

James P. O'Donnell Oral History Interview – JFK#1, 07/16/81
Administrative Information

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Biographical Note

Political advisor, educator, author; Campaign worker, John F. Kennedy [JFK] for President, 1960. In this interview, O'Donnell discusses his relationships with the Kennedy family members, JFK's involvement with politics before running for president, and JFK's relationship with the press, among other issues.

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Oral History Interview

Of

James P. O'Donnell

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James P. O'Donnell – JFK #1

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Oral History Interview

with

JAMES P. O'DONNELL

July 16, 1981
Boston, Massachusetts

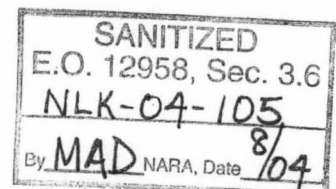
By Sheldon Stern

For the John F. Kennedy Library

BEGIN TAPE 2 SIDE 1

Here,
STERN: Why don't we begin, then, with just a--if you could, begin with
a brief summary of your background and general connection to
the Kennedys, ^{--to work} And coming up to when you started to work for
George Ball [George W. Ball]. Then we'll go back and . . .

O'DONNELL: Right. Yes, that's curious. I've ^{ive} never actually written
any of this. Except, from time to time, the German press
always said, "Did you know John Kennedy's [John F. Kennedy]
older brother? ^[Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr.] ^[Joseph P. KENNEDY] Did you know
Mrs. Kennedy? And so on. So let me fill in briefly. As I
say, I deliberately have never written in the United States,
on the grounds that I dislike the type of journalist who
spends one evening with a man, and goes out and writes a
book. I prefer to do it ^{in the other way} And, I'm no relation,
incidentally, to Kenney O'Donnell ^[Kenneth Philip O'Donnell].



A man like Kenney was a thousand times closer to Jack than I was. On the other hand, I probably knew the father as well as Kenney O'Donnell, or at least earlier. I mean I, ^I just wouldn't know; ^We'd have to check that out with Kenney, ~~who~~, incidently, I don't know. I ^{he} met him two or three times very briefly. We're aware of each others existence. But I was far--When I was an official in the Kennedy government, I, of course, was on a far lower, and more distant, level than Kenny. Okay. It starts really like all good Boston Irish ^{stories,} it's always my grandfather knew his ⁺ ~~his~~. Actually, my grandfather knew his grandfather because they were in local politics here, ~~back~~ when it was almost exclusively Republican. And since my grandfather was a lawyer, John O'Connor ~~is~~ that's a remote relative of mine who just made the Supreme Court last week, ⁺ Third or fourth cousin or something. But my grandfather, John O'Connor, was a Tremont Street lawyer and knew Jack's grandfather, But the way all Boston Irish politicians knew and liked to dislike each other. I don't think he knew the ambassador. He simply know ^o of him, because he would have been older; ^m My grandfather would have been a good ten years older. On the other hand, I have an older brother, John O'Donnell [John P. O'Donnell], the newspaper ^o man, who was about the ambassador's age, And

he'd gone to Tufts and played baseball against Harvard, and knew Joe--we're now talking about the ambassador, Joseph Kennedy, ^{R. Sr.} ~~Senior [Joseph P. Kennedy Sr.]~~, And through my older brother, ^{then} ~~then~~ throughout the thirties, when I was quite young, when I was a high school student, I first. . . So the first member of the Kennedy ^{Kennedy} family whom I knew personally, and incidently, ^S liked tremendously, ^e was the man whose ^e now called the founding father. And I ^e ~~led~~ like, a little bit later, to defend him on the grounds--an isolationist he was, ^{But that} he had the remotest respect for ~~Hitler~~ ^[Adolph Hitler] or ~~Mussolini~~ ^[Benito Mussolini], and so on, is simply not true. I talked with him for long hours . . .

STERN: Well, why don't ^{we} go into the, go into that right now then.

O'DONNELL: Go into that right now?

STERN: Sure.

O'DONNELL: Good. All right then. When did I actually first meet him? I met him in the Manhattan ^a of the mid-thirties at ^a one of these fashionable, I think, ^e frankly, ex-speakeasies. It may have been Stork or Twenty-One, ^{we} which I certainly couldn't afford. But my brother was the Washington--my brother, John, ^e was the Washington correspondent of the New York Daily News, ^{we} which was at that time America's largest newspaper. I don't think it is any more, ^{as} And, incidently, was very pro, pro-new deal, pro-- You people of the younger generation don't realize that now, but the ^{the} News up until '39 or

'40 was down-the-line for ^uuncle Franklin Roosevelt [Franklin D. Roosevelt], And in that ~~ing~~ and so, incidently, was, ~~was,~~ was Joe Kennedy [Joseph P. Kennedy], ^uwho had just--That's it, ~~he~~ he had just had this big job, reconstruction finance.

STERN: Right.

O'DONNELL: Then--I don't think he'd broken with Roosevelt, ^gparticularly, I think he'd gone back into business, among other things, ^gHollywood and Schenley's and so on--to make money, ^gwhich he was rather good at. So, he was obviously ^gpicking up the check this evening in, let's say, Twenty One, I'm quite sure; ^ghistorically, it probably wasn't; ^gBut it was a place like that, which, ^gto me, I was goggle-eyed. I think this is the first time I had been in--not, no not the first time, ^gthe first time I'd been in that particular club. And-- I was taken with him because he was in the--let's see, then ambassador then, ^gwas probably about the same age that John Kennedy was at the end. ^gIn other words, he was in ⁱⁿhis late forties. And. . . ^gbut there was no political talk. Two--^gI can name three or four other fairly prominent people who were there. ^gThe columnist, Doris Fleenon--now there's a real down-the-line democrat. ^gShe was my brother's wife. In other words, she is, or was--^gshe's now dead too, ^galas, ^ga loss-- she is, ^gor was, my brother's--my half brother's--^gex-wife. She later married Dan ^{Kimball and so on.} DAN A. Kimball.

Two or three other people there, I think Arthur Krock *Arthur Krock*
of the New York Times and the Washington correspondent.

STERN: Who's an old friend of the ambassador's.

O'DONNELL: Indeed, indeed. *Yeah.* And I think Walter Trohan *Walter Trohan*
still alive, of the Chicago Tribune, who was covering the
White House, but also ~~went~~. Joe Kennedy, ~~Senior~~ *Senior* had many,
many friends in the press. Even those who did not praise ~~him~~
him in print knew him privately. I think among other
things, he was ~~one~~ prime source of information. So that
was the first meeting. There's nothing particularly
political about that, but it establishes the ~~the~~ length.
Then the next year my brother came up to--I'm not sure it
was Hyannisport, but it was the Cape. And I remember our
driving over, And then there was a political conversation
and it was--I can date this quite well--it was at the time of
a famous Roosevelt speech called "Quarantine the ~~Aggressor~~" *Aggressor*
Chicago, 1937. This--hard maybe for your generation to redall
it--but this was a big moment in America. It had nothing to
do with votes. Roosevelt had already won--overwhelmingly in
'36. But ~~and~~ *and* incidently every--the word "interventionist"
had not even been invented in '37--but this was the first
sign that a president of the United States might do some-
thing more than mere neutrality to stop Hitler. Therefore,

this speech really divided the nation. I wouldn't say that. In retrospect, it looks like the dividing line. I know that this is where my brother got off the wagon. My brother was a World War I veteran, and almost obsessed with no foreign wars, as was, at that time, the ambassador. But really, if you have a good memory, as were ninety-five percent of the American people. I think our generals and admirals--you see, we were all hiding behind the Maginot Line. Your generation realizes that the Maginot Line was not as solid as this seawall out here. But to us, in '37, the Maginot Line was, we had been assured, impregnable. And there was a myth of the, of the French

So in that mentality, people then broke down. And those who were isolationists, in other words, no intending alliances. And the others that started with Roos--and so that would include the ambassador, include my brother. I'm not so sure it included me. I was then thirty-seven, I was a sophomore over here--the place across the river, as my would grandfather called it. I think, I was--we were left-wing--New Deal liberals intended--I don't think we used the word "interventionist", but we were anti-Hitler, anti-Fascist, and we later became aid, aid to the United States by aiding the Allies. Bundles for Britain and all that sort of--as insi-

-dently, Jack Kennedy was, ^{his father,} but less so. Now to continue, ^{however,}
 for a couple minutes, on the father. That's the second
 meeting and the third meeting. Now the ^{the} fourth time, I
 didn't actually meet him, but it's an incident, ~~not~~ much
 in his life, ~~but~~ certainly in mine. I had spent the
 summer in Germany as an exchange student, ~~we~~ won't go
 into why, ~~but~~ it was to learn the language and a few
 other things. And he knew I was there, ~~And~~ when I came
 out the first of September when, when England and France
 when ~~Germany~~ marched into Poland, ^{and Fra--} and England on a Friday,
 and England and France declared war, ^I on a Sunday, Sep-
 tember first, second, and third, ~~I think,~~ I crossed the
 border, got out of Germany--although you see we were
 neutral at that time--and into Holland. And that was a
 terrible scene because Americans flowing from all over
 Europe ^{had} and ended up there. Then you had the far more
 serious refugees, ^e Jewish people, German-Jewish people, or
 even from farther east, ^{plus} anti-fascist German?
 Many of these people were to be scooped up nine months
 later--did not survive. I saw a lot of suicides in
 Rotterdam. Anyway, I myself was stranded for five or six
 weeks which--one of those things you live with,--I mean, I, I
 didn't fear much. I mean, even ^{had} the German army
 ---marched in, Americans were still treated, you know, as if

we had a golden arm--for political reasons. But the ambassador, with all of his other problems, advanced me the ticket money. Because with the outbreak of war the--I had a student's ticket on the Holland-American line which, for which I probably paid a hundred and thirty dollars, at that--It was probably around--^{Cost} dirt cheap in those days. And that, ^{that} very ship, New Amsterdam, went out to the then Dutch Indies, now Indonesia; ^{So} that vanished with the war. And I needed money to live there, in Rotterdam, where prices just--the Dutch did not act well in that period, ^{as} People seldom do under panic. The ambassador realized that and advanced the money to my brother, actually, who was with the BEF [British Expeditionary Force]. And he gave it to me, and so I got out ⁱⁿ in November '39. So naturally, I was very grateful to. . . . Basically it's the duty of any ambassador, but it helps to have a wealthy ambassador 'cause he, you know, he reaches into his own pocket. I did pay it back; but, nevertheless, it was very helpful. I didn't get to see him then. He remained as ambassador. I saw him sometime in the campaign of '40, And here comes perhaps the first real and fairly sharp political discussion, Right here in Boston, I think, about. . . . Oh, Roosevelt gave really a great speech at the Boston Arena.

- That's the one that the cabaret-people--

"I have said it before, but I will say it again, and again,
and again . . . "

STERN: "My friends, I'll never see an American boy . . . "

O'DONNELL: Yeah. "Your boys"--I think I've got it literally, 'cause I was sitting right in front of him, you know, I was really in the third row, or fourth, with a press pass by that time. "Your boys will not be sent to fight in any foreign war." Now Roosevelt was possibly the greatest orator of his day. There are a couple of--Churchill [Winston S. Churchill], Goebbels, [Paul J. Goebbels] curiously, was a--in an evil sense, but a magnificent orator. But I, I would rate Roosevelt highest 'cause he was so handsome. And this pledge--the hysteria in the Boston Arena, you know, ten days before election. Well, I think he justified it by saying, "The war that involves the United States is no longer a foreign one", or something like that. But in any case, I was pro-Roosevelt then and still am, as a matter of fact. The father, Joe Kennedy, had cooled, but he gave a pro-Roosevelt speech. A few weeks later--perhaps even months later--I met him, this time, in my brother's flat in Washington. This time he's no longer ambassador, he's no longer in the government, and he's fairly bitter about Roosevelt. And so I asked him--I don't

- think I ever called him Joe, he was too old for that. I think I called him Mr. Ambassador, most likely. My brother would call him Joe. There's a difference because . . .

STERN: Sure, sure.

O'DONNELL: "Why did you give that pro-FDR speech?" And he said, "Well

sunny boy, if you really want to know, he's awfully good at looking at income taxes." ^{Then --} And there I--you could see a warm friendship cooling. I think that Franklin Roosevelt got angry at Joe for his being lukewarm and possibly ----

And also there was real hostility, unfortunately, between Eleanor Roosevelt [~~Eleanor E. Roosevelt~~] and Jack Kennedy's father. Those two people just--they were opposites. They disliked each other. In retrospect, again, I think both were too bitter. I think that people like Joe Kennedy and my brother, John [E]

were much too bitter on Eleanor, and she, in turn, was a much sharper politician than people think. I mean she, she was, a, she was a major figure in that administration. But later, you remember, when she was very much against Adlai [Adlai E. Stevenson], And then too, she was against Jack in '60.

