

Oral History Interview

with

WALTER F. SHEBLE

March 22, 1976
Washington, DC

By William J. Hartigan

For the John F. Kennedy Library

HARTIGAN: This is Bill Hartigan [William J. Hartigan] in Washington, D.C. The date is March 22, 1976 and I'm in the office of Walter Sheble, S-H-E-B-L-E, an attorney in Washington, D.C., former chairman of the Young Lawyers [District of Columbia Bar Association], chairman of the Young Lawyers [American Bar Association Convention] back in 1960 and currently Assistant to the General Counsel of the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington, D.C. I'm in the office of Walter Sheble and I'm interviewing him on behalf of the oral history department of the John F. Kennedy Library in Boston, Massachusetts. Walter, when did you first come in contact with John F. Kennedy or his organization?

SHEBLE: Bill, I think it was about in May or June of 1960 when a number of us, Tom Powers [N. Thompson Powers], I remember, and John E. Nolan [John E. Nolan, Jr.] attempted to get to then Senator Kennedy to make an appearance in suburban Maryland at -- and that appearance did occur during that time in Wood Acres Elementary School. I'm ashamed to say that I didn't -- I'm not sure that I attended -- I can't recall whether I did -- I was busy with a number of things that particular year leading up to the convention here of the Younger Lawyers section in July and August of 1960. The second time when I shook hands with him, however, was a meeting in another

school that John Nolan advanced himself in Montgomery County near Silver Spring, and I shook hands with the senator at that time.

HARTIGAN: Walter, you were active after you got relieved of some of your responsibilities as head of the Young Lawyers in the Washington, D.C. Bar Association. What were your activities during the 1960 campaign?

SHEBLE: Bill, after the American Bar convention was over I can recall sitting around the Shoreham pool -- John Nolan, myself, and Tim May. The telephone rang and Nolan answered the phone and he said this is Kenneth O'Donnell [P. Kenneth O'Donnell] and he needs somebody to

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advance a Houston conference of Baptist preachers; and I still had clean-up activities to do for the convention and John was engaged and Tim May said he'd like to do it, and he would have to check with his firm which was Covington and Burling at that time and he did, in fact, do that job. The next time I came in contact was when John called me in late October and asked me if I'd like to do some advance work. I said, "Sure, I'll have to get leave from my office." During 1960 I participated in a national security amendment case with the Japanese electronics industry, which required a considerable concentration of my own particular time, so it wasn't until October that I could free myself up, and at that time I undertook my first advance.

HARTIGAN: [Interruption]... the interruption, but we do have to change our tapes once in a while. You were about to tell us about your first advance, would you continue, please?

SHEBLE: Thanks, Bill. John called up and he asked me if I'd like to go to Michigan. I said, "That's fine," and he handed me the instructions for advance men, which I have here, written by Tom Finney and Marty Friedman [Martin Friedman] -- a very comprehensive, thirty-two page manual -- I guess one of the original manuals -- and then a work-sheet to be filled out ah, the details of the schedule, and I see you're mentioned very prominently throughout all these things, as you were in all the efforts for President Kennedy... Bill... I went to Detroit to the Cadillac Hotel, knocked on the assigned door, and somebody said, "Come in." I opened the door, and, there was a stocky gentleman standing in his shorts... speaking loudly over the phone to a lady whom he called Millie [Mildred Jeffrey] at various times. He turned around and looked at me and I had my old gray flannel suit and he said... he said "Are you that Princeton boy that John Nolan sent up here to help me?" And I said, "Yes sir." And it was my first meeting with Jerry Bruno [Gerald J. Bruno] who has been a close acquaintance, if not friend of mine, and whose friendship I'd valued over the years. Jerry was the head of the advance team in Michigan. His assistant that time was Mel Cottone [Mello Cottone]. I was assigned to do a shopping center in Macomb County, Eastgate, specifically, in a little city called Roseville. The shopping

center was the ordinary type shopping center, shaped something like a horseshoe, with the stores at the back of the -- of the -- semi-circle. And we began, at that time, to make the arrangements for the -- for the materials and for -- the uh -- the press accommodations and building a platform, and so forth. We had a very energetic group of people. There was a great deal of excitement. There were a number of disagreements as to exactly where we would put the -- where we would put the stand and so forth and so

