does. You understand parts of it. But I know this much. I know that you'll do a very dangerous thing if you take a hard position right now attacking the Eisenhower administration on their money policies for yourself. In fact you're going to find when you take office. . . . Forget the if, as, and when. You're going to take office. You are going to straight-jacket yourself, you're going to nail yourself to a wall if you take a position that what the Eisenhower administration is wrong because they're not doing enough of what they're doing. You are going to have to do more of it. (And that's what's happened historically incidentally--more of it.) They're not tightening the money supply enough for the interests of the United States in its world position and for keeping away from inflation. Actually, money should be tightened further." He said, "What does that really mean?" because there was one lovely, ingenuous quality to Jack Kennedy and it's the same quality perhaps I shared. I didn't pretend I knew a painting I didn't know or something. He didn't pretend. He didn't have to effect. He was secure enough within, perhaps, that he didn't have to effect that he knew what he did not know. He didn't have to impress me that he was a savant economically, that he was an economist. He was not. Neither am I, but I knew more than he knew, and he knew it and he, therefore, was picking my brain. It didn't mean he was going to be necessarily influenced by it, but he was doing a good sharp listening job, trying so hard to grasp the concepts. What I told him was startling to him and he said so--that he was going to have to pursue more of the policy of the Eisenhower regime not less of it. Therefore, if he came out damning the Eisenhower regime for their tightening up the money supply, he was going to find this his own cross to bear the rest of his administration because he would have no choice in my judgment--and, I said, I thought of many real thinking economists as well--but to somewhat further a little bit tighten up the money supply. I pointed out to him, however, if you overtighten it, it's just like brakes on a car. If you keep using them going down a mountain or something, if you overuse your brakes, you'll burn them out. So it had to be done gently. It wasn't to be done in one fell swoop. I wanted to get through to him what really tight money was. I assume that no matter how delicate the ears of anyone who hears this, they have. . . . I'd like to tell you what I told him but. . . . Of course, you can always get it off the tape I suppose, can't you?

GRELE:           Yes.

LYTTON: All right because I'd like to tell you what I really told him there because I'll never forget his laugh so long as I remain alive. I shall not forget how he laughed when I told him this and he said to me, "For the first time I begin to understand the damn thing." I said, "Senator, tight money is like a whore. She may be expensive, but she's not necessarily tight." [laughter] He got an enormous boot out of that because it was a semantic problem that he was involved in and he didn't realize it--that tight money merely meant expensive money. It's a euphemism. It means that money is expensive. It's a euphemism that joined. . . . It was a conjoint thing from a century ago--well, William Jennings Bryan anyway--that people think tight money always means that there isn't enough money. That is not necessarily the case. The case is that money becomes more expensive via national policy or a combination of other forces, usually national policy, like you've been seeing the interest rate rises in all the central banks of Europe, for instance, in the last several days. National policy has tightened money. How have they tightened it? Not by shortening its supply, no sir. They tightened it by raising its cost, presumably, therefore driving out of the market certain marginal borrowers. They can also tighten it by shortening its supply. It can be either way, and I explained this to him in this kind of language. Now he had had these explanations made to him by some brilliant men--Arthur Schlesinger, Seymour Harris, [J. Kenneth] Kenny Galbraith. Men like that had attempted--[William McChesney] Martin--to explain to him the real meaning of this. But he told me that this was the first time he saw the whole thing and what it really meant, that he shouldn't confuse in his mind tightness with the volume of supply. And he hadn't seen that before. That's simple and they had neglected--not neglected, it apparently hadn't struck them to explain it in. . . . Well, they naturally wouldn't explain it in these particular terms and all that. Now he said, "All right, what do we do about it?" It's all well and good to give him advice that he shouldn't hang his administration in the future on tight money--what do we do about it? I said that I thought the approach should be a semantic one because you're dealing with semantics, that he should come out saying, "We are neither for an easy dollar or a hard dollar. We're for an honest dollar." He said, "What does that mean?" I said, "What's the difference?" [laughter] You can't come out for a hard dollar, you see, because you're going to irritate labor if you come out for a hard dollar. You're going to irritate certain small town banks. All kinds of groups that you're going to irritate with a hard dollar, you see. And you can't come out for an easy dollar because you're going to lose Wall Street, and you have some support there, and conservatives and people who are worried about inflation. So, therefore, to hell with what this means. Just say that you're not for an easy dollar or a hard dollar, you're for an honest dollar." He said to me, "What does that mean?" He was delighted with this, so he said "Come on with me."

I'd been in there about forty minutes, and we walked out and we talked to his men out there. He said, "Bart has something here I like. I want you to write it down. I think we ought to use it." Not only did they use it, they were nice enough when he made the speech to the Business Council up at the Waldorf [Hotel] four years later than Adlai Stevenson made his, as I mentioned yesterday, where I participated they sent me a copy of the speech in which they took this approach. They played it strictly that he was for a dependable dollar, an honest dollar, things like that. It can't. . . . And I'll tell you what happened. I'll tell you what happened, and I take great pride in this.

Within forty-eight hours the outflow of American funds stopped, and it was laid to the fact that Kennedy, who was now considered to be the front runner, was saying that he was not going to go for an easy dollar. The business community, the financial community, read it--they read it correctly--Kennedy's not going to come out for an easy dollar, he's not going to be for cheap money. That was great. Now on the other hand it did not send any alarms into the labor market and so on. It worked beautifully and I'm very, very pleased with it indeed. That was the thing that occurred on the trip to Youngstown.

GRELE: Was Seymour Harris on the plane?

LYTTON: I don't remember. I think I have the manifest, but I don't remember if he was on the plane.

GRELE: I was wondering what his advisers, his academic advisers, thought about this.

LYTTON: They seemed to like the language. Incidentally, that's not the story I told you about the lady of easy virtue. But I didn't want to use the euphemism there. I wanted to tell the story as I told it to him. I felt that the trip was most productive and apparently so did they. After he was elected, after the election, I visited him at Georgetown with my personal aide, Glen Wilson, but Glen did not sit in the conference with us. We conferred in December at Georgetown for about thirty-five minutes in his study.

GRELE: On this problem or. . . .

LYTTON: No. He was now the president-elect and we talked politics and many things. He asked me what I thought of his brother Bobby being the Attorney General. I gave him some advice he chose to ignore.

GRELE: You mean you said it wouldn't be a good appointment?



