

Wendell H. Pigman Oral History Interview – RFK#6, 09/08/1969
Administrative Information

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Biographical Note

Wendell H. Pigman was Legislative assistant for Senator Robert F. Kennedy, 1964 - 1968. This interview covers air pollution issues for motor vehicle control, air pollution in New York City, and Pigman leaving the Senate office, among other topics.

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By Wendell H. Pigman

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Wendell H. Pigman. – RFK #6

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Sixth Oral History Interview

with

WENDELL PIGMAN

September 8, 1969
Washington, D.C.

By Robert W. Greene

For the Robert F. Kennedy Oral History Program
of the Kennedy Library

GREENE: We're talking about the air pollution bill for motor vehicle control, 1965.

PIGMAN: Well, auto pollution was the big problem that had not been dealt with with the previous air pollution bills. We had been receiving some material in the office from the head of the Los Angeles Air Pollution Control Division, which is the most effective air pollution control outfit in the country, informing us of the problems with the pollution that came from cars. I think the senator made a statement that was prepared at that time. It was partially based on material that had been supplied by the Los Angeles group. It was drawing on material that they had sent in, rather than something that they themselves prepared. But this statement showed a concern about air pollution. This was a statement emphasizing air pollution. New York City had air pollution problems, although its problems at the time were not cars so much as they were sulfur dioxide. New York City had an air pollution crisis in 1966. But that I think was the extent of involvement on the bill.

He certainly, as far as I know, never talked to Senator [Edmund S.] Muskie or anyone else to maneuver on the bill. The bill was fairly well accepted by the Senate and we believed it would pass. I think it passed by a wide margin. I don't think there was. . . . The car people attempted to influence the members of the committee more than they attempted to influence us, because the committee members and staff were involved in the drafting of the bill. The lobbying related to the standards and the standards to be set up by the Department of HEW [Health, Education and Welfare]. I think that the industry lobbyists, although they opposed the bill, realized that the guts of the controls would be established by HEW, when they actually set the specific control standards.

GREENE: Do you remember administration resistance to this, particularly I'm thinking of Under Secretary of HEW [James M.] Quigley's testimony that the controls were not really necessary, that [Lyndon B.] Johnson was going to try to work it out with people in the auto industry and other interested parties?

PIGMAN: Well, that sounds to me--I don't remember the statement, but that fitted in very much with my impression that the Johnson administration was very friendly to the automobile manufacturers, both in the Auto Safety bill that was drafted and sent up to the Hill [Capitol Hill] and in the air pollution bills. I'm sure that the auto industry's contacts with the Johnson administration were fairly strong and that may well have been the source of Quigley's speech. Quigley left shortly thereafter to go to the Department of Interior and on top of that it may be that. . . .

As a matter of fact, Public Health Service had some disinclination to get into standards administration, which is what they would do if this bill was passed, before they had done research. This was going to be the one area in which the federal government was going to set and enforce standards and of course it put them on the hot spot and they, by inclination, didn't like this sort of thing. So that doesn't surprise me, and I vaguely recall at the time that he (Quigley) did, but that approach wasn't acceptable. There was too much of a history of the industry being totally uncooperative at the state level, so it was necessary to pass legislation at the federal level in order to develop pollution controls for cars.

GREENE: Do you remember how he felt about the final bill? Was it reasonably satisfactory, or what you expected?

PIGMAN: As I recall, the bill was reasonable as far as control of cars went. The question was, "What sort of standards would be put into effect, and how long would it take HEW to put them out?" This was something that you had to watch and see. The senator himself never commented on it per se.

GREENE: In 1965 he testified at the New York City Council Special Committee on Air Pollution. Do you recall that? That would have been in June. Do you remember if he encouraged the setting up of this session, or was he simply invited?

PIGMAN: I think he was asked to speak and I don't think he encouraged it. That was a group that wanted him to speak at the meeting as much to dramatize the issue as anything else. We were not involved in setting it up. The New York office--Carter Burden--it seems to me he was involved in some way with that group, you know, had had conversations with them. Perhaps the organization was Citizens for Clean Air that was sort of behind that. I think they were instrumental in getting the meeting put together.

GREENE: Was this at all unusual for a senator to testify before the City Council?