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on. One of them, I understand, not in my presence, was settled outside the hall, one that was a little dispute between the mayor and the local coordinator! In any event, uh, the preparations proceeded rather smoothly. I can recall a number of the specific, uh, instructions I had from Mr. Bruno, uh, Jerry Bruno said, "Now, boy, you want to be sure and get a ladies committee organized and these people are going to be Kennedy hostesses." And I said, "How many hostesses are there going to be, Jerry?" And he said, "Well, if you have 10,000 women, they're all going to be hostesses, and they're all going to have badges." And I said, "Jerry, what does a badge look like?" He said, "You want me to get some ribbon -- for the badge?" I said, "And how do you attach the badge to the woman?" He says, "I tell you what you do. You go get 10,000 little cards printed up, called 'Kennedy Hostess,' with a picture of the senator [Kennedy] on it and a straight pin," and he says, "that's your badge." So I went out and got 10,000 cards printed up with 'Kennedy Hostess' and 10,000 straight pins and we handed them out to the -- and had them distributed and every woman there was a Kennedy Hostess and, I'm sure, proud to be a Kennedy Hostess. We made the usual arrangements for the Kennedy girls, who were dressed all in white, with the red, white and blue paper-mache stripes. Now we get to the particular day which was October 26, Wednesday, October 26, at 3:30pm. The flyer I have here, Bill, says, "Hear Him Here, Eastgate Shopping Center, Frazho and Gratiot, Wednesday, October 26, Senator John F. Kennedy, Your next President" and of course, at the bottom of it has the union bug on it, which was always useful and important -- we got a lot of help from the United Automobile Workers because that was a United Automobile Workers territory in the Michigan area. The day came and the stands were prepared and the people flocked in. By about two o'clock, I think I had twelve thousand people in the shopping center. By the time the senator arrived at three-thirty, we had fourteen, maybe fifteen thousand. They were all over Gratiot Avenue, the shopping center was packed -- it was just full of people, there was not an inch, inch to move in. Some of the interesting things that happened.... According to Jerry's instructions, we had a band, the band played for an hour, and people sang. We had a cordon -- we cordoned off space with the local police authorities so that when the senator's car came in, he could get out of the car and then we had a walkway which was -- went up to the stand which was roped off. I remember checking the stand and going up the walkway and, from back in the crowd, a very tall, distinguished man raised his head. He had a bowler hat on a Chesterfield and he was -- there weren't too many dressed as well as he was, and he was handing his, his calling card up in the air, and I motioned him to come over and he came through the crowd. He handed me his calling card and, Bill, I wish I could remember the gentleman's name, but, it said Associate

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Justice, Supreme Court, State of Michigan, Justice so-and-so. He said to me, "Sir," he said, "I would like to stand someplace convenient where I could see this great man." And I said, "Yes, sir, you can stand right here," and I made a place for him so he could stand in the crowd, but where he could have a good view of SENator Kennedy. And then, Bill, it rained. And I never saw so much rain in my life; it was a complete downpour -- a downpour! And, the Kennedy girls stood there -- everybody stood as though they were fixed in concrete; not a one person moved out of that place; some of them got back underneath the awnings, but we lost none of the crowd. [Laughter] The white, the white dresses turned as the, as the paper-mache -- the red, white and blue paper-mache -- melted away, the white, Kennedy girls' [Laughter] dresses changed to all different colors and they stood there and those lovely ladies were soaked right through to the skin, but they held their ground. And, just as the sirens were heard down Gratiot Avenue, the sun came out and it was a brilliant, sunny afternoon as the then senator, John Kennedy, approached the Eastgate Shopping Center, and, as usual, as the manual says, the candidate never rides in the Cadillac -- the candidate always rides in the small convertible, with the top down. Here came the senator in the convertible and into the shopping center. Well, as generally happens in these advances, unfortunately, the cordon rope did not hold and the local police officers melted into the crowd as the ropes fell and Senator Kennedy got out of the car. I walked up to him because the crowd was so -- was pressed all around him and I couldn't see exactly how he was going to get to the stand, and I took him -- I touched him gently on the, on the left elbow and I said, "This way to the stand, Senator," and he looked at me very briefly and he said quietly, and, but very convincingly, "Damnit, Walter, let go of my arm." And, I'll tell you, I was honored that he knew my name and I learned a lesson at that time, and, that is, that he wanted to go where he wanted to go so that he could meet the people... and -- that was one of his great, as I saw in later years -- he knew the people and he wanted to meet the people and he knew where he wanted to go and that was part of his job to do. He proceeded right into the *middle* of the crowd -- he walked out in *front* of the stand -- into fourteen thousand people and they were all jumping and I'm not quite sure how we ever got him back to the stand. We did, in fact, get him back to the stand, and he addressed the crowd and gave one of those stirring speeches of, maybe, ten minutes or fifteen minutes that just enthused and inspired a crowd, as he could. After that, he got in the car, I had an old coat on, I got some of the red, white and blue bunting on my coat -- I still have the coat today, Bill, with the red, white and blue smeared all over the thing from the rain, and I said goodbye to my friends and I was trying to catch the last bus and I almost -- Millie Jeffrey keeps telling me this every time she sees me. I ran