LYTTON: Yes, I said that I thought that it would be received badly by the people, that they would resent Bobby being Attorney General, that his lack of experience in this particular area was such that I felt it would be badly taken. Why didn't Bobby run for senator from Massachusetts? And he grinned like hell at that. Maybe he was thinking of Teddy. [laughter] But anyway I said to him, "That's the thing he should go for--senator--and then build up to it." So I was wrong in my counsel in that particular regard, in terms of what he did. He went ahead and did the other.

He talked about the feeling in California at the time and the West. He told me how much he appreciated things I had done in many directions. I had done a lot of fund raising for him, and he recalled the time in the Caroline and he said that was valuable, that it saved him from coming into office with a greater outflow of American funds, that it proved to be a very real thing in terms of the country--his not knocking Eisenhower, which would have done the opposite. He now knew, would have increased the flow, his aides were persuaded. So he was very grateful for that and some other political advice. In the course of that I asked him--I had the gall to ask him--if he and his wife would be our guests of honor at a party I would like to throw mostly for western delegations during Inaugural week, and he said he didn't see why not, which was very pleasing. And he walked out then with Glen and me. The party itself was held in Washington for about six hundred guests at the Statler Hilton, and it was the only private one he attended.

GRELE: Before we get to that, were you ever asked to come to Washington in any official capacity?

LYTTON: No, no. I had made it known earlier that it would not be possible for me so I wasn't asked. I had made it known quite early, that I had no ambition for, in fact could not. I said I could be of intermittent service on assignments if I could be of help, but I couldn't take a job in the White House. I had a young company that had just gone public, and it needed my fullest attention.

GRELE: On to the party. Why did he choose to go to that and only that party?

LYTTON: Oh, dear, dear, dear. (sigh) That's quite a sigh, isn't it. I know why, but I'm hesitant to say why. I mean, I think I know why. I can't know another man's mind but I think I can read it pretty well. At the very beginning of the campaign, I rode a whistle-stop train the length of California, his railroad whistle-stop here in California. I was taken back to see him alone. We by now had become political friends, and I was one of those ushered back to see him alone. Not many people were, of course, because

how many could he see alone in the rear car where he had his own room. It wasn't a bedroom. It was a--I haven't traveled on a train for so long--his was a combination car, railroad executives' combination car. This was larger than a bedroom, a section. No. What do you call it? It wasn't a section.

GRELE:           Compartment.

LYTTON:          Compartment. No, bigger than a compartment. It was bigger. Whatever it was. Anyway, he was very, very tired and. . . . I'm going to skip that.

GRELE:           Okay.

LYTTON:          No, I just think I. . . . I'd love to tell it to you, but it's one of those things I'd have to tell you "Look, it's all right to use when I'm dead." It's highly revealing about this president of the United States. It's enormously revealing.

GRELE:           Well, you know, you set the restrictions on the tape and the . . .

LYTTON:          I do? I can take this out . . .

GRELE:           Yes.

LYTTON:          And we'll tell you that you can put this in the library only after. . . . Well, I'll give a number of years.

GRELE:           We'll make up two transcripts. We'll make up two transcripts, one that does not contain anything that you feel . . .

LYTTON:          All right. All right. Now I have your assurance on that regard. Okay. Mike, you've heard the assurance. Would you tell me so?

BANK:            Yes, I've heard the assurance and our machine has heard the assurance.

LYTTON:          All right. All right, Fine. Not only the tape but I mean that you're here is what I was establishing as well because I'm telling something here. It's both re. . . . I mean, it's very revealing about Jack Kennedy. At the same time it's material you will quickly know I don't talk about.

I don't know if you know by now, Ron, that I once appeared before the House Un-American Activities Committee as a witness.

GRELE: No, I didn't.

LYTTON: Well, I didn't assume that you necessarily knew though a hell of a lot of people know. I was what is called a friendly witness, but I was the friendly witness different than probably any other who appeared before the committee. I appeared as a witness before the House Un-American Activities Committee as a friendly witness who gave them hell, and utter and total hell, for what they were doing to people--the wrecking of reputations, in the forcing people to name friends, and things like this--at the same time that I was a friendly witness, not an unfriendly witness, and in which I told of my own membership in the Communist party--which may come to you as a bit of a surprise at this juncture. This is highly revealing about the president. I have to background it first by explaining that I myself had appeared and had said that I was a member of the Communist party. I did not take a Fifth. That was at one time when I was a screen writer. You probably don't know that I was a screen writer.

GRELE: No, I didn't.

LYTTON: Well, I was probably the Hollywood eleventh and all that. I wasn't one of the ten. At the same time that I told them--I made no denial because it's my nature; I don't dissemble and all that and I don't deny anything; it was so; so I told them so, I was very difficult with them on the rest of the thing. I made quite an impression. It was on television in 1953, and I made quite an impression on the public and so on at the time. I was just beginning to be very successful. That's why I'm in the mortgage business when I was a writer before this, screen writer, a very successful one. I apparently made a hell of an impression on the public because it was the height of [Joseph R.] McCarthyism, the very height of McCarthyism at that particular time, and the public was getting damn sick of McCarthy. Apparently, I was the guy who symbolized this, a guy who came in and decently said, "Yes, I was a member when I was a screen writer. There were so damn many screen writers who were. I was a member, but I left. And I don't like anything they did" and so on. Well, when they came to "Who do you want to name?" I only named the Hollywood ten. They'd already been in jail so I wasn't giving them any new names to speak of. And then I gave them hell on the name issue at the end. After they had commended me as a great American, I then said, "Well, before I step down. . . ." (This has to be told to explain it.) I then ripped into them, and I was apparently the first witness in the United States, openly, who got a chance to tell them off. Nobody. . . . And get away with it. The point is I got away with telling them off. I told them off. I thought I was through in business, but the public response was precisely the opposite. I became overnight very well known in Southern California, in California. Overnight. I had everybody but the hard-edged lefts--Communists and leftists--were with me and the hard-edged reactionaries. But the

moderate, the people, I got enormous support out of them, which I didn't anticipate or expect, and my business wasn't over.

