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Bernhard, Berl oral history interview

Don Nicoll

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Interview with Berl Bernhard by Don Nicoll

Summary Sheet and Transcript

Interviewee

Bernhard, Berl

Interviewer

Nicoll, Don

Date

April 30, 2002

Place

Washington, D.C.

ID Number

MOH 346

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Biographical Note

Berl Bernhard was born in New York, New York on September 7, 1929 to Morris and Celia (Nadele) Bernhard. Berl lived in New Jersey, then attended Dartmouth College, graduating in 1951 and Yale Law School, graduating in 1954. His law career began in Washington as a law clerk to Luther Youngdahl. In the late 1950s he took a position on the Civil Rights Commission, and was appointed staff director by John Kennedy in 1961. In 1963 he returned to private practice, and became counsel to the Democratic Senate Campaign Committee in 1965. He became involved with Senator Muskie's 1968 vice presidential campaign as a result of his DSCC work, and then went on to work for Senator Muskie's 1972 presidential campaign as national campaign manager accompanying the Senator on his trips to Israel and the Soviet Union. From 1980 to 1981 he served as senior advisor to Ed Muskie when he became Secretary of State.

Scope and Content Note

Interview includes discussions of: family history; law school; clerking for Luther Youngdahl; Owen Lattimore case; discussions with Supreme Court justices; private practice; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights; confirmation to the Commission on Civil Rights; Strom Thurmond's public racism; Civil Rights at Dartmouth 1951; meeting Ed Muskie; General Counsel to the Democratic Senate Campaign Committee; cleaning up the DSCC; arguments with

Ed Muskie; involvement in the 1968 campaign; speechwriting for Ed Muskie; relationship between Humphrey and Muskie staffs; balancing Senate work and a national race; problems in the vice presidential campaign; nearly leaving the campaign; Humphrey-Muskie relations; Muskie's lack of energy; Muskie's weakness as a national campaigner; Florida primary 1968; change from the 1968 to 1972 campaigns; financing problems in 1972; Ted Kennedy impact in 1972 and Chappaquiddick; Arnold Picker; lack of a national fundraising organization; uncooperative donors; establishing foreign policy credentials; and diplomatic trip to Israel (continued on MOH 365).

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Transcript

Don Nicoll: It is Tuesday, the 30th of April. We are in Washington, D.C. in the law offices of Berl Bernhard, and Don Nicoll is interviewing Mr. Bernhard. Berl, would you give us your full name, spell it, your date, place of birth, and the names of your parents?

Berl Bernhard: Alright, name is Berl Bernhard, B-E-R-L, B-E-R-N-H-A-R-D, birth September 7, 1929. My father's name was Morris or Maurice Bernhard, my mother's name was Celia Nadele, N-A-D-E-L-E.

DN: And you were born where?

BB: In New York City.

DN: Did you grow up in New York?

BB: No, I never lived in New York. My mother got caught short in New York. We lived in New Jersey for a long time, in Englewood, went to school there. And then my parents, when I was in eighth grade or so, moved down to Marathon, Florida. My father, who had been, who was originally from Vienna, Austria, had gone to law school, became a lawyer and a banker in New Jersey, disliked his profession quite significantly and loudly, and ended up just turning it all over and moved down to Marathon and bought fifteen acres of land. We were the first people I

think with any real interest in developing that island, and built a fishing resort called Tarpon Lodge and they stayed down there for twenty, twenty-five years. I didn't, I didn't like the heat, I liked the sailing. I didn't like the fishing because it was, I ran their charter boat for three summers and I hated every bit of it because people came down, always got seasick. It was not pleasant.

DN: Now this was, when did they move?

BB: They moved down to Marathon, it was probably right after World War II, 1946, and then started to develop this property. And it was not what you would call a high tone place. It was basically established as a fishing resort but it grew some and it became a very nice spot.

DN: They moved about the time you were graduating from high school.

BB: Well, a little before that actually. They had planned to do that. When I talked about '46, that was the actual move, but prior to that they were already, my father was already moving down there and we were beginning to go, shuffle back and forth on a transitional basis.

DN: And where did you go to college?

BB: I went to Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, and I graduated in 1951. Just finished my fiftieth celebration, if you want to call it that, some people say reunion. And then after that I went to Yale Law School, got out in '54.

DN: You went directly to Yale.

BB: Yeah, I did.

DN: Now, you tell us that your father hated the law and banking, but you went into the profession.

BB: It's strange, I really was quite uncertain about it. I debated whether to go to the Fletcher School, which I had applied to, and I wasn't quite sure what I wanted to do. So I applied to Harvard Graduate School of Public Administration, Fletcher School at Tufts and to Yale Law School. And when I got into Yale Law School I said, "Well, it gives me more options." So I decided to do that. And Yale turned out to be a good choice because it was less concerned with the miniscule aspects of the law, although you had to have some of the basics, the fundamentals. But it was possible to take things for, like the jurisprudence of East and West, and some very philosophical kinds of things. And it basically taught some discipline in thinking as opposed to just rote, footnotes, Martindale-Hubbell (sounds like: "shepardizing paces" ----*unintelligible phrase*) and that kind of thing. And so it was a good place, and I was fortunate to be there.

My dad was beginning to get low on money and I ended up teaching for a semester and a half in the undergraduate school at Yale, as a graduate instructor of political science. And that was too bad for the kids at Yale, but that's the way the school worked in those days. The full professor would teach one day a week, and the graduate assistants would have two days a week. And it

was, it seemed to work for them but it was, publish was the main issue, not teach. I think it was a mistake. Quite frankly, I think Dartmouth did a better job on undergraduate teaching than Yale, but that's a debate that they're having.

DN: Now, where did you go after you graduated from Yale?

BB: I was fortunate, I got a job as a law clerk to Judge Luther [Wallace] Youngdahl, who had been one, in the federal district court, District of Columbia. It was an interesting opportunity because he had been chief justice of the supreme court of Minnesota and governor two terms. He ended up coming to Washington only because Hubert Humphrey had decided that if Luther Youngdahl ran against him, he'd [Youngdahl] win. And so he got Truman to appoint him to the U.S. District Court here. And it was a wonderful period for me because it was intended to be one year, but could be extended by the judge if there were a need.

And it turned out to be extended because we were in the middle of the Owen [J.] Lattimore case and it was a very hot issue. It was the McCarthy period, and Owen Lattimore had been indicted for committing perjury when he said he wasn't a follower of Communist lines or adherence to Communist causes, and it was, we hadn't seen anything quite like this. Leo (*name*) was the U.S. attorney and Herb Brownell was attorney general. It was a, I think, a very unfortunate, I would say, extension of the McCarthy mentality, to try to suppress free speech. And the upshot of it was that we dismissed the perjury indictments, and there were a number of counts, on the grounds that it violated the First Amendment. And it went up to the court of appeals, and while it was there I thought we had a good shot at losing. And the chief justice died, who was opposed to the position, and we were sustained on a four to four vote. But it did come back for another time. And this time they filed for a very unusual motion of bias and prejudice against the judge, on the grounds that he had shown in his first opinion that he was biased against the government. And we dismissed the thing on the grounds that you had to show bias and prejudice beyond the four walls of the case, that he had done something that showed he was prejudiced against the government. But it was a hell of a time and extended therefore for two years.