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and ran after that bus and I finally got up to the door and the bus stopped and I got in front of the bus and I fell right down into the mud and almost drowned in the puddle, [Laughter] in front of the thing, and everybody on the bus was screaming and hollering, laughing, and I was the big hit of the show, and I finally did get in the bus and went back down to town; we went to the Cadillac Hotel while the senator rested.

HARTIGAN: Walter, before we get off the Roseville advance, who else was on that advance trip with you, do you recall?

SHEBLE: Yes, Jerry was the head, and Mel Cottone was his deputy, Bob Martin did Birmingham, Michigan, I did Rosedale; there were other distinguished people around. At that time, I can recall that Congressman James O'Hara [James Grant O'Hara] was a freshman congressman -- we met in his office, which was close to Rosedale, and he did, in fact, represent that particular area; and then Adam Clayton Powell -- was there, and possibly some others that I don't recall. The major event in Detroit that evening was the appearance of Senator Kennedy in the Detroit Coliseum. That particular job had been worked by Mel Cottone and Jerry, and we -- my participation was minimal; I had certain assignments within the Coliseum with reference to crowd control, and those types of things. I do remember, however, the coliseum was a very large auditorium; it was fairly well packed, but it was raining. The rain, which had cleared up and let the beautiful sunlight in my particular assignment, reoccurred in the evening and it created really adverse conditions around the Coliseum to move the candidate in and out. The mud was right, way up over my shins and below my knees, as I recall, as we were talking with the car going into the Coliseum. Coming out of the Coliseum after the talk --the speech, Senator Kennedy decided that he would go to Hamtramck. It had been a great wish and desire of the people of Hamtramck to have the candidate appear, and it was a last minute decision on his part, and I know that was an exciting experience -- I think Eddie Dragon [Edward A. Dragon] went along on that and knows a little bit more than I did; I did not go on it -- I remember helping get the senator through the crowd into his car, into this mud, and everybody was stuck in the mud and the car was down in the mud and we pushed the car to get it out of the mud and off he went to Hamtramck, and that was the end of that particular day in Detroit, Michigan. As I recall, I don't think Ed was -- Ed Dragon -- was not on that advance and you'll be talking to him tomorrow, so you can clear up that point -- I believe he was working the phone -- the scheduling phone -- with the great Richard O'Hare at that time. Subsequent to that period, I checked in to Mr. O'Hare's office and there was a great -- since the advance in Michigan had been very -- or, at least, let me say -- since the -- not

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the advance -- but since Senator Kennedy had been received so enthusiastically in Michigan and since we had the cooperation of everybody, there was a serious consideration of bringing him back maybe for the next to last or last appearance, and I was instructed to remain in Michigan and attempt to coordinate with Millie Jeffrey and the then chairman of the party, Mr. Staebler [Neil Staebler] to set up the possibilities of a second, and final, appearance by Senator Kennedy. Ah....

HARTIGAN: Walter, you mentioned the name of Staebler, that is the Staebler who is currently a member of the Federal Election Commission, is that correct, and a former congressman?