But this put a weight upon me as a political figure from there on out. I wasn't active in the Democratic party. I was a member, a registered Democrat, but I hadn't been active in the '52 campaign particularly because I was afraid I might hurt them. Now we come to 1957. I got active in the. . . . In 1956 I got active in the Stevenson campaign and was brought right up to the top very quickly to help write speeches on money and finance for Adlai Stevenson. Hy Raskin brought me up to the top there very fast. I worked with Joe Fowler, the present Secretary of the Treasury, very closely. We traveled together on whistle-stops and wrote these speeches for Adlai Stevenson. I started to get active in the Democratic party. I got active in 1954 in the campaign for governor here because I'd found that instead of this hurting me I was very eagerly sought at the time and so on. Now all this is known to California sophisticates. I'm not telling you something that's secret to California sophisticates. But the reason I was loathe to put it down here is it's from my mouth, (A), I never talk about it. I handle it and apparently that's handled it very well. And newspapers are very decent about it, magazines. Often they come and say, "We'd like to tell this story." They don't know it. They'd like to tell this story because it's a great story of how a guy could be before the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1953, and in 1960-61, be this big in the Democratic party and this big in the national scene, you see, and everything. Now the revelation is this. While this was known to Californians, it wasn't necessarily known nationally. Hy Raskin had me in his compartment aboard that train to get me active in the campaign. He said, "Bart, you're a guy we really need. You can be so damn helpful. Very rarely you find a man who can both raise money for us and also help us in the very campaigning itself." I said, "Well, Jesus, Hy, you know my history. (He knew it from '56.) It might hurt the president. I don't know. (He wasn't the president.) I might hurt Jack, hurt the senator. I don't think. . . . I wouldn't want to do it unless he fully well knew about these things. It just might. . . . I wouldn't want it to hurt him." He said, "Well, let's find out what he thinks." Now this is where we're coming to what's fascinating because two things happened in this campaign--direct opposites. He said, "Let's find out what he thinks." I said, "Well, if you want to. Gee, his mind's so full now. It's a hell of a burden to put on him, but I suppose you're right."

So he left. He left me in his compartment, and he left to see the president--he wasn't the president then--to see Senator Kennedy in the back of the train. He was gone about a half an hour. Of course, he couldn't see him the moment he went back necessarily. He came back, and he said, "I told this all to Jack, and he said he had heard some rumbles about this. So I told him the whole story--that you were concerned with hurting him in some way during the campaign if it came out, even though it had been public knowledge, if some son of a bitch wanted to make something out of it. And I told him." I said, "Well, what's his



response?" He said, "He just looked at me and he said, 'Eh, (I'm going to use a nicer word here for tape purposes.) screw 'em.'" But he used another, more direct Anglo-Saxon four letter word. He said, "That was his whole response. 'Screw 'em. We want Bart in the campaign.'" Now that was Jack Kennedy, and that's a tremendous thing because, you see. . . . And he stayed with that right through. You ask me why the party, and I'll come to that. That was Jack Kennedy. But Lyndon Johnson did exactly the opposite, precisely the opposite.

You're going to hear a story now that only Glen Wilson and I know, really, that's never been in any way. . . . That's why I had to protect this whole thing, you see. I gave great help to Lyndon Johnson's train for the South which many people think won the election. Glen Wilson, my personal aide, was made train manager of that train. I had a run-in with Drew Pearson during the campaign over whether or not he had a contract with me to sponsor him on the air. He was pretty sore, and he put out these pieces that were all over the Convention, on every Convention chair, damning me. He went on one of his vendettas, and I was the subject. Pearson apparently got to. . . . This has been verified since. Pearson has apologized and so on. Pearson apparently, through Leonard Marks got to Johnson and said I was a dangerous guy for Johnson to associate with, did Johnson know of this history of mine. I had been invited aboard the train. I ought to have been; I paid the bulk of the cost of the train. I had been invited aboard the train through the South. Just before boarding the train, we got the message via [Robert G.] Bobby Baker that the Johnson boys were upset about Bart going on the train, maybe he shouldn't go. Glen Wilson and I talked it out. Glen said, "Nuts. (He was the train manager.) Don't pay any attention. They'll forget it by tomorrow," which was a conclusion I wish we hadn't reached. I went aboard that train, was assigned my compartment, slept. . . . We went down the first night, down to somewhere in South Carolina where they went to honor Bobby Baker in his home town. Johnson helicoptered there. I was aboard the train. When I came back aboard the train to pick up there--I spent the night in a hotel--the message came to me that I was persona non grata on the train, and I'd have to leave it. It was both an acutely embarrassing thing and a sickening thud that hit me. As far as I could have it, I had to read it that this was Kennedy-Johnson. I couldn't read it at the time any other way. So Lyndon Johnson bumped me from the train on the basis of the same news that Jack Kennedy said, "Screw 'em." as I put it. I traveled on whistle-stop tours with him and so on. This was very late in the campaign. Now this to me, I think, is a hell of an insight into two men. You take the two men, how they handled the same thing. The one man said, "Come aboard. Stay with us." The other man said, "Get the hell off," because those McCarthyites around him read things differently. Then came the party. Now I believe. . . . You see, I know who preceded me who was not on the scheduled guest list--not guest list. I know who preceded me in seeing Jack Kennedy at Georgetown who was not on an official list they had there of appointments--he was snuck in just ahead of me--was, is it Walter Judd? Judd Walter. . . .

GRELE: Former senator?

LYTTON: Whoever. . . . Is he dead? No, this man's dead. Walters! [Francis E.] Walters.

GRELE: Oh, Walter. That guy Walter . . .

LYTTON: From Pennsylvania.

GRELE: He's a Democrat, yes.

LYTTON: Who was the chairman of the House Un-American Activities Committee and was on it but not chairman when I was in the hearing. Somehow he was snuck in at my appointed time, and then I followed and all that. I haven't any doubt that Jack Kennedy talked to him. "What about this Bart Lytton? What do you think of this guy?" And I know the House Un-American Activities Committee thinks highly of me. I mean, I have lots of reasons to know that they do. They respect me; I'll put it that way. They damn well respect me, and they're scared of me [laughter] for a lot of reasons. And they think highly of me. So I don't doubt that he checked out with him, "Is the guy okay?" because now he's going to be president. "Do you have any doubts about him?" Now I don't know for a fact, but I do know. I do and I don't. I handed my card to Congressman Walters on the way out, and I said, "I was once one of your customers." [laughter] He got a big kick out of it, you know. I said, "I'm Bart Lytton. I was once one of your customers." He just laughed. He didn't say a word, see, and took the card. So I don't have any doubt that he did do that, but that was after I had been aboard his campaign, I had made the four whistle-stop tours with him--the three after the train one and all that. I think that Jack Kennedy was about to be president and felt pretty damn secure now, and with a reasonable check-out that he wasn't dealing with someone that he shouldn't deal with, I think he wanted to give me national recognition--a total national clean-up.