And, if I may put something in here, I do believe that an Eleanor Roosevelt--I hate to say this--but I do think that one of her faults was an--at least unconscious--anti-Catholic bias. Sorry to say that but I think it's there.

STERN: I think it's there.

O'DONNELL: 'Cause it comes out just a little too often.

STERN: ^[Joseph P. Lash] Lash Lash shows that . . .

O'DONNELL: Does he? Well--now Joe, incidentally, I knew at that time too and Joe was certainly an admirer, and still is, I'm sure.

STERN: Yeah.

O'DONNELL: More of Eleanor. So that a lot of people at that time . . . Here perhaps we'd better switch to Joe Kennedy, Junior [Joseph P. Kennedy Jr.].

STERN: Right.

O'DONNELL: 'Cause in that ^{and} The time thing I'm giving you here, I hope you're able to follow, 'cause what we're--we're going back forty years. In other words, I'm about twenty-one at this time. In college, I was in the class of '39, at Harvard, which is to say I entered in '35. I commuted my freshman year, I was not ^{in the} yard--from Melrose, and my sophomore year. And then my junior and senior year, I was in Leavritt House. And it was when I was in residence there that I first got to know Joe well. Now here--Joe Junior--and here is a surprising thing. During that period of Harvard--it's not the last convertible period; that's ^{that's} the next five years--but roughly speaking, from '35 into '40

and '41^{I was} 'cause there one year a graduate student too-- and
Junior Fellow. That pre-war, and up to the outbreak of
war period, the campus was very alive.

and these great debates we had. Chancellor Brüning ^{BRUENING}

[Heinrich Brüning] was there, and Salvemini [Gaetano Salvemini]

he was there, and so on. To all Harvards, this is sort of

a nostalgic period. The faculty at that time was not

only very much alive, but, but these great issues of the

day were debated about every night. Now there was where

Joe Junior was a good student but a camp--we didn't use

the word "campus" there, but at Harvard you had "activists".

He was, I think, president, or the driving force in the

Harvard ^Ddemocratic ^Cclub--the Harvard Liberal Club.

And then, I think we also had a special FDR [Franklin D.

Roosevelt] club. We had a lot of these things. And we were

manipulated. There was a ^{PS} ~~political~~ political spectrum at

Harvard ranged from Trotskyists [Leon Trotsky] to practically

pro-Franco [Francisco]. I remember the son of the owner of

the Grace Line was one of few rather literate and civilized

defenders of Franco. But at that time, that was quite rare.

Above all, on an American university campus. And Joe was in

between, the practical politician. I've often been

asked how far would he have gone, because the old man had

nominated him as a . . . I honestly think, that to become

^P president of the United States--for anybody, even for a Jimmy Carter [^{James E. Carter Jr.} ~~Jimmy Carter~~], to become president of the United States--lightning has to strike at least three times. So I think that Joe Kennedy Jr. would certainly have made it to senator. Whether he'd ^{have} of made the presidency-- as the Scots say-- who can tell? But there was a difference in personality between Joe and Jack which was quite marked to us who knew them both at that time. In the first place, we all tended to know Joe better, and Joe was just everywhere. He was in the square, he was there at night, ^{even} on weekends and so on. A generous man, a--he reminded me, curiously, of a sort of a cross between his own father and a very prominent politician at that time, James A. Farley. In, in, in other words the likeable--much more of a glad-hander than Jack.

STERN: That's interesting.

O'DONNELL: ^{There--} Yeah. As I say, these brothers liked each other, but they were quite, quite different. ^{There} was at least the difference between Joe and Jack as there was between Jack and Bobby [Robert F. Kennedy], ^{Not} forgetting the present senator either. But everybody says the Kennedys are all alike, and we know what, what one means. It's like saying that U.S. currency is all alike. But there also were profound differences of personality. And ^{and} this was noticeable

to people like us who knew them when they were really just a Boston phenomenon, long before it became a national discussion. Should I speak a little bit more on Joe?

STERN: Oh, that's fascinating. Sure.

O'DONNELL: Good. As I say, an extremely likeable fellow. Very much the politician, in the best sense of that much abused word. An activist. Politically, basically ^{N D} new deal, I'd say a little bit skeptical ^{N D} new deal, as every fairly wealthy person was. On the war, ~~in the beginning~~ isolationist, but I think after the fall of France, he, similar to Jack, felt that the war against Hitler had to ^{be} fought. Mind you, Bobby and Teddy [Edward M. Kennedy] at that time were just ^{too} ~~too~~ young, one knew of their existence, but they were -- I saw Bobby once, I think, and he was a sailor boy suit, ten years old. The next time I met him he was Attorney ^g general. But to finish that on Joe Junior, the tragic end of it was. . . . I remember one ride ^{we}, we rode one time -- it wasn't his car, but I guess he simply rented it or something. We drove from the Harvard yard to [^] DuPont Circle in Washington, where he dropped me. We must have been eleven hours on the way. We had a car of six, and we recited limericks all the way. Every three minutes, somebody had to come up with a limerick, and most of them were pretty naughty, but we made it the whole, the whole distance.

STERN: Was Jack there too?

O'DONNELL: No, Jack was not there. Jack--to begin with, although I had three or four chats with him and so on, it. . . . I was one year ahead of him, which means when I was a sophomore, he was in that--freshman. And he was a Choateist, I think you'd call them. So, one simply ^{met} meant, I, I was already in a couple of classes with him. I think I was in a course called History ^I One with him, I'm not sure, And a government course, or something like that. Then my senior year was his junior year and he spent that in London. He wasn't around at all. Then in his senior year, I met him--his senior year. ~~.....~~ You see, I was a graduate student--I met him up in the stacks of Widener Library fairly often; He was researching ^{his} this book Why England Slept. And then I had a job--^{as a} ~~as a~~ not as a tutor, that was a much too exalted status, but it was called a Junior Teaching Fellow. In short, and in clear text, I picked up some eating money by correcting books of eminent professors; Professor Fay [Sidney B. Fay], Professor Brightman [Edgar S. Brightman], Professor Langer [William L. Langer], and Chancellor Bruening. I think I read the Blue Book--I'm not--no, on Bruening, I don't think I did. The other three--Blue Books of under graduates. And the rumor was that we threw them on the stairs ^{to graduation,} and ^I that's not true. And I can remember them, but very,

very vaguely. Jack had a very, very legible, nice handwriting. He could not spell worth a damn, ^a And his--a specific course--I remember giving him an A-minus; ^N not because he was Jack Kennedy, but because he had written a good ~~paper~~ paper. It was an appreciation of James Madison, very, very well written. It must be somewhere here in the files, my files.

STERN: It probably is.

O'DONNELL: We'll dig it out some day. Okay, but I, I... . . . At that time, let's say the whole four years of college, I cannot remember having spent an evening with him, I cannot remember. . . . Yes, ^{about meeting} meet him a couple times, ~~it~~ it was always through Joe. It was ^{it was} that--and Jack was there. We all liked him. We regarded him as quite scholarly, quite ~~diff~~ diff--^{quite} diffident. We knew he was a ladies man, but all Kennedys were ladies men; ~~And~~ And he certainly was not a loud-mouth about it. He was a, you know, quiet operator. And that pretty much is, is, is what I recall of the Cambridge time. Now on Joe again, I was to see him only once more, under quite tragic circumstances. We jump from '40 to--let me make a pause in '42, 1942. I was already in the U. S. Army and I was at Fort Monmouth, but I had a ten day furlough. So I came up here to meet my brother in New York, ~~and~~ ^W and we drove out to Hyannisport, and

the father promised to take us out on the ^{the} yacht; I, I think
it was the Marlin; ^{I think it was known ----} ~~the name of it was the Marlin.~~ But some-
how ^{or other,} the bad weather came up, so we just sat and drank a con-
siderable amount of, of ^{gin} rickeys, which was the drink at
that time. And there I noticed the father getting quite
bitter about the war. He, ^{he} was almost obsessed in a Eugene, Eugene
O'Neill sense, "I may lose all my sons." In fact, ^{this} ~~it was,~~
this was this black Irish side of Joe Kennedy which I think
deserves to be mentioned to ^{this day} ~~history.~~ I was a little bit
shocked at, at the morbidity. But, of course, they all were
slowly exposed. Jack was in--Joe was in the Navy air force.
Jack, with his little boat, as we used to call it,--P T boat,
Bobby, toward the end, was--young as he was--was still in, I
think, as a gob. Teddy, of course, was too young. And then
there was this business of Kathleen [Kathleen ^{Kennedy} Harrington]
which we'll come to in a minute. So, in, in terms of the
commitment, he, he was almost, ~~as I say,~~ an Irish-Greek
about this, this morbid fear that he would lose . . .

STERN: Did he, did he, in a sense, kind of blame that on Roosevelt?

O'DONNELL I'm afraid one would have--my brother did. My brother was a,
was a, a, an extremely bitter. . . . All the isolationists
turned to become admirers of MacArthur [General Douglas
MacArthur]. ^W Win the war, and that sort of thing. But they--

nevertheless, they wanted an argument after the war about whether the war hadn't been convenient to Roosevelt's third and fourth term ambitions. That was the charge. Good Lord, trying to be very objective about it, How can you even tell what goes on in the mind of a man like Roosevelt, ^WUndoubtedly, ego that he was; And you have to be an ego to govern this country? He regarded himself as irreplaceable; and, you know, one thing leads to another. The argument put forward, ^gnot by the ambassador now, but by my brother, quite openly, ^gwas that Roosevelt provoked the Japanese into the attack. I do not think that Joe Kennedy believed that; I cannot sight chapter and verse, but they--let's put it this way, I'm not, you, ^{Jan}know,

all of this

And I, ^Iwill defend John [sic] in many things. An isolationist had a perfect right to be an isolationist, to my mind. They shouldn't ^ghave thrown so many low punches. The low punches were also thrown on the other side. If, if, if, ^{if, if}you, like I, myself, ^gif you were dedicated and felt it was an absolute necessity to fight Hitler, ^gMussolini, and the Japanese, ^gwell-then, ^{to}To my mind even then and now, I think Hitler was, ^{somehow or other,} ~~the horror,~~ the primordial issue. We didn't have much of a great quarrel with ^gfacist Italy other than with an unpleasant form of government. But with Hitler, I think, ^g

I thought then and I think today--we did. The interventionist thing--and here we get to the Eleanor Roosevelt, or the Doris Fleeson, or I was an interventionist myself, and I was probably the ^{only} other ~~one~~. We began to regard people like Lindbergh [Charles A. Lindbergh] as traitors; and traitor is a terrible word in politics. Once that comes in--we had it later with Senator McCarthy [Joseph R. McCarthy]. Words like traitor, fascist, communist, fellow traveler, agent, unless they are absolutely and clearly defined--I mean, unless a person is ~~is~~. For example, not every Marxist that I know is a communist. And I would be very, very careful. I might say a Marxist scholar, meaning a man who's, who's, who's instrument of research is, is Marxist flavored but he's not a member of the NECP [. and he's certainly not an agent. Well that's an issue that's behind us, I hope, anyway. But these labels were pretty rough at this time and this explains much of the later ~~flak~~ ^{flak} of Eleanor Roosevelt's permanent resentments against Jack, and the father's--the founding father's--resentment against--well, such flanks of the New Deal, let us say, as Arthur Schlesinger Junior [~~Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr.~~], not Senior. Whereas Jack and Arthur were friends. There's

a generation thing in there. I think the older generation felt these issues somehow more bitterly than we who fought the war. Now, I move on to '44 because it's the last and quite tragic meeting with [^]Joe Kennedy Junior. I'd gone overseas in '43 in, in the army, and I was stationed first in London and then down on Beachey Head, which is that high promontory on the Channel close to Dover, about fifty miles west of Dover. D-Day, part of D-Day, took place from there as a matter ~~of~~. And we were there for ^{or} every obvious reason. We were in signal corps [^]code breaking and direction finding, and the higher we could get in on the German army fronts--long, long before the invasion. And one day--this must have been October '43 I would say--I was walking--in Beachey Head there's a town of Eastborne--and I met Kathleen Kennedy, whom I had met before but I had met her at the age of, say, thirteen or fourteen when she was a chubby little rosy-cheeked girl, and now, of course, she was a woman of eighteen. She had come over and was--stage door canteen, I think ^{it is,} American Red Cross stage door canteen. After all, she had known London because she had been there early on. And it was at this time that she met--and I think ~~that~~ when I met her she was already engaged to the Marquis of Hartington [^]whom I also met because his unit was contiguous to ours, and we were picked to be the first