SHEBLE: Yes, sir, that is. He was one of the great chairmen of the Democratic Party, as you recall. We worked closely with Millie Jeffrey, who was one of the great national committeewomen of the party -- she did most of the actual coordination between myself and -- well, Mr. Bruno and myself and the other people in the field and also an assistant to the then governor by the name of Maurey Connell [Maurice J. Connell] was another person we worked with.

HARTIGAN: Walter, you were assigned by Dick O'Hare to stay in Detroit for a potential visit -- last minute visit by the President to wind up the campaign -- would you tell us about that particular assignment?

SHEBLE: Well, that assignment just had me -- required just checking with Millie Jeffrey and the other leaders of the party in Michigan and back and forth with Dick O'Hare and Ed Dragon on the phone as to the possibility of the assignment of coming out, coming forth. As a result of other strategy and tactics, the assignment never came and I found myself without an advance and without the pleasure of participating again with my friends in a further appearance by the senator. I can't recall when I came back to Washington, but it probably was in the first couple of days of November -- I think I was in Michigan a total of maybe, twelve days.

HARTIGAN: Those things happen, I suppose, in campaigns where you have to plan them even though, sometimes, you don't utilize the talents that we used in advancing, but you can't wait until the last minute; you do have to have -- you probably have more than planned than you use anyway. Walter, did you advance any other cities during the campaign or was that...?

SHEBLE: No, Bill, I didn't advance any other cities; I, ah, when I came back to Washington, I went right back into my work, there were only two of us, and

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we had a pretty heavy load of cases to work; in any event, it was right close to the election.

HARTIGAN: Did you participate in any of the inauguration activities between the election and the inauguration?

SHEBLE: I participated in the festivities that the advance men were invited to and I was pleased to participate in those; I'm not sure that I -- I can't recall -- I'm pretty sure I didn't have any official capacity or any official jobs assigned to me at that time, although I do vaguely recall something about a -- some kind of advance of a gala, but I'm very hazy on that. I would say that I didn't have anything to do -- I

know it snowed like crazy during that period and that was some experience through the inaugural itself.

HARTIGAN: After President Kennedy took office, did you participate in any way in the administration after he took his oath of office?

SHEBLE: Yes, I did, Bill. There came a time when the President became concerned about the minerals and material stockpile -- the size of the stockpile, how it was acquired, and the cost to maintain it and the utility of the materials that were contained therein. Three of us, Tim May, Ed Dragon and myself were asked to participate in making a survey of that particular situation, and, as a result of the President's concern, Senator Stuart Symington, who was Chairman of the Stockpile and Naval Petroleum Reserve Committee, Subcommittee of Armed Services, undertook a survey along those areas and the three of us were assigned to be available to Senator Symington and his counsel, Richard Coburn, whom I had known, a distinguished member of the Board of Governors, the American Bar Association, and whom I had known personally in my work with the Younger Lawyers section.

HARTIGAN: Walter, what were the particular objectives that you and Tim -- Tim May -- and Ed Dragon had in this investigation?

SHEBLE: I think that the President was concerned, as I said, of the size of the size of the minerals and materials that were stockpiled. At the time we began our investigation, there were over eight billion dollars stored at a cost of \$250 million dollars a year to store them; I think that figure is correct -- it may have been a little less -- and there was a substantial question as to the utility of certain of the commodities that were stored and whether, in fact, the present war plan required that much material, and if, in fact some of these couldn't be disposed of with the

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resulting gain to the U.S. taxpayer in the sale of the commodities and the savings in the storage of the commodities. For instance, with reference to natural rubber -- I think the facts sustain that we had enough natural rubber for fifty years' full use for industry and government, and that was just more natural rubber than was conscionable for us to have acquired to hold. My particular area of concentration was in areas such as lead and zinc. I did the lead and zinc study and made recommendations in general with reference to stockpile policy, as did Tim May and Ed Dragon. I made some interesting findings which are all incorporated in the hearings and the final report. I was particularly interested in two things -- let me correct that, Bill -- I was interested in several things; first was lead and zinc, and then, what I thought was very basic, the standards for acquisition of stockpile materials. Let me take the latter one first. Stockpile materials were acquired as a result of an estimate by people in the Department of Defense, the Department of Commerce and the Department of Interior as to how much of a particular material we might need for a particular time period. Generally,