And we had some wonderful cases, including the rights of the courts, civilian courts, to review the nature of military discharge certificates, that kind of thing. He was a very good guy. And I have to say, I never really talked about this, some of the cases in which we were involved ended up with certain discussions that took place between Luther Youngdahl and his very close friend Earl Warren, because they were both Republican governors and they were both of a liberal bent for the Republican party, and they used to have many discussions. And at the same time, David [L.] Bazelon, who was on the U.S. Court of Appeals here, was a close friend of the judge's because they were involved in many mental health activities. And there was much discussions between them on cases. So it was a really interesting time for me.

DN: And you had an opportunity to sit in on those conversations?

BB: Yes, and I'll tell you, some of the, one of the more enjoyable things that came about as a result of that was that I got to know a fellow named Milton [S.] Kronheim, who was a liquor distributor and a very active Democrat. And he used to have these little lunches over at his delicatessen and, in north-northeast Washington. And he used to invite all of his friends, and

Thurgood Marshall would come over there, and all kinds of people would come up there. And I got to know a number of the justices, particularly Brennan. And it was, I learned more about how some of these cases are decided, which one doesn't always see.

DN: But I take it you were never tempted to seek a judicial career.

BB: You know, I thought about that a number of times. And the problem was, and I'm still not sure exactly why because once or twice it had been proposed that I should try to do that. But I always found other things that attracted me immediately and seemed to be more of a challenge. May be wrong, I'm not sure I would have been a very good sitter for a sustained period of time. I know I did not enjoy the motions calendar when I was law clerk as much as I did the criminal and civil trials, as such. And I thought, well, there's going to be an awful lot of that listening. And I enjoyed drafting opinions, that was a lot of fun. But it just was something that, you know, you either feel it or you don't feel it, and I didn't feel it. And so I thought there were so many other things that interested me, that I just never focused on it.

DN: When you finished your clerkship, what attracted you first?

BB: After that? Well, what attracted me was that I was looking around for a job and I knew I needed a job, and I had worked in New York for a summer at (*sounds like*: Davis, Polk, Wardwell, Sunderland & Kendall), as it was known then. And that was an interesting time because it was when John W. Davis was, had agreed to argue *Brown vs. Board of Education*. And since I'd written my senior thesis at Dartmouth on John Marshall Harlan, who had written the dissent, and plus he beat Ferguson in a "separate but equal" issues, I wasn't much inclined to be helpful. And I turned down an opportunity to work on the briefs with John W. Davis. And I had some interesting, unfortunate discussions with a fellow named D. Nelson Adams, who was kind of running the firm at the time, who at one point told me that: did I feel that working on this case, despite my previous position, would turn me into a whore? And I said I didn't look at it that way. And he leaned over in this very snide way and said, "You could become a very wealthy one." And in any event, I was invited to go back there after law school but I didn't, I had the clerkship, I never returned there.

But I decided I didn't want to go with a big law firm. And one of my classmates at law school, Harris Wofford, he and I had become close friends, studying for the Bar together down here at Gary Gessel's (could not verify last name spelling, unless he is the CFO of the Milgard Co.) house, because they were old friends and Harris had worked as a law clerk there. And Gary, I got to know him because I was living over at his house for two weeks. And he asked me if I wanted to go to, come over to Covington and Burling [law firm name]. And I said, well, I didn't, because it was a big firm and I had had that experience. I didn't want to do that.

And one day he called me up and he said, "You know, there's a small firm that is coming along pretty well, and a fellow named Jack Tierney" (I knew from Yale Law School and he was one of the heads of the firm), "you ought to go see him." Well, I went there and it turned out to be very fortunate because I met Jim Verner and later he and I started this firm, and Gene Liipfert, they were both practicing over there, and it was a good time. And then Jim Neil, who later became the prosecutor of Hoffa, was there, we were born on the same day and we shared a room together

over there, so we had a good time. But it was a good firm. But then along came the civil rights days, and Harris [Wofford] had gone with the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. And he was working with Father [Theodore M.] Hesberg, as a legal assistant, and asked me whether or not I would be interested in, (this was after two or three years) be interested in heading up the voting section, doing the investigation on 'deprivation of the right to vote'. And since I'd been involved in some civil rights stuff at Dartmouth, I was eager and left the firm. I took a leave of absence and never returned actually. But that little leave of absence lasted over four years, and it was worth, worth it all, so. I don't know, where do we go from here? I could go in a lot of details, but you don't want to hear all that.

DN: Just a couple of questions. One is, the Verner Liipfert firm had not been formed then?

BB: No, no, we were attorney and attorney. And then 1960 came about and I took leave from the civil rights commission to work on the Kennedy campaign for the summer. And when that concluded, I did not, I didn't expect that I would be nominated to be staff director of the civil rights commission, and so I was planning to go back. And before I was nominated, Jim Verner and I started the firm called Verner and Bernhard. And then about two months after we started the firm, I got a call from the White House about, the president was interested in nominating me. Would I be interested in doing that? And I really thought about it a lot. And Jim said, "You got to do it." The president, I saw the president and he asked me if I would do it, and I was only twenty-eight or twenty-nine, and I thought this is really good stuff. Little did I know what I was getting into or, the confirmation process which was just agonizing. And you remember what the civil rights conditions were in 1960 and '61, it was bitter.

I'll tell you one funny thing, after I'd been nominated, it just occurs to me, I went up to see all the members of the judiciary committee. Ted Sorenson said, "You better do that, because it's going to be a controversial appointment and so you'd better go see" I went to see everybody, and I was pretty well turned down by most of them. And I went to see Olin [DeWitt Talmadge] Johnston, who was then from South Carolina, and not an indecent fellow. But I figured, what the heck, I have to go see him anyway, so I did. And I came in there, I walked into his office and he looked me up one side and the other. And he said, "Well, damn, I'm glad to see you. I didn't know if you were going to be black or white." [laughter] And that started it.

And then we started talking about, he told me, he said, "I don't have a problem with you but you know I can't vote for you. I mean, it's impossible, I just can't afford to do that." But he said, "You know what's going on right now?" I said, "No, I don't senator." And he said, "Well come on down to the floor, I want you to listen to it, there's a debate on civil rights going on right now." So we went down and we sat in the well, stood in the well of the Senate listening to this debate.

And Strom Thurmond was at, in those days, was not what he found necessary to be later, because of the voting opportunities of the blacks. And he was inveighing against all these northern Communist coming down and causing all these problems, and started using the word 'nigger' on the floor. And I thought, "Oh man." And suddenly I looked up and Olin Johnston leaned over me, he said, "You hear that?" And I said, "Yes." And he said, "Well, you know what the problem with old Strom is?" And I didn't want to say, I was just stunned by his

comments. He said, "You know what the problem is? The problem is old Strom believes that shit." [laughter] So I learned a lot during that whole confirmation process. It took seven months to get confirmed, and a lot of other things had happened. But it was, it worked, it was all right and it was a great experience.

DN: What triggered your interest in civil rights originally?