into Normandy. Actually, my unit did not move out until about three or four weeks later. But his, as far as I recall, was in ^{the} D 1 or 2 or 3 in those early days, and he was killed, very few ^{of them}, he was killed in early July. Now at that time ^{to} back to October '43 ^{to} I met her--I said I met her in Eastborne, that is wrong--I met her right in London at the stage door canteen. And we were not allowed to say where we were, you see, where we were stationed, for obvious reasons. Particularly if you ^{were} stationed, as I was, on a--I was a operations officer ^{of} for a signal company at that time. Precisely because we were in this five mile limit thing, it was ^{it was} very indiscreet. ^{it} It would be a court-martial offense. But somehow or other, she, being a civilian, mentioned that she was spending a week-end in Eastborne. ^{then,} This is where the Marquis of Hartington was stationed, you see. And I said, "Well, fine. I'll drive you down." Because I had a jeep and a driver, and in those days even a jeep in England was a luxury. We did not have the left wheel drive either, ^{we} we had to drive on the wrong side of the street, it was the same way. So I drove her down. It must have been a Sunday, Sunday afternoon or Sunday evening. It was only a couple of hours drive. And still didn't quite dare tell her where I was stationed, but ^{that--} when I dropped. . . . The Marquis of Hartington's family had let one of their--

they were estate owners, among other things--one of their hunting lodges and so on, to the Royal Eastborne Country Club, which in turn were training WACS [U.S. Women's Army Corps] or WRENS [Women's Royal Naval Service] or whatever. But Kathleen had a, had a ^{sort of a} cottage there ^{you} See, I was stationed only five miles away--so the next day or so, I walked up and introduced myself. And that was where I met-- I was a first lieutenant and the Marquis of Hartington was, I think, a major--~~We~~ we met each other and exchanged notes on this and that, had a long chat. And this is where I heard that ^{the} Rose Kennedy [Rose F. ^{Fitzgerald} Kennedy], the mother, was very, very hostile to this marriage, for seventeen or eighteen reasons, and was about to come over to try to break it, which I--I didn't see it but I subsequently heard that she did. She wangled a B17 and came over because she wanted a Roman Catholic church ceremony. And ^{if} you know the Hartingtons, and so on, you could see why that really couldn't happen. Anyway, the marriage took place, ^A and Kathleen was upset about it, but, on the other hand, it was, you know, "You know ^{my} mother, and I love her, but this is my life" ^{sort} so ~~of~~ of. . . . Marquis of Hartington was a really charming Brit ; Not that all Marquises are charming, but he was. He was also a good soldier. Then. . . . So we had. . . . Oh, I would say I drove her up on this, this, this run maybe

-six times, maybe eight or ten, and then, ^{then} things began to tighten up and we had security relations down there and the spring came on and I stopped. But in that very critical period, pre-D day, with ^{the} tension building daily, we didn't. . . . I knew in April that it wasn't going to be in one day, because of the weather and so on. But I actually thought maybe it could be in two weeks or three ~~weeks~~. So we went on living in a tense time. And it was at that period that, after I had not heard from Kathleen for a month or so, and didn't even realize she was down there, she sent a message to me somehow, maybe telephone, that ^{an} old friend of mine was there and that -- ~~Could I come for high tea,~~ or something like that, which I did. And there was Joe Junior. This time he was in his navy pilot's uniform but he was wearing camouflage too. And he gave me a cock-and-bull story, more or less, about how he'd love to get in the war, but actually all he was engaged in doing ^{he} was a taxi flyer. That he was flying navy planes to England and then going back, and that he wasn't getting into action, ^{which} which, incidentally, may earlier have been true, I don't know. But he was there on a very secret mission. We now know what it was. It was this blowing up the ^V B-2 sites, which I knew about and didn't dare tell him, because our radio was intercepted--~~the~~, ^{the}

messages sent by these V-1 and V-2 things. So we had a very pleasant evening, discussed ^Auld ^Lang ^Syne and stuff like hornswoggling that. But each knew that we were ^{Secur-} the other a little bit. Security conscious those days was that, was that high that you really didn't tell your best friend more, because your own safety was involved. So, to make a long and rather tragic story short, two months later I, too, was in Normandy and I heard, almost simultaneously, of the death of the Marquis of Hartington--I think that was in the Stars and Stripes because by this time the marriage had taken place--and within two or three weeks--I think I'm right on this July '44, or maybe August . . .

STERN: Okay, August.

O'DONNELL: Was it August? That's right, because our troops-- We, we reached Paris by the twenty-fourth of August, so it was probably ^{ear-}early in August--and Joe's ^{ss-} And then I instantly thought back to this and felt, ^{Oh, Oh,} he, he, He was in there on, on these, these things." That sort of ends the war, ^{Thankfully,} When I came back in '46 for a very short while--'cause I switched uniform--I didn't even take off uniform practically from the war to Newsweek correspondent. Sometime in '46 in Washington again, I met the ambassador, but I didn't dare tell him this story, ^{the, the wound--} The wound was too raw. I did tell my brother, who later

told me on his death bed that he had told the story. But I, at least, did not tell it. And I did not see the ambassador again until seven years, 1957. I was living in France. I spent a long weekend with him down there. This was when the Jack Kennedy campaign--but that was when he first asked me to "Come aboard" as he put it, and I, unfortunately, declined. But that's getting far ahead of the story. Let's get back to ^{end of} the war. I didn't see any of the Kennedys for some years, until I met Kathleen in London in '47; ^a And one year later she was killed in this really fluke accident--private plane ^{the} flying to Nice, ^{the} which incidently, ^{the} the hill that she hit there--then this plane crashed--was only about five miles from where, two or three years later, I, I built a house which I still have there. So once in awhile I go up and look at it. It ^{it} was a sad ^{one} thing. She was an awfully nice person and any rumors ^{one} one has heard about this, that, and the other-- that she was with a, a, a married man, for example--^t That, ~~that~~ explains itself if you knew the circumstances about that.

He was the pilot and was flying his friend; ^s she was going down there to visit some ^{abs-} absolutely--I mean there ^{there, there} was nothing wrong with it, as some of the gossip columnists had it. So that's my last meeting with Joe Junior and that's the last with Kathleen of course. Now, Jack. The . . .

STERN: Before we get on to that, I wondered if we could just ask you one question. In terms of your perception of the differences between Joe Junior and Jack. I was thinking, as you were, ^{as you were} describing them earlier, about ^{one} of their teachers at Choate who did an oral history, made a very interesting remark about them, and he knew them both.

O'DONNELL: Uh-huh, yeah.

STERN: And I wonder how this jibes with your sense of the two of them. He remembered once having gone into town--I don't ^{remember} know ~~one of~~ the towns that Choate is near--^b But they had a very strict dress code in those days for kids, and he found Joe Junior without a tie. And he said, "Young man, we were not going to be in town without a tie." And he said that Joe Junior immediately apologized and went back and put on a tie. And then he said that he had the sense that if he had met Jack in the same circumstances, that Jack would have tried to finesse it. He would have said, "Well, you know, I brought it along but I lost it," or something like that.

O'DONNELL: Well, as I say, the difference is this: Jack would have had a tie on, ^{as, as} as far as my memory of the thing. And then that second part. . . . Well, can I tell you a wonderful joke that some members of the Kennedy family might not like; but when I was talking to Jack--jumping way ahead now to

1960--I think he was Senator, and I think he was already president-elect, but he certainly was not president. I had very few--I only had one long ^{con-} not even long, one conversation with him when he was president, other than telephone. But this was over at Marguerite Higginses [Marguerite Godard Higgins] who comes into the story later on.

STERN:

Right.

O'DONNELL:

And we were talking about Teddy. And I said, "You know Jack, that business about cheating in ^{the} Spanish exam at Harvard is not good. You know ?

And he said, "Yes dammit, If it had only been a Greek exam!" And--now that's a touch of--I've never written that story.

You can, you can have that for kicks. ^{But} I think it's character revealing and would tie in with this Choate thing. For example, I'm sure that Jack Kennedy's reaction to Nixon [Richard M. Nixon], whom he did not hate--he had his number but he did not hate him--would have said, "Why, in good, sweet

Jesus' sake, did he not burn the tapes?" 'Cause I know the ~~---~~

I'm talking now about the president Kennedy--the tremendous responsibilities of this office in, in--I've talked to Nixon

two or three times about this. But a man like Roosevelt, or Truman [Harry S. Truman], or ^{Eisenhower} Eisenhower [Dwight D. Eisenhower],

or "Uncle" Lyndon [Lyndon B. Johnson]--I'm not so sure about

Jimmy Carter [James E. Carter Jr.]--But almost all of those

^{have}
-would of destroyed the tapes on the grounds of, of "the
king can do no wrong." I mean, that was their conception
of the presidency. And, and Nixon saw this too, but. . . .
And I've talked to Nixon two or three times about Jack
Kennedy, and you know, he has the most amazing, ^o always had
the most amazing respect for him. Really! I mean, it's,
it's, it's an almost touching, ~~there were~~ so few nice
things to be said about Nixon. But I've been in circles
where Nixon was almost provoked to say something really
hostile ^{a-} about Kennedy. He never--and I think that was
shown ^R remember the night of the election when it was
really so close, and Mrs. Nixon [Patricia Ryan Nixon]
was there, and she starting bawling? Nixon said, "No
siree. ^{The} The presidency of the United States is not a
raffle and there's gonna be no recount." And that, that,
that, ^{there--} ~~there--~~ Somebody should write a book someday--There
were a few things, parallels, between Richard Nixon and
Jack Kennedy? ^{*} The young naval officer, the this, the that
and so on. But that's a little bit off our thing.

STERN: Okay, you wanted to get back to what you were saying
about your contact with Jack then.

O'DONNELL: Yeah. I cannot recall--I've often been asked this by
British, French, and German editors in song, wanting a
story now, and to try to reconstruct a political conver-

sation in the Harvard days. ^a And I honestly ^{could} think of only one, and that was a conversation--I think right up there in the Widener stacks--in which, curiously, Teddy White, Theodore H. White, [~~Theodore H. White~~] was also there; ^b He was off in the Chinese wing, the Yenching Institute. And anyway, ^{it} it was not--we were not à deux, there were five or six people there, I can't recall whose, ^c it could have been a breakfast before the Dartmouth game or something like that. But Jack was holding forth quite eloquently on the greatness of the founding fathers. The theme was a federalist paper which I think involved Madison, ~~Hamilton~~ [Alexander Hamilton], and John Jay [John Jay], or maybe Burr, I don't know, But we got discussing the federalist papers as a great American document, And then Jack Kennedy's great admiration--I say this came out later in this Madison paper--for Jamesey boy, for James Madison, And I think Jack's impression of--you would expect a Bostonian to be pro-Adams, either Sam [Samuel Adams] or John [John Adams]. But of all of them--and even all of the Virginians, Washington [George Washington], Monroe [James Monroe], Jefferson [Thomas Jefferson] and so on--I think Jack had the most admiration for Madison. As I said, this ~~is~~. ^d And I've never seen this in, in any of the biographies. Now, the one real serious conversation I had with

the Jack Kennedy of the fifties, came up by sheer accident. He had defeated Henry Cabot Lodge [~~Henry Cabot Lodge~~] right here in '52, which was really a surprise victory. I was abroad; I had switched now from Newsweek to The Saturday Evening Post, and I was in Bonn which had just become the, the new capitol of the Federal Republic of Germany, three or four years. And there had also been an election, an election there; Adenauer [Konrad Adenauer] had won his second victory. So it was sometime after that; quite possibly October '53 or even April '54, I'm, I'm quite vague, I could go back in my notes. But the date is not so much important, it, it--'52, yeah--I'm inclined to think it was '53 rather than '54. But in any case, very early in the morning, for some strange reason, I was out bird watching around 7:00 A.M. along the Rhine there--where it's most beautiful, by the Beethoven [Ludwig van Beethoven] house, and the this, that, and the other. And Jack was staying with somebody in the State Department who was a fellow Choate and Harvard--I--^{their} name became quite prominent in the New Frontier as host and hostess^{there}--I'll think of it in a minute. The wife ^{is} is a, ~~is a~~, is a well known art critic.

STERN: Oh, I know who you mean.

O'DONNELL: Isn't that a shame?.

STERN: I can't think of it.