they said one year's full supply for a war period. And then, that was factored by what type of a war we were gonna fight. Now, this was in 1962. I made a survey of the concepts with references to the particular war plan, and I found out that up until 1958, the war plan with reference to the acquisition of minerals and materials, was based on a five-year conventional war. Now this was in the time of the development of atomic weaponry and the whole Defense Department had geared themselves to fighting limited wars of short time duration, and yet, the stockpile conditions called for a five-year full scale war. This, of course, increased the need for minerals and materials and this, as I said, this condition held until 1958, when it was removed by Gordon Gray, who indicated in the memorandum, that this was ridiculous and that President Eisenhower would "hit the roof" if he thought that this type of acquisition of material was going into government's stores at such a cost.

Then, with reference to the lead and zinc investigation, I found that there was considerable lead and zinc. The hearing record bears out that it was the -- that lead and zinc was acquired for the purpose of supporting the price of lead and zinc. At the beginning of acquisition for the stockpile, the price was nine and ten cents a pound; at the termination, or when we were through -- or at the height, let me say -- at the height of the acquisition, the price was fourteen and sixteen cents a pound. This substantially raised the price for lead and zinc and the administrators, during that period, felt that this was justified -- the economic price increase in the interest of national security -- planning, at that time, in the late fifties, for a full, five-year war. I do recall that the head of the stockpile, the assistant-secretary of the

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interior at that time, was the vice president of the St. Joseph's Lead Company, and he was brought to Washington, specifically, for a short period, to assist in the acquisition of these various materials -- not only lead and zinc -- however, his company received a very substantial order for lead and zinc, as did other companies, and he testified, himself, that he thought that raising the price of lead and zinc through these substantial acquisitions was in the national interest and that's why he recommended increasing supplies of lead and zinc. I might say that something that didn't come out at the...

HARTIGAN: Walter, we had to change tapes again, I want to excuse the interruption. You were talking about -- just a second -- the assistant secretary of the Interior, I believe, during the time of stockpiling.

SHEBLE: Something that didn't come out of the hearing, which I think is interesting, was, of course, that the assistant secretary of the Interior was just prior to that time, was the vice president of one of the leading minerals -- lead companies -- and, it was through his assistance -- insistence -- that such large amounts of lead and zinc were purchased and the price rise, rose rather significantly. At the same, this same time that he came to Washington, the lead industry was under investigation for price fixing by the Justice Department. Another one of the interesting factors, Bill, is that in getting information from the Commerce and the Interior department, we ran into a situation where we would open the door and walk in and talk to a person and we would find that we'd been

talking -- we'd talked to a person who had just been brought to Washington -- maybe the week previously he was a dollar-a-year man -- and he represented, or was an official of, the particular company that, or industry in which we were interested in. This led to a executive order on special consultants by President Kennedy which effectively abolished the dollar-a-year type of person. I can remember Gene Foley [Eugene P. Foley] who was the then assistant-secretary of Commerce, calling me and saying, "Walter," he said, "Geez, I don't know who's in those offices," he said, "Every day I walk in, there are different people there I see; I can't really tell who's in there." And that led to concern by the President, with reference to possible conflicts of interest and an executive order involving conflicts of interest.

HARTIGAN: Walter, this begins to sound like the case of putting the fox in charge of the chicken coop. In light of that, could you tell me, from your observations during the investigation, did you see any signs of the Eisenhower administration trying to take steps to correct this unusual situation in stockpiling?

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SHEBLE: The steps, the only steps I saw were made very late in the game, in 1958, and that particular step was to correct, to correct the concept of possible conditions of national emergency or the war plan that applied to stockpile, when Mr. Gordon Gray said that it was foolish to think that we would fight a five year -- a war of five year duration and the war period was cut back, as I recall, to a third year -- a three year war. We held a hearing, specifically, with a consultant from the Hudson Institute, Dr. Stephen Enke, who was a specialist on possible conditions of military emergency affecting the United States. It was his conclusion that, even three year war, was difficult to envisage, and it would be better to concentrate stockpile acquisition on atomic catastrophes, or on very short, brushfire type, wars in distant lands.