PIGMAN: Well, is that the Special Council or the City Council because. . . .

GREENE: New York City Council, Special Committee on Air Pollution.

PIGMAN: You see, I remember a special group that he spoke to one spring, but whether this is the same . . .

GREENE: Well, this would have been spring, June.

PIGMAN: Yeah, but is that the time that we went to City Hall? I guess it may . . .

GREENE: Yes, it was at City Hall.

PIGMAN: Well, that was the one at City Hall. Well, it was a No, that's nothing that Carter Burden had anything to do with. I really don't recall. That doesn't ring a bell. I don't recall the circumstances that led up to my getting there or anything like that, other than that he was interested in the problem. [Robert A.] Bob Low was doing quite a bit on air pollution at the time, and it may be that it was just a good opportunity to do it in the city.

GREENE: Would there be any resentment from [John V.] Lindsay on this type of thing, his coming into the city?

PIGMAN: Well, Lindsay wasn't mayor at the time. [Robert F.] Bob Wagner was.

GREENE: Oh, '65. That's right. Excuse me.

PIGMAN: It was our town then.

GREENE: All right. What did you do between the passage of S. 306 and October '65 when the work on S. 3112 began? Was there anything in between on air pollution that you can remember?

PIGMAN: Well, somewhere along in there occurred the air pollution crisis in New York when they had the five-day warning and I Was that November of '66? I guess. Whether that preceded the bill or came after the bill, I don't know, but I was on vacation when the thing broke. But the senator was making a number of statements at the time and was quite concerned that New York had reached the disaster stage, and had an air pollution disaster. It subsequently turned out that about two hundred people had died beyond what would normally be expected.

The second bill, the bill after the car bill, was the one that dealt with regions. It was a question of whether the regional approach was the best way to do it. I think we supported that, although we had some reservations on whether this sort of multi-unit government was going to work effectively in this case.

GREENE: Now this bill seems, from what I've been able to figure out, to have moved very quickly through both chambers and not to have had any opposition from the administration. How much would you do on a bill like that when you didn't . . .

PIGMAN: Not a hell of a lot, if you're not on the committee. What you do is, you support the bill in the sense that if it's a problem in your area, you can dramatize it by speaking on it. As a matter of fact, for a lot of the pollution legislation, his job or what he did was more to speak on it rather than to be involved in negotiations because he was not a member of the committee. It was very possible in cases for him to speak on problems, but it wasn't necessarily possible for him to affect, really affect negotiations. He had no status within the committee other than being one of the two senators from New York State.

GREENE: Do you remember some of the technical advice you got in preparing that floor speech on that bill?

PIGMAN: No, I don't.

GREENE: There were a number of them. I wondered if . . .

PIGMAN: A number of speeches?

GREENE: No, a number of very technical and elaborate suggestions that he made.

PIGMAN: What? Just refresh my mind? Do you remember?

GREENE: Let's see if I can remember some of them. Well, actually I think it would be better if I didn't say because I'm not sure that I have them that straight in my mind. But anyway, I wondered if when you made specific suggestions which didn't necessarily relate to the exact legislation, how much of that was to get a reaction, to see what kind of reception these suggestions got?

PIGMAN: Well, it was not so much that as just suggestions as to what should be done in regard to the situation. It was not to see if there was a reaction as to try to affect the action being taken by the Air Pollution Control Administration and those involved in the problem. He made suggestions of that type on all legislation with the end in mind that perhaps the idea would be adopted by the administration--you know, try to bring the best thinking to bear on the problem and see if they could get those ideas adopted. As I recall, we worked very closely with the Air Pollution Control Administration on a lot of that stuff. You know they were interested. There were guys there very interested in making sure that good, effective legislation was passed.

GREENE: Do you remember specifically who . . .

PIGMAN: No, I don't. I don't at all. It's very vague in my mind. It's years ago.

GREENE: Well, anyway, in the final version there were significant House cuts on the appropriations involved. Do you remember?

PIGMAN: Yeah, but we didn't do anything on the House side, and then we're not involved in the conference committee afterwards. That's normal. You have to understand that it's very unusual for anyone other than the committee's staff and the people who are likely to be conferees to be involved at all in what the other house does. You might call up a member from your state who was involved if you were going to make a special case of it, but even that would be unusual. There's very little coordination between the two bodies, other than that that's imposed by the administration. The administration would be the group that would be presumably fighting to coordinate the bills between the two houses.