That the president of the United States would go to this man's party, then there could be. . . . He was going to knock it off once and for all, the political implications, the social, any others, in this background item. And that's why I think he picked my party. Plus, I think he was grateful--because he said so--for the fact that very early long before the primaries and so on. I think he also appreciated the advice I had given him not to enter the California primary and why, what he would do. He would only make Brown the enemy but he could win Brown over if he let Brown win. Without taking him on, he could win Brown over. And that with the California delegation. . . . If he hadn't had the California delegation, he couldn't have made it even on the second ballot and he couldn't have made it. I think he appreciated that advice. He appreciated the advice on money--to always take the stance that he did need money. He appreciated the advice on how to handle the question of easy money--hard money. In other words, all the brain picking things that went on there, and the fact that I had both raised a hell of a lot of money for him (came through one time with fifteen thousand dollars so he could make a statewide broadcast here when they didn't have the money and the station wouldn't do it--that day), plus the other money. So I think it was a combination of all these things and that he had decided I was a pretty decent guy, or

whatever else, and we liked each other and he was about to give me national recognition because that's what it amounted to.

GRELE: He enjoyed that party very much, didn't he?

LYTTON: Oh, apparently. You saw pictures and all.

GRELE: Yes.

LYTTON: Apparently. I wonder if I could tell you about that party. It's at that party. . . . Johnson came to that party. Johnson and Lady Bird came, but they wouldn't permit any pictures to be shot, none, because they didn't want to be really associated with me, you see, and all that. They went because Kennedy went. They appeared after he did, and nobody cared. Honestly, nobody cared much that Johnson was there. But when Jack Kennedy came in; we got a taste--the newspapers wrote this up and so on--we got a taste of what it was going to be like to have him as president. We got a taste of how the public was going to respond because wives of senators on through to wives of top politicians, very rich people who had been big contributors and so on, got up on tables to scream and yell when he came in the room. Husbands held wives up. Women went out of their crazy minds then. Now we had there. . . . Mike Mansfield said, "We have a quorum of the Senate, Bart. If you get overcrowded here and the fire department gets rough with you, I'll just call a meeting of the Senate and relieve you," and all that. But it didn't matter who, everybody got up to scream and yell their heads off when he walked in the room. They were wild at his entrance. Apparently, yes, I bet he enjoyed himself, but I don't really know. I can't know that he did. He appeared to. He enjoyed himself that whole week. I don't think at just especially our party, in all objectivity. He enjoyed the accolade he got. You see, this was probably. . . . Remember, he only attended two parties Inaugural week. He attended a private one held by his brother, Bobby. Was it Bobby or Ted? I think it was Bobby held the party for him--the same night. And he attended that private party. Then he came over to our party. Then from there he went on the Caroline to New York where he spent the night. But of course he had . . . . It was great for him to know how beloved he was by the people, how much they expected of him, of course, but how they took him. Because this was really his first public appearance Inaugural week, you see.

We were fortunate. It was Monday night, and it was just before the snows so we had a big turnout. The police were unable to control it. His Secret Service men were just lost there. Actually, nobody was after attacking him, but the crowds just surged inside the party. We had six hundred at the party. It was intended to be for four hundred, but maybe fifty or a hundred snuck in and the rest--we invited a few more people. When he entered--with my daughter on one arm and me on

the other and I was holding my wife's arm, the four of us there--this place just went into a total, wild, crazy pandemonium. Everything went crazy. If it hadn't been for one. . . . Do you know the corps that saved his life? The photographic corps. If it hadn't been for the photographers backing up, as I'm backing up now, with their cameras, about thirty of them, the crowds would have swept through. But they couldn't sweep through the photographers. The photographers kept backing the crowd back. They were much more effective than the police. We had about, oh, I think, eight city policemen and maybe four private police. Nobody anticipated it was going to be this rugged, you see. And maybe he had six Secret Service men. And this was all we had for crowd control at that moment--and some firemen--for crowd control.

Well, they were just swept away. If it weren't for the photographers backing up, he might have lost a leg that night. [laughter] They kept backing as we kept walking forward, you see. Georgie Jessel made a toast to him. He spoke; I spoke. It was real great. After, I was asked by the press corps, "What's it feel like to be the only man in the United States to entertain the president-elect just before Inauguration?" I said, "Well, it just makes me feel that any American boy can grow up to be a friend of the president." [Arthur] Art Hoppe who writes a column out here wrote a vicious column on that. He said, "Any boy with a million dollars for a party can be a friend of the president. Yes sir."

[tape recorder off; resumes]

Well, in the Jesse Unruh thing I want to try to do it as quickly as possible and get to the other. Jesse Unruh and I were having a beef. Jess and I have been intermittently very good friends and political enemies. At this particular time we were having a beef in which Jess had threatened me, something Jess is quick doing. His threats had to do with some of the things I talked of earlier. I owned a couple of little newspapers. [William] Bill Stout, a television commentator now in Viet Nam, CBS, was tops herein Los Angeles, whom I had as editor of one of these little papers and also wrote a column for it, was publisher. Bill was taking on Jess Unruh and Gene Wyman at the time--they were working together--and he wanted me to stop Bill from so doing, to make a brass check pay. I said, "Look, I can't control what he writes or what he says." He said, "The hell you can't. You own the paper." I said, "I know, but that isn't my understanding with him. He doesn't get paid to do what he's doing. That's to give him freedom of expression. I may influence him, Jess, but I can't. . . ." Then he got threatening. He was a little bit loaded, and he got threatening. I decided that I had to knock Unruh on his keister, just had to do it or otherwise he was going to be very inimical to me.

The opportunity came, The opportunity came when [J. Edward] Ed Day resigned as postmaster general and they were going to pick a new postmaster general. There was lots of speculation as to who this postmaster