To answer your question, specifically, there was a small amount of -- small attempt to rectify the situation, but, over the total period from '52 through '58, the attempt was, specifically, to build up the stockpile to the maximum extent possible.

HARTIGAN: Walter, the situation seems to be -- to have been a very serious one and, of course, legally questionable; as a result of the investigation, were there any indictments or were there any convictions?

SHEBLE: There were no indictments or convictions that I can recall -- I think that's pretty clear. It was a very complex field. There were a number [Laughter] -- there were a number of potential witnesses, Bill, who disappeared -- they disappeared all over the world -- who had information which we thought that was critical and we never did find these people. It, there were some ques-, I would say that there were some questionable tactics involved and it was a policy question, but certainly, the people who directed the stockpile was in fact the president of the American Mining Congress, who was serving as a dollar-a-year man.

HARTIGAN: In what capacity was he serving?

SHEBLE: He was then in the General Services Administration in charge of procurement under the, procurement of the stockpile. Now, this was, this goes back into 1950 and 1952, so you can see that there was this pervasive influence and this intimate contact with the procurement of metals and materials in the stockpile by the industry people all during that period.

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HARTIGAN: Walter, I recall from newspaper articles, wasn't the Secretary of the Treasury George Magaffin Humphrey involved in some of these companies that were under investigation at the time of [unintelligible]

SHEBLE: The Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. George Humphrey, was involved. He was the chief executive officer of the Hanna Mining Company [M. A. Hanna Company] which had the only domestic nickel mine in the United States. I'm sure that Tim May worked on that case pretty exclusively with Ed Dragon and he'll be able to fill you in on additional materials; however, I might say that I do recall, having researched a particular piece of legislation toward the end of the hearing, which increased the depletion allowance for domestic minerals which were essential to the national security. The bill was sponsored by the treasury department, and it increased the depreciation, the depletion allowance for a category of minerals, of which, of course, nickel was one. Now, the secretary testified -- no, strike that -- I can't recall whether the secretary testified for that bill -- I'm pretty sure he didn't but the treasury department was, participated in that bill under which his former company, of course, would have gotten a, an increase in his, in their depletion allowance. There were other metals and materials included in that as well as nickel.

HARTIGAN: So we did have a secretary of the treasury, whose department was sponsoring, supporting a bill that would ultimately give, show financial gain or profit to a company that the secretary of the treasury was directly involved in.

SHEBLE: That's true, but, also there were other minerals and materials, as I said, involved in that particular piece of legislation, Bill.

HARTIGAN: Walter, you mentioned witnesses that the committee wanted to interview. Could you name some of those that were amongst the missing when it came time to interview them?

SHEBLE: I can't recall specifically -- I know he was the general counsel of the General Services Administration; he went to Japan and stayed there for

two years, and, of course, he would have been an essential person. A number of other people in the Office of Emergency Planning or, at least, one person who directed the stockpile during the term of Arthur Fleming [Arthur S. Fleming] who was involved in this, all during this time, he retired and was unavailable to us. And there were others that possibly Tim or Eddie could bring to your attention. One thing that was

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related to me by Dick McGuire [Richard McGuire] which showed the President's attitude toward, toward this particular work that we were doing. There were a number of -- we had some material which was, which never came to light -- we had some material which showed some very poor judgment on the part of a person who was in a position of authority in the government in the stockpile area, and he, in fact, while serving as a consultant, signed a contract giving his own company a contract. At the time that we got to this particular thing, the gentleman was elderly, and he was ill, and we just didn't feel that it was worthwhile, since we had so many other cases and things to go forward with, to bring this into public hearing. We had cases where a man would work for the government as a consultant for four hours in the morning, and then go back to his office as a lawyer and work for four hours with a private client involving the same material and the same company and the same case, in the afternoon. These were taken care of, of course, by the President Kennedy's executive order on conflicts of interest in consultants. But one of the things I recall that Dick McGuire said is that the President wasn't so much interested in exposes of particular wrong doings by minor officials and small people who were workers in the government. This was a Saturday, I recall, that Dick talked to us, 'cause we worked Saturdays and we worked Sundays, and worked 'til two o'clock in the morning, and Dick said that the President felt that it would be counterproductive to attack a large range of bureaucrats and people working in government unless something just flagrantly criminal was discovered, because that would destroy the fabric of the people's confidence *in* the government, and he wanted to build up the people's confidence in the government and to bring about curative and restorative forces to work rather than tear down the government -- he felt that this would be good for his administration, and this would be something that would give the people confidence in the government and that we shouldn't bring to his attention a whole slew of small, petty, minor violations by a number of people -- ordinary people -- who were working in the government from day to day.