BB: I guess I always had kind of an interest, but what really brought it to a head was at Dartmouth. I played football for a year and a half, until I banged up a knee and had an operation. There was a fellow that was playing on the football team, a halfback, good guy that was black, and he was pledged to the DEK [Delta Kappa Epsilon] fraternity. And after he'd been pledged, the DEK fraternity was told by its national [chapter] that they could not accept him as a member of the fraternity. Well, I was kind of outraged by it, and I was vocal about it. And later I was elected president of the student government and I thought, well, I got to do something about this. So I was able to pass a student referendum which said that any fraternity which had nationals which discriminated on the base of race, religion, national origin, could not continue to participate in any of the programs or inter-fraternity competitions at Dartmouth. And if they persisted in that, they would have to go local. And if they didn't go local they could not exist on campus after a transitional period of four or five years. That was an over-reach, because we didn't own the fraternities and we probably couldn't have done anything to them to make them leave the campus, but we could exclude them and that's what happened. And it worked pretty well, but that's how, that is really, it got started.

Remember Frenzel, Bill Frenzel? See, I had gone into a fraternity and it was really, it turned out that our fraternity, which was Sigma Nu had a national clause in it. So I ended up my senior year putting Sigma Nu plus seven others on probation, and it was rather embarrassing. And Frenzel was president of the fraternity at the time, I was not very popular, I didn't go to the fraternities my last year in school. But anyway, that's what got started, and it was a difficult time

I have to tell you one little anecdote about it, was that I didn't quite know how to proceed with it, because it was so controversial in those days about, you know, how do you handle overt discriminatory actions. And I went to see a fellow named Robert Carr, Bob Carr who was chairman of the government department. He later became president of Oberlin. He was the fellow that I ended up writing my thesis for. And he had been head of Truman's committee on civil rights which desegregated the armed services. And he was my advisor about how to go about this, and not be a hothead and do something really stupid. And he told me I had to really work through with the trustees, because there are twelve trustees, and they have a lot of power and they could prevent this if they really wanted to.

So we worked out a very careful plan with the president of the student council, Dickey, who was quite favorable. And I ended up making a presentation to the board, and I was very nervous about it, to put it mildly. And fortunately that day Nelson Rockefeller, who was an active graduate, was making a presentation to the board and he sat through it. And at the end of it there was silence for a second and I thought, "Well, this is over." And suddenly he jumped up, grabbed my hand and said, "Listen fellow, it's about time someone did something like this at Dartmouth College. And I'm telling you we're going to support you one hundred percent, don't

you worry about it.” Well, from then on Nelson and I, well they did sup-, they didn't do anything but they didn't cause any problems, and Nelson and I became big friends after that. In fact, I had a drink with him that night to thank him for it. So, it was an interesting time, but that's what had really pricked my interest initially.

DN: And you continued and served on the civil rights commission (*unintelligible word*)?

BB: Until two weeks before the president's assassination. And then I went back into the firm and subsequent thereto, about two years later, Johnson asked me to serve as a director with [Rev.] Walter Fauntroy and counsel to the White House conference to fulfill these rights. And if you remember, in the interim period, President Kennedy, before maybe the fall of '63, summer, late summer, and Lyndon Johnson and Bob Kennedy established the lawyer's committee for civil rights under law, and I was director of that from the law firm when I came back in. In a lot of time we established offices in Jackson, Mississippi and a number of other places. So I continued that, but I finally had to, you know, try to make a living. Those things weren't going to do it.

DN: So you were doing some volunteer work between '63 and '68?

BB: Right. Yeah, but then along came Fred Dutton who was then, had been secretary of the Cabinet under Kennedy, and asked me to help with the issue of discrimination in the State Department and the boycott of South Africa. And so I went over and worked a little bit with Averell Harriman before he departed, and that was an interesting experience. Again, it was not what I would call a paying job, but it was fun. And so, but then I went back and I really did focus on our law practice for a while. I was teaching for two years as an adjunct professor at Georgetown, at the law school, on current problems of Constitutional law, which was fun. I had some interesting students, like John McEvoy and Harold Pachios and some people like that, so it was kind of fun.

DN: The lines that go on.

BB: Yeah, it just continues, but it's kind of fun.

DN: When did you get involved with Ed Muskie?

BB: After an interesting experience. Well first, let me tell you, I got to know Joe Tydings when he was U.S. attorney and I was with the commission. And then when he ran in '64 for senator, he asked me to chair the, of course we'd become friends, we tried desegregating (*unintelligible phrase*) if you remember, he was really helpful on that. But anyway, we became friends, he asked me to chair the Montgomery county campaign and be coordinator for a few of the other counties, in his campaign.

So the reason that is relevant is that after, I guess I can't remember the exact year, '65 maybe, when. . . . I was the first general counsel of the Democratic senate campaign, and Ed became chairman of that, if you recall. I can't remember the year, but he became chairman because of the fallout from the Tom Dodd problem. And it turned out that the people who were involved in the file theft, we don't talk about this too much, but one of them turns out to have been my

secretary at the Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, and had worked for Tom Dodd. And her boyfriend, Jim Boyd, had been his administrative assistant. You may have known Jim Boyd. [*Don Nicoll gestures in the affirmative*] Well, I represented them in the controversies on the Hill and with the FBI and a number of other things.

In any event, right after that it became relevant only because that started the Democratic senate campaign committee's desire to clean up. And Ed, who was always Mr. Clean, was asked to chair it. And Joe Tydings had been asked to be the vice chairman, and he had recommended me to Senator Muskie. And I didn't know Senator Muskie other than by reputation until then, at all, and we had a reasonably long chat, for about an hour. And as you know when you first got to meet Senator Muskie when he didn't know you, I think he had a huge quantity of reservation. And he asked me a lot of questions and ended up saying, "I think you'll do, but I think you better talk to the other members of the committee." And so I made my rounds. I knew Tyd was okay.

The one person that was really blunt, and actually turned out to be very helpful, was Scoop Jackson. I went to see him because Senator Muskie had set it up. And he gave me his views and he said, "I don't have any problems, any problems at all with your cleaning up some of our obviously questionable activities. But if we're going to have some nitpicking lawyer coming in here and second guessing every political decision we make on some legal grounds, it won't work and I will oppose that. So I don't mind you being very precise, but I do mind you being a nitpicker, and I'm going to oversee that." And he was very good actually. We became good friends.

Well, I went back and saw Ed, and that was the first time, when I went back to see him after it was understood that I'd be acceptable. And it was the first time I really saw something in him that I began to appreciate much more as it went. Because I went back and I said, "It looks like everything's okay." And he said, "Yes it is and we ought to get started." He pointed out first, one: please understand this is not a paying position; two: we have to set up certain criteria for how we're going to handle receipt of money, and we're going to have to get away from the cash accounting here. And I said, "I'll try to do what I can."

And then he stopped, and I remember it very clearly because he, the way he would lean down with the intent gaze, and he said to me, "I know there'll be continuing opposition to making this too constrictive, so that we won't be able to operate. I don't think that's the case. I think we can do it." I remember this so clearly, "We can do it cleanly and that's what I expect." And he said, "Let me put it this way: if you are satisfied that there is a right way to do it, that's what I expect you to recommend. Now, I'm not always going to accept what you recommend, but I want you to be able to justify it, on the basis that you believe this is warranted and required as a matter of law. And then we can talk about how we deal with that later. I don't expect you to come in and tell us how we deal with the legal parameters of it. I expect to get you to make recommendations based on the law. We'll determine how it's going to be done, and it'll be done right." And I thought, whoa, this is not what I expected, but this is great. And I think that started our relationship.