GREENE: Do you remember any discussion in this period after the passage of that bill about the need for a much stronger piece of legislation in 1967?

that the air pollution control mechanism

PIGMAN: We knew as far as the enforcement provisions went and it just wasn't a particularly workable thing. You know, it was very much a product of the Muskie approach. Muskie always wants states to do the work rather than federal government. And when the states do the work, then they get involved in logrolling and they don't want interference with their own activity. I don't know that there was so much talk about additional legislation. I think in a couple of the speeches at the time of the air pollution crisis that the senator made up in New York, he described the process one had to go through when you finally would wind up that the Justice Department would enforce something, but that this process wouldn't take place till two or three years afterwards. He was emphasizing the fact that there was a remedy but, of course, at that time there hadn't been a single case that had been prosecuted by the federal government.

GREENE: Do you remember much about the New York-New Jersey Metropolitan Area Air Pollution Conference in '67 called by Secretary [John W.] Gardner?

PIGMAN: Well, I know that the senator spoke at it, but that's. . . .

GREENE: He wasn't involved in putting it together, in calling for it?

PIGMAN: I think we called for it, as I recall. I think we wrote a letter to Gardner and asked him to convene it for sulfur dioxide, at least, and something else, as I recall. That was the first, I think, of what was to be a series of conferences, and he asked Gardner. . . . I think he called, personally called Gardner in that case just to emphasize it. He spoke up at the Waldorf [Waldorf-Astoria], I believe. I think that was it, wasn't it?

GREENE: The Waldorf or the Hilton [New York Hilton]?

PIGMAN: It was the Waldorf. In those days they didn't use the Hilton, I don't think. The Hilton, wasn't it?

GREENE: There was one at the Hilton, I think.

PIGMAN: Was it? Maybe that was it. I don't recall.

GREENE: Was Gardner generally cooperative on these things?

PIGMAN: Gardner was very sympathetic to environmental issues, reasonably so. He had a tough problem administering that department, but I mean he was certainly a hell of a lot better than Celebrezze was.

GREENE: Was this also mainly, this type of conference, to dramatize the problem and to get people going or did . . .

PIGMAN: No, there's a set format for conferences. The National Air Pollution Control Administration is supposed to get agreement on what the standards are to be for certain pollutants, and once you get agreement, then they were to promulgate those standards. And then there was a time schedule reached as a result of the conference, and the people were supposed to clean up their pollution within terms of that time schedule. If they didn't, then they were subject to administrative action. It's part of the law. The conferences are set up under the law. So it's not a dramatization except that, of course, any time that he appeared on an issue it did tend, it was useful from the standpoint that it highlighted the issue.

GREENE: In this particular statement he was very tough on Con Ed [Consolidated Edison]. Was this an effort to get them moving on it? Why were they singled out?

PIGMAN: 'Cause they're the biggest polluter in New York by far. They still are.

GREENE: Were there any efforts to work with them privately before that?

PIGMAN: No. The hell with them. They're the biggest polluter. Not until they got Luce [Charles F. Luce] in there, Con Ed made no effort really to cooperate. They were on the defensive most of the time, so . . . And it seems to me there were a couple of calls from their people and they were interested in telling us about the . . . They kept emphasizing that it would cost more if they cleaned up pollution and all that.

GREENE: He was also very critical of the city government for not enforcing its own laws.

PIGMAN: That seems to me by that time Lindsay must have been mayor then.

GREENE: Yes, he was. How did this go over?

PIGMAN: Well, it was a statement of fact. I mean it still is a statement

of fact. The city is one of the biggest polluters in the city, and it doesn't make a hell of a lot of sense to tell a private individual to clean up his air pollution and have municipal buildings doing the same thing. As a matter of fact, I would take a case to court if I were a private individual on that basis. You could, seriously. And you say, "What the hell, why should I clean up if they don't?" So that I mean when you say, "What effect did it have?" the effect is that there hasn't been very effective air pollution control. There's been a lot of talk about having reduced the pollutants by such-and-such a degree, but I don't think it's been significant.