HARTIGAN: Are you saying that -- I would judge from what you're saying that the President had a great opportunity for headlines if he could -- and great expose, if this was his whole objective -- to be that type of man seeking headlines; he certainly had enough material here to keep the newspapers busy for a while, wouldn't he?

SHEBLE: There was enough material to keep the newspapers busy. There is material that will never come to the fore and I thought that this was a wise exercise

of constraint and showed, if I may be so presumptuous to say, it showed leadership and concern for the country, as

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well -- instead of just attempting to do the broad brush exposure of everybody who had created, done anything which "might be perceived to be wrong."

HARTIGAN: It finally, Walter, on this investigation, then we'll move on -- you felt that, as a result of this investigation, or rather, did you -- do you feel that as a result of this investigation that some corrective measures were taken to put back on track a more realistic type of stockpiling?

SHEBLE: I think there was a more, some corrective measures were taken; I think as much as anything else, the executive orders on conflicts of interest and the questions of dollar-a-year men, and if they came from industry, what waiting period would they have after they left their government, left government service before they went right back into their same jobs, and those kinds of things, they were basic structural problems that we had which helped create such a large stockpile excess, and that was as useful as anything else. There were subsequent sales of the stockpile, which returned revenue to the U.S. Treasury, which closed down some of the storage plants, which saved revenue for the U.S. Treasury, and it was done in a way which did not disturb the operating -- the legislation that Senator Symington worked and we worked on, provided that it was done in a way which would not disturb the ordinary workings of the market forces because there were large quantities of these materials in the stockpile which, if let loose all at one time, could have disturbed the markets for these minerals.

HARTIGAN: So we are operating under some corrective measures in our stockpiling activities today, as a result of this investigation.

SHEBLE: That's true.

HARTIGAN: Walter, let's proceed on with your activities in the Kennedy administration. I, from my own experience, am aware of the fact that you did, on and off, or, you were available, from time to time, to render your services to the Democratic National Committee. Would you care to comment on some of those activities?

SHEBLE: After I worked on this particular assignment I went, I returned to private practice but I continued to work voluntarily with the national committee, particularly with Richard McGuire, the treasurer of the national committee. I can recall doing an investigation for him, once, which required a survey of some fifty state election laws, with reference to reporting, and it was a difficult study to do and we completed it and we turned it in

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to Mr. McGuire, who was delighted with the performance -- he subsequently turned it over to Kenneth O'Donnell, and then I got a big, ringing telephone call with a lot of laughing on the other end, and they said, "You son-of-a-guns, you did a great job but you forgot one state," and I said, "What was that?" and he said, "Geez, you left out West Virginia," [Laughter] which was a very important state, of course, for President Kennedy in his primary.

HARTIGAN: Who did that survey with you, Walter?

SHEBLE: I can't recall, I think Ed Dragon participated with me on that survey.

HARTIGAN: Were there any other activities for the Democratic National Committee or for the Kennedy administration that you took part in?

SHEBLE: Yes, yes, Bill. During that period we were active in fundraising, particularly with lawyers and in helping Dick McGuire that way; we worked up a list of attorneys who were good Democrats and got them on committees to support the fundraising activities at the various galas. We'd, we've had, we had a number of solicitors and, before the galas we'd have a party, and, I can remember, a couple of times the attorney general, Robert Kennedy, attending the party with his, with his various, with his assistant attorney generals, and these were always done in the spirit of good will and friendship amongst the number of people who had been loyal Democrats, and I have some comment on how these things were done. I was executive secretary of these things. We, I knew a lot of -- as a result of my position in the Bar Association, my work with the Bar, I knew a lot of lawyers, and we would just call them up and they were always glad to help. There were no huge sums raised -- we're talking about fifty and a hundred dollars and a lot of fun. It seems to me, that when we played these games, Bill, we -- when we did these things, we did have a lot of fun. In the political arena, if a bunch of us were walking down the road together and we saw an obstruction, or there was somebody that we'd rather not have participate with us, one of us would "peel off" and we'd give him a little nudge and maybe he'd bounce down and fall down on the road or something, and we'd run along and we thought that was fun, and we had a good time at it. And he'd pick himself up and he'd come running after us and we'd speed up and it was fun. In some of these previous administrations they have organized groups of people that walk down the road and they see somebody and eliminate them. Ten of them attack them and they stomp them to death and that's the end of that, and there's no chance for that particular individual to ever participate in the process again. And that's what I objected to in some administrations