And I have a feeling that coming in from the outside was desirable because I didn't have any particular baggage. I'd never worked for him. And I think it was helpful because I didn't feel

encumbered and I later realized how important that was because he was such a dominating personality that, you know. I have a feeling if I'd been with him for too long it would have generated the kind of submersion that I could see he was capable of. And I think it ended up where we could have pretty good arguments and he knew I could walk away, and it worked kind of. And I felt very comfortable arguing with him or disagreeing with him. But I must say I have met a lot of people but there was no one more formidable than Senator Muskie in argument, both in substance, in articulation, and being totally irate about your disagreement.

One of the things that I remember which was, it just so stuck in my head. There was one time we were having an argument about something and there was suddenly silence for a minute. And Ed looked up at me and he said, "You know what your problem is?" And I said, "I'm not sure." "You think we're having a conversation." And it kind of summarized the whole relationship. But it's, that's what started it all, and I guess I kept doing that even after he stepped down and Senator Inouye became chair of the committee. But I kept up the relationship with Ed and, you know, just with great respect. I mean, you have to adore him and fear him, and feel uncomfortable all at the same time.

DN: Now, you got involved in the '68 campaign.

BB: Yeah, that was because of the senate campaign committee. We were out there as counsel of the committee and we were at the hotel with all that god awful mess and the smell of gas and the police and the broken glass. It was just a horror show.

And then, I guess there had been speculation about Ed becoming the vice presidential candidate. You never know, and I certainly didn't know. And then there was a knock on the door and there was Hubert. This was about, I think, around four o'clock in an afternoon, and they had a chat. And then Ed said, "Well what am I going to say?" after Hubert had left. And Leon was there, and the two of us were trying to figure out what he was going to say. And I don't know if you remember his performance there, but he had a combination of papers, and I wasn't sure, either he knew they pieced together or whether he could read them. But he had, he went up to the podium, he had, as I found out later was standard that this is, as he told me three or four times, "I'm not going to give this speech you wrote, it's got a broken back."

And we had pieced together all kinds of prior statements or speeches, transitional clauses and phrases and things like that. And no matter how we did it, Ed found something wrong with it and we never had the time to retype it because he was speaking at seven or seven-thirty that night. And, you know, he finally with great annoyance took this all together and put in more effective transitional statements and the right conclusion, and you know, you realized how good he was, how smart he was. But it was just, we, I just held my breath when he was giving it because I figured one page goes out of here and we're dead because it was not nice and clean, it was not typed well. It was cross outs, Muskie writings, papers that were not even put together well, it was kind of, but it worked.

So then he asked me to come with him, and then, during the campaign and to help coordinate with Hubert's campaign, which I did. That was enough chaos as I've ever seen. It was an interesting campaign. And you know, Ed stood out in that campaign.

DN: What was the arrangement from your perspective during that campaign between the two candidates and the two campaign staffs?

BB: Well, it was never clear. First of all, Hubert had, I don't remember all their names, Bill Welch -

DN: Bill Welch.

BB: Bill Welch, and then there was a guy who was running the campaign, who got into trouble later.

DN: I forget the name of that person.

BB: Yeah, I'll have to get that to you. But there was a hierarchy in the Humphrey campaign, but it was never very clear. It seemed to gyrate and became, to me, a kind of a happening. There was no one that had clearly defined schedule responsibilities, that changed rather frequently. And Hubert was on the phone almost every day with Ed talking about how things were going, what needed to be done. And I can remember one time when we were flying to Seattle and we were to meet, in mid-flight Hubert said, cancel Seattle and go to San Antonio, and I thought, Jesus, we're not ready for that, why are we doing this. But that was the way the campaign was. And from Ed's standpoint, he was never very precise about how that campaign should be run, from an administrative standpoint. And Don [*sic* Dick] Dubord -

DN: Dick Dubord.

BB: Dick Dubord, was a very close friend, and I think a very decent and smart guy. And I think Ed relied on his judgments a lot, even though I don't think he was, had the breadth of national politics. I'm not sure any of us did, outside of Ed. But it, George participated to some extent. Ed made very clear he wanted the Senate staff to do his Senate work while he was campaigning, and I'm not sure that was very helpful because the coordination with the Senate staff became more difficult because, you know, he would change, maybe because of Humphrey, maybe because of Muskie, they would change speeches in mid-course, they would change places, geography of where we were, and it was very difficult to coordinate what was happening outside and what was happening on the Senate staff. And he was always very, he wanted to draw what I always believed was an artificial line, there was no question about that. And, you know, George was involved in the campaign, and Dick Dubord and some other people. But it was not a clear, there were never clear lines. Ed didn't like clear lines.

And the other problem, and it came to a head in Cleveland, to be quite honest about it. There was a, as you maybe recall, it was a really difficult period because of 1968, you know, Dr. King and Bob Kennedy and there was a very much anti-Humphrey wing of the party, not just in the party but nationally. And I thought that we really had to make an effort to enlist as many of the dissident Kennedy people as possible. And there was a big rally, anti-Humphrey rally, at the hotel where we were staying in Cleveland. And I wanted Ed to come down and talk to them because I thought he could make a difference. And I went up to his room to say I really, I want

to encourage you, please, to come down. There's some people we could use in the campaign, they're ground forces we need. I don't think it's impossible to woo them over, you're not stuck in the mud on Vietnam. I know you can't walk away from it altogether, but.

Well, we got into this argument which extended, I went, well Ed turned it down, and I went down to try to talk to them. It was not effective. And I came back up to say that I thought this was symbolic of the problems I perceived in our campaign, that we weren't reaching out far enough, that we were going to the center of the party and that the left of the party was antithetical and would not support us, and we needed them to win. Well, we got, I went back up and it got to be, it was the first real screamer that I had with Ed. And he was tired, he was irascible, from my standpoint, and it got very loud to the point that Jane, who was trying to sleep in a closed bedroom, came out and said, "What is wrong?" And he turned around and told her basically to get back in the room.

And it continued, with Dick Dubord trying to be the peacemaker between me and Ed. It was a, I was, I regretted it, but yet I felt very strongly about it. The upshot was that I said to him, I thought I was the wrong person to be working with him because I disagreed with the strategy of the campaign. And I said, "If you don't mind, I'd like to leave." And so the next morning I packed up and left, and went back to Washington. I had a picture of Ed underneath the door, and signed (*unintelligible phrase*) Berl. I don't know where it is, I'll have to find it. But Ed wrote, "I appreciate all you're doing, and I look forward to seeing you back in Washington," and signed it and left it under the door. And I went back, you know, and I said, "Well I just, this is not, I'm just not fit for this and this is not, we're not a good mix."

And about three or four days later I guess, he got back in Washington. He called me and said, "Are you still pouting?" And I said, "I'm not pouting. I wasn't pouting before, but I think you need people that are more in concert with your approach to this, and obviously I'm not one of them." And he said, "That's not true!" And then I heard a, "You come up here, I want to talk to you." So we went up and we had a discussion about it. And he said I misconstrued what his position was, and "come back and help." And, you know, I admired him. And I said, "Fine," so I went back. And the campaign went pretty well actually.

I found something that was impossible to do, and that was to write an acceptable speech for him. There was no speech except one, I think, that I worked on, that was given in Seattle, that he ever found moderately acceptable. And he would call everybody he knew to write a speech. I know he would call Don Nicoll in the Senate; he would call Dick Goodwin in Maine; he would call Bob Shrum. He would call anybody except the people who were close to him, that were in the campaign. That was, at the time it was George and me basically, and Carole [Parmelee?] and Gayle [Cory] and some people. But it was not what you would call a large traveling staff, and he did not have speech writers with him. But there was no speech that was ever given, I can tell you, I mean it, it was difficult.