GREENE: Was he ever at all cautious about attacking Lindsay particularly running the city?

PIGMAN: Oh, no. He always welcomed the fight if it was on legitimate ground. He had no hesitation about that. As a matter of fact, it actually helped when Lindsay took over because when Wagner was mayor he couldn't knock the city too much. I mean, it wasn't nice to be nasty to Wagner, and when Lindsay came in, you could be honest, terribly honest, about the city so that it actually made it a lot easier from our standpoint. You know, as a critic you don't try to do in your own party that much and so a lot of stuff had to be done behind the scenes during the Wagner era, to the degree it could be done at all. And after Wagner was out, of course, then you could open fire.

GREENE: Did you have any continuing contact with this conference after Robert Kennedy's testimony? It went on for quite awhile..

PIGMAN: At subsequent meetings, and I think we were trying to get him to hold meetings for other types of pollutants. They'd only covered a couple the first time and they were going to go on to others and I don't. . . . At this time I don't recall what they were.

GREENE: In March of '67 the senator sent a letter to Secretary Gardner asking for certain action on the pollution question by HEW. Do you remember this and what prompted it?

PIGMAN: What was the action, do you recall? Was it to call a conference on certain pollutants?

GREENE: Yes.

PIGMAN: Yeah, well, I think that was one of the cases where we asked them to go on. And I don't recall whether they did, in fact, finally have that or not. I think that was an attempt to get set. Each time they called a conference for one of these types of pollutants, then they would set a standard for it and that's what we were trying to get established so they could go through the long rigamarole so that the standards would finally be enforceable.

GREENE: Would this have had any relationship to the administration bill of '67 that was already in the making?

PIGMAN: No, I don't think so. This was a separate attempt to deal with the pollution problem in New York City. That was the March following the pollution crisis of that fall, that November, and there was a great deal of concern about it. Unfortunately, people react when they have a disaster, but in between they don't have much feel for it. They were still alert to it then. You don't hear that much talk about it now, in New York anyway.

GREENE: I know that you left somewhere in the spring of '67.

PIGMAN: I left in. . . . Oh, in February I was sick. And then in June, the end of June. . . . Well, July fourth weekend I became ill and I was out until about the middle of August, and I came back in the middle of August and I was there until September 15 when I went on leave of absence.

GREENE: How much did you do on the '67 bill before you left?

PIGMAN: I don't recall a thing about the '67 bill really. Did he speak on the '67 bill?

GREENE: Well, you see the files are kind of sparse after that because you left.

PIGMAN: Yeah.

GREENE: That was my next question, was there anybody to take your place?

PIGMAN: No. Not really. Jeff Greenfield who was the new IA [Legislative Assistant] in my place was not involved really in environmental issues. That was not his field. As a matter of fact, there's a guy who's done a book [Apostle of Change, Douglas Ross], a collection of Robert Kennedy's speeches, and he speculates as to why after a certain time there are no speeches on the environment and conservation, and one reason is that nobody was that interested in it on the staff. So that it's, you know, a comment on where people. . . .

Of course, you have to understand what were the senator's priorities. The nuclear issue was the foremost issue. And the next issue is the question of the war in Vietnam. This was his sense of priority. So that if you were working on those issues, your contacts with him were going to be that much more important. Also, environmental issues are middle-class issues. I hate to say it, but it's true. You know, the guy who works in a car wash and makes a hundred bucks a week or something like that, he. . . . Environmental issues are nice, but. . . . They're not important to him, they're not bread on the table. And so that from the senator's standpoint both Bedford-Stuyvesant, which Adam [Walinsky] was working on extensively

in '67--sort of, the housing and the food and things like this and poverty were foremost. And environment, while I was there, it was something that I worked on, but it was not. . . . Within the office I was not one of the intimate--what do you say? Intimate is not the word. But, rating myself, I was probably about seventh or eighth down the line of the people contacting the senator. That may be one or two off, but I would say that Adam and Peter and Joe were closer, certainly closer to the senator than I was.

GREENE: What about Mankiewicz?

PIGMAN: And Mankiewicz, when he came in. Mankiewicz is a very brilliant guy. And, of course, the press man worked constantly with the senator and went with the senator constantly. And he also is closer in age to the senator, slightly closer than I was. So I don't know. Well, he's just a brilliant guy, and I think the senator enjoyed his suggestions and comments. So he was closer I would say.