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in contrast to the Kennedy administration.

HARTIGAN: That seems to be a general observation, Walter, with reference to President Kennedy's administration; I hear it today, very frequently, that after Kennedy was assassinated, there was no more fun in politics or in the government.

SHEBLE: Yeah. If I may -- I wonder if you're interested in everybody's recollections on the day of the death of the President.

HARTIGAN: As a matter of fact, you anticipated my next question. What were you doing at the time of the assassination, Walter?

SHEBLE: I'd been working hard and one of my favorite places to go in off season, where it's cheaper in off season -- is the Homestead, which is a lovely place, and one of my friends and I went down there with our wives and we were just going for a weekend, and the news came over the ticker in the library and I happened to -- we were just leaving -- no, no, we weren't leaving, but I had been -- I walked into the library, read the ticker, and read the account that the President had been shot, and I tore it off and I gave it to the assistant manager. And the Homestead is a beautiful place, with a lobby -- a great lobby -- and huge fireplaces, and verandas and so forth, and within five minutes, everybody was in the lobby of the Homestead. The waiters and waitresses, many whose fathers and even grandfathers had participated there -- the whole family filled up with, the whole lobby filled up with the people that you'd never see in the lobby of a resort like that, and everybody, of course, was crying and weeping, but it was just a common mass, a mass of humanity of all classes and all people, who were dedicated and who had great love and affection for President Kennedy, who were grieving at that moment, and they were joined together in the lobby of that beautiful place, in their grief.

HARTIGAN: For the record, would you describe the Homestead location.

SHEBLE: Well, Homestead is located in Hot Springs, Virginia.

HARTIGAN: Walter, any general observations you'd like to make with reference to President Kennedy's administration and its people?

SHEBLE: I now, I spent a number of years working with Young Lawyers and in the -- I was a member of the

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House of Delegates of the American Bar representing Young Lawyers and in that capacity, I think what he [President Kennedy] gave to so many of us who were young at that time was the knowledge that the individual does, in fact, make a difference, and that if you perform, that you can make a difference in the society. We did a number of things -- we amended the constitution to get the vote in D.C. for president and vice president, we worked

on criminal justice -- a number of us who participated in the Kennedy administration -- however small or however great it was -- did those kinds of things. I'm not working in education; I'm trustee of a small college in New England and I work on boards in the education field and I think one of the outstanding things that the Kennedy administration gave and gave to all of us is that the individual does make a difference and you can set high goals, and you can perform, and particularly young people can perform, and make a difference in the way the society and the way this country works.

HARTIGAN: What college in New England, for the record, are you...

SHEBLE: I'm a trustee of the New England College in Henniker, New Hampshire, I'm on the Board of the National Cathedral Schools here in Washington.

HARTIGAN: Possibly some of your students of your school will be using some of your materials? Walter, I, unless you have something else to relate to, I would like to, for the record, request that, if there is any of you, any of your memorabilia that you would be willing to donate to the library, that would be surveyed by our archivists for their value, and we appreciate your donating them to the library so that we can round out, develop and build a great institution for posterity. Do you have any such memorabilia?

SHEBLE: Yes, I think I have, Bill; I'll give you some of the material I have here today and I'll make a search through my files and turn everything, turn anything I can over to you.

HARTIGAN: And just for the record, Walter Sheble, later on, was called upon by President Johnson's administration to go to the post office and he also performed a public service there, in the postal administration, for a period of time, before, once again, returning to private practice in Washington, D.C., signing off with Walter Sheble.

SHEBLE: Thank....

[END OF INTERVIEW]