And then Humphrey's people would continue to send over material which he thought he was under a mandate to use. I didn't think much of some of it, even though it was from a wordsmanship was quite good. It was defensive. And I thought that we were going to get into trouble with it. So we used to have arguments about what we had to do as far as cooperation

with the Humphrey camp. And I must say, Ed did not have a problem dealing with Hubert, I didn't think. I think he was straight. But he did believe that, as a matter of loyalty to him, that when it came down to the ultimate fight over an issue, he had a tendency, which I can't say was wrong, but I didn't always agree with it, to defer to Hubert, which was appropriate since Hubert was the candidate.

But I think, sometimes I look back and I wonder, we lost by a quarter percent. And I always have thought back and wondered if either we'd really made more of an effort with the Kennedy wing, McGovern group, which was still active, as you know. And the Kennedy family was very supportive of George McGovern, even though he wasn't the candidate. And I don't know, I just always wondered if we'd just been able to enlist them. But I guess if you enlisted them you lost some moderates at the same time, so it may have balanced out, but I always wondered about that.

And whether or not we would have won if Humphrey could have extracted himself some from the Johnson-Vietnam mistake, and Ed feeling that he could say a few things that were much more to the, moving toward peace side. And he did, he did separate himself from Hubert, but it wasn't dramatic. It was trying to convince Hubert to step away, and there are a whole series of things that, if you remember, there was a change in Hubert's position as it moved, which antagonized the Johnson people. It was a difficult time. But I think that, of course with the Williamsport speech and things like that, he acquitted himself brilliantly.

He was a loyal citizen, and he was a hell of a good campaigner. He showed the signs, though, that he had, that he showed later on in '71 and '2, that tiredness, energy level. He didn't have Hubert's energy, or Bob Kennedy's energy. And as his energy would wane, his disposition would be adversely affected, shall we say. And that became much more of a problem later when he really had the ultimate responsibility. But there were signs of it in '68 as well, which is no one's fault but that was a fact, I think. And I saw it a number of times during the campaign.

DN: Talk a little bit about the question of energy. You have referred to his formidable personality and the way he would argue. At the same time you talk about his energy not being the same as Hubert or Lyndon Johnson for that matter, or Robert Kennedy. Was it tied in with, was it a general physiological fact, or was it related to what motivated him?

BB: Well, I think, that's a good question because I have never been sure of that. I believe, for example, that in '71 and '2, he did not have the same level of hunger for the presidency that John Kennedy had had, Bob Kennedy had. I always thought, and I still do, that Ed was a person of very considerable, very considerable intellectual capability and a very large brain. And I think with, with a unique perspective about what the country required, and that, whether it had to do with the environment or the budget or whatever, didn't make any difference. That, these things really -

End of Side A
Side B

DN: . . . of the interview with Berl Bernhard, April 30th, 2002. Go ahead, Berl.

BB: Well, we were talking about Ed's energy level and what it was, and his motivation. I really think, and I'll be more specific about it, that he in his heart believed that if you articulated a vision of where the country should be going on some of the most fundamental issues I think about his endless and enormous contribution in the environmental area, Clean Water, Clean Air, whatever it was, (*sounds like: café unintelligible word*) standards on cars, everything. And on his concern about fiscal responsibility. I think he believed that if you stood for certain things that were important for the country, that would be not enough, but a grand contribution to being almost enough, to run the country.

I think the strictly political aspects, and I mean political in the sense of the details of a campaign, were never comfortable for him, as comfortable as the issues. I really believe that. The details of a campaign, the discipline of trying to work out schedules, which he always talked about, as we're all aware, there are no white spaces. I found it was an annoyance to him to be confronted, as was unfortunately mandated in trying to run something for him, to get the discipline of a political life.

And I, so when you say, what was his motivation? I think his motivation was for a better country in the real sense of it, the substantive sense of what the country needed. But in terms of the motivation to do all of the nasty, detailed, political campaigning was not comfortable for him. I never felt he was really comfortable with it, despite the fact that he had the political instincts to respond to issues as they came up, as he did in Williamsport [PA]. You know, the instinct to have people come up and to listen to what people were saying. And I think it was a genuine listening, it wasn't phony listening. He wanted to know because, again, it went back to what I think at the core was his substantive interest in major issues and how they unfolded, how they could, what their meaning would be for the American people, individually. But the details of it were confounding to him, and annoying to him, and it undermined the motivation to become president or vice president. And it certainly showed itself much more in '71 and '2 than it did in '68 when he really had the responsibility.

I can tell you, the one, you know, I really kind of loved him for it and I hated him for it at the same time. The night before the Florida primary we were at the Dupont Plaza Hotel, and I had asked all of our field people to please meet me in the lobby before, that night, so we could give out final instructions and directions for what they had to do to get out the vote, and to see that people got to the polls. And I had them all there, and it was probably ten-thirty at night, and I look up and who do I see come into the lobby, Hubert in person. And he saw me there and came over, and we had a big chat, and he said, "Where's Ed?" And I said, "Well, he's upstairs, he's just finished up." He'd been up there for a few hours and I was trying to get him to come down. But then when Hubert Humphrey was there, I thought 'what an opportunity', let's get

So I went up to Ed's room and said to him, "I need to talk to you, Senator. It's really important because Humphrey's down in the lobby, we've got maybe a hundred of our key people down there and we're trying to give out last minute instructions for tomorrow morning. And I think it would be really a great thing for you to come down and rally the forces, and say, 'Hello' to Hubert to show, you know, everything's all right." And he was in bed reading, and he said, "Do you know what I'm doing?" I said, "Yes, you're in bed reading." And he said, "Do you know what I'm reading?" And he told me, it was some Victorian historical novel, and, it was

(*unintelligible phrase*) of the Eighteenth or some damn thing, I can't remember, I'll have to remember what. And I said, "Well I'm really not interested in that, but it's really important to get you down there." Silence. And he said, "Let me read to you. You want to hear some beautiful prose?" And I said, "Not particularly." He said, "Listen to this." So he read it. And I said, I looked at my watch and said, "It's 10:40." At which he said, "And it's time for you to leave." That concluded my opportunity to get him down into the lobby, but it said it all. I mean he was clearly enjoying reading. He was clearly enjoying the syntax, the verbiage, the thought of this book. And I realized, my God, here is Hubert running around, this hyper-energy and hyper-kinetic like a fourteen year old. And there's Ed, intellectually reading this book which he is totally enjoying, immersed in. And I'm saying to myself, this campaign is really screwed.

But it wasn't, you know. We lost in Florida but, as you know Wallace won, and hell, we all got polished on that. And then we came back and won in Illinois big, big on that. That's what I felt, I mean I felt that he, it wasn't a motivation, lack of motivation, to want to be president, it was a discomfort about all of the miniscule, dreadful demands on his life, his psyche, everything. It wasn't him. That's why he'd be so good in debate, because he was so damned smart and knew the issues so well. But when it came to the minutia of scheduling, which was always a trauma.

DN: As I hear you talking about this, it impresses me that, from your point of view, he resented and did not want to get involved in the minutia of campaigning, but if you look at his performance on legislation -

BB: Totally different.