general was going to be. Quite by accident in Washington I learned talking to a newspaper person down there that there was a check-out being made on Jess Unruh by the FBI for postmaster general and what did I think--it was a newspaper person who asked me--what did I think of this. That's the way I learned it. I phoned Bill Stout from Washington--I was coming back that night--and I said, "Bill, meet me at the airport with a television camera." You see, I couldn't control this guy but I could tell him to meet me with a television camera. [laughter] He said, "What's up?" I said, "I've got the greatest. I've got one that's just going to. . . . I'm not going to tell you on the telephone, Bill. Just trust me." He said, "Well, Bart, I've got to do some preparatory work and all that." So I said, "Well, look, I'm going to take on Big Daddy in a way that's going--by supporting him. I've got the greatest thing going." So Bill didn't, he couldn't meet me. Technically it wasn't. . . . He said, "Let's do it in your office instead the next day" because of the time. The time I'd get in was 6:30. It wouldn't go on the air that night anyway. So the next day on the telephone here I talked to Bill again, and I told him what was up. I said, "Look, Bill, Jess Unruh is being considered for postmaster general. I learned it in Washington. Now we can kill that and kill Jess all with one punch." He said, "How?" I said, "I want you to pick up your honker and call two or three top, prominent Democrats. Call Ed Pauley. Call Dan Kimball. Call Paul Ziffren. A few people like that. . . ." Not Paul. No, this was later. Paul wasn't in that. I told him to call Pauley, call Kimball, maybe call. . . . Oh, I named a few. I said, "And anyone you want to call and ask them who's going to be the postmaster general, who do they think. You're going to get a lot of crud. Nobody's going to give you a name because nobody has any idea. They're all going to tell you they don't know. Then you're going to call me, you see. When you call me, I'm going to tell you Jess Unruh. You're, therefore, going to come out and interview me since I seem to know who's going to be postmaster general." So he said, "Well, I don't dig it, Bart. Why would you want to promote him for. . . ." I said, "This won't promote him. This'll kill him. He can't possibly be postmaster general if I announce it in advance. That's a presidential policy. I'll murder him." He said, "Well, are you sure?" I said, "Sure I'm sure. I'll tell you why. Jess is controversial. They want him to be postmaster general. It figures because they owe him something. They owe him a lot in terms of California, (A) They think an awful lot of him. His trouble is exactly what Glen Wilson said. He just doesn't look like them. [laughter] He doesn't look like a Kennedy man, the type, you see, and all that. So therefore they want to put him over in the post office. They want a real political guy in for the campaign coming up. (This was in '63.) Jess is ideal. He'd be tough politically for them. He'd organize the post office like a drum, a political drum, you know, and all that. They'd reward him. And they'd replace a Californian with a Californian. It makes sense. All right. If I say, 'Oh, Jess Unruh without a doubt,' this kills it." He said, "How do you figure it kills it?" I said, "Because Jess is



controversial and the Senate won't. . . . If there's time to mount a fight. . . . I know what they're planning. I can figure it out. They're going to take Jess into the Senate--at the end of thirty days they have to have a postmaster general. They're going to take him into the Senate Thursday you know for approval, submit his name on Thursday, get it through on Friday before any campaign can be mounted against him. But I've got two weeks on that for a hell of a campaign to be mounted, and they don't dare appoint him. So we knock Jess down on the one hand, see."

So Bill came out and interviewed me. This put it on television and, therefore, it got it on the wire services. He asked me, well, why was I so eager to promote Jess Unruh. I said, "I want to advance his career beyond the borders of California." [laughter] And get the hell off of me and all that. So in any event we then went. . . . This was the same weekend that that picture was shot with Johnson up in Sacramento. Johnson was vice president, and they were putting on a show for him in Sacramento of the state central committee having a meeting. They were going to show harmony, great harmony in California. We were up to bust up this picture of harmony and get Jess at the time. Jess and I are very dear friends again now. Jess respects what I did there. He looks up like a football player--it was a game--and he says, you know, in hit'em high, hit'em low, he says, "Bart hit me high and low at the same time, and he knocked me out." In Time magazine he described me as a "mad genius in equal parts." I on television said, "Well that's funny. I also think of Jess as a mad genius except in unequal parts." But in any event Johnson came up to Sacramento. Glen Wilson and I cooked this one up. This is really Glen's. Up to now it's mine. Glen said, "Bart, you want to really rattle Jess this weekend. I can do it for a hundred dollars." I said, "What can you do with a hundred dollars?" He said, "I want to make some picket signs. I'll get some CDC types up there. We'll rent a bus. We'll need bus fare and some homemade looking signs and some printed ones. When Johnson arrives we'll greet Johnson this way: "Greetings, Mr. . . ." What was that act that just had passed? The CDC couldn't officially. . . . "Unofficially, of course." "Greetings, Mr. President. Unofficially, of course." was one set of signs. "Greetings, Mr. President, if Mr. Unruh permits. Unofficially, of course." Well, the president got off his plane and here were about a hundred people. . . .

GRELE: Vice.

LYTTON: Vice president got off his plane--about a hundred people with these damn signs. Johnson is enough of a politician--in fact he's all politician that boy--that regardless of Unruh and Wyman trying to pull him the other way not to see the signs, he saw them. He went over to shake hands with every one of these people with a sign. He went down the line--they were behind a fence--to find out what the hell it was all about. Well, he found out that there was anything but unity in the California Democratic party circles and that, of course, (You're running out.) for Unruh was a devastating blow. That weekend he did anything but show himself as a guy who controlled California. P.J.S. He didn't get the postmaster generalship, as you know, and after he said to Time, as I said, Time magazine that I was an evil genius--I mean, a mad genius; he didn't say evil--a mad genius in equal parts.

[Begin Session II TapeII--July 11, 1966]

GRELE: Before we move on to your last conversation with Adlai Stevenson, do you recall any personal contacts you might have had with the president when he was president?

LYTTON: Oh yes. Not very many. It was quite different once he was president, after that period. I didn't have many. I was in the White House many, many times. Oh, I'd say scores of times I was in the White House, but actual contacts with the president were quite limited. I honestly don't think that in any of those contacts there was anything you would find significant or helpful. My own editorial sense. It isn't that I want to withhold it. Simply I don't think anything happened while he was president. The very day that he was assassinated we received a letter--the next day, the day after he was assassinated--that was postmarked at eleven o'clock in the morning the day he was assassinated--just after he was, eleven o'clock--inviting me to see him at the White House. But the letter was mailed after he was assassinated but was written by Kenny O'Donnell, dictated before, and of course just went through the regular thing.

GRELE: Can you recall for us your conversation with Adlai Stevenson before the assassination?

LYTTON: Yes. That is a . . . . It rends my heart. Adlai Stevenson was in Los Angeles I think two days before the assassination. I think it was two days. The World Affairs Council, I believe, held a lunch for him. I'm trusting to memory as to whether it was the World Affairs Council. I think it was. I was a guest on the platform as was my wife at his request, I think, a list he gave of people he'd like to have. We were among them. I'm not sure at the lunch. I am at the dinner. During that lunch he was called from the dais to the telephone. He came back ashen white. A little bit later, when the lunch ended, I looked at him and I said, "Trouble?" He said, "What?" I said, "When you left for the phone and came back. Troubles?" He said, "Oh my. Oh my." No more than that. "Oh my. Oh my." He said, "I'll see you tonight," after that--and then no more.