GREENE: Did you have any contacts with the senator after you left him on environmental issues?

PIGMAN: You mean after I left the office or what?

GREENE: Yes.

PIGMAN: Well, I got involved in the Hudson River Conference--not conference, but the Hudson River trip with the Scenic Hudson [Scenic Hudson Preservation Conference]--thing in the fall of '67, and I did some staff work for him on that. And I went on the trip up the river and advised Carter Burden on that thing. And then it seems to me there were a couple of calls on occasions for minor problems that came up. But then in February, early February of '68, I had gone out to the coast in connection with the study of air pollution that I was doing and talked to my friends in California, including a number of political leaders in Los Angeles. And then, after that I'd come back and spoken to the senator for about a half an hour about the need to get into the race. This was before [Eugene J.] McCarthy was up in New Hampshire, and I just felt terribly strongly that the senator, even if he lost the race for the nomination, would still win by entering. If he didn't get into it, he would lose in the sense that he would lose his constituency. Because people, many, many people that I knew and people who were favorably inclined to the senator were asking what the dickens was going on here, why wasn't he getting into it. And at the end of that conversation--have we discussed this before? I don't know, maybe we have.

GREENE: I don't know if we discussed this particular . . .

PIGMAN: I think I gave you a copy of that memo. But at the end of the thing he said, "Well, I agree with you, but my advisers tell me otherwise." And then he went on into the committee room, but so . . . I don't know, it's a tough thing. It was a tough thing. He was

obviously going through a change at the time, but I felt terribly strongly. It seemed like everything was going to be lost. I mean if Johnson wasn't moved, then the war would go on ad infinitum, and that, two, it looked like Rockefeller might have a chance if Johnson kept going the way he was, and, three, all the social issues that were so important were being neglected because of the continuation of the war.

GREENE: Before we leave the subject of air pollution completely, in a number of places he speaks of things that were being done in California, and you just mentioned that you went out to California on the pollution question. Was California a kind of a . . .

PIGMAN: On air pollution, California--not California, but Los Angeles--is the home of effective air pollution control ^{where it is.}
to the degree there's anyplace in the country

GREENE: So you would frequently look to them for . . .

PIGMAN: Well, all the federal legislation is patterned on IA's standards. As a matter of fact, in one of the bills that was passed recently, California is allowed to set its own standards because they are more advanced than any other part of the country.

GREENE: I remember, that was the '67 bill.

You once told me about Robert Kennedy's efforts to free a man named Gustav C. Hertz, who was held captive in North Vietnam. Could you explain? You've explained it to me off the tape. Could you explain on the tape how this came about and how you got involved?

PIGMAN: Well, we were contacted by Burke Hertz, who was his brother, and asked if we could do anything to influence the administration to do more to free Gus Hertz. And we had a series of meetings, one with Maxwell Taylor. I went to have a meeting with Maxwell Taylor and a couple of other people and Hertz. And Gus Hertz's wife discussed the thing and argued for certain trades that they thought could be made, and Taylor wasn't very sympathetic to it.

Then later on the senator and I went to the Algerian ambassador and asked if he could do something to contact the VC Vietcong to free Hertz, and he agreed to do what he could, and they sent a message. There was a VC representative in Algeria at the time and he sent a message, contacted them to see if they could do anything and this went on and on and we kept. . . . We did a series of moves. A lot of it initiated at Burke Hertz's request where he'd have new ideas about the way to do it. And then Hertz, Burke Hertz, thought that it might be useful to go through Prince Norodom Sihanouk and he wanted to see. . . . He and Mrs. Hertz were going to go see Sihanouk in southern France, and the State Department didn't think it would be a good idea.

So the suggestion came that Mrs. Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy might

write to Sihanouk--she knew Sihanouk--to see if she could convince him to make representations on behalf of Hertz's family to see if they could get information about him at the least, and possibly to free him. And so a letter was drafted up and sent up to Mrs. Kennedy and at that point. . . . Well, the next thing I knew Mrs. Kennedy was going to the Far East including a visit to Angkor Wat. And I gathered from the discussions at the time that some of it involved an attempt--you know, discussions relating to Hertz. And not long after that word came down that Hertz was dead.