DN: he would absorb himself in the minutia

BB: Loved it.

DN: of both the substantive arguments

BB: Tactics.

DN: the tactics, the reactions of other people.

BB: See, but that was, I used to think about that all the time because that was a definable goal, something that he knew was needed. It was circumscribed, it was targeted. He knew where he wanted it come out and he was prepared to do whatever was necessary, including all the political machinations and cooperative efforts that were required. And the management of legislation on the floor and handling of amendments, that was all for a goal that he had set in his mind as important for America. And I really believe that.

It was much more tenuous when you got into the whole thing of governing the country, or politicking throughout the country. There was no, there wasn't time to direct your entire being to recognize that miniscule details could unhorse a campaign. The goal was much more uncertain, except in the biggest picture. I think if there were ten issues that govern a campaign, Ed would win handily because he would know how to accomplish each one of those definable goals. But it

was much more uncertain, much more inchoate, much more broad. And he didn't see the connection sometimes, between the extraordinary demands on his mind for managing details or responding affirmatively to details of something that wasn't clearly moving toward a, an acceptable or desired ultimate goal. And I really, it was an annoyance to him, and it showed.

I mean, it's no secret that Ed and I had many arguments, had many, some quiet and some loud. But, you know, it wasn't lack of respect on my part. It was the feeling that I had all along, that there was a huge gap between his level of comfort in accomplishing definable goals and as a campaigner, as a national politician. I mean, no one was better on the talk shows, no one could deliver a speech better, unless you didn't have a speech that he decided, you had written, and it was to be discarded, at which time he could speak endlessly to the point you'd want to say, enough, enough, enough. But he had a lot to say. And, there was just a significant difference. I never had the opportunity to see what everybody that was close to him in the Senate saw, and that was a really great mind and a great legislator, and someone who knew how to get things done in the context of the Senate. In legislation, he understood all that, but when you put legislation aside and you talk everything from prison riots to (*unintelligible word*), it was not comfortable for him to just respond to that. There wasn't time to study; that was what I think drove him more into, I don't know, exhaustion, depression at times, that he was being asked to respond to myriad, sometimes miniscule, sometimes important, public issues which he hadn't studied. I mean, he wanted to know more than any of us could ever have taught him, instantaneously, and that's how the campaign, that's how a campaign is. And it, his discomfort at dealing with some of these issues that just flowed, was manifest.

DN: Let's shift from, we've jumped back and forth between '68 and the '71-'72 campaign. Let's go between those two to that 1969 period when -

BB: Everybody said he should be president.

DN: Right. And you were advising him during that period. What was your sense of his mood and his response?

BB: I believe in '69, leading up to the '70 speech in Maine, that he really had decided that he, he could lead the country, that there was a strong enough following for him to attain that possibility, that there were a number of things that he could say or articulate better than anyone else. And I really think it was in his gut to want to be president. It was, at the same time, reasonably clear to me that the issues were going to be difficult with him when it came to raw politics. That I don't think he perceived the huge difference between organizing state by state, and organizing in Maine, for a successful campaign and establishing the hegemony of the Democratic party in Maine.

He, a number of things happened, I mean we had talked a good deal certainly early in 1970 about what was needed. And I know I had done a number of memos to him about what would be needed, from the standpoint of raising money, which was crucial; from the standpoint of organizational effort state by state; the fact that he would have to step aside, for all intents and purposes, as a legislator and find some people in whom he would have confidence, his colleagues in the Senate who could take some of the responsibilities; that he would have to miss

a number of key votes, which would be an enormous problem for him because he was so proud of his voting record. And there were all these kinds of things that were impinging on how he felt about it.

But I do believe that when it came to the election eve speech back-to-back with Nixon, in which I think we all got pounded from him. And Dick Goodwin came in as the good white knight and drove us all totally crazy, but the result was good. And Bob Squier did a wonderful job on orchestrating it and etcetera. It was, in an odd way looking back on it, it was both a wonderful and a disastrous event because it thrust him immediately into being the likely heir to the nomination for president of the country, and we were ill prepared for it.

You know, I'm sure you can recall, we all recall the problems of inability to respond to all the letters that came in, and the volunteers that wanted to help. We had no organization to be, I guess, moving on the offense and being able to mobilize people, to galvanize their, their interest in him. And I think we ran off all kinds of people who would otherwise have made ongoing commitments to him, because we didn't respond well. We didn't have a good database. I mean it was something that I feel, looking back, I was very naive and very ingenuous about our ability to do all those things, and to move him to really secure the nomination, well in advance of the convention. I don't think I appreciated the gap between the public persona of Ed Muskie and the need for the structure to make it possible for him to succeed.

We had a few people who were helping us financially. We didn't have a real finance committee early on. We didn't have money. We didn't have state people identified. We weren't responding well to people who wanted to help. And, you know, it may have been that if we had had, say, more experience I guess in, rapid organization, and rapid fund raising, and the ability to have recognized that we had to slow down the process, to catch up with the process structurally, we would have been better off. But it was, you know, looking back is one thing, being there at the time was very different. And we did everything we could to try to both move him ahead, and in a rather disorganized manner began to put a campaign together. So that evening was, as I said, both wonderful and disastrous, and we never caught up in a sense.

DN: Do you recall his mood prior to Chappaquiddick and the Teddy Kennedy phenomenon, or is that not part of the picture for you right now?

BB: Well, I don't know how to begin on that. You would probably recall later on in the campaign when we had the dirty tricks, and Ted Kennedy, it was like we were attacking Ted Kennedy? And we had the Chappaquiddick thing brought up again. I, you know, it was funny, I always had the feeling that there was a, an undercurrent, maybe it was more than that, in Ed's mind, you know. It was like the *parable of the talents*. Remember in the Bible, "To he who has it shall be given, he shall have it in abundance, and to he who shall not even have it, to he it shall be taken away" [Luke 19:26]. Well, I always had the feeling there was some of that with Ed and Ted Kennedy. And there was a, I think before Chappaquiddick Ed, I don't know if this is true, I always had the feeling that he might not have had the motivation to really move out from the Kennedys. But after that I think he felt a little different about it. I don't know how to, really, but I know there were a number of times that I insisted that Ed call Ted Kennedy during the campaign because there was unhappiness all around, on that. Well, we had the same problem, as

you know, in Florida with Hubert and Scoop Jackson on some of the dirty tricks. But I don't remember all the details of the Kennedy thing, I'd have to go back and look at it. I know there was a concern on my part, both as to Ed's view of Ted Kennedy before and then after. It was a defining moment in a sense, Chappaquiddick, for Ed.

DN: They, what I was recalling and I wondered whether you had as well, was the fact that Ed felt that no matter what he did in the 1969 period, he never could get attention the way Ted Kennedy could. And it led to the kind of frustration that you were describing.

BB: I swear, it was a parable of the talents, I always thought that he thought that the Kennedys had just gotten it all, it had been given to them. And there was that certain level of resentment, you know, it was there. I mean, it was a resentment that no matter what Ed did, it was of little public consequence. No matter what Ted Kennedy did, good or bad, it was headlines. And it was the whole Kennedy family, I mean that's how he saw it. It's understandable.

DN: Let's come back to the '70 to '72 campaign, and you were talking about a limited number of financial backers. One of the people, little known today, the late Arnold Picker who was very active, and I'd like to get your recollections of Arnold, how he came into the campaign, what kind of a person he was.