That evening my wife and I attended a . . . . We weren't even going to attend it as a matter of fact. We were scheduled to attend the Navy Ball at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. Also at the Beverly Hilton Hotel was this dinner for Stevenson which Jesse Tapp hosted. Jess Tapp was then the chairman of the board of the Bank of America. This was a rather small dinner party attempting to get support for the Eleanor Roosevelt Foundation which Stevenson nationally chaired, I believe. It was a small dinner party. I say small, it might have been a hundred people. Small for the Beverly Hilton, I meant. It might have been a hundred people. Beth and I went to that. We were in black tie. We--I was in black tie because we were going to go to the Navy Ball--went into that dinner only to say hello because we were told that he wanted to see us. I said, "All we can do is come by."

The professionals at that dinner said, "Oh, Mr. Lytton, you must come to the dinner for a while because the governor (that is, Adlai Stevenson) has asked that you. . . ." The ambassador they were calling him then. "The ambassador has asked that he sit between you and Mr. Lytton. He's asked for you to be his dinner partners." I was quite flattered--human enough--that he had so done. I came to know him in '56, of course, and since. I said to my wife, "We can't do this to him, Beth. Let's go have dinner, and then later we'll go on to the Navy Ball." It was all right with her. She didn't care whether we went to the Navy Ball or whether we ever went aboard the Navy Ball or not. So it was fine with her. She was delighted. So we went in. He had asked for us to sit with him one on either side. He was distraught. He was not the Adlai Stevenson we knew or that most people knew. He was quiet; he was introspective; he wasn't responsive to humor generally; he just. . . . I had enough sensitivity. . . . He'd been to our home. I had traveled on whistle-stop tours with him, in his campaign. I had chaired two dinners at which he was the guest of honor. We had had many meetings. I knew him just well enough that I was sensitive to. . . . I couldn't have any empathy. I didn't know what the hell it was all about. That's what I'm coming to. Frankly, I had never seen him like this. He was suffering. And when Adlai suffered, he suffered like Hamlet, you know. He suffered. He was there and he was a man who was totally self-absorbed at the time. He didn't hear the conversation around him. He was polite. He'd say polite things back. Then at some juncture--it was a table of ten--at some juncture where everybody was talking to their partners and so on and we could talk privately, he started to talk. It came about this way.

He had just returned from Texas where that woman had spit on him and hit him with a picket sign, and he had had that roughing up. He started to talk, and we had an opportunity to talk quite quietly there because we surrounded him. And he talked quietly. I said, "You said, 'Oh my. Oh my.' at lunch." He said, "Oh my, oh my, is right. I don't know what to do, Bart. I just don't know what to do. I called Arthur Schlesinger. I didn't get him right away. I picked him as sensitive and aware. He called me back during that lunch at the World Affairs Council, lunch that day, the civic lunch. He said, "I told him of my experience in Texas privately, and I told him not to let the president go to Texas. I begged him to cancel the trip, do anything he could to cancel the trip to Texas, I told him that there was something strange in the air in Texas." And he said, "There was something I couldn't describe. I couldn't put my finger on it, but it was an atmosphere like nowhere else in the United States. I've been pushed around a little. I've been hooted. Nothing was like Texas because even the police didn't care. Down there it was like I was the enemy. If I'm the enemy in Texas, what's Jack Kennedy? I fear for him." Now this, mind you, is before the assassination he's telling us this. He said, "He could have a very humiliating and even terrible thing happen there. So I called Arthur, and I told him not to let him go, cancel that trip,

use any excuse. Something's rotten in Texas." These words seared into my memory because they were only thirty-six to forty-eight hours old when he was assassinated, so they seared their way into my memory. He said, "I don't want him to go, but there's so much at stake political, and I suppose I'm wrong. I suppose I'm being subjective. I suppose I have to reverse that advice. What do you think?" I said, "I wasn't there, but if you have these strong, strong feelings. . . ." He said, "It's hard to stand up to. It's hard to bear." [tape recorder off; resumes] I appreciate your turning it off there. He said he had put himself in a very bad position. Nobody likes to be told these things. Nobody likes to hear these things. And he said, "I'm not in a good position here. I'm in a tenuous one anyway. You know that. I told Arthur, and I feel I did the best I could there." He started to brighten up a little bit. Just before we were leaving--we were going to go on to the Navy Ball; this was after the dinner--he said, "Well, I told him, 'okay, go ahead.' (I guess he meant Arthur. I don't think he meant Kennedy.) After all, he's got all that security and probably everything will be all right. Maybe I was overreacting to what happened to me in Texas."

That my friends, is the story never told to any. . . . Beth and I never told. . . . You never heard this, Mike, and you've heard a lot of things. The story never told, absolutely true to the best of my memory. I'm sure you could verify that there was a talk between Stevenson and Schlesinger. I believe it was Arthur Schlesinger. That's the best of my memory. I'm trusting to memory. I think it's Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., he talked to. Why, I don't know. Stevenson called and urged that Kennedy not go to Texas. Now, actually it's a hell of a story when you think about it. It's a drama-packed thing of Stevenson being attacked, fearing for Kennedy, and then, being Adlai Stevenson, that lovable, wonderful guy that he was, backing down, which Adlai Stevenson was prone to do and then hate himself for. It was a classic pattern of Stevenson's that he would take a position, and then he would back down some, and then he would regret that he backed down. He wouldn't trust his own first impressions. Here we have a case where the whole history of the world might have been different if--might have been. I doubt that he could have stopped that trip, but maybe he could because other things I've been told indicate that there were mixed feelings about making that trip, not thinking of death, thinking of humiliation and so on. But the most pertinent part, perhaps, of all was Stevenson's description to us of what he felt about Texas, that he didn't tell the newspapers because it wasn't politic. He felt that the atmosphere in Texas was totalitarian, he said; he felt that it was like being in a police state where the police are against you; he felt that it was so total down there to be disrespectful to liberals, Democrats of liberal stripe, that the feelings were so total, the hatred, the prejudice so deep, so stupid. . . . He used the word. He said, "There's a mass stupidity, a mass stupidity about politics. I don't suppose the people are less intelligent than the people anywhere else, but there's some mass stupidity about what the world's all about. I won't go back."



And, of course, he didn't. He said, "I would never go back. Well, never's a long time, but I can't imagine going back. I wouldn't submit myself to that again." And he said he had never had these feelings in any other area of the United States except. . . . Remember his incident was Dallas, also. He was talking about Dallas specifically. He said that he felt that the police would have been perfectly delighted if he had been beaten to a shred. They would have stood by and rescued, he said, a beaten up guy. Well, these kind of things have happened before. But he ended up telling whoever he told the second time that he thought it would be all right, that they should just take enough precautions.

GRELE: That's the end of my questions unless you have something that you think we might have forgotten.