O'DONNELL: ^{Gauguin}~~Gauguin~~? or. . . . I can't either, but at least we know who we're talking about. In any case, that's who we were staying with. But I met him right along the Rhine, He was, you know, playing ducks and drakes, he was skating, and stuff. That's ^{as we} ~~what he~~ use to do on the Cape. And as I came closer, I recognized him--and, I mean, we hadn't aged so much that we didn't recognize each other--and shook hands, and happy to meet him, of course, and I congratulated him--the victory was still fresh. And I said, "Incidentally, how the hell did you do it?" I said, "I have--it's pretty tough to knock off a Lodge in Massachusetts." And he says, "I probably wouldn't have done it if he weren't the laziest son-of-a-bitch in the world." And I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "He never started to campaign until four in the afternoon." And I guess Jack was up around the clock. And that way--we talked about Boston politics and national politics, you know, the Steven-^{versus}son ~~vs~~ Eisenhauer and so on. There he detected my loathing of Eisenhauer, and he always tried to soft-pedal me on it. But I could not stomach Eisenhauer and I can't today. And he soft-pedalled me on that, and he made some friendly critical remarks about Adlai. One of the things he said I think should be mentioned. He says that one of the troubles with Adlai is that he likes those little witticism^s, but every one of

them costs a hundred thousand votes. Now, I think it's, it's true of Adlai, but, curiously, Jack liked little witticisms, and I think they were worth the hundred thousand votes. There was a difference of personality between the two. But the real theme was Germany, which is fairly natural because we were in Germany *at the time,* and things were begining to look up in Germany. For the first time, really, we could see this may be a functioning democracy. We, we, we're not always wrong in what we back.

← STERN: Excuse me. I just want to . . .

O'DONNELL: Oh, surely. *END TAPE I SIDE I*

BEGIN TAPE *I* ~~II~~ *SIDE II*

O'DONNELL: And as I say, ^{*knee-*} Kneeland is the name, I think, of that, that State Department family. Kneeland or *Kneelan.*

STERN: That's not the name that rings a bell with me. I may be thinking of somebody else, but I just can't think of the name.

O'DONNELL: It, it ^{*it*} come to me. I, I should know because this conversation ends--we wound up there and had a sort of a nine o'clock breakfast, and a nice one too, which I remember--
And the ^{*the*} name that flashes on my mind is Kneeland, but that's not quite. . . . But in any case, it's the content of the talk that's important, and not the weather or anything like that. It was a long discussion. He never mentioned the

presidency, Neither did I; I mean, that was really a long way off. But, he was already thinking in a statesmanlike way, "What do you think of NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization]?" "What do you" You know this. . . . Jack always cultivated newspapermen, and he brain-picked, which I think a good politician should, this is one of the ways of discovering, which is ~~I~~ I don't want to run down professional diplomats, but I think you ^{get} got, if not a better picture of the area you were in, at least a different picture, from the journalist. Because a diplomat, almost by definition, is accredited not only to a state but to a regimen. He cannot, in all honesty, ^{act} inform a visiting American politician too much about the opposition; because if there's a slip-up, he's apt to be discredited in a hurry. This is a built-in failing of the diplomatic profession; ^W whereas a journalist, on the contrary--and ^{and} I'm not one of these barricades journalists against everything--but a journalist has to keep up his contacts with the opposition because that's where the news usually originates. So you get a natural bias of the journalist profession to be against a government. Up to a point this is healthy. The point can be passed, ^{and} and in this country, ^{has} has, to my mind, all too often been

passed. But better than the type of press you have, say, even in Britain which is not nearly as free as our press. They can tighten, tighten up_ in, in, in the national interest. In any case, Kennedy's long discussion was Germany. He was very, very objective. He was very, very intelligent. And he even said such things, ^{as} he says, "You know, I've heard some German political figures tell me that I must be anti-German because I lost a brother and a brother-in-law in the war." He said, "Good Lord, I'm not that kind of a person. Naturally I. . . . But I, I mean, I'm not gonna blame Hans Schmidt," he said, "except if he were a Nazi or something. But I would dislike ^{him} for that reason." He said, "Please try to tell them that." He said, "My feeling about Germany is--" and he said it--repeated this many times later--he says, "is my ignorance." He said, "Back at Harvard I learned quite a little bit about England." You know, Jack was quite an Anglophile--British constitutional law, Lord Melbourne [William Lamb], It doesn't mean that on the Irish question he didn't have quite a--you know, his own opinion. But he has great admiration for the House of Commons, and I told him that I shared that, and I covered it, and so on. So we chatted a little bit about England and about his earlier days and ^{all} youth, and we kept getting back to Germany.

He asked me about this old man, Adenauer--already then he was called an old man--^{and} about the role of Catholicism, political Catholicism, in Germany. We really rang the changes for a good forty-five minutes. I can't remember much more. ^{He--} Oh, then I told him the whole "Joe story," and he said, "Well, that's typical Joe." He told me a little about the Pacific, not much. I remember asking him. . . . Jack and I had a way of needling each other; weren't that we were not friendly; we were. We later had a policy quarrel, but I ^I don't think it ever became pers[onal]. There was one day he got angry at me because somebody told him a lie--^{I, I don't want to} might as ^{get} right to that; it took quite a while to straighten this out. In the Berlin crisis, one of the worst appeasers--I can find no other word--in the State Department was a man whom I have never admired and I don't admire today, named George McGhee. He's one of these Texas Irishmen who, who married his money and got more of it in the oil business; bought his way into the party and into the department and ^{was} really ^{was} a bad performer. On August thirteenth, when the Berlin wall was going up and everything else, ^{he} he was, among other things, arguing ^{that} this was a great victory. Anybody with his head screwed on at all knew that that's ^{exactly} exactly what it wasn't. So I turned to him and ^{--and} I admit in anger--and I said, "George, you're the type of

person who's putting a fourth color into the American flag." This is an excitable, journalist's phrase, but it was directed specifically at McGhee. McGhee himself distorted it and said I'd said it about Kennedy. And Jack got really angry at this, but I must say--and this is clear--that he called me up, and he said, "Did you say that?" And I said, "Yes, I said it. Not about you, but about McGhee," and so on. So that got straightened ^{out,} but there was a ten day period which was rather rough. But I've moved way ahead of the story. Back now to the 1953 conversation. We began needling each other a little bit in ~~that~~ ^{that}. ~~He said that~~ ^{He said that}. Let me tell first a quote from him which is far more important than the personal thing. He said, "I think I know enough about England to follow British politics and British parties and British personalities. ~~The same language and personal friends,~~ ^{and, and} ~~and he~~ said, "After all, I've written a book about England," which was true. And he said, "Even in France--I took in college," ~~He said,~~ ^{also} "I can read French; I can read a French newspaper," which he could. He couldn't speak it, I mean, George, uh Jack was an awful linguist. He couldn't say, without stammering. But, for that matter, Churchill was not much better. And he said, "In Spain and in Italy, ^{he says,} ~~peripheral countries,~~ ^{peripheral countries,} --I can read them. But Germany has

always been to me, Blank. ^{He said,} "Oh I've read the Shirer [William L. Shirer] book, and I've read the this," he said. ^{and} And he said, "Also, I think they are awkward,"; That's one of his favorite phrases. He said, "I've met a lot of these Germans, the politicians," He said, "Some of them have been in concentration camps." He said, "I'd love to get them to exude," he says, "but they don't; they act like civil servants," which is quite true. So, that this came up later when even Adenauer tried to read anti-German biases into Jack Kennedy which, to the best of my knowledge, were not there. And I knew that he had a lot of friends in ^{the} newspaper business; not only me, but twelve others closer to him, because I was always over there. I got letters from him once in a while, but that's all. But those who'd been over there and came home earlier; like Marguerite Higgins; like Peter Lisagor [Peter I. Lisagor]; like Elie Abel [Elie Abel]; like, for example, Walter Cronkite [Walter Cronkite] and so on. These people Kennedy would often call up and say, "What is Adenauer really like? What is ~~later~~ ^{the} "Willy Brandt?" this, that and the other. He used the press far more than, than his other sources up in the Senate, or later, in the White House, when he wanted to find out this or that or the other about Germany. And he did-- he never asked the type of questions that a man, say like

Dean Rusk [Dean Risk], who was germanophobe; who just
so disliked all Germans that it made no difference to
him whether a German was a Nazi, a communist, center
democrat, or somebody like that. ^{This} This plays quite a
role ⁱⁿ in politics at the high level. But certainly I
would defend Kennedy; ^{then-on;} and on German television I've de-
fended him quite often, because that charge has been
raised. It gets so bad to the, the-- --. One of the German
tragedies that really produced Hitler, was this "stab in
the back" legend. You know, ^{we} we didn't lose World War I.
We were about to win, but the trade unions, or inter-
national finance, or the ^J jews, or the ^C catholics, or
God knows who, stabbed us in the back." They tried to
get another "stab in the back" legend going after the
Berlin wall; namely, that Jack Kennedy and Khrushchev
[Nikita S. Khrushchev] had decided this was the scenerio
and this was a way of going. This, this--as you--you
know the documents better than I. This is just not
true. And I don't think that that's widely believed by
young Germans today. But there was a danger in '61
that that would be built up into a, you know, a, a really
wicked myth. And ~~per~~ ^{perhaps} Perhaps that's one of the advant-
ages on, on television; that we could thrash that out.
And I, I think I was up for at least a dozen times. He

heard about that, and one of the letters I got from him was a letter of thanks. Now we were going, however vaguely, chronologically. We've reached '53. There comes a long gap. I did not see John Kennedy again until the campaign; that's seven years. However, in the middle of that period, '56, '57, I met three people who play a later role in as far as I played any role in the new frontier. The first was the ambassador himself again. Now this was '56, 1956. Elie Abel, the newspaperman, NBC, later Dean of the Columbia School of Journalism, but now, I think, out at Stanford in a similar job, was a close friend of mine from the Berlin days. And he had reached Paris and came down, whether by ^{train} ~~plane~~ or plane, but he came down with the ambassador. They'd been invited, ~~he had been invited~~ to a week end at Ed's. The ambassador had ^{rent} ~~rented~~ or bought a place in the ? that's the ? up fairly high, and then there's a ? right down on the coast. That was only about thirty minutes from where I lived. So they called up, and the ambassador, too, said he wanted to see me. I went over with my ^{my} wife, the mar-^{novelist} velous ^{Toni Hollis}. We drove over and had a truly delightful evening. And this ^{had} was the first time I heard that business about Jack being a

candidate. He had just made that run for vice-president, you know, out of nowhere; and just barely lost against--I forget who it was he met.

STERN: Kefauver. [Estes C. Kefauver].

O'DONNELL: Hmm?

STERN: Kefauver.

O'DONNELL: Kefauver, that's right. And I must say, in my political judgement--I could be more wrong, and I think I embarrassed Joe Kennedy Senior. I said, "I do not think the time is ripe for a catholic president of the United States." I said, "if there's gotta be one I'd be all-- I'd go all out for Jack," and this, that, and the other, "but I, I, I, I think you're twenty years--We discussed this. Elie, I think, was Jewish, and he was against me. He said, "Jimmy, you've been out of the country too long. Things have changed." And he was right. And the ambassador, who was there, and he said, "Well, I'm going to do my best, that's all." That was the discussion; and we discussed this and that and the other thing. It went on, a long evening, but we discussed everything from World War II--Oh, It just happened then? It just happened, I think, yeah. It was a long and pleasant evening. And now was that--no, that's not the last time I saw the ambassador; that's the last time I saw

STERN:
O'DONNELL: It just

the ambassador well. My God, and he was in rugged shape. He was--now he was getting into his sixties. We must have killed a magnum of . . .

STERN: You're saying he asked your help in the campaign or? . . .

O'DONNELL: Yeah, yeah, yeah. They. . . . Have ^{have} you ever heard the story about the "necktie league" invented by the ambassador?

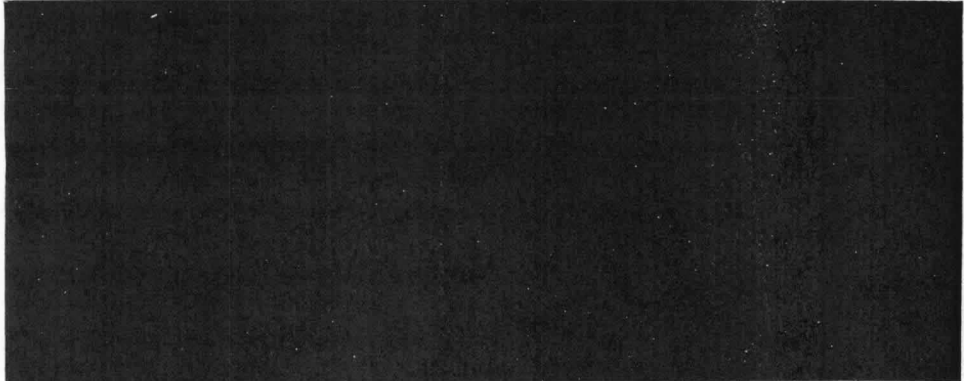
STERN: I don't believe so.