I think the initial story at the time was that Sihanouk had gotten word that he was alive and then after that, you know, the word came through that he had died. He was not being held prisoner by the North Vietnamese, but rather by the VC and they would move him around. It's questionable whether he was alive. You know, I mean who knows at what point he died? He [Sihanouk] probably wouldn't know till afterwards. And there are all sorts of funny. . . . For example, apparently the American mission in Saigon paid \$200,000 to somebody who bugged out with the money who was supposed to turn up Hertz--they lost money. All the scandals in the Johnson administration!

GREENE: Where did that money come from?

PIGMAN: Well, you know, it was spook money--your tax dollar. But they were embarrassed about that. But they were following every lead they could because, for one thing, we were bringing a great deal of pressure on them, and it actually got to the point where they leaked their side of the thing to Life magazine and there was a big story in Life about who was doing the most to free Hertz type thing which is gross in retrospect, in the sense that the poor guy was dead.

GREENE: Why did this particular man become the object of so much concern?

PIGMAN: He was the highest American civilian captured by the VC.

GREENE: AID [Agency for International Development] ?

PIGMAN: That's right. He went toddling off on his bicycle one day in an area where he wasn't supposed to go and he got picked up.

GREENE: Do you know if Mrs. Kennedy actually did consult with Sihanouk on it?

PIGMAN: I assume that she did. I don't know. She didn't call me to let me know, but I assume that that was the purpose of the trip. And then there was some discussion at the time.

GREENE: How did you feel about Taylor being contacted then?

PIGMAN: Well, Taylor was not that cooperative in the contact that went at the meeting, and subsequently I heard from other friends of mine that he was the guy that had resisted doing some things that could

have been done perhaps to free Hertz at the time. So my impression of Taylor is not generally favorable based on that. That's really the only thing I have to base it on. I don't think he felt. . . . They didn't feel terribly sympathetic to one civilian. We kept getting the argument, "Well, what about the four or five hundred fliers who were captured? Why aren't we making the same effort for them?" And our point was well, hell, "if you can free one civilian . . . we'll be glad to free as many as we can, but let's start out with one or as many as we can and see what we can do."

There was the one chap, but I can't remember his name, in the White House who subsequently worked for Averell Harriman for awhile; who was working on this and had a lot of spook contacts that he was using to try to free Hertz. They were willing to put in a special forces team to rescue him if they knew where he was, but they didn't even know that. There was just very vague sort of information coming out. I don't think they ever got a letter from him all the time that he was captive.

GREENE: He might have been dead right from the beginning?

PIGMAN: No, I don't think so. There were people, there were reports that he had been seen, but they never got a, you know, written message. But you just don't know at what point in time he died. The Vietnamese would use him as a prisoner, as a hostage for whatever purpose. They were using him as a hostage against their terrorists. And one of their proposals was to free a terrorist who had bombed the embassy in return for Hertz. And Taylor didn't want to do this because would we then be saying that--what is it?--66140 South Vietnamese are worth one American," you know. This sounds rational, but I'm not sure it's terribly rational when you're trying to save a life at any point in time.

GREENE: Well, just to conclude, is there anything else?

PIGMAN: I really am just. . . . You know, sometimes you think of things and sometimes you don't, and I don't have anything particular in mind this morning.

GREENE: Would you want to comment in any way on, looking back now, what you yourself gained from this association with Robert Kennedy, what impact it had on your life?

PIGMAN: I'm afraid that would take two hours or so, if I were to be honest, you know, completely honest about it. Just very briefly, it's a fantastic experience for me and I treasure it a great deal. And it's not only Robert Kennedy, but it was the other people in the office. It was Adam and Peter and Frank Mankiewicz and [Wesley A.] Wes Barthelmes, all of whom are able guys, and the senator and friends of the senator's who were very, very effective and motivated people. It was a good experience. I don't want to say much more than that because you could go on ad infinitum I'm afraid. I wouldn't have done it any other way.

Given to the JFK
Library by Wendell
Pigman

Wednesday, February 28, 1968

Senator,

Just to reiterate my thoughts on the Vietnam war and the importance of our national leadership at a time like this.