LYTTON: You know, anyone as vivid and as vibrant, vivid and personable as Jack Kennedy never dies. He lived inside the people who knew him. And for a long time, he won't. And memories, my God, I suppose anyone you talk to who knew him at all--even if you didn't know him, knowing him on television--they'd have a lot that they'd say about their feelings and so on. But if you knew him, as I was fortunate enough to do. . . . I will just close by saying that within forty-five minutes of the assassination this was the first financial institution in California to lock its doors for the day--others then followed--because I was totally knocked out as everybody else was. It was the fact that the basic memory is of a young man who related to people which this older man who's now president--picture up there--doesn't really do. The older man wants to tell you what he thinks. There's no dialogue. It's consensus by light to heavy artillery. There's consensus. He doesn't relate. I've seen him many times since the incident I was telling you about, and he's always been apparently very friendly, but he doesn't really relate. But Jack Kennedy related to people. The idea that he was an arrogant Boston snob is about as far from the truth.

I think he had a sense of mission. I think he really did have that. But I think that he never ceased to relate to human beings as human beings. He could listen. He didn't pretend to know what he didn't know. He had no hesitance in saying "I don't understand that" or "what this means" or something of the sort of specific knowledge. So anybody has so many memories--how he looked, how he talked, how he carried himself. You think of Jack Kennedy with his shirttails out and his shoes off marching around a hotel suite or his own abode, eating caviar, which he loved, by the spoonful, you know eating seven dollars of caviar by the--that is, seven dollars per spoon; that costs about two-two and a half dollars if you buy it yourself at home, which I don't--by the spoonful, drinking daiquiris, not very many of them--I mean, that was one of his drinks and all that--and just being a very delightful, personable, warm. . . . Some people thought he was cold. Actually, he wasn't. He was sometimes diffident, which is a quality not often associated with him. I think



he was a little diffident until the ice was broken, a quality he shared with Adlai Stevenson. Not shy, neither of them were shy, just diffident. You start off with his Arrow collar ad quality anyway, the fact that he could damn near not take a bad picture, and you go from there to this. . . . You wonder what would have been this man's life if he hadn't been president. Of course, that's impossible to conceive and talk about. But the fact that he was a very compelling guy personally. You don't have to like every president. You don't have to think of them as personal, as a guy who could be your friend. I think of Jack Kennedy as a guy I could have as my closest friend. Oh, he wasn't, of course. I wasn't even close to closest friend of Jack Kennedy's, but I got to know him I'd say the twenty-three, twenty-four times I was with him personally, and I got to know him well enough--and that's a lot of times if you think about many people you consider friends and you add it up--that, while I've never resolved my speculations as to whether he wore a toupee, [laughter] actually there's something so rare and so unique about this. . . . In his personality, aside from his story. Here he has this great, dramatic story, this fantastic story, but aside from the story--and perhaps that's what made the story possible--was his uniquely compelling, wonderful personality. I could go on, but you'd run out of tape and you've got other people to talk to. Like everything else I'll remember tomorrow, you know, "Gee, I should have told him about thus or so."

GRELE:           When you get the transcript back if there's anything you want to put in, do an editing job on it.

LYTTON:           All right. This has been a cathartic experience for me, this ventilation. I've told things I've never told before, and there's a form of catharsis in the ventilation, I guess. I'm sorry I broke into tears at that one time. I'm not sorry really, but I mean I was embarrassed. I imagine I'm not the first and won't be the last.

GRELE:           Thank you very much, sir.

Political Newsletter

A Man to Be Considered



BAKER

By JUD BAKER

Herald-Examiner Political Editor

Once upon a time a man like Bart Lytton would have been described — by your grandmother and mine — as “a man to be reckoned with” in any discussion or situation in California’s Democratic politics.

The expression may have changed, but the colorful Beverly Hills financier still is a man, if not THE man, who calls many of the plays in Golden State and, to some extent, national Democratic affairs.

Lytton also occasionally appears to be “a man to be reckoned with” in non-partisan civic affairs — such as the Hollywood (motion picture) Museum and even the sacrosanct Los Angeles County Museum of Art, which has benefited greatly by his philanthropy.

In January, 1964, Lytton challenged “business leaders and movie magnates” by demanding investigation of the \$6.5 million Los Angeles County Hollywood Museum project.

His request for appointment of a “watchdog committee” to overlook the county’s investment (of tax monies) in the project drew angry cries of outrage from such notables as Sol Lesser, the museum president; Oscar A. Trippet, noted attorney who was president of the leasing corporation set up to operate the museum — if and when; Walt Disney and movie mogul Y. Frank Freeman.

At the time, Lytton insisted that “before the credit of the county is clouded, we should darn well know this project is businesslike and won’t fall back into our hands so we find the county running an amusement park.”

(In passing, it should be noted Lytton’s \$800,000 donation for an art gallery helped start the \$10 million fund drive for the country’s Museum of Art in Hancock Park — and the evidence is

Murphy and economic researcher Harrison Price, a close friend and associate of Walt Disney.

By January, 1965, the supervisors had decided to cut off further county financial support.

The museum had cost more than \$1.25 million by the time Supervisor Kenneth Hahn said it was “a costly Taj Mahal that ultimately will cost taxpayers more than \$21 million” and the supervisors cut it off at the pocketbook.

Lytton is perhaps the best known and most widely known savings and loan executive in the nation, being one of the very few, if not the only such financiers whose establishment bears his own name. He also has a fair to middlin’ talent for advertising — Bart Lytton.

In the political field, Lytton’s most notable feud, perhaps, was his short, sharp public exchange with Assembly Speaker Jesse M. Unruh, during which Lytton “nominated” his fellow Democrat for the post of U.S. postmaster general as successor to resigned J. Edward Day.

The “feud” reached a climax when Lytton and Unruh got together in the Hotel El Mirador in Sacramento and “talked out” their animosities. Since, they have been, as before, teammates.

Earlier, Lytton had filed as a non-running candidate for mayor of Los Angeles. He did that, he said, because he was convinced the race needed an authentic Democrat, who could attract party backing. The intimation was, of course, that Sam Yorty was not “an authentic Democrat” and could not attract Democratic votes for the non-partisan office.

It is typical of Lytton’s “let bygones be bygones” approach to political Don-

well know this project businesslike and won't fall back into our hands so we find the county running an amusement park."

(In passing, it should be noted Lytton's \$300,000 donation for an art gallery helped start the \$10 million fund drive for the country's Museum of Art in Hancock Park — and the evidence is he was equally generous in helping launch the Hollywood Museum.)

Lytton was critical when the museum leadership changed ground rules for the project in a manner so the county Board of Supervisors could not elect a member of the museum's board of governors — although the county was being asked for substantial financial aid.