O'DONNELL: Well, this anecdotal side of the Kennedy clan. The old man--I guess going way back to the thirties; I know, because I've seen my brother's tirade. For Christmas, what does a millionaire--in his case a multi-millionaire--give to people? You can't give them something cheap; that's worse than ^{you know} . . . Women you can always give a perfume or flowers, something like that. But to your men friends what do you do? He had, at least for the press--which, let's face it, he had cultivated; but ^{then} he was a naturally gregarious man and would have cultivated them anywhere ^{to} he went in the and bought two fine ties. In those--^I know, I later went and priced them--in those days I think they were two for fifty dollars, which wouldn't be a too ^{shocking} shopping price today, But for those days that was a really shocking price. Well, I mean, if you're a

millionaire that's precisely

And I think he had a list of fifty journalists, I know four or five who were on it. And every Christmas, delivered by busboy or Western Union or something, they got these two magnificent ties. I know my brother had a rack of at least forty, which I later inherited; some of them I've still got. And they go out of fashion and they come in to fashion and they go out. And then around--from this meeting, I got on it. The next year on Christmas, not by Western Union but by air post mail, I got one. And I remember my shock when one of them--this time he bought them in Paris, I think--after five or six wearings--it was a tie not unlike this--was frayed here, and I thought, "Good God, a tie like that!" So I went into Paris--at that time I was earning considerable money and could afford to buy maybe a bow tie there too-- and I said, "Hey look, what's this all about?" And they looked at me with that, that arrogance of the clerk in a rich man's store, and say, "Mr. O'Donnell, normally our clientele do not wear a necktie more than six times." And he didn't mean to be insulting or anything like that; and I thought, as a matter of fact, and I said, "You're, you're taking--!"

But I laughed and, and, and I guess I bought a bow tie too. But--of course you can understand it--I assumed ^{that, that} that Joe Kennedy, ^{Senior} probably--but this one, nevertheless frayed away. And of my ties that came personally to me, it lasted only up to Dallas, and then Bobby or somebody got ahold of the list and had it cut. I think it was growing and growing, and they had to cut it back, so it disappeared again. But we're on '56 and '57. Then, the role of accident in the human life--I mean, we're all like badly drafted characters in, you know, in a novel, you know-- the role of accident is-- For example, At that same time--and I don't think I even knew of the friendship between Jack Kennedy and Ted Sr Sorenson; ^[Theodore C. Sorenson] why should I? I'd been in Washington as I'd said, was since my home town-- But I'd been back there very little, and certainly not long enough to be informed. If I'd read the New York Times more carefully I probably would have noted it, but I didn't. On the



STERN: Eventually, of course, he was number three man in the CIA, USIA [United States Information Agency].

O'DONNELL: Yeah, yeah, exactly, yeah. Well, that comes from this connection, of course.

STERN: Right.

O'DONNELL: But also ^{and} the second thing, that on merit, he was, he was a political operator. Now, in the Cairo ^{of} '57, after he and his friends had taken me for four hundred bucks in a poker game,--which I later got back; Not that I'm a good poker player, but that I'm sometimes lucky--he took me aside one-time-- . I'll tell you a lot about him and Nassar [Gamal Abdel Nassar]-- but we get back to Jack Kennedy--and he, too, laid out these plans. And ^{he} He says, "You're an American, and you come from New England, and you're Irish Catholic, and so on, What do you think?" And I said, "I think this, this issue is a killer." I mean, this was my obsession, practically. But looking back on, on '56, it was a ^{There} ~~there~~ were many people who felt the way I did. As a matter of fact, many catholics, who simply didn't want-- . You see, I'm old enough to remember the Al Smith [Alfred ^{E.} Emanuel Smith] thing, and, and the, the bricks that-- incidently on both sides, 'cause I've come to have a rather mellow feeling about Hoover [Herbert ^{Clark} Hoover],

And I don't think that Hoover was a bigot. But I did see fiery crosses out there in Newton and Wellsley and so on. It's, it's fairly shocking when you're ten or eleven years old. So, some ^{how} or other, you wanted the feeling of, you know, ^{of} let--"leave it lay where Jesus flang [sic] it" as the old saying goes. But Ted, once again--Tom, rather,--from the west, ^{had} and said, "Look, you, you Irish catholics in the Boston area"--I'm from Maryland actually, but he, he. . . . "This seems to be a hang-up, you know, ^I it's a long time ago and far away," which I--he turned out to be right. So he discussed it at some length. He said, "Would you be willing to do this? Would you be willing to do that?" and so on. And, and, ^{and, and} and I said, "Yes, within reason, I would." That is where I began writing these reports, never directly to Jack, to Tom, who'd send them on to Ted for use of whatever, ^{and} mainly notes on Germany, and, above all, on Berlin; ^{and} And that too, comes later in the story. But now on this--the Sorensons, I didn't get to meet Ted until three years later, until the campaign, whereas I would meet Tom quite often, every time I was in Cairo. So my actual role in the, in, in the New Frontier, such as it was, and it certainly was a minor role, through this close personal friendship with Ted--or

Tom, which led to the friendship with Ted. He would, we would meet together, you know, under

as you might say, on this or that, on a specific issue and so on; first in the campaign, and then in the government itself. And Then my relationship with Jack became a backdoor one; you see the funny I had known him before they did; long, long before they did, as the story tells, But they were intimates . . .

STERN:

Sure.

O'DONNELL:

. . . in the sense that I wasn't; And I also respected that. I, I, I have a--when a man is a senator, I call him senator; even if I've known him from the first grade. And certainly a president. Marguerite Higgins and others would call him Jack or JFK; I never did. And I think, somehow or other, he respected that too; because those titles are there for a purpose. Now, at eleven in the evening, in the middle of a campaign, and you might call him "Hey, you." But generally I, I, I afford these people who did not know him--this gets to the European, the French and the German; there's the familiar tu and du forms. This over familiarity, which is a little bit of an American vice. People know each other for ten minutes, and they're "Hey, Maggie, hey, hey this." There was a lot of that at that time. But

I'm getting now, ^{as} I would say, pretty close to the end of the story. Oh, except one more, one more Kennedy, yeah, ~~which of course . . . one more Kennedy,~~ yeah, ^{we} which of course is Bobby . . . [interruption]

^{• • •}
I'm sorry.

STERN: ^{Yeah.} Well, why don't we get up to the . . . How did you get into the ^{position} of being Ball's speech writer? How did that happen?

O'DONNELL: That's right. That gets to, really, I would say the last Kennedy on my list, namely Bobby. Although. . . We're ^{were} recording again, aren't we?

STERN: Right.

O'DONNELL: Again, it was, it was very, very indirect. The Saturday--it starts,--^{as} seen from my point of view, of course--it starts with ~~the~~ ^{the} Saturday Evening Post was, was going under, you know, permanent menopause, and all sorts of quarrels; and, you know, "you can't fire me, I quit" sort of thing. I won't go in to that, but I had a really tumultuous quarrel with them, and resigned. I, I also--although I did not know it at the time--had ^{hep} hepatitis, and I had to come back to Georgetown Hospital--to,--first to have it diagnosed. . . As a matter of fact, I was sitting with the Sorensons in the Mayflower Hotel when this jaundice broke out, which revealed the

hepatitis, I was very close to death, and so was in the hospital, oh, six or seven weeks. I met Jack once in there when he came in to see two people; my brother, John, was also in the hospital with a completely different ailment, and somebody else. So I remember one hospital visit, but that was social, and a little bit of talk about Hubert Humphrey [Hubert H. Humphrey], That's spring of 1960, the campaign year. But the way I got into the government was this: first place, I was back home for the first time, really, I'd been abroad from forty military from '43, almost all the way through.

STERN:

Right.

O'DONNELL:

I had been home in the United States, but never--the longest period I'd ever been here was five weeks, and it was pure vacation; I mean I wasn't working here. Now--so I was determined--this is part of my quarrel with the Saturday Evening Post; they wanted to send me back to Kuwait and Iran again; and I said, you know, "Nix." In any case, in 1960 I was looking for a Washington job, with, preferably, a newspaper job, naturally. And I wouldn't have had too much trouble. I could--there were still national magazines--I could have sat down and written, written articles. But then Bill

Attwood [William Attwood], who also comes in on this as ^{a, and,}
 another one of Jack's, I think, far, far closer friend
 of, of Jack's down through the years. I don't know,
 I think the link there was Choate, too. Also, Mrs.
 Attwood [Simone Cadgene Attwood], who I met in Paris,
 was a friend of Jacqueline Bouvier's [Jacqueline Kennedy
 Onassis]; They were together at Vassar, or something
 like that. There's another family link; my niece was
 Jackie's roommate at Vassar.

STERN = ? Bobby?
 O'DONNELL:

But ^{get} ^{onto} ^{the} ^{story} back on to how I met Bobby, and how
 I came into the government. One of my closest news-
 paper friends there, from the old Berlin days, was
 Marguerite Higgins, ^{she} ^{and} and she was New York Herald Tribune.
 And she gave a party one time in the summer ^{there} ^{at} ^{the} ^{place}
 which both of the senior Kennedys came, Both, both John
 and Bobby. And that, I think, is the first time I ever met
 Bobby. I knew about him; he was already a public pers-
 onality ^{of course,} But that's the first time I, I met him;
 And I was quite taken with him. I've always been an
 admirer of Bobby. I, I, I've--quite different from Jack,
^{but,} but, ^{but} nevertheless, a, a man you respect. And then he
 asked me about ~~George~~ ^{general} availability, And I told
 him that I'd, ~~Id~~ ^{Id}-this is Bobby I'm talking about not
 Jack, that--this is a complicated way we get to the

'George Ball thing. But, Bill Attwood, who was also in the campaign, and who had been Adlai's speech writer, 'cause Bill knew Adlai, Bill was one of the people, along with Arthur Schlesinger, that came over from the, from the Adlai camp, which was also the Eleanor camp, to the Jack Kennedy camp. And therefore, Attwood felt, in duty bound, to let Adlai know that he would not be available as speech writer for Adlai anymore because he'd be with--you know you can't serve two masters. And he recommended me, rather surprising, and it was rather flattering. I knew and liked Adlai, although-- boy, fate saves you from some things, doesn't it-- Speech writing for him was, was really carrying the cross. I wrote two or three for him and my respect for him did not go up. But I had known Adlai only, again, through Attwood, who, in Berlin--we had a long, sort of a evening supper there at Campinski's Hotel right after the June seventeenth events there, the the uprising of the East Berlin working class, and then later in Paris. Remember, Stevenson went around the world

STERN:

Right.

O'DONNELL:

... maybe you ^{would} did not remember, But right after

his first defeat^g by Eisenhower, he went around the world for Look magazine, with Bill^{and}, sort of ^{writer}, and friend; All the--there was a close relationship between the two. But, as I say, Attwood had recommended me for that job, so that when the election came--1960 election--and Adlai, of course, was eager to become ^s secretary of ^s state, and I think, in retrospect, it probably would have been a good, pretty good thing, had he become; he certainly would have been better than Dean Rusk. But, in any case, I had this promise, but Adlai was hemming and hawing. January came and my--I would hate to tell you how much money I had lost in those eighteen months. But with health, I had no social security, and the loss of the job, and the loss of the houseⁱⁿ--well, I haven't completely lost the house in France, but I'm not occupying it--and so on, I^{had} lost the equivalent of fifteen year's savings. And I was in debt, not much, but debt is debt; it's like "the only thing [?] is under water," And I really needed a job to pay my, well, my rent if--no, I don't think it was quite that bad, but it was getting that bad; and Adlai was hemming and hawing. And I went to a New Frontier party

right after the inauguration, and met George Ball, who, of course, I had known in Paris days, and rather well. And I like George a lot, still do. And I went over and I said, "George, for the love of Mike, you're a close of Adlai's as I am not. He's promised me this job but there's this, that, and the other, and I still haven't, you know, neither yai nor ~~no~~ And he says, "Well that's, that's my boy, Adlai." And he said, "Look, why don't you come over" George had just been appointed ^h undersecretary of state, which I knew. He said, "Why don't you come over and work for me, and in God's and Adlai's good time, which will probably be April, you can then shifted up there and you can do some valuable liaison work." And I said, "Fine." And of course I went to see Ball at nine; at nine-fifteen I was on the payroll, which was important; and at eleven we were working on a speech; and two days later ^{we} were out in St. Louis giving it. So things went very fine between me and Ball.

STERN:

What was the exact title?