BB: Well, Arnold Picker was everything that you would have expected, to admire Ed Muskie. Arnold Picker could well have been the most decent wealthy man in the United States. As you know, he'd been vice chair of United Artists, Bob Benjamin I guess was the chairman of it. I've never been sure quite where Ed and Arnold Picker met, but I met Arnold very early on and, in the campaign. And I very clearly remember the first meeting that Arnold and Ed and I had about the campaign, when Ed said, what did I think about Arnold chairing his finance committee. And I said, "Well, if we could get him to do it." We had a meeting up in, I guess it was in the little hall -

DN: The hideaway.

BB: Cave, yeah, the hideaway, the cave I used to call it. And I remember Ed talking to him and asking would he do this and how important it would be. And Arnold said he would do it enthusiastically, I really, "I'd rather do this than anything than I can think of. You must be president of the United States. We all need this." And he said, "And I want to make something clear to you." And Ed kind of, "What is that?" He said, I, "There is nothing that I want or nothing that I would take in the government. I want to be clear, if I do this I'm doing this as an American citizen, I am not doing it for any personal gain, and I am not doing it for a job of any kind. And if we have that understanding, and you will be open with me and I can be open with you" And it turned out that Arnold was more than open with Ed, he was very direct with him the whole way. He accepted. And from then on I would say we never had a more loyal, more decent, more committed individual than Arnold Picker. I mean, he was really the salt of the earth, there was no one, I never met anybody that I liked more, admired more, or did more. Just a good person all around. He was wonderful.

And then when we assembled the finance committee, and I would prefer not to comment on

some of the members of it because I didn't like some of them, and I didn't think that they cared much about Ed, they cared about themselves, and it was not pleasant with some of them. But we never mounted the kind of the finance effort, and it goes back to what I said earlier, it was not just a detail, it was combat with Ed to get him to allow us to schedule fund raisers. He didn't like them. We had some very unpleasant ones, including one in Texas which turned out to be like raising money, bonds for Israel, because it was at someone's house outside of Houston. Everybody was asked to stand up and announce a pledge, and I think everyone, Arnold was uncomfortable, I almost died. And I think Ed handled it very well, but he was so embarrassed about it. I mean, he couldn't believe that he was in the middle of something like this. But that was a serious problem, I mean it was a combination of difficulty in other areas as well politically, schedule, and of a total dislike for the whole problem of fund raising.

But, you know, the other thing that came out during the campaign that, you know, just reinforced why it was we all loved the man so much and respected him so much. We'd go to these little fund raisers which were just dreadful, I mean it couldn't have been worse. And people would shove money into his hands, you know, small people, people without real resources but they really believed in him. And we'd go back to a hotel room and Ed would empty his pockets, there'd be all kinds of change and dollar bills and everything. And he'd reach in his pocket, I'd be standing there, and he'd put them on the top of a bureau and say, "Oh, these people gave me all this money, it's not mine, it's for the campaign." And I said, "Did you get all their names?" And he'd say, "I don't even know who they were." But it was, he'd do this fairly regularly. It wasn't like, for show, it was that he had that honor in him that it never occurred to him that he would be doing other than taking any monies, no matter how big or small, that was for the campaign, it was never personal, it was not for him, it was for the campaign. And it was, I just got used to that after a while, that was his behavior. Someone gave him a hundred dollar bill, it would be on the bureau. And it was the same whenever we had these little things, and it just, it was just his sense of private integrity, and it was there, and that's what, you know, so.

But that was a very difficult time. The fund raising efforts were not good. I really would prefer not to talk about specific individuals, but there were people who in, on the fund raising side, I think took advantage of Ed and would ask him to do things which shouldn't have happened. I can think of Los Angeles and Denver as just dreadful examples of it. I guess I can mention one, but we'll put some restriction on it.

DN: Certainly.

BB: Okay, Mort Tapley had a very close friend named Marvin Davis who was a big oil, Davis Oil, in Denver. And so Mort called me one day and said, "You know, we can raise a lot of money in Denver if we can get Ed out there." And I said, "Okay, but I want to talk to Mr. Davis first to be sure we have an understanding." "Fine." So I talked to Marvin Davis, I didn't know him, and I told him what we expected and how much money we hoped we'd raise. And we were talking about big bucks in those days, like a hundred thousand dollars, which was just beyond the pale. So it was all arranged. We flew there, and we got to this huge house outside of Denver. And I had met him that morning so we had, I reiterated what my expectations were.

We got there, the place was jammed. And I expected Mr. Davis to stand up, because he said he

wanted to be part of our finance committee, to announce his intention to support Ed, to raise all this money. Not a word. And there were all these people there. And at the end of the evening I went over to Mr. Davis and I said, "How did we do? Did you get these pledges? Did you collect the money?" He said, "Well, we didn't do very well." I said, "Well what are all these people doing here?" "It's my anniversary. And I thought that having Ed Muskie here would be, they would really appreciate that." And I said, "Mr. Davis, do you know you're toying with the man who should be president of the United States? You're using him for your anniversary. I am absolutely livid about this, and I'd like to talk to your father," who was there, and I went, I think he, subsequently I think he's died. And I said, "Mr. Davis, we have been, I think, sorely treated, and I am very upset, and I want to know what you're going to do. "Well, I'll meet you in the morning." I said, "Fine."

So I went downtown and saw him in the morning. And they had raised, with Davis' contribution, something like ten, twelve thousand dollars. It was unbelievable. And I was out of control. And I told him I expected him to make up the difference one way or the other and (*unintelligible phrase*). We never got much more money out of him. And (*unintelligible phrase*), well I won't mention the name, but we were going back in the car from downtown Denver to the airport, and I was furious. And the fellow who had really set up the schedule, he'd had no responsibility, I did, for the fiasco. But we're coming back and I said, this is the worst mistreatment of a candidate and a person that I have ever seen in this entire campaign. I've seen a lot of raw stuff, but this is the worst. Silence for a second. "Oh," he said, "no, it's not the worst." I said, "It is the worst. What are you talking about?" He said, "Oh things could be a lot worse, I mean, I got laid last night." And I said, "And so?" "With his daughter!" That's a wrap.

In any event that was, and there were things like that, you know, where people were using the senator. And I was not chagrined, that would be an unfair word, but Ed did not want to confront any of it, he thought this was my responsibility. And that's basically true to the extent that, you know, the campaign person should be, take the load if things don't go well. But I thought that he was much too willing to forgive this kind of thing, when if it were a substantive issue he wouldn't have forgiven any part of it, okay? But it was, there was a disconnect between the real Ed Muskie and the campaign Ed Muskie, and I saw it. I saw it in Los Angeles, I saw it in Miami, where we were used, and I got pretty hardened by the time we got done, and so did Arnold, and we made changes as we went. But we were sort of running out of money, I mean, it was just that simple. And Ed just didn't focus on it. He did, but he didn't. He did focus on it in a sense, but not with the focus of I must do something, I must commit, I must do what they're all telling me.

Arnold and I had met with Ed once a week to say please, we've got to free the schedule up. And you know how Arnold was, he was always pleading, he was always, he was about as nice a person as you will ever meet, and only cared about Ed as the president. That's what he saw, that this was going to make a different country, that's what Arnold saw. And he used to get so frustrated and say, "We've got to have more, we've got to get more money, and we've got to do this." And Ed just, that was not him.