"There is no reason why a group of wealthy citizens who sincerely want something built should ask the county supervisors for an extraordinary appropriation," Lytton said of a request for \$75,000 of public funds.

Despite his protest, the supervisors, two weeks later, voted to approve museum leases and to provide the \$75,000 — without the safeguard of a "watchdog committee" Lytton had demanded.

It turned out Lytton was, in truth, a man to be reckoned with. On or about Nov. 10, 1964, the Board of Supervisors ordered a "thorough investigation" of the financial operations of the museum — and Bart Lytton was named to head the reviewing committee, which also included UCLA Chancellor Franklin D.

race needed an authentic Democrat, who could attract party backing. The intimation was, of course, that Sam Yorty was not "an authentic Democrat" and could not attract Democratic votes for the non-partisan office.

It is typical of Lytton's "let bygones be bygones" approach to political Donnybrooks that he has since been a key man in the various testimonial dinners which have honored Sam Yorty — just as he was a co-chairman of a dinner honoring Jesse Unruh after his public squabble with the Assembly speaker.

Lytton has been vice chairman of the Democratic national finance committee, and has always been active and a leader in California's Democratic finance drives, having been chairman of the powerful Democratic State Finance Committee five years.

He does not, however, hold any party post of governmental appointment. This is a matter of choice, because he has been the confidant of Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson; he is a close personal friend of Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, and his slightest whisper is a roar in the hearing of California Democrats, including Gov. Edmund G. Brown. He could have almost anything he wants.

Actually, he wants only to be known for what he is — the other man to be reckoned with in California's Democratic party.

# Bart Lytton Found Dead; Built \$500 Million Empire

Los Angeles—(AP)—“I make money as a byproduct of success,” Bart Lytton once said at the height of his career as founder of a \$500 million savings and loan organization.

“It is like applause to an actor. I need profits to sustain my confidence I’m performing well.”

The profits dropped. Creditors worried. And 14 months ago Lytton was pushed out as head of the companies that bore his name.

He was found dead at home yesterday of an apparent heart attack. His doctor said Lytton, 56, developed a coronary condition 18 months ago, as the Lytton Financial Corp. crisis neared its peak.

## ‘Couldn’t Stand Losing’

“It killed him,” a friend said. “When they took his name off the building, it really hurt. He couldn’t stand losing.”

Lytton was born in New Castle, Pa., into a prosperous family. Successively a newspaperman, a screenwriter and a publicist, he developed the knack for brash, pithy comments like, “Only three guys have had savings and loan associations named after them—and Washington and Lincoln are dead.”

In 1948 he went into the mortgage business. Five years later his company was the nation’s second largest mortgage broker.

In 1954 Lytton bought his first small savings and loan association. Within 10 years his savings and loan holding company was the fifth largest in the United States.

He amassed a personal fortune estimated at \$15 million.

## ‘Go for Big’

“Forget security and go for big—but not for broke,” he ad-



AP Wirephoto

Bart Lytton

vised. He lived lavishly and contributed the same way. He said he gave as much as \$200,000 to political campaigns of Democratic candidates, and pledged \$750,000 to the County Museum of Art.

Financial troubles began with declines in Southern California real estate. In 1956 and 1957, his savings and loan associations dumped \$56 million in foreclosed property at a loss of nearly \$11 million.

Lytton resigned last year as chairman, president and chief executive officer of Lytton Financial Corp., parent company of Lytton Savings and Loan Association.

“I’m no longer a millionaire,” he acknowledged. “Perhaps the relief chauffeur will have to go.” He said he’d spend no more than \$250 a month on cigars.

His wife, Beth, and a daughter survive.

# Bart Lytton Dies, Savings, Loan Head

LOS ANGELES, June 29 (UPI) — Bart Lytton, a flamboyant rags-to-riches financier and patron of the arts, who made, spent and lost a fortune, died here Sunday after a heart attack. He was 56.

The silver-haired Lytton was forced, in April, 1968, to step down as head of the savings and loan empire he built into the fifth largest in the Nation because of the demands of creditors.

In January, Lytton Savings was merged with Mission and Equitable Savings and Loans under the name of Equitable.

Mr. Lytton, who earlier sold personal holdings of 13 per cent of the firm's common stock to satisfy personal debts, said, "I'm no longer a millionaire. Perhaps the relief chauffeur will have to go."

The flamboyant tycoon, who earned \$24 a week as a play director for the WPA during the depression, told reporters, "I'm not a rich man anymore, but I'm probably still a genius."

Associates and competitors agreed Mr. Lytton was an easy man to respect, a hard man to like. "There are a lot of good things about Bart, except his personality" said a competitor.

"He is impossible to work for," said a close associate. "Terrible ego. Terrible temper. But I couldn't work for anyone else."

The stocky, ruggedly handsome tycoon was born Oct. 4, 1912, to an upper middle class family in New Castle, Penn. The son of a lawyer murdered by a butcher who lost a lawsuit, Mr. Lytton rebelled against a law career planned for him and left home.

Educated at Staunton Military Academy, Westminster College and the University of Virginia, Mr. Lytton began as a \$23.86 a week play director for the WPA Federal Theater in New York.

His mother, remarried to a

doctor, wrote him off as a failure. "You," she wrote him, "you who were raised in country clubs, you who used to buy a dozen golf balls and two tennis rackets at a time, you who could have been the governor of Pennsylvania—you want to run off and join the radicals. Well, go eat bread with your comrades then."

During his screenwriting days, Mr. Lytton briefly belonged to the Communist Party, and was a friendly witness at the House un-American activities investigation in the early 1950s.

He worked as a reporter and editor on newspapers and magazines, and in advertising and public relations, later becoming a Warner Brothers press agent and script writer ("Hitler's Madmen" and "Bowery to Broadway").

Mr. Lytton entered the savings and loan business in 1956 with the theory that money could be merchandised "like girlie shows" and proceeded to rock the staid money community by using one press agency gimmick after another to attract depositors and borrowers. He changed the name of Canoga Park Savings and Loan to Lytton's and put his name on the door.

At the height of his financial power, Mr. Lytton's personal wealth was estimated in the \$30-million range.

Mr. Lytton was a power in Southern California Democratic politics and managed California finances for John F. Kennedy during the 1960 Presidential campaign. He was a delegate to the 1956 and 1960 Democratic National Conventions.

A founder of the Los Angeles Music Center, he and his wife, Beth, were large donors to the Los Angeles County Art Museum and he founded the Lytton Center of the Visual Arts in West Hollywood.



BART LYTTON