O'DONNELL:

My title? Ball had a very small staff of six. He was, he was number three, ^{all} undersecretary of state for economic ^e affairs, ^e And I was press officer and, and speech

writer, although I think the title--it was a GSC 16,
whatever that means. I think the title was, was, was,
really something presumptive, such as "political con-
sultant". But what it was was primary speech and press;
two jobs combined, and I, I, I, I, I, I didn't the job.
So, after two or three or four months, I was not even
sure that I wanted to go to--make one more Art
Fund, one more change from Washington, which I re-
gard as a hometown as I do Boston; Whereas New York,
for me, is a place I've been coming through all my life.
On the other hand, the, the job of--up there in the
United Nations, it ^{cause} I always had a respect for, for
Adlai. And I later met Adlai and asked him why this
thing never came through, not even a rejection or any-
thing; Why just fill it. He said, "Well (a) George
Ball told me that you were perfectly happy, so I knew
I wasn't letting you down;" and he said, "(b) Ben Hibbs,
[Ben Hibbs], (this editor of the Saturday Evening Post,
when I had to write around for these previous employer,"
he said, "stuck three knives in your back. He accused
you of being a secret member of CIA," which, of course,
I was not; "in the secret pay of the oil companies,
and too strongly pro-Israel." Funny, the editor didn't

of the Saturday Evening Post. I've never published this, but this is the way it went. And I said ^{that} to --
"Adlai, ^{Adlai} I really think you owed me that sooner than ^{cause} I would of filed a slander suit, instantly." It would have ruined him; ^{Perhaps} it's just as well. But Adlai said, "Well, the letter was, was, was in confidence." And my respect for Adlai went down a little bit because he, he, he wasn't what he, frankly, should have been. But all's well that ends well in that sense. And that brings us ^{into} the summer of '61. Now I, I had neglected one important thing in the summer of '60; 'cause that's documents that should be right in this building. At the request of -- no, not Tom -- ^{oh,} of Tom and Ted Sorenson together, I wrote four separate ~~memo-~~ memoranda, ~~memorandums,~~ memoranda, whichever, ~~addressed,~~ addressed, this time, ^{to} "Sorensons for JFK" during the campaign. Was a, I wouldn't call it polemical, but it was a critique of the Eisenhower-Dulles [John Foster Dulles] Administration on ^{the} "great talk, no do", of various things they had done ⁱⁿ Europe and so on; but concentrating on the Berlin crisis. Because, you see, in the campaign of '60, one was already in the middle of that Berlin ultimatum. Khrushchev had laid down this ultimatum in

'58 which lasted until '62 actually, so Kennedy was right in the middle of that. This, as a matter of fact, was the big issue in American-Soviet relations. It was the sword of Damocles of the ultimatum which was by no means over. So, those are the only political ^{commu-}communiques, and see, they are not inside the government at all; they're really democratic party, or really Kennedy personal staff, Sorenson. All through the New Frontier, my relation to Kennedy was either through the Sorens^{ons}ns--that's quasi, what the French would call --or thru ^{one's} Maggie Higgins, which was purely private. Sometimes Kennedy would call her; much more often than he called me; he was much closer to her. She was a power in the press in those days, and she would often call me because I was more familiar with the specifics of the Berlin thing; She ^{of} having been away many years. And I had spent a couple months of that summer there putting out a special issue of a new magazine with Kennedy's picture on the cover. Perhaps we could end ^{up} that with that 'cause that's a funny anecdotal story. I've covered the thing about the '60, and we haven't gotten into at all, to the the crisis. Perhaps we should keep that seperately

'cause that's historical, and that's not personal reminiscence. Whereas this, I'll end on this; there's a little bit of both. Let me get my dates right. ^{year} Yes. In the summer of 1960, the biggest publisher in Germany, and for that matter, I think in Europe, Axel Springer [Axel C. Springer], anyway he's one of ? --very pro-American man, sort of center-right politics. He would not be in favor of the Schmidt [Helmut H. W. Schmidt] government; he was much more an Adenauer man; so-called "hard liner writing." But I had known him quite well; and basically a generous man as some millionaires can be. He wanted to launch one of the famous old, it was really the first big picture magazine which Eisenstaedt [Alfred Eisenstaedt] and all of those German photographers of the "Leika CONTACTS" period; many of whom were Jewish; at least half of them, I guess, were Jewish--who made these great careers in the Germany of the twenties, and either left voluntarily, or less voluntarily after '33, came to the United States, and were really responsible for Henry Luce's [Henry R. Luce] life. Life was an imitation of this famous Ulstein Berliner ? strada (en the)

of the twenties. I would say, if not the first picture magazine in the world, it was the--photo-journalism was born in Berlin at this [?]Ulstein place. Now, when the Nazis came to power in '33, they did not end the magazine, they simply took over [?]Ulstein lock, stock, and barrel, on two grounds: (1) they took over all printing presses, and (2) the Ulstein family was German-Jewish, ^Sso that was ^{this}a double-barreled thing, ^aAnd they ran this as a Nazi organ, ^Sso that Nazi, in 1945, had ceased to exist; ^wWe, the American military government, actually took over the presses. Springer then later, bought those, and in buying the presses and the plant he also had this title which was worth ^gwell, it was worth the same thing as, as say what the title Saturday Evening Post and America of today might be worth, ^aAnd seriously considered re-launching that magazine and the ^gand he did; ^aAs a matter of fact we made several dummies. In 1960, in the late summer--^{mainly}namely, right out of the campaign--September and October, I flew back to Germany. I was one of the senior editors of this ~~thing~~; we, we got quite a lot of talent. We put out a special edition dedicated to whomever be ^gwas to become the president of the United States. It had a ^gBraunenberg Gate

^{and} the old title; and then a picture of Jack Kennedy, and a picture of Dick Nixon in reserve. John was apt to act that way. Now here's the anecdotal part of the thing. I wrote two long articles for this. I had one interview with Sorenson, and he promised to get a quote for Kennedy to go into this thing; and they sent a man named Ryan over with the signature, signature. And so the^{is}, the^{is}, this was all prearranged and so on. On the quote--in the busyness of the campaign, I mean it got closer and closer--I telephoned a couple times; ~~one~~ one time I called Tom and got Ted; and the other time I called Ted and got Tom; ~~you~~ you know, typical thing of the campaign. Finally I, I went into the America house in Berlin, and they dug out a quote I was vaguely familiar with. In October, 1958, John Fisher [Henry J. Fisher]--Atlantic or Harper's? I think it was Harper's as a matter, ~~yeah~~, Fisher was Harper's--had a long interview with John Kennedy on foreign affairs. And when he got to the problem of Berlin, Kennedy--John--gave this surprisingly strong quote. He said, "Well, Mr Fisher, as far as Berlin is concerned, I think the security of Berlin is on the same level with that of Paris, London, or New York." That's a terribly strong

statement, ^g not so much the Paris, London, but ^{the} New York thing, ^a And for political propoganda--mystic? purposes in Germany--was almost the perfect quote for this magazine. So, having dug that out, I then, this time, sent a, a, a cablegram because I wanted ^{the other} I said, "In, in lieu of the various other things we suggested, how about this one? Is it still good? Is it still valid? And can you get JFK's okay?" At which point, twenty-four hours later, this okay came back, just as we were going to press, thank God. So, we got the thing put in there. And, of course, Kennedy won the election as we now know. And it took four or five weeks to print this magazine, because we were restarting up a new process, ^a And the English edition of it was actually more important than ⁿ the German. I think we printed two-hundred thousand of the, ^g ~~one~~-hundred thousand of the German edition, but three-hundred thousand of the American; ^a And that was distributed through USIA and so on, but also, right in Washington for the inaugural. Now, not to make a fairly long story longer than it has to be; ^e at this time Kennedy, again, just coming in, and now, about-- he'd be now not ^p president-elect, but actually ^p president--

was in contact with Khrushchev, and he wasn't giving out any statements, which is natural, having completely forgotten, I guess, this statement. When this came out, it was picked up by the wire service and the Voice of America then, which is also natural. But Pierre Salinger [Pierre E. G. Salinger], who was in rather constant friction with the Sorensons--he shouldn't have done this; I've discussed this with him later and gotten him straightened out. But he called the press in and said, "This statement is a fake. Kennedy never gave it." Whereupon, Voice of America and the German press went out claiming that Axel Springer--meaning namely me--had, had forged a statement, that, that it hadn't been signed by Kennedy. I instantly got on the Sorensons and, and that was straightened out. But the damage had been done. The news reached Germany, and this, that, and the other. Some of the in-fighting in the House of Ulstein; people who did not want to ? this ? , and used it too, against me, and against the publisher, and so on. But the end, the sequel to that story, is, is rather ironic. ^{The} Copies of the magazine were around, and of course many, many in Berlin. And a future comm-

- andant--I don't think it was General Watson [?],

I think it was someone later--who did not know
this story, and ^{so he} did not know this complicated
background. He had it chiseled in, in ^{Peridot (?)}
marble, and over the headquar--United States head-
quarters in Berlin today, ^g Almost, you know, like
~~see one of these~~ ^{at, at, M} at Marathon. It's ^g this immortal
statement, ^a And every time I look at it, I figure,
well, Jack, I think would be happy. It, it, it's
become a part of the Berlin, ^{g like} ~~life--~~ the Brandenburg
gate, and this, that and other things.

STERN: That's fascinating.

O'DONNELL: And the BBC has that story from me. They're doing
an anniversary number about August 13th, ^{the} the day
the wall went up. ^{W.} And although it's critical, they,
they put me on to, to kill this, [^] this rumor, this
~~stab in the back~~, which I thought was important even
today. And it meant finally to tell the story; that
the statement was there; And now it's in stone.

STERN: That's fascinating. Wonder if we could get to the,
the meeting you had with the two Sorensens on the
24th of July about his speech?

O'DONNELL: Yes. That, that really is ^{is}, is a footnote to

history. This is some of the stuff we were doing out on your lawn two weeks ago. In the line of what I've just said, of the ~~...~~ I think an objective historian could criticize the New Frontier, as he could criticize the Reagan [Ronald W. Reagan] government today. Any new government is on a shake-down cruise. It, ^{it's} is only vaguely at home in Washington; it leans on its tried and true friends; and it very often--I mean, I'm not getting any telephone calls from Ronnie Reagan. I mean, don't mistake me--but they very often turn to the press, or old friends, or people they knew earlier, and say, "What's this like, what's that like?" and so on. So, too, it was in those days, I mean, I would actually praise Kennedy as president, ~~that~~ ^{that} ~~that~~ ^{he'd pick} he that he knew enough newspapermen that he could call up and, and--something like that young naval officer line, you know, "What the f--- is the story on this or that?" ^{or} ~~or~~ ^{or} "Who is this, or who is that?" No--Information--Knowledge is very often the knowledge of where to go to get information. And so, so it was in, in this case, of, of, of August 13th. As the--this Berlin crisis which had been there and had been simmering, it now became looming because the refugee thing, as spring turned into summer, was mounting dramatically. Let me tell you two things ^{that} there, shows again about Kennedy's relation with the press. I had a telephone call

from him, from the White House, I think--wherever he was that night; I assume it was the White House--in which he said, "Jim, the other day at Marguerite Higgins', Bobby heard you use the phrase 'tailgate issue'. Could you kindly tell me what a 'tailgate issue' is, because it came up at a staff meeting today and I'm not quite sure I'm sure?" So I told him. It's an old anecdote story about how the American and British soldiers were moving Fräuleins in and out of Berlin, and the Russians caught 'em at it and said, "Naughty, naughty, ^{you} And now you must show what's in your truck." And the British, ^{you} ~~bashful~~, did; and the Americans came by; ^{you} They had a ^{you} lorry where the tailgate was high, and we had one that was low, A typical Byzantine situation in Berlin that grows up there. The importance of it is that when you were handling these things down through the years, a small symbolic thing; who is sovereign, who inspects whom? The French verb au contrait and, and all of that stuff. A ^{you} tailgate issue became--and this is pretty much what I said to Jack--a ^{you} like a sacrament in the Roman Catholic church, It's, it's a symbolic thing; insignificant itself, but a symbol of something far more important. Whether that British soldier, long, long ago, was sleeping with a Fräulein or not, is of absolutely no importance unless

he possibly bred a child who'd become future dictator or something. But the fact that the Russians used that as a precedent to ask that we let down a tailgate. And we, we had one wonderful sergeant, a, a black. And ^{they} they want so far--the Russians really can be, not diabolical, but funny--
They got a dwarf from the Moscow zoo who was only that tall,
And ^h He came out and he said, "Take down the tailgate of this SM truck, 'cause I can't see thru it." This big, handsome sergeant from Chicago said, "Brother, you just gotta go get a taller Russian." And that phrase too. ^{well} I told this to Jack Kennedy. He roared with laughter. He said, "I guess we gotta go, go get a taller Russian." But--so I had explained this "tailgate issue" to him, and ^{and he} it got it. Now whether in the next day, "cause it, it is [?] But I said, "Mr. President, what it means in the language of the Berlin experts, is one of these very, very complicated things going far, far back into the past, ^b but it, it, it's a ^{brizz word} what we today would call a ^{brizz word}." He said, "Fine. Thank you very much," and hung up. It's the only nighttime call I got. Now, the meaning is this: Kennedy... No, the second call, second and last call was this: he called up and he said, "Do you know George Bailey [
And I said, "Yes, very well." He said, "I have just read an

article in the Reporter magazine called "The Vanishing Satellite". And I said, "Yes, I read it this morning too." And he said, "Well, if you believe Bailey, ^{than} East Germany's just disappearing." And I said, "Mr. President, if you believe the figures, two thousand people a day, university students and every ^{1.1/1.1} something, you know--this. *was kind of explosive and so on* and he was checking this thing on, on, on Bailey's validity and this was where the debate between the hardliners and the softliners grew up. And this leads to the Sorenson meeting.