DN: Arnold, you said earlier, was very direct with Ed. Was his directness pleading, or was he direct in telling him what he thought was wrong with -?

BB: It was a combination. He was a good pleader, because he was so nice about it, but at the same time he was quite direct about what he thought needed to be done. And, you know, he was so supportive of my efforts to, and he would try to support the dispute, you know, when we had a dispute about, it was a scheduling thing, you know. Ed hated it. He hated the fact that there's no white space, that what we were doing was miniscule in terms of importance. It was not his moment of interest. And no matter how Arnold would try to cajole him, try to convince him that there was no way to go ahead if we were bankrupt, and we'd be out of money and all. And Ed knew that, but it was just, it was, he couldn't really relate well to it. He didn't like it.

It was, let me tell you, I mean, I don't know how we're going to deal with some of this, but we had a meeting in the (Blackstone?) Hotel, in Chicago, during the campaign. And I was told in advance that there was a Polish-American who wanted to give Ed a lot of money. Well, I said I'd have to meet him first, I wasn't going to have him blindly talk to Ed unless I knew more about him. And we did, we ran down a few things, and I thought slightly questionable, but certainly very wealthy. So I decided, considering, and I talked to Arnold about it, considering the superficial support we had financially and the rather tenuous nature of our effort in this regard, that okay, I'll, I think there's something here. And I talked to him, I think he said he was going to pledge twenty-five thousand dollars, and he'd give us ten thousand dollars up front. And that was munificent.

So I brought him in to see Ed. And it was, oh, maybe nine o'clock at night but Ed had been out campaigning and speaking all over at Cook county before. This fellow was, you wouldn't find him particularly desirable, to someone you'd want to spend the evening with. But at that point I was So we come in there and Ed has his shoes off, and he's sitting on the edge of his bed. I introduced him and said, this fellow wanted to be of some support to us, it was significant, that's why I told Ed about him in advance. First thing out of his mouth is, "Sir, I know you'll enjoy this, I want to tell you this Polish joke." And I had this feeling, I just, my stomach just turned and I thought, "Oh, my God." And there was silence for a second, and he started to tell it. And you know how careful Ed was about trying to be disciplined about these things, and suddenly there was silence. And this fellow could see that Ed, I just looked in his face and I said, "Oh God, this is bad news." And that was when he [Ed] came out with his one and only, he looked at this guy and said, "What color are my shoes? Have you heard this one? Yeah. It's from kicking the crap out of people who tell Polish jokes."

Well, that ended the contribution. And I escorted him out very quickly, just really embarrassed, and Ed was furious, you know, that I had allowed this to occur. And I, and it was my fault, I mean, but I thought I'd run enough to not believe for a second this guy was so crude as to do something like that.

But to me it was symptomatic of the problems we had. You know, we would reach for any kind of jagged effort to get money in the till, and Arnold knew we couldn't get it organized, we couldn't get it done, Ed didn't want to provide for it. And there was no way you'd do it without him, you know. I'd try to find surrogates, you may remember this effort of finding surrogates from Harold Hughes to whoever it might be that would speak for him at fund raisers. And they didn't want to hear surrogates. If they were going to contribute big money, they wanted to meet

the candidate. And it was the kind of thing that I knew that the Kennedys did better than anybody I'd ever seen. I mean they understood the mother's milk, and they wanted to have money in the till and they just did it, you know, they, substantive issues were not quite as important. They made them sound like they were, but they weren't. Getting elected was what was important, and that was not number one in Ed's psyche. He had issues on his brain. And so these, these gnawing unpleasantness of raising money and organizing and all that kind of thing just didn't work easily. That's all I can say.

DN: One little question of fact in connection with this fellow in Chicago. You said he had Polish ancestry?

BB: And so it would have, you know, and when he first started Ed knew it because I had told Ed that he was, you know, his ancestry was Poland, that he was a second generation and he was active in the Polish-American Alliance, some kind of business alliance. And so I thought, you know, okay, this is going to be comfortable, this is going to be easy. And the sonofabitch starts out like that. And I said, "Oh, I'm leaving." I mean, Ed was furious, I mean furious. It wasn't like casual. Because he wouldn't do that kind of thing to others he didn't know, I mean, it wasn't in his psyche. But he sure did it. And I just, I'm sure he'd used that before but it was the first time I ever heard it.

DN: The only time I ever heard it was to staff.

BB: Is that right?

DN: Yeah, and close staff.

BB: Oh, okay. Well this was a, try to picture it, o.k.? Needless to say, we didn't get the ten and we didn't get the twenty-five. That was a difficult, that was a hard, that was very hard.

DN: Let's look at another aspect of that campaign and then we'll come back to the question of organization and how it evolved. And that is the forays into foreign policy, and particularly the trip to Europe, the Middle East, and the Soviet Union. And why don't we start with that, because there are other questions about -

BB: Well, okay, kind of a standard, I guess in those days, was you have to establish the credentials that he really understood foreign policy. And it was rather superficial and childish but I guess the politics of it were compelling, and that was that he had to go overseas and meet a lot of people and show that he really knew people and they respected and responded to him. And so we arranged this trip to go to London and go to Germany, and go to Cairo and Israel and all the rest of it, well, and to Moscow. Well, it was, we didn't have the money for it to start with. And there was this wonderful man, John Clifford Folger, who had once been chairman of the finance committee for Eisenhower and the Republican National Committee. He didn't like Richard Nixon. And he paid for that, frankly, and made it possible for us to do that.

The trip was a, I think, mixed politically and spectacular in terms of looking at Senator Muskie as someone who really had an instinct for foreign policy. I really saw him at a different level,

both at the meetings in London, and then we were caught in a big storm and didn't go to Germany and ended up going, I guess, first to Israel. And he really handled all of it without missing a beat, it was, he just seemed to have an instinct to work with and to connect with people who were leading other countries.

When we were in Israel, I don't know if you knew about the problems. The prime minister, he loved her, and they had a very good relationship. And I was concerned that we were getting, in the crudest sense, sucked in to the internal politics of Israel to the point that we weren't getting a real sense of what was necessary to both protect the country, or sustain its security, and also have a country that was not totally militaristic, which was the impression I certainly had when we were there. And he was having all these meetings with the prime minister and all the rest there. I decided on my own that I had to get another point of view, because he was really enamored of what he was being told by this wonderful woman. And I had heard that there was a fellow named Begin who was nipping at her heels and that he wanted to take over the world, I guess, or certainly wanted to conquer Egypt.

And, well in any event, the upshot of it was I went to an apartment where he lived to talk to him one night. And Golda Meir heard of that. And I guess I misunderstood and didn't properly evaluate the capability of the Mossad and their intelligence operation. And the next morning I was to be with Ed to meet with Golda Meir, and she started the meeting with just blasting me for having gone to this riotous, warmongering, blah-blah-blah. And when I finished that evening talking to Begin I said, "Holy God, he was talking about how we have to take over Cairo and we need new missiles and all of this. But Ed's response to that was, at the moment, while she was there, he said, "We'll talk about that later." And, you know, I knew that this was really a problem. And the Prime Minister said, "I hope that you will. This is very serious." Well, we got back and Ed bellowed, he was livid. "You didn't clear it with me, you . . ." [tape ends]

End of Side B

End of Interview