Your Chicago speech on the war was effective and important. It gave me something to show to the Democrats (all young) whom I was visiting in Los Angeles who were throwing McCarthy in my face. I thought the speech was appropriate and particularly timely in view of Rockefeller's delay tactics.

However, Rockefeller has changed his schedule because of his goof on the garbage strike and in a rather slick publicity drive encouraged a write-in in New Hampshire and Wisconsin while managing to squelch some of the news in the rest of the country; after all, who looks at Saturday night news tv.

I believe that the Republicans, namely Rockefeller, will now come out saying that they were misinformed by the Democrats on the war as a result of the Fulbright hearings and will say that they are therefore the only party who has free options in deciding the future policy of the war.

At this time I believe that Rockefeller or Nixon will win if they run against Johnson: this will be the result of the bloody nose that we will get in the Vietnam war (unless LBJ runs us into a nuclear holocaust) and because of the troubles in the cities.

I believe that my guesses on this are confirmed
by :

the desparateness that LBJ showed in his address to the REA last night

the big push by ~~XXXX~~ Botwin with WH leadership on a write-in for Jdgon

Johnson's imposition of censorship on the war at this time; not only a tactical move to keep the VC uninformed about Khe Sanh but a move to relieve the pressure on the American public, a pressure that is changing the ~~mode~~ of the public.

Confirmation con'd

Howard K. Smith
~~Edward P. Morgan~~

Edward P. Morgan has announced that he is taking a two year sabbatical because of the poor job that the press has been doing. Although he didn't attribute it to the war, I am sure that if you called him, he would say that he resigned because of the poor job that American TV and the press has been doing in recommending alternatives to our current course of action.

NBC has been doing all within their power for the last week or so to put out i. e., include in their t. v., revulsive material on the war; such as five minutes in a Marine aid tent at Khesanh, even for an ex-Marine like me, a tough scene. I am convinced that the NBC staff is indirectly going against their national policy at NBC headquarters

The desparateness of Secretary Rusk in answering the question as to why the South Vietnamese people had not warned us of the coming raid; by comparison 4 South Koreans (woodchoppers) warned us of the raid of 30 or so North Korean spys so that we were able to capture them all; see Marquis Child's article in the Washington Post today.

The political implications of this series of guesses are;
either Republican comes out for freedom of policy in deciding the future of the war

the only Democrat who has a chance of beating Rockefeller and Nixon is you

you have only an outside chance; i. e. you would have to win in the cities, the minority groups, friends of JFK, and among liberals who believe that the war will be over within a year and that a Republican congress carried in by a Republican wouldn't adequately face the problems of the cities.

the Democrats

if you don't run and are beaten by a Republican (with LBJ a certainty according to Larry Scalse in Ic wa, Assemblyman Sieroty in Los Angeles and Assemblyman Charles Warren of Los Angeles with whom I had dinner early in February, you will not be in office for 8 years and we will have a Republican House that will cut taxes and prevent us from

urban and rural

facing the crucially important problems of our future in a realistic matter.

Eight years with a Republican party will either mean they will be a changed party, or as occurred with ~~ROCKEFELLER~~ the Eisenhower administration, Rockefeller will be overwhelmed by the ~~Neath~~ Neanderthals. . And by the end of eight years the youth of this nation ~~will~~ will not want to turn to a leader who failed at the most crucial time in our recent ~~history~~ history.

partially

the test of courage

Therefore:

I recommend that you announce now that you believe we should pull out of Vietnam now; beat the smart Republicans to the punch on this and take the political credit from the liberals, the youth, the press, and the Negro minority; win or lose this is the courageous position and it is the only way you can win, I think.

Play up the poll that showed that business was almost uniformly ~~again~~ against you in an appeal to the city voter, a great consumer issue in the areas that count to you.

Put emphasis on the minority ~~groups~~ groups; I understand that Rockefeller is already ~~spen~~ spending a great deal of money in trying to buy up this support.

And all the other things necessary to win. I believe part of California delegation and part of Long delegation would come over now.
Please forgive me for being so worked up about this; I haven't been since ~~to~~ the first major appropriation that came before the Senate for the war in early 1966. Thanks for taking the time to read this.

With best wishes,

Wendell