END OF TAPE I SIDE II

O'DONNELL: Yeah, well to finish this off. Because it is a, it is a moment of ~~some~~^s ~~some~~ ~~how~~^{how} ~~how~~ ~~Somebody~~ once said to me, "Getting a government to move fast is like getting an elephant to do a tap-dance." And here, you must sympathize with any president ^{that} to get ^{that} ~~at~~ ^{and} I sometimes call it, "Soviet-Washington." There's often the same type of people, not evil people, but--the colonel there and the colonel in Moscow are roughly the same types, react the same way, which is, which is, slowly. And, ~~to~~^{through} that June and through July, Jack and here I would say, even more, Bobby, ~~because~~ Bobby I used to see two or three times a week ^{down} at his place in McLean, but also over at ^{Higgins's} ~~Higgs~~ ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ and the third place we use to go, ~~Pete~~, Peter Lisagor's ~~[Peter I. Lisagor]~~

met quite often. A lot of the politics took place at, at, at a what you might call the "brother level." And Bobby was good at this thing. So, I had the reputation, I suppose, of being what today you'd call a hawk. I dislike that ornithology, but the--I thought we should have been--we should have asserted our rights in East Berlin earlier. You couldn't do it on the day itself, but in June and July we could. But the State Department was blocking that, for one reason, the Pentagon was part of another, and our beloved Allies were blocking it for a third, and Adenauer was blocking fourth. So this was really a lost cause. I think I recognized it as such. But, the following happened, this anecdote: On the twenty-third or twenty-fourth of July, in other words, just shortly before Kennedy's historic speech up at the United Nations, ^(Thomas C. Sorensen) Tom--Ted Sorensen [Theodore C. Sorensen] called, and Tom, and said, "Let's have lunch together at the Mayflower," which we'd done two or three times before. But this was--they had something to celebrate and--I'll never forget it! Ted came in, he was happy. He said, "I finally got something that's gonna make you, and Higgins, and Lisagor, and all you hard-liners, really happy, because Sorensen, except on the military side, was, was, ~~was~~ quite a political hard-liner on this when compared say to Arthur Schlesinger and Dean Rusk [Dean Rusk]. So he -- after the shrimp

cocktail, or maybe it was soft-shelled crab, whatever, one of these nice Washington meals--he handed me--it was--I read this in print somewhere, rough draft. It was more than the rough draft, it was the approved copy that the government was about to--that I think the White House press secretary was going to release within twenty-four hours--of the speech to be given by the president tonight at such, and ~~him~~ So it was far beyond the, the manuscript stage. I mean it was typed, for example, it was not in hand--.

And he handed ~~it~~ to me to read, and I read through it. It read like Pericles [~~Pericles~~]. It reminded me very, ^{very} much of the ~~of~~ the inaugural speech. And then I read through it again. We discussed it for a few minutes. Then I read through it again, and I saw this word, "West Berlin," "All the previous guarantees of said Berlin-- --." This is the semantics of power, Berlin, Berlin, Berlin, and now suddenly it's West Berlin.

SECRET · Meaning the abandonment of East Berlin?

O'DONNELL: In essence, yeah. Now, this is a bureaucratic game, you see-- State, [Department], CIA [Central Intelligence Agency], Pentagon, my god, I think even Treasury [Department] was in this, as they are in so many things, and all insisted-- And, in a certain sense, you can understand their psychology-- The business about the Autobahn and the air corridors, ^{and} what

Kennedy later called the "the three essentials". That's a potential war and peace issue. A certain escalation could--I don't think it would, but you have to admit it could. My feeling is that a thing as old as Berlin-- there are seventy-nine escalating things so that if a war is to happen by accident it's least likely to happen there. But nevertheless, ^{you--} I can't prove that, and so people who really hold power, ^{you know, I,} I've seen generals who, who sweat blood by the wrist because they might be called upon to push a certain button. So I have to be ^{go} very, very easy on this issue. My argument, and that of most of the by-liners, was, precisely because that was so terrifying, not even the Russians will seriously consider it, and therefore they'll flank you on the East Berlin thing, ~~cause~~ ^{cause} that's already been declared, not a war and peace issue. And so we're apt to lose every ^{you know, salamic(?)} process ^{being} nibbled to death. And I think Jack Kennedy saw this, but nevertheless the, the crunch of this government saying, "No, we will be strong as nails on the Autobahn, ^{up} up to and including a risk of atomic war, ^{there,} and, and therefore we write off each win." So I, I said to, to Ted, a bit too sharply, that, you know, you sold the pass. ^g This is it. ^g The game is over. As soon as any Russian colonel reads that, they know exactly what to do. He didn't get angry, but he got nonplused. He says, ^s ^{"Oh,} ~~what~~ ^{what} do you want

me to do at this late stage.⁷" I think he looked at his watch and said, "In thirty-six hours this speech will be given." I said, "Well, just take your pencil and knock out the word 'West'. That's perfectly--look--". ~~And he said,~~ "You are insufferable," he said. "All you're asking me, little ole me, to do, is reverse the State Department." And I said, "Of course, I realize that. But, but watch the echo. That's what it'll be." So I think that two Sorensens left vaguely disappointed, because I heard from them later--the disappoint-- they call it the "shrimp cocktail disappointment"--that Jack himself--here, and now I'm calling him Jack--but the ^President of the United States had said, "God Damn it, this is a tough speech. Show it to Higgins' and"--he probably named twelve people, but Higgins was one of them, and I was probably the ninth. ^{And} The fact that he was showing it to me... He said, "Let's, let's get a real hard-line reaction." Well, he got it awfully fast. But, ²historically speaking, I think that speech, followed by Fulbright's [James William Fulbright] going on "Meet The Press", ^{and then,} to emphasize it, that was the la--rightly or wrongly, and these issues can always be debated by historians--from that time on it was too late to reassert our rights, which we still have today, incidently, in East Berlin, because that is the type of thing the Russians could misunderstand. Once they read

this Kennedy speech, they, I think, took the decision. This is not--we've never gotten the secret diagrams, ~~as I say~~ ^{you see}. But I think their final decision came between that speech and the actual day. I can't prove it, but it's highly likely. And that's probably a fairly good point to end on.

STERN: That's, that's fascinating. Let me just ask you one of the additional things about ~~the~~ ^{the} crisis itself, in August.

O'DONNELL: Sure.

STERN: ^{you} You mention the anecdote about ~~the~~ ^{the} confrontation with George McGhee [George C. McGhee] earlier.

O'DONNELL: Yeah.

STERN: But, apparently, ^{you} you were one of the first people to learn about the construction of the wall, because you were called by a journalist, ~~a~~ German journalist friend of yours.

O'DONNELL: Yes, Yes.

STERN: . . . when Washington was still ^{sort of}, sleeping. ^{Tell me more.}

O'DONNELL: Yeah. ^{this} This is part of the history of those times. Good Lord, it's twenty years ago! ^{That} ~~not~~ only was a new government in, you see, ^{because} because when a government changes, just as, again, this Reagan [Ronald W. Reagan] thing--when a party also changes--you had eight years of Eisenhower, ~~Dulles~~ [John Foster Dulles], ^{then} Eisenhower, Nixon, ~~Dulles~~, then a complete change. ~~And~~ Jack's crew was really new. But that doesn't necessarily happen in bureauracy, you know. They, they

go on forever. So you got the fact that the ^{the} German reporters there tended, quite [?], They tended to be quite pro-Kennedy, incidentally. But they came in this government, every time, two American journalists who ^{through} down thru the years they'd know. They knew our stand there. They knew our politics, so to speak. And therefore I, I beca--I got in a lot of trouble on this, because they would come to me, cause Germans above all, but most continental Europeans, are far more skeptical of government than we are--and I think we've become so. But they always, somehow or other, feel there's a story behind a story.--What's really happening? And ^{up} to a point, they're right of course. But I think they carried it much too far. To the point that almost every policy thing is a conspiracy, which it isn't. It's usually--most policy things, to my mind, are compromises of power interests and a mixture of wisdom and stupidity and so on. But, I knew a dozen German journalists very well. As a matter of fact, on George Ball, I had to go and see these people in line of duty, whereas Berlin was not my line of duty, except indirectly. So they would very often come to me. And the trouble ^{with}--there's always some trouble when you're in the government. The people in State Department, to this day you can talk to even fine people like Jimmy Riddleberger [James W. Riddleberger] and so on--and certainly there are fine people in our depart-

ment--they are convinced that Jack Kennedy put me into the State Department personally, to spy on them. It is absolute-ly not true. You just heard the story of how it happened, and it did happen that way. But it looked so plausible. Irish Mafia, to which I definitely did not belong, the family link, the Harvard, you know, and, and people will, in, in return, a high person in, the State Department tells his British colleague, who tells his German colleague, who tells the Chancellor of Germany, Adenauer later, and I'm now... If they'd of came to me and said, "Well, you were obviously Kennedy's 'the man in the State Department'." Ha, ha, ha ~~I said~~, "No, Mr. Chancellor, I wasn't." But that is, curiously, the way it goes, and you cannot down a suspicion like that. It's like a poor fellow going around saying, "You know, I really ^{am} not a homosexual." He, he-- perhaps he'd have to rape the first lady to... And it's funny the... Somebody could do a fascinating book on the relation of press to politics to bureauracy. And here I would say a strong word for Jack Kennedy. He learned what Nixon nevered learned, ^{and} what Reagan has only half learned. Jack cultivated the media, ^{which} what we now call, ^{it, no, I} prefer to call it ^{the} press still, press and media. And one of the ways he did it was by not lying. ^{In a way,} In other words, he--Jack was a non-- he was a rhetorician, but he was a nonbullshitter, so he built up this tremendous trust ^{with} the press which is part

of the art of governing. The press in this country is extremely ^{me} powerful; To my mind, far too powerful. I mean, this is a power that the people are going to take a, a long, long look at someday, 'cause power without responsibility is a, is a chary thing. But I think that Kennedy was masterful in realizing that, very, very early on. And if, once in awhile, he got angry at this or that column, nevertheless and basically, he, he leveled. Nixon never learned it, ~~and~~ never could. I don't think that Reagan is very good at it because, with his California background and everything, he is much more a media man of film. Maybe that's what the times call for ~~the~~ media man, film man, TV man. But there aren't very many people on the New York Times who, who even know Ronnie Reagan. I think Jack Kennedy knew forty Time's reporters. And he knew who they were sleeping with, and this and, ~~that~~. And he knew the gossip and so on. But, he--newspapermen liked to deal with this man because--I won't say that we're businessmen, but when you talk to a politician for an hour you've really gotta have something to write, other than the Sermon on the Mount and what all. And ~~from~~, from Jack, ^{one} ~~one~~ really got it. Although, ironically toward the end there, I was not in my capacity as a newspaperman. This is why I got the flak from both sides.

STERN:

Yeah. I wonder if you could put on the record the story of the whole thing, ^{the} General Clay [Lucius DuB. Clay] and the--you

know, the . . .

O'DONNELL: Yeah, certainly! I'm just afraid of using up too much of your time.

STERN: Oh, that's okay. Why don't you just . . .

O'DONNELL: Yeah. Well, ^{well,} the Clay--Let me try to make it ~~as~~ brief as possible. I mean, there are two types of people in this world: the Hegelian [Georg W. F. Hegel] determinists who believe that--or, you know, ~~the~~ Marxist [Karl Marx] writer, and you've heard of the Augustinians. You believe in the great inevitable sweep, ^{and} the Napoleons [Napoleon Bonaparte], and the Good! There is obviously ~~the~~, ^{the, the, French Revolution} the French Revolution was just not a, a ball game. But I have been impressed, in my forty years of journalism, where ^{I've} ~~I have~~ sometimes been close to where the power decisions are really taken, the tremendous role of accident. I would now like to go back and find out if the Battle of ^{Myana} was fought in the rain or, ^{things like that,} ~~the personalities,~~ people, Grey Eminences, and as I say, sheer accident. You go out to the ball park, and that little ball, it bounces over the head of a shortstop, ⁱ In the box score it becomes, for all time, a double. But you were there and you saw it. ⁱ It hit a pebble and went over. So too, in the naming of Clay, there are going to be whole books,--certain doctoral theses are already being written about how Jack Kennedy ³⁰⁰

turned to a representative of American capitalism, and so on. Sheer nonsense! 'Cause I--on this I can really be arrogant-- I know how the whole Clay mission, which incidently was a dubious affair from beginning to end, started. And I am really one of the responsables. If there's ever a Nuremberg trial I'll--for us, I'll be sitting there. It happened in the following way. On that very Sunday--you've heard me mention several times, Higgins, Marguerite Higgins, the late Marguerite Higgins, unfortunately. She had a really fine relationship with, with President Kennedy, and even No gossip, incidently. This, this thing was really platonic. He had said to her one day, not in my presense but I heard it from her on the same day, that she had printed something that he didn't like, and he had turned to her and said, "Marguerite, I thought you were a friend of mine. You could ~~WV~~ at least have called me up. You're going out with this thing. It's critical. You could have called me up." And she said, "But Jack"--she could call him Jack, you see--"it was eleven in the evening. I am not " And he said, "Look, I don't care what time of day or night. If you're going to be on the front page of the Herald Tribune with something ^{that} concerns my government, you can roll me out at three in the morning. I'll only be angry if you didn't check it. Because (a) you got it wrong, and (b) I could have given you

some added information." So she, from that time on, had this-- which for a journalist of course, competing within the

? was terrific, that she could literally call him ^{at -- midnight --} at midnite without, you know, and get through. She said she had ^{th-} this funny little number there ^{When} you did not get the switchboard. You got, you got Ted Clifton [Chester V. Clifton] I think, or someone like that. Now, in that atmosphere, this Axel Springer, [redacted] whom I also mentioned, the publisher, had offered me a very high paying job, ^{Was} ^{around} the world assignment for his newspaper, ?

And I turned it down solely on the ground that by this time I had said yes to George Ball and I didn't want to start going around the world on, mainly on ^{health problems.} ^{jaunts.}

I wanted to stay in Washington at least a couple years. So, I also wanted to keep that seat warm, that job warm. So I recommended Marguerite. She got it, in addition to her Herald Tribune job, because she in turn knew that the Herald Tribune was not forever, that they were in financial difficulty.

So she entered into an arrangement with me whereby she would do this column twice a week in addition to her Herald Tribune column and would turn it over to me in a couple ^{of} years. Okay. Fair enough. But came the month of July, and she was going on vacation in early August, and she had written a column about this refugee flow in Berlin, but from Washington, ^{How Wash-}

ington sees the crisis.

STERN: Right.

O'DONNELL: She showed it to me and said, "Do you think this will stand up over the weekend?" I said, "Maggie, I honestly don't know. But go off on your vacation", Hyannisport, incidently
"Go off on your vacation, and if on the weekend things get tacky, I will simply write a substitute and cable it for you. So relax." I gave her my word I would do this. Incidently, as an official of the State Department I should not have been doing that. But I, I did, for the reason I just gave. And so then, on Saturday she called, and I said, "Maggie, it won't hold. But I will write you a thing and I'll file it tomorrow.", Then the tomorrow being Sunday--and then she called up. And meanwhile, as you so correctly pointed out, I'd gotten these four or five calls out of Berlin, which is six hours ahead of us at the time. And so, in the middle of the afternoon she called again and, and she said, "What have you heard from Berlin?", I said, "Your column went off. I wrote it. And there, there's a disasterous situation there. Something's got to be done because morale is, is, quite literally, collapsing!" And she said, "Well, you want--", she said, "I've got an idea. Do you know who my next door neighbor is?", And I said, "No, who is it?" She said, "General Lucius D. Clay," whom both she and I knew very, very well from the old Berlin days of

the blockade, which is, after all, fifteen years previously. And she, in turn, had married the man, the air force general, who at that time had been Clay's air intelligence officer. His name was Bill Hall [William E. Hall]. He was there too. So they went over and talked to Clay. And Marguerite said, "Do you mind waiting by your telephone, Lucius?" ^{And and} She, I called him General, and she called him Lucius, you know, Women's Rights; back in those old days they had more rights than they do today--will call back. Which, sure enough, a half an hour later he did. I gave him a fill in also, "out of church, out of ^{chair} because I criticized the department and; above all, Chip Bolen [Charles E. Bolen] and McGhee [George C. McGhee], pretty strongly. And then Clay said, "Look"--I don't know whether we want this in the record at all--he said, "What should I do?" And, and I said, "Well, you are a former four ^{star} general, you are the former military governor of Germany, and you were a prominent Republican raising all ^{of} that dough for Ike. You certainly have some clout with the president. Why don't you get in touch with him?" And he said, "Well, I'd be perfectly willing to volunteer to go back in the job of ^C commandant." And I said, "No, general, you're out of touch, ^C commandant is two star. You've gotta go back, you know, the ambassador^{dom} [sic]." That's what later turned out, ambassador-at-large or -- j --

STERN: Special representative?

O'DONNELL: Special representative, exactly, of the president of the United States. And then ^{then} he said--and this is, perhaps should be possibly off the record, but let's get it on the tape anyway. He said, "I cannot abide Bobby. But I have a great respect for the young man who won the election, who is the ^P president, and who is also our ^C commander-in-^Cchief." Clay was an old-fashioned southerner, and he reacted that way. And I said, "Well, ^{on the} 'abiding Bobby' there are two points of view. I, I, I happen rather to admire him. But in any case, a close friend and great admirer is, is your own friend, Maggie Higgins. So get her to call Bobby and let him know of your availability, and he, I'm sure, will get in touch with his brother." Which is exactly what happened. Marguerite called Bobby. Bobby reacted politically and said, "Oh, oh, Clay's a Republican, that's good, bipartisan, but I gotta get a Democrat." So he, he got Lyndon. So it was a couple days before that deal was announced. But I, of course, was reasonably aware ^{that} of what was ^{he was telling him} coming, ^{on} that Sunday night. I gave it--'cause I wanted it to break ^{to} a Germ-^g a top German correspondent, and he refused to file it. He was convinced that I was swindling, as he told me later. That's typical of the German reaction in those days. But, the coincidence of the relationship between me and Marguerite Higgins and the 'little column'

matter, which still, nobody--I think you got it for the first time ~~on~~ or it will be on ~~paper~~. Secondly, the even stronger coincidence of the, his, the next door neighbor--^{1d says} it was Chatham, not Hyannisport, ^{here} here, I was wrong. Clay and, and, and, and, ~~and~~ and Higgins--the Halls, as they actually were called, Gen-- Lieutenant General Hall-- they were in Chatham, in North Chatham, ~~the~~ place called Squaretop, ~~but~~ that's not so far from Hyannisport. And ^{there,} there's ^a ~~the~~ ^{coincidence} third point, since I pointed out. The fourth coincidence, that I was even back at my flat. The fifth, that Maggie also knew Bobby. And so, this ball is going through. And a determinist would say, "This was a secret deal of American capitalism. Clay sitting on his continental can," And all of that. Not true. And I think that precisely because it happened so out of channels,-- the Clay mission was by no means a complete success. I certainly think it was a partial success, and in these days you settle for partial successes. But it, ~~of~~ for the structure of government, ~~it,~~ it created a, an instant clash between the then ambassador, Red Dowling [Walter Dowling], a man whom I'd known and liked well, and I, I, I will not speak to him today. He acted abominably. He wouldn't even give up his house to Clay. Mrs. Clay [Marjorie McKeown Clay] had arthritis. He left her out in ^{Goebbels's} ^{old} mission. He, he acted in a detestible way. I went to him three times

and I said, "Red, look here, ^I there's no conspiracy against you and your job ^{here.}" And I told him, just as I told you, how this really happened, "But Clay is here, you are . . ." And, you see, the American ambassador is normally in Bonn, so he could perfectly well have worked out a relations^{ship} with Clay. But there is that deep, continuing hatred between the Department of State and the Military, and it, ^{it} comes to a head most often in Berlin, where they, they clash on, on function, and everything else. And ^{Red} Dowling did not come off at all well in that crisis. But anyway, that's the rather long answer to your question.

STERN: That' fascinating. Just one last point there. General Clay, in his ^{own} oral history, mentions that he wrote to General Taylor [Maxwell D. Taylor] suggesting that he might do something, in terms of the crisis, right after August thirteenth. I assume that he did that after he is ^{after} your exchange.

O'DONNELL: Could have been before. This is the first time I've heard this, incidently. I, I knew that there were close relations-- you see, Maxwell Taylor was a former commandant.

STERN: Right.

O'DONNELL: It could be before. I tell you why. That is where the "Commandant" idea might have gotten into his head, you see, because he was following the crisis. I, I, I wouldn't want

to be adamant on that, nor would it make too much difference. Clay was a, on the one hand, ⁷ It was August, most people were on vacation, including Clay himself. But he was keeping in touch. Taylor would be a natural man for him to keep in touch with, ^{and} and therefore, that in turn would condition his, ^rhis, his volunteering. In other words, the two stories don't necessary colla-. ^y But it also could be after. For example, he could have written and/or-- I think Clay did most of his business by telephone. I think he could have called Taylor that same afternoon, or within an hour. The conversations I know about are the two calls from Higgins on that afternoon, and the two, at least two, from Clay. And I, I, I can even name the time; it was between, it was between four and seven in the afternoon of that very hot day.

STERN: I had the sense that both you and Clay felt that the administration was underreacting, and that - - -

O'DONNELL: Oh yeah. But the man who finally proved our case was a high member of the administration, Ed, Edward R. Murrow [Edward R. Murrow]. Once again, there's chance. It was pure chance that he happened to be in Berlin at that time; in other words, he could have been in Paris, he could have been in Dublin. His U.S.I.A. [^{INFORMATION}United States Intelligence Agency] tour, incidently, shaped up by Tom [Thomas C. Sorenson] and that--over,

over in U.S.I.A. --this was a, a "not-around-the-clock" thing, but it had been laid on at least six weeks in advance, to go to four or five countries. So he ended up in Berlin, for the obvious reason, it was a crisis spot. But that he would land there the day that the wall went up _____ was pure chance. And you see, at that--and Springer, and the--that's it, he was having lunch in the Springer house; the same place I was getting the calls from. So he got through, I think directly, to, to the [?] president and said, "Look, we've got a, we've got a problem here."

STERN:

One last thing. I just--I came across a fascinating quote. Apparently you spoke to Bobby Kennedy not long after the incident with his speech, the Sorenson luncheon--the luncheon with Sorenson about ^{his} the speech--and asked him about whether it was possible to change it. And he said to you, according to this quote, "Jesus, Jim, We can't be more German than the Germans themselves," unquote. The implication being that the Germans had, themselves, approved of this, of this.

O'DONNELL:

Yup, yup. That's right, that's right. With one exception, ^{the} the German ambassador there. But Willy Brandt [Willy Brandt] and Adenauer both--he's absolutely right. But Bobby Kennedy did say that to me in the presence of several other people, but not after. ^{Hang on} Wait a minute--he said this more than once, incidently .

STERN: Essentially though, he was telling you that Adenauer and Brandt agreed with him.

O'DONNELL: Yeah. That's right. Sure. Well, you know, I replied to him. I don't know who you got that quote from, but there's a reply going to that quote. I said, "Bobby, where the ch-- where the American chips are really down, we have to be more Germany than the Germans themselves, 'cause they do not have sovereignty in Berlin; we do. But they also are making political football." But even in such shrewd politicians as the Kennedys were, it was asking too much to get them into all of the nuances of German party politics, which is fought in a quite different way than ours. It's, it's, it's internecine. For example, what's going on over there at the moment; "Night of the Long Knives", between Helmut Schmidt [Helmut H. W. Schmidt] and Willy Brandt. I have several friends in the Social Democratic party, and when they removed Brandt as chancellor--and they had the best grounds, and all that-- I said, "You've scotched the snake, not killed it. As long as Brandt is around you will have to, you'll be forced by here it what determines and comes in, to be your enemy." And Schmidt's number one enemy right now is Brandt. It's, it's a, a potentially very dangerous situation because Helmut Schmidt's health is by no means good. I mean, he may live many, many years, but the doctors are going to tell him, I think, in a

very few years that he's been in this tough office for quite awhile now. Yeah, the--you can under--Bobby is right on that, it, it, it, it is tremendously difficult on *alliance issues*, to be more French than the French, or more Eng--and above all. But, but Berlin is a rather special case. I'm trying to think, Bobby said that more than once. It comes in later.-- Just as well, ^{you} we don't need it on tape. I wrote a speech for Bobby, later, when he came to Berlin, I think Abraham Lincoln's [~~Abraham Lincoln~~] birthday, '62, and--I don't know if I've even got a copy of it, ~~any~~ ^{or} although a copy of it may ^{may} ~~again~~ ~~here~~, be here ~~somewhere~~. But in the last minute, the, the word came up from Washington, and they, they, they substituted a completely different one, written by Arthur Schlesinger.

STERN: Do you have anything to add?

O'DONNELL: No, I, I, I really don't, except thank you.

STERN: Thank you